

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Council

## Agenda Item 62

**Subject:** Addressing Infant Mortality Through the BabyBox Initiative

**Date of meeting:** 19 December 2024

**Proposer:** Councillor De Oliveira  
**Seconder:** Councillor Robinson

**Ward(s) affected:** All

### Notice of Motion

#### Labour Group

#### That this council notes:

1. Infant mortality rates have risen over the past three years, disproportionately affecting deprived communities.
2. Babies born in the poorest areas face nearly three times the risk of death compared to wealthier areas, with black or black British children being most affected.
3. The infant mortality rate in England and Wales has increased from 3.8 to 3.9 per 1,000 live births.
4. England's child mortality rate remains 50% higher than Sweden's, where thousands fewer deaths would occur if England matched Sweden's rates.

#### This council believes:

1. Urgent action is needed to address these inequalities.
2. A BabyBox initiative, providing essential items for newborns and their families, can improve infant wellbeing and reduce mortality in disadvantaged areas.
3. A council-led pilot program could support local families while contributing to broader national efforts through the NHS BabyBox pilot.

#### This council resolves to:

1. Request the Health & Wellbeing Board to review the possibility of working with the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector to Distribute BabyBoxes to up-to 100 newborns annually in the most deprived postcodes including essential items like clothing, bedding, and personal care products.
2. Explore collaboration with health professionals and community organisations to ensure effective delivery.
3. Advocate for enhanced national implementation and collaborate with government and local authorities to share insights.
4. If a program is considered deliverable, collect data on program uptake and impact to guide future expansion and integrate the BabyBox program into wider strategies targeting health disparities, working with partners in health, education, and social care.

