

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
EQUALITIES, COMMUNITY SAFETY & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

4.00pm 11 JULY 2023

COUNCIL CHAMBER - BTH

MINUTES

Present

Councillors: Pumm (Chair) Winder (Deputy Chair), Goldsmith (Opposition Spokesperson), Alexander, Czolak, Lyons, McGregor, Pickett, Cattell and Grimshaw

Standing Invitees: Stephanie Prior, Joanna Martindale, Justin Burtenshaw, Chas Walker.

PART ONE

1 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1 (a) – Declarations of Substitutes

Councillor Grimshaw in attendance in place of Councillor Mistry.
Councillor Cattell in attendance in place of Councillor Gajjar.
Chas Walker in attendance in place of Lola Banjoko.

1(b) – Declarations of Interests

There were none.

1(c) – Exclusion of Press and Public

It was agreed that the press and public not be excluded.

2 CHAIRS COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair gave the following communications:

Dear colleagues,

This is the first time the newly formed Equalities, Community Safety & Human Rights Committee comes together, and I would like to think of this as an important moment in the history of our city's council.

Brighton & Hove is a City of Sanctuary, and I am grateful to have been given the opportunity to chair this committee which will ensure the safety of our residents, hold everyone's Human

Rights in the highest regard and will strive to making sure every resident is free to live their best life.

Since Labour took over the Administration in May, our city has been busy with celebrating numerous summer events and preparing for the annual Pride festivities.

I would like to use the opportunity to highlight some of the happenings and give insight in what kept me busy.

Brighton & Hove is a city proud of its diverse and culture-rich communities and with our status as a City of Sanctuary I believe we must be empathetic and caring towards people who have come to our city fleeing war, persecution, and poverty; even more so in the problematic political circumstances we find ourselves in as a country.

That is why I visited a drop-in service at All Saints Church and spoke with asylum seekers, discussing the distressing situations they have found themselves in and horrific conditions of the hotels that I know our Refugee & Migrant Integration Lead, Cllr Mistry, has recently visited.

I have also recently been to a programme in Birmingham for 'Inclusive Cities' in which I was able to talk to councillors from a range of political parties and from different cities across the UK.

We participated in discussions and exchanged innovative ideas and strategies to help refugees and migrants feel more welcome and accepted across our country.

As an Administration we understand the challenges that lie ahead and the work that needs to be done.

However, with determination, dedication, and the support of our community, who's love and acceptance for asylum seekers was made so obvious in refugee week last month, we can bring about meaningful change and we hope that you will join us in this endeavour.

As I am sure you all know, it was Pride Month last month and as the Chair of this Committee I made sure that the Inclusive Pride Flag was raised on both Brighton and Hove Town Halls in anniversary of the Stonewall Riots.

I want to make clear that our Administration stands with the LGBTQ+ community in the face of discrimination and strives to improve the lives of those in queer communities across the city.

It is the 10th anniversary of Brighton & Hove Trans Pride this weekend, and I cannot wait to march alongside so many of my transgender and non-binary siblings, making it clear that our Administration stands with them in the fight against transphobia.

We will do whatever we can to protect them from abuse and hate-crime.

I am also looking forward to joining Brighton & Hove LGBTQ+ Pride March on 5 August and am hoping I will see many of you there.

I would also like to let you all know that I have sent a report to Full Council which lays out our Administration's plans to declare ourselves a diverse council and sign up to the Diverse Councils Declaration.

I look forward to working with you all over the course of my time as Chair, and look forward to all your inputs, especially with such a diverse range of councillors from different backgrounds, ethnicities, sexualities, and genders.

Labour's vision of a diverse, fair and accessible city is bold and I invite you to work with us to create an equal, safe, and inclusive future for our residents.

