

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Council

## Agenda Item 61

**Subject:** Council Budget and Public Participation

**Date of meeting:** 18 December 2025

**Proposer:** Councillor Sykes

**Seconder:** Councillor De Oliveira

**Ward(s) affected:** All

### Notice of Motion

#### Green Group & Councillor De Oliveira

This council notes:

- 1) Our highly constrained council budget, described as one of the most challenging this council has seen, with in-year and multi-year pressures impacting on services.
- 2) Resident frustration about council finances in areas of particular concern to them, including about the basis for decision-making on significant items of spend, and service cuts.
- 3) The commitment by the council Administration to ensuring open and transparent local government under the Cabinet system.
- 4) The value that Participatory Budgeting (PB) and Participatory Advocacy (PA) can add, and the availability of the new Your Voice channel on the council website to facilitate participatory approaches.

Therefore, Council resolves to:

- 1) Proactively shift from a culture of 'need to know' to one of trust, openness and transparency in budget decision-making.
- 2) Request of the Finance Lead in future years to publish a draft budget in December, prior to Budget Council in February; to allow the public, businesses and the VCS time to provide constructive comment and input on draft proposals.
- 3) Request of the Finance Lead to raise the profile of budget communication material, aiming to increasing public knowledge and awareness of budget challenges.
- 4) Propose to our Scrutiny Committee chairs that they jointly commission a Task and Finish Group to review potential for PB approaches in council budget development and to suggest that this review may consider
  - (a) earmarking a small proportion of a Directorate budget to PB approaches
  - (b) piloting PA approaches to help inform Administration messaging to HMG on Council finances.

**Supporting information:**

- 1) Early budget publication and participatory approaches have previously been used by this Council.
- 2) According to the LGA, participatory budgeting can be most useful after a devolution deal has been agreed and decisions need to be made about budget allocations. Budgets can be spent in a way which better reflects the strengths, needs and aspirations of the local community and can improve self-confidence, increase volunteering and faith in local service providers, helping to establish positive relationships with citizens and organisation within devolution areas. [Participatory Budgeting | Local Government Association](#)