

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

CABINET

2.00pm 19 MARCH 2026

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Sankey (Chair) Taylor (Deputy Chair), Alexander, Allen, Daniel, Miller, Muten, Robins, Rowkins, Williams, Czolak and Robinson

PART ONE

136 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

136a Declarations of interests

136.1 Councillor Alexander declared a pecuniary interest in Item 149: Crisis and Resilience Fund as Chair of Brighton Grub Hub. Councillor Alexander stated that they would leave the Chamber during discussion of the report.

136.2 Councillor Daniel declared a pecuniary interest in Item 149: Crisis and Resilience Fund. Whilst the organisation she worked for was not currently in receipt of funding via the Crisis and Resilience Fund, there was a possibility they may be in the future. Councillor Daniel stated that they would leave the Chamber during discussion of the report.

136b Exclusion of the press and public

136.3 In accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the Act"), the Committee considered whether the public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any item of business on the grounds that it is likely in view of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during it, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information as defined in Section 100A (3) of the Act.

137 MINUTES

137.1 **Resolved-** That the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as the correct record.

138 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

138.1 The Chair provided the following communications:

We have a substantial agenda this afternoon which goes to the heart of our ambitions for Brighton & Hove: a cleaner, safer, fairer city, where every child has the best start in life and every community can thrive.

We begin with a set of reports on our city environment and public realm – building directly on our recent street maintenance and public realm investments.

Through the proposal to modernise our Hollingdean Materials Recovery Facility, we are investing in the future of our recycling service – upgrading an ageing plant so it can safely handle more complex waste streams, meet new national requirements, and increase the amount we recycle. This Labour Administration is determined to turn around the Council’s previously underwhelming record on recycling and become a leading authority.

Alongside that, our refreshed Environmental Enforcement Service sets out a more proportionate, prevention-based approach. We have listened carefully to residents and businesses who told us the previous model could feel overly punitive for minor incidents while not going far enough on serious repeat offenders. The new framework will focus on education and early engagement, backed up by CCTV and robust action against those who persistently blight our streets and fail in their duty of care.

The “Cleaner City Centre” report is about pride in our place. It reflects the work we have started with businesses, the BID, hoteliers and other partners through the Station to the Sea pilot, and proposes an overnight cleansing service to raise standards in the areas most visible to residents and visitors. The City Centre Manager role is already making a difference, and this package gives us the tools to match the expectations people rightly have of a major coastal city

Transport is another cornerstone of our agenda, linking to our active travel improvements. The Local Authority Bus Grant Delivery Plan for 2026–27 sets out how we will use national funding to keep buses moving, support key routes, invest in more accessible stops and corridors, and continue to make bus travel an affordable, realistic option. At a time of pressure on public finances, this is a deliberate choice to back reliable, low-carbon public transport.

Community safety runs through this meeting too – our proposed Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy for 2026–2029 is a statutory plan, but more importantly it is a shared commitment with our partners to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour, violence against women and girls, hate crime and serious violence. It has been shaped by evidence and by residents’ voices, and it focuses on prevention, support for victims and communities, and tackling the root causes of harm

We will also consider the proposal for DPW’s Crisis and Resilience Fund, the next iteration of the Household Support fund and recognising that too many of our residents are still living with the sharp end of the cost-of-living crisis and wider shocks. This is about working across the city with partners to offer targeted, practical support that strengthens people’s ability to cope and recover, not just short-term sticking plasters – and it explicitly aligns with our Inequality and Life Chances Review as we work together we identify what will provide the best most effective support to those who experience poverty and inequality in our city.

Our Best Start in Life Strategic Plan sets out how we will work with partners to support children and families from pregnancy through the early years, close the gaps in outcomes, and ensure that where a child is born in Brighton & Hove does not determine their life chances. It sits alongside our decisions today on the Planned Maintenance and Asset Management Fund allocations and the Education Capital Programme, which are critical to keeping our schools and public buildings safe, warm and fit for purpose.