3 CALL OVER

The following items were reserved for discussion:

8 Domestic Abuse New Burdens Funding Allocation

9 Accessible City Strategy 2023-2028

The following items were therefore agreed as per the recommendations in the reports:

7 Constitutional Matters

4 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

4.1 The Chair invited Adrian Hart to present their question on page 3 of Addendum 1.

4.2 The Chair gave the following response:

We are fully committed to fulfilling our public sector equality duties. We are taking steps to ensure we meet these duties in a more systemic and co-ordinated approach working closely with people with lived experience. The council approved its first ever anti-racism strategy in March 2023. Today we are approving our first ever Accessible City Strategy. We are working towards securing re-accreditation as a City of Sanctuary, and will be developing future equality strategies, for example, a gender equality strategy.

There are also other equality drivers and obligations for the council that we are committed to and value alongside the Equality Act, such as the Faith Covenant, BSL Act, Armed Forces Covenant.

Across all our equalities work we seek to take an intersectional and nuanced approach understanding the diversity and complexities of individuals.

4.3 The Chair invited Adrian Hart to present the following supplementary question:

Can the Chair confirm that this administration deems gender critical beliefs (a) worthy of respect in a democratic society and (b) are absolutely not examples of transphobia, and that the Council will unequivocally uphold this element of the equality act?

4.4 The Chair confirmed that a written response would be sent to Adrian Hart.

5 ITEMS REFERRED FROM COUNCIL

There were none.

6 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

There was none.

7 CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee's terms of reference, as set out in Appendix A to this report, were noted; and
2. That the Committee agreed to establish an Urgency Sub-Committee consisting of the Chair of the Committee and two other Members (nominated in accordance with the scheme for the allocation of seats for committees), to exercise its powers in relation to matters of urgency, on which it is necessary to make a decision before the next ordinary meeting of the Committee.

8 DOMESTIC ABUSE ACT NEW BURDENS FUNDING ALLOCATION

8.1 The Chair invited Jo Player to introduce the report starting on page 8 of the Agenda.

8.2 Councillors Goldsmith, Pickett, Czolak and McGregor were informed about issues regarding measuring satisfaction with the contract, prioritising local services, extending existing contracts, bringing information on potential contracts to committees going forward, Stonewater and Victim Support, contract monitoring, and communications to signpost people to access Domestic Abuse support.

Jo Player agreed to provide a written response to Cllr Goldsmith and Committee members about what could be possible regarding including further information in Committee Reports about contracts before renewing.

8.3 Joanna Martindale was informed about the potential for a local strategy for Violence Against Women and Girls in Brighton as well as refuge provision.

RESOLVED:

1. That Committee noted the Government allocation for Domestic Abuse Act New Burdens Funds of £620,128 for 2023/24 and £631,828 for 2024/25.
2. That Committee agreed to allocate the 2023/24 award to the services and administrative functions for a further year as set out in paragraphs 5.1, 5.2 and Table 1 of this report.
3. That Committee noted that a further report will be brought with recommendations for spend for the 2024/25 allocation.

9 ACCESSIBLE CITY STRATEGY 2023-2028

9.1 The Chair invited Emma McDermott to introduce the report starting on page 21 of the Agenda, and moved an oral Officer Amendment to eliminate recommendation 2.1 of the report.

9.2 Councillors Goldsmith, Czolak, Grimshaw, Alexander and McGregor were informed about issues regarding figures from the 2011 Census, neurodiversity, intersectionality, equalities data standards, funding, concentration of residents with a disability around the city, and the positive benefits of accessibility.

9.3 Stephanie Prior and Joanna Martindale were informed about issues regarding collaborating with local businesses, Council PR, raising awareness, success measuring, the Council complaints and compliments system, and co-production.

RESOLVED:

1. That committee recommends the Accessible City Strategy for approval to the Strategy, Finance and City Regeneration Committee.

10 ITEMS REFERRED FOR FULL COUNCIL

The Accessible City Strategy was referred to the Strategy, Finance, and City Regeneration Committee for approval.

The meeting concluded at 5.05pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

