

Subject: Deputations from members of the public

Date of meeting: 29 January 2026

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 that three deputations have been received. The spokesperson is entitled to speak for 5 minutes.

1. Support the Together Alliance against the far right

Supported by:

Davinder Mankoo
Christian Hogsbjerg
Dr Gil Mualem-Doron
Sue Bowes
Phil Mellows

Summary of Deputation:

The Together Alliance is about building solidarity and unity across communities and is supported by UK charities, unions, civil society organisations, politicians and other individuals including Sir Lenny Henry, Leigh-Anne Pinnoch, Steve Coogan and Paloma Faith, offering a platform of 'love, unity and hope'. At a time when representatives of the far right minority are feeling emboldened to spout hatred and the politics of poison, the Together Alliance is advocating hope over fear, and rejects narratives of division and racism.

<https://www.togetheralliance.org.uk/>

Given the far right is on the rise in the US and UK, leading to fear and intimidation of black and Asian communities, Brighton and Hove council – as an anti-racist city of sanctuary - should follow the lead of Sefton council and sign the Together Alliance statement and promote the national mobilisation on Saturday 28 March widely across its media and social media channels as well as supporting putting up posters on prominent locations such as the seafront. The Together Alliance statement is below:

The voices of division in our country are growing louder. Those who preach division are becoming more confident.

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For the first time we face a far-right party topping the polls, and far right protests on our streets mobilising the biggest numbers they ever have.

Their false promises seize on the very real economic problems people face, in order to scapegoat migrants, Muslims, and refugees.

But we can change things together. The voices of unity can grow stronger. We can show that strength lies in solidarity. That the change we need comes from us working together for hope not despair, for unity not racism.

- Together we can reject narratives of division and racism.
- Together we can build solidarity across communities.
- Together we can unite against the far right.

Our alliance of over 80+ organisations and hundreds of individuals is coming together to say enough is enough.

We are mobilising and organising across the country to bring a message of hope over fear, prior to holding a major demonstration in London on March 28th, 2026.

Join us and help us build an alliance for hope and unity.

2. Deputation from Equity in Education regarding the proposal to extend the sibling link to all families in Brighton & Hove

Supported by:

James Baird
Nicola Clewer
Essie Marks
Lesley Reeves
Raphael Schlembach

Summary of Deputation:

Introduction

- Representative from Equity in Education advocating for families living in north-east Brighton
- Deprivation, social segregation and educational disadvantage in our area
- Recent changes to the secondary schools admissions arrangements (free school meal and open admissions priorities) and why more change is needed

Response to the proposed change to sibling link priority

- The unfairness of the current sibling link policy and how it impacts on families in our community and elsewhere in the city
- Benefits of proposed changes for families across Brighton & Hove
- Response to the consultation from our community
- Why the sibling link and opened admissions priorities are and must remain separate

Brighton & Hove City Council

Concluding remarks

- Appeal to councillors to vote through the proposal to extend the sibling link to all families in Brighton & Hove

3. **Deputation from parents affected by this year's proposed Secondary School Admissions changes**

Supported by:

Matthew Boote
Rebecca Korda
Evgeny Batov
Eva Myers
Lou Mitchell
James Christie
Nichola Tuck
Mark Jukes
Thomas O'Leary
Hannah Heathcote
Leanne Evans
Juliette Dyke

Summary of Deputation:

This council is proposing major changes to secondary admissions for the third year in a row - yet still no impact assessment has been carried out on the last two rounds of changes. Councillors and the public have no evidence about whether previous policy aims were met, or what unintended consequences have already occurred.

The new proposal would extend sibling priority to all children, regardless of where they live. At present, sibling link applies only to children living in catchment. Removing that safeguard introduces a clear and serious risk: in- catchment children, including those on free school meals, could lose places at their local school because out- of- catchment siblings are placed ahead of them.

As worded, this is a policy to extend deliberate displacement of children from their local schools, including those on Free-School-Meals.

In Varndean and Stringer catchment the council's own 30% cap for children on free school meals would be reached before all in- catchment FSM children are offered places. Those children would then be just as vulnerable to displacement as any other. This directly contradicts last year's policy change, which was explicitly designed to *protect* in- catchment children on free school meals.