We then turn to the Pride in Place proposals in Whitehawk and the Marina – a clear statement that investment, high-quality public realm and a sense of belonging must reach every part of our city, not just the centre, and directly supporting our deprivation-focused Review. In the same spirit, the Affordable Housing Planning Advice Note

clarifies our expectations of developers so we get more, and better, affordable homes through the planning system – extending our recent housing delivery

Our Annual Procurement Forward Plan will ensure that the way we spend public money is transparent, strategic and aligned with our priorities, delivering social value and environmental benefits as well as good commercial outcomes.

Finally, we will look at the next steps on Large Panel System estates and the associated rehousing and leaseholder offer, and at statutory notices for Middle Street. These are complex, sensitive decisions with real implications for residents' homes and neighbourhoods, and we will approach them with care, openness and a focus on safety and long-term regeneration

Across all of these items, the thread is clear. We are using the levers we have – investment, enforcement, partnership and planning – to deliver a cleaner city, tackle inequality, support families, and build resilience in the face of national and global pressures. Today I am asking Cabinet to consider each report in that spirit: pragmatic about the constraints we face, but ambitious for the Brighton & Hove we want to create.

139 CALL OVER

139.1 All items on the agenda were reserved for discussion.

140 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

(a) Petitions

1) Bampfield Street & Hurst Crescent Controlled Parking Zone

140.1 Cabinet considered a petition signed by 7 people requesting the introduction of a controlled parking zone (CPZ), also known as residents' parking scheme, on Bampfield Street and Hurst Crescent in South Portslade.

140.2 Councillor Muten provided the following response:

Thank you for your petition regarding the introduction of controlled parking in Hurst Crescent and Bampfield Street in South Portslade. I am sorry to hear about the parking difficulties currently being experienced by residents.

The area was previously consulted on in 2020. Since the introduction of the existing scheme, the council has received requests from residents in surrounding roads for further consideration of parking controls. We are a listening council and as a result, South Portslade has been included on the Parking Scheme Priority Timetable.

At present, officers are focusing on schemes in other parts of the city. However, we are reviewing where Controlled Parking Zones are most needed and how to deliver an accelerated programme to better support residents.

140.3 **Resolved-** That Cabinet note the petition.

(b) Public Questions

1) Middle Street Statutory Notices

140.4 Vanessa McGeachin read the following question:

Could you clarify what proportion of the current budget deficit, which has been cited as a key factor in the decision to close Middle Street Primary School, is attributable to ongoing or one-off payments to staff no longer employed at Middle Street, including the Headteacher?

140.5 Councillor Taylor provided the following reply:

I realise this is a difficult day for parents, Carers, pupils, staff, and the wider community around Middle Street, and echo the comments from Councillor Sankey, which is that we take both the lead up to this issue and the decision we face today extremely seriously. As I'm sure you'll appreciate, it's not possible for the council to discuss specific circumstances in relating to staffing decisions or associated costs. It's important to note that a school's overall budget position is largely dependent on the decisions taken by the governing body and the school leadership. There's a pressure on school funding nationally, which is noted. However, within that, it's also worth noting that there are lots of schools within the city that are managing their budgets within those parameters, despite specific and one-off costs that may relate to a number of different things, potentially including staffing. Middle Street had a budget deficit first licence from the 2020-21 financial year but that position has deteriorated more recently, which is implicit in your question. The council introduced an interim executive board, partly in response to concerns around governance, the governing body and the management of the budget. I understand the thrust of your question, but the reality is that many schools and many public sector bodies face one-off costs and that is part of the overall management of their budgets. Thank you for your question.

2) Middle Street Statutory Notices

140.6 Jane Goldsmith read the following question:

Given its heritage as Brighton's oldest school and its central location, close to public transport links - also bearing in mind the recent refurbishment at significant public expense - what are the council's views on repurposing Middle Street, perhaps as a special needs hub serving the entire city community.

140.7 Councillor Taylor provided the following reply:

Thank you, Jane, for your question, obviously, and also for your comments about the history of the site. I'm so particularly aware of the history of the site. My wife attended the school, and I know of a number of people who have attended the school over many, many years. It's, as I say, a sad thing to consider.

