

Letter to Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

I am submitting this letter under Council Procedure Rule 23.3 to be included on the agenda for the Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee on April 10th 2024. This rule applies to all committees.

Brighton & Hove City Council's Constitution states that part of the purpose of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee is 'encouraging the Council as a whole to take into account the implications of their policies and activities on health and health inequalities'.

This letter seeks to ask members of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the implications of the proposal to amalgamate the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee into a 'People Scrutiny Committee' under the new governance arrangements. The People Scrutiny Committee will be responsible for scrutinising all of the decisions that are made by the Cabinet which affect people, as opposed to the 'Place Scrutiny Committee' which does the same except for where decisions effect places. Both committees have large remits and so the People Scrutiny Committee will have less time to scrutinise decisions which effect health provision in our city. It is also unclear whether non-voting co-optees will have the same rights to sit on the People Scrutiny Committee when it is carrying out its legally required Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee functions. Upper tier local authorities such as County Councils & Unitary Authorities are required to have a committee which has Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee functions. The new governance arrangements meet these requirements through amalgamating these functions into the People Scrutiny Committee.

It is my opinion that a dedicated Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be able to provide better scrutiny of local health provision compared with a People Scrutiny Committee. The People Scrutiny Committee's remit is too large even without Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee functions. Most councils with a cabinet system have more than two scrutiny committees as well as a dedicated Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

This letter does not ask for an officer report, it simply asks for Councillors and non-voting co-optees present to consider the matter at what is currently our last Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Raphael Hill

Green Party Councillor for Round Hill Ward

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