

Subject: Deputations from members of the public.

Date of meeting: 19 December 2024

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting of the Council for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes following which one Member of the council, nominated by the mayor, may speak in response. It shall then be moved by the mayor and voted on without discussion that the spokesperson for the deputation be thanked for attending and its subject matter noted.

Notification of two Deputations has been received. The spokesperson is entitled to speak for 5 minutes.

1. Deputation concerning Affordable Housing in Brighton & Hove

Supported by:

Diane Montgomery
Sheila Rimmer
Carol Wilson
Ian Needham
Lynn-Ora Knott
David Gibson

Summary of deputation:

In the Brighton & Hove City Council Plan 2023-27 Homes for All you say:
“Our goal is to deliver accessible, affordable, high-quality homes for everyone in Brighton & Hove.”

“Access to decent quality, affordable housing is fundamental and key to people’s

There are high levels of private renting in the city which you admit is unaffordable for most people e.g. **see accompanying examples.**

There are high levels of temporary emergency households, more than 1,700, February 2024. The cost of which to the council is 16.9 million - the councils’ own figures

In the Housing Strategy consultation, quotes the public said they want:

- **“truly affordable”** housing
- Prioritise the needs of local residents and families
- Involve communities in planning development

For years private for-profit luxury developments such as Moda Living in Hove have swamped the city and have not had any effect on reducing the crippling

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housing crisis we face, as is demonstrated by your own figures. To show you are serious about the promises you make will you use public owned land for developments that benefits residents. Not mammoth for-profit builds of 700+ unaffordable so-called luxury apartments.

The council needs to use its assets to ensure truly affordable housing is delivered if it is to honour its commitments. We feel that the remainder of the King Alfred public owned site should not be privatised and instead be used to build council housing to meet the huge need in the city.

Please say how you will demonstrate that the commitments you have made will be delivered?

Supporting information:

| Moda Living rent per month | Average private rent per month |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Studio from £1395 | Room £607 |
| 1 bed from £1650 | Studio £814 |
| 2 bed from £2000 | 1 bed £1,025 |
| 3 bed from £3900 | 2 bed £1,375 |
| | 3 bed £1,790 |
| Hove Gardens rent | 4 bed £2,500 |
| Studio from £1,350 | |
| 1 bed from £1,495 | |
| 2 bed from £1,850 | |
| 3 bed from £2,350 | |

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2. Deputation concerning Smartphones for Children

Supported by:

Gregor Ross
Kate Reid
Michael Kew
Hannah Kew
Kirsty Ware
Sarah White
John White
Kathryn Steele

Summary of deputation:

I would like to ask for your help in protecting young children from the risks associated with smartphones.

Smartphones are devices designed for adults. They have access to all the wonders and horrors of the internet. They are addictive by design, with the aim of keeping you on the phone for as long as possible. They are not safe for young children.

51% of 11-13 year olds have seen hardcore pornography

90% of girls and 50% of boys report being sent unwanted explicit content

75% of 15 year olds have been sent beheading videos

Professor Jonathan Haidt, a social psychologist, has published much research into the topic which shows that since 2010 there has been a continuous rise in children's mental health problems such as depression, loneliness and suicide, which correlates strongly with increasing ownership of smartphones amongst children.

So, you may be thinking, well this is simple, just don't give your child a smartphone. This reductionist thinking is very limited. 89% of children starting secondary school own a smartphone. So at one of the most critical times of a young child's development, parent's are being presented with this terrible dilemma. Give your child a smartphone, or choose not to and alienate them from their peers.

It is not just parents who want change. Children too want change. 67% of children believe smartphones are harmful, 50% of teens say they feel addicted and 20% have felt life is not worth living due to social media.

Policy across our city varies enormously and sadly, some schools and teachers are unintentionally adding to the problem, by using smartphones within lessons.

Despite these problems, there is a potential solution. In February 2024, a small group of parents in the UK started a grassroots movement called the Smartphone Free Childhood (SFC). Their method is simple. It is the 'parent pact'. A voluntary pledge to delay giving your child a smartphone until at least

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14 years old. This pact can help parents develop that much needed parent peer support. To date, over 80,000 parents have signed this pact.

Parents are doing their bit but they need help. I have raised this issue with my primary headteacher, MP Sian Berry, local councillor, B&H education and enterprise, who have all passed me on to someone else.

So, council I am now coming to you, to ask for your help. Please will you consider publicly supporting and promoting the smartphone free childhood campaign across the city? Please will you send SFC resources to all schools across the city, just like you do for other public health matters, encouraging them to implement no smartphone use in schools? Lastly, if you decide that you cannot support this movement right now, then please consider two further questions. If not you who? If not now, when?