In terms of the building itself, I just want to be clear about how we think about it and the process. So today at Cabinet, we will obviously decide whether to publish statutory notices. There will then be a further decision following those statutory notices. It will only be at that point, and if those things are reached, that the council would then formally consider any usage of the site. I think some of the points you raise are really important. Sadly, in the city, we do have some experience with schools that have shut and we've also seen that sometimes those schools can be broken into. People think it's very clever to break into them and film videos, which it's not, but we have to learn the lessons from

that and make sure that if we do proceed in this way, we think about the site very carefully, but I just want to be sort of genuine.

There are no plans whatsoever for the site as yet. In terms of any special needs facility, that will be driven by the need as determined by the department, and there is a whole plan on special needs education in the city, much of which is focused on sites within mainstream school, but if the department were to say that this is a site that is needed, then of course that would be considered. Thank you for your question.

3) Middle Street Statutory Notices

140.8 Oli Sharpe read the following question:

It concerns me greatly that the report for item 156 fails to capture the temporary nature of the recent problems at Middle Street School, blaming “governance and finance” rather than the widely known break down in relations between the previous senior leadership team and the school community. The phrase “senior leadership” does not appear once. Nor does the report mention that pupil numbers had been consistently around 190 (90% of PAN) for years, making the school financially viable compared to neighbouring schools. It is only the recent complex HR issues and loss of community trust that led to pupil numbers dropping to 141 and then 71 after rumours of closure circulated. With a PAN of 15, a new senior leadership team, and a 10 year plan to pay off the deficit this much loved school would be viable. Why are these details and options not in the report to council?

140.9 Councillor Taylor provided the following reply:

I'm sorry you feel that don't you feel that the report doesn't reflect the reality of the circumstances. What I would say is the report does try to reflect the feedback that came through in the consultation, and what you've brought today is now firmly on the public record and as will be reported, I think we should be clear, and there's no attempt for the council to hide this, that the change in position was relatively rapid versus other things that have happened at other schools in the city where pupil numbers have been very low for a long time. This is a different situation, and I think it's very important that you raise that in the public sphere and for us to consider.

Unfortunately, where we stand is that doesn't change the fundamentals of where we are now and the future decision making, and it's perhaps not a simple just to decide whether we want to keep it open or not. It has to be balanced against all of the factors that are set out in the report and indeed the reasons behind the recommendations that the interim executive board eventually made and then we went to consultation and then we're now considering today. In terms of the substance of your question and your suggestion, it would be very, very unusual for a council to licence a school deficit of 10 years in length, that will be way beyond the normal period. And whilst that might represent a theoretical option, we feel that the realities of the situation make that almost impossible, not least, unfortunately, because of the wider context of falling pupil numbers overall.

What I do want to say is, obviously the report recommends publishing statutory notices and that's what Cabinet will be discussing later today and deciding on. But what I do want to say is, given the lead up and the issues and the concerns that have been raised by parents, I have requested and it has been agreed that we do need to have an independent lessons learned of the process to answer some of the questions that have

been risen about process and governance. I think it's really important that the council as a local education authority does learn those lessons and so that will be happening. Thank you for your question.

(c) Deputations

- 1) The Potential of Middle Street Primary School**
- 2) Deputation to Support Middle Street Primary School**
- 3) Deputation to Cabinet – Middle Street Primary School**

140.10 Cabinet considered three deputations that outlined concerns relating to the potential closure of Middle Street Primary School.

140.11 Councillor Taylor provided a joint response to the three deputations as follows:

Thank you, Chair, and can I say thank you to John, Councillor Shanks on behalf of five residents, and then Ruth for bringing those 3 deputations. I think it's really important that, as a Cabinet and as the public listening to this meeting, hear those inputs and those views from parents. It's an important part of this overall process. I won't cover everything because everything will largely come out in the debate that we have later in terms of how we discuss decision, but there are a few things I just wanted to respond to. So first of all, to John, who talked about the distinct community and consideration of families living in that area and numbers and finances. I just want to take a step back and be really clear that schools are not just numbers in a building. They're not numbers of pupils on a spreadsheet and in a building. A school is something very different and very much more special than just that. And in this city, like many others, there are schools that have a great and rich history. And as we've said, Middle Street is one of those, which makes it a very difficult situation that we're in. As a Cabinet, and when we've had to consider decisions like this before, we don't think about it as numbers on a spreadsheet, not least, as I said in the beginning, that I have so many personal connexions to this school, and by the way, friends who had kids at school have, you know, recently left and in recent memory, family, friends who worked at the school. So, we do have a strong understanding and connection to the school.