This proposal would even prioritise children who do not live in the city over children who do. It applies not only to siblings who gained places through open admissions or the FSM priority, but also to families who move out of the city.

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The result is predictable: more children unable to attend a school they can easily travel to, more separation from primary school friendship groups, more random allocation, more uncertainty for families, more appeals. Yet the council has carried out no assessment of these likely impacts or even bothered to articulate them before going out to consultation.

In November, cabinet papers stated it was not possible to quantify how many siblings this change would affect. This is wrong. During the consultation, some individuals received private emails from Richard Barker containing figures - quite large numbers. These figures were never published. How can the community respond to a consultation and how can councillors be expected to make an informed decision when the data is withheld?

Deliberate displacement hits hardest on those children with the least resources. Information the Council shared with the adjudicator last year showed that the first to be displaced will be those whose parents or carers didn't put any application in - who are likely to already be facing less stable home circumstances and who are unable to navigate increasingly complex admissions systems.

We are asking councillors today to reassess this proposal and amend it so that in- catchment children are not de- prioritised. This could be easily achieved by:

- counting out- of- catchment siblings within the existing 5% open admissions quota, or
- introducing a split sibling criterion that places out- of- catchment siblings after all in- catchment children.

The proposed changes to waiting lists also prioritise administrative convenience over supporting families through an already complex process and should be rethought.

Over 1,500 children apply for secondary places in Brighton & Hove every year. Councillors have a responsibility to ensure that any policy change is evidence- based, transparent, and properly assessed. We are asking you to insist on that due diligence before our children pay the price

4. Mission:HOME – Request for faster building of Social Housing on small sites in Brighton and Hove for families experiencing homelessness.

Supported by:

Scarlett Chapman
Gordana Chapman
James Chapman
Bill Wallsgrave
Mike Bosnivic

Summary of Deputation:

Brighton & Hove City Council

This deputation highlights demonstrated public support for additional social housing, and shows that such support increases when residents are given fuller information about families living in long-term temporary accommodation.

It asks the Council to increase efforts to identify small, under-used sites suitable for social housing, and to bring them forward for development sooner.

Context

Around 1,000 families in Brighton & Hove live in temporary accommodation, many for six to eight years or longer. Prolonged stays harm children's health, education, stability, and long-term outcomes.

The Opportunity

The key issue is delay. Small, under-used council sites can often deliver family-sized social rented homes faster than large developments. Used together, these sites can reduce time spent in temporary accommodation.

Why Small Sites Work

Small developments integrate families more quickly, place little additional pressure on services, are easier for communities to absorb, and reduce long-term social and financial costs.

Evidence from Woodingdean

Mission: HOME is supporting engagement on a live application for four family-sized council homes on a small site in Woodingdean. When residents are given clear information about family homelessness and the role of small sites, many choose to support the proposal, alongside legitimate objections.

Role of Mission: HOME Mission: HOME is a grassroots, community-led initiative. It does not build housing or make planning decisions. Its role is to support informed public engagement and demonstrate that public backing for small-scale social housing exists where residents are able to engage with fuller context.

Supporting Information:

Mission: HOME — background note

Mission: HOME is a grassroots, community-led initiative based in Brighton & Hove, focused on family homelessness and the long periods many children spend growing up in temporary accommodation.

The project started from a simple observation: when people understand what family homelessness actually looks like, and how long families are waiting, many are more open to small, well-designed social housing being built in their communities.

Mission: HOME does not build housing and does not make planning decisions. Our role is to help residents understand the issue, encourage thoughtful engagement, and support constructive participation where local housing proposals come forward.

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The current focus of the project is on small, under-used sites and how these can become permanent family homes more quickly than large developments. Woodingdean is one example of this approach, where residents have engaged constructively with a proposal after being given fuller context about the families affected and the need for homes.”

This note is provided simply to explain the background to Mission: HOME and the thinking behind the deputation. It is not intended to set expectations or require a response.

More information is available at:
www.missionhome.org.uk