So, I just want to try to say, that we're not just thinking about this in terms of numbers. Schools represent something different than that, which is communities of learning, but also broader hubs for the community, which is why it is obviously such a difficult thing to consider. Your point around turnaround is correct. And in this city, we have quite a good record of turning around from special measures to ending up being good or outstanding. So, the city does have a good record of that, including schools in some of our most deprived areas of some kinds been in special measures, but then recovered. I think what we're considering today is obviously slightly separate to that because it is also considering that the conclusions of the interim executive board as to whether that is viable to do within the overall context of the pupil numbers and the budget and whether those can be forecast to any degree into the future. And they obviously as I will set out later today, initially considered a path where there would be a turnaround, potentially via Federation, but then they felt that the further shift in numbers meant that that would be impossible. In terms of the, and then sorry, last thing in John, in terms of the overall need for the school, as you say, schools are vital infrastructure. We do have to

unfortunately keep coming back to the overall context in this city, which is that we have a very high level of excess capacity, particularly at the primary sector, but also moving into the secondary sector, a very high level of capacity in the system. What do I mean by that? I mean that the number of places available is forecast to be 500 more than the number of pupils that will be coming through. Now, it's always a difficult thing for us to communicate and discuss, and whether we did a good job of it in the previous schools, I'm not sure. But we do have to try and make this fundamental argument that schools, and whether it's this specific school or a different specific school, to school, but schools being well below their capacity is actually not a good or progressive thing for children, families or for staff, because what happens, and we have seen it, is that schools are faced with the invidious decisions of as pupil numbers continue to fall, how do they respond to that? And they often have to respond to that by reducing learning support staff and reducing support for special educational needs. And so unfortunately, you know, my conclusion that I came to is that the most progressive thing, particularly for children with special educational needs and for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, is to try and achieve a system where schools are closer to capacity. They don't have to be full, absolutely not, but it's not a good thing for children who need support to be in schools that are half empty and then declining. And so we have to balance that up and make the decision in the round on that, talking to your point about future need of the school, and we then have to look at the forecast numbers within the overall city centre scope. By the way, I actually essentially agree with what you're saying about thinking about the future of the school. I think sometimes this, the future of the city and its housing, I think sometimes in the past 25 years, the city has roller coasted a bit and responded to changes in demographics, in some cases by expanding schools too quickly.

When we first looked at this issue when you got in, on paper, the conclusion might be that you need to close six or eight schools. We didn't do that. We ended up proposing to close two schools because we were cognizant of the future demographics you can't predict. You should be able to maintain some building capacity because as you say, once schools close, it's very difficult to reopen it.

However, the numbers have sort of persisted, including now two examples where schools themselves, via their governing bodies, have proposed to close. And so unfortunately, even if we were to make this decision, you would still see on paper that we have significant capacity in the system. To Councillor Shanks on behalf of residents, obviously raising issues about the finances, and the governance, I just want to reconfirm that yes, I do think there is merit in an independent lessons learned review. I think in many ways the council did act fairly, not dramatically, but strongly in appointing an interim executive board. That is one of the most extreme steps that we can take as a local authority and I think it was required in this example, given the scale of some of the concerns.

However, that doesn't mean that everything was done perfectly, and that's why I do think we need these independent lessons.

And then, Ruth, on the three points that you've raised, it is very important. Well, one, communication is really important. And, you know, being a parent myself and responding to things from schools, and government bodies, you know, the communication is not always perfect and it is frustrating as a parent not to get things clearly and early.

So in the rest of this process, I can certainly give a commitment that I will be instructing and asking officers to communicate clearly with parents on all of the steps as they flow. In terms of the tracking, that may be a bit more complex and harder to achieve in the

way that you've described it, but it is certainly important that we are tracking pupils and tracking the outcomes and understanding how that transition is happening. To your point, there is already a large number of pupils that have moved, as has been discussed.

In terms of the support, the council has proactively reached out to all receiving schools and offered support for that process. Some of it has been more simple and hasn't really required support. There hasn't been support asked for. But as the report sets out, there will of course now be support and transition in the way that we have done for other school closures for all families that are remaining at the school.

And then in terms of the building, yeah, I mean, just to sort of reiterate and to answer your question directly, yes, there will be a fully transparent decision, which is a long way in the future about any use of the building. It won't simply happen and you hear about a planning application if that to be or a new school or anything like that, it will need to be a transparent decision and by the way, we have to go to the Secretary of State anyway for any change of use of the building. So yes, there will be a transparent decision about the future, of which genuinely the answer is there has really been no discussion about what the future of the site is if we were to make those decisions.

I want to reiterate thanks to everybody that has brought the deputations and the broader issues will be brought out in the debate later at Cabinet. Thank you.

140.12 **Resolved-** That Cabinet note the deputations.

141 ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS

141.1 A copy of the questions received was circulated ahead of the meeting. Responses provided both at the meeting and in writing are as follows:

1) **Councillor Meadows - Modernising our recycling centre**

While we're happy the aim is to increase Brighton & Hove's woeful recycling rates, we are concerned about borrowing costs. How close is the council to a borrowing ceiling given that we are borrowing for the King Alfred Centre, Withdean swimming pool and are paying off the loan for i360? How resilient are we to future shocks?

Response: Cllr Rowkins

The council sets its authorised borrowing limit at Full Council each year as part of the budget papers. Within this limit, the council must ensure borrowing is affordable, sustainable, and prudent, as set out by the CIPFA Prudential Code. New investment proposals are individually assessed, with borrowing costs factored into future budgets when necessary. If considered more financially prudent, the council may choose to fund this project from the Waste PFI reserve, which is set out in the financial implications section of the report.

2) **Councillor Meadows - Environmental Enforcement Centre**

There was a budget on 26th February, only two weeks ago. Is the overspend outlined in 6.1 additional overspend from what was outlined in the budget? What is meant by 'structural pressure' (paragraph 6.1)? Did officers not know this extra expenditure was required last month before budget council?

Response: Cllr Rowkins

The overspend outlined for 2025/26 is being managed within the current budget envelope for environmental services. Without the actions outlined in the report being taken this would continue to be managed in the same manner during 2026/27. The approach to review and improve collection rates of enforcement income presents an opportunity to ensure the service is self-contained and frees up the resources currently mitigating the pressure.

3) Councillor McNair - A Cleaner City Centre

Has the establishment of a new overnight cleansing team (paragraph 3.3) reduced cover from other parts of Brighton & Hove? Will this level of service be rolled out to the rest of the city, including other central areas such as London Road and George Street? How will the overnight cleansing team handle rough sleepers who might be sleeping in central areas targeted, for example, for graffiti removal?

Response: Cllr Rowkins

The new overnight cleansing team is an additional service - it will not reduce daytime cleansing or take resources away from any other part of the city and our daytime teams will continue with their full citywide duties.

We are starting this overnight work in the city centre because it is our busiest area, with the highest footfall and the greatest pressure on cleanliness. While deep-cleaning tasks can be carried out during the day, they are far more effective and much less disruptive when undertaken overnight, when the streets are quieter and crews can work more efficiently.

The service is not limited to the city centre, and we can deploy it anywhere based on need.

Regarding rough sleepers, the team will always work safely, respectfully and compassionately. They will not disturb anyone sleeping in an area scheduled for cleaning. Work will be rearranged, and any welfare concerns passed to the appropriate outreach teams.

4) Councillor McNair - Local Authority Bus Grant Delivery Plan 2026-27

Has the council been given any reason as to why funding is being cut by 5% as outlined in paragraph 6.1?

Response: Cllr Muten

Thank you, Cllr McNair, for your question.

The 5% reduction in the LABG revenue element reflects a policy decision of national government to pivot slightly from revenue spending to capital infrastructure spending on Transport. The 5% cut in revenue allocation was applied to all non-mayoral LTAs, at the same time we have a small year on year increase in the capital allocation. The revenue decrease was somewhat balanced out by a commitment to retain the £3 national bus fare cap until 31st December 2026. Further, in association with this pivot, more funds

will become available as the Strategic Authority for Sussex and Brighton is set up and becomes the transport authority for the region to include allocation within 2026-27.

5) Councillor Meadows - Planned Maintenance Budget

What is the purpose of the property condition survey for Old Boat Corner Community Centre at a cost of £4,700? Are there any particular concerns about the building?

Response: Cllr Taylor

As part of our Planned Maintenance programme for the year, we have commenced a rolling programme of condition surveys to ensure the maintenance and repair of our building is recorded. As part of that rolling programme we will be completing condition surveys for our Community Centre's and a number have been identified for the current year.

6) Councillor Meadows - Pride in Place

Whitehawk and Moulsecoomb were part of the new deal for communities fund of £50mn delivered over 10 years in the 1990s. Whitehawk was given the bulk of that funding which produced little result. What lessons have been learnt from past failures that can be carried forward to this programme?

Response: Cllr Sankey

The New Deal for Communities programme represented a significant and welcome investment by government in areas such as Whitehawk and Moulsecoomb, reflecting a clear recognition of long-standing inequalities and the need for sustained regeneration. The outcomes were mixed and provided important lessons which directly inform the Pride in Place programme.

The key lesson is that investment alone is not enough. Past programmes were often overly complex, insufficiently community-led, and too focused on short-term projects rather than long-term change. Pride in Place has been explicitly designed to address these issues.

It is long-term and stable, providing multiple years of funding rather than short funding cycles.

It also places local people at the heart of decision-making, through a neighbourhood board with real power over priorities and spend. It also combines capital investment with capacity-building, ensuring communities have the skills, support and governance to deliver lasting impact.

Most importantly, Pride in Place builds on what communities already do well, backing local ambition with sustained government investment to create visible, meaningful and enduring change.

7) Councillor McNair - Affordable Housing Planning Advice Note

According to paragraph 3.1, 'City Plan Policy CP20 sets a requirement for 40% affordable housing to be provided by developers in schemes of 15 or more homes and requires smaller percentages of affordable housing on site or an in lieu financial contribution in schemes down to 5 homes.' Will reducing the number of houses that are

liable to pay a financial contribution from 9 to 5 put an onerous burden on house builders? The development of three houses in Rotherfiled Crescent is one example of the challenges faced with small infill sites. Is this financial contribution in schemes of 5 homes another reason why infill is becoming unaffordable for developers?

Response: Cllr Taylor

The policy requirement for developments of 5-9 dwellings to provide a financial contribution equivalent to 20% affordable housing has been in place since the adoption of the City Plan Part One in 2016 and is unaffected by the PAN. The policy allows for flexibility and allows for a lower, or zero, financial contribution where independently verified viability evidence demonstrates this is necessary to ensure a development proposal is viable and able to come forward for development

8) Councillor Meadows – Annual procurement forward plan

How are we paying for a £14m expansion of the city's bike scheme? How will this allow other authorities in the southeast to establish their own scheme'? Are Brighton & Hove residents subsidising the scheme in other councils?

Response: Cllr Muten

Thank you Cllr Meadows for your question.

The current Bikeshare contract runs until September 2027 and provides a fleet of 780 bikes, around 60% electric and 40% pedal-only, supported by over 100 docking hubs across the city. The scheme was introduced to improve coverage and accessibility compared with the previous model.

The £14m figure refers to an estimated total contract value published in 2022, covering the full life of the framework and potential use by other authorities, not the cost to the Council. The Council's contribution to establishing the Beryl scheme was approximately £1.3m.

A Cabinet report will be brought forward once negotiations with the operator conclude, to set out the potential for the introduction of e-scooters following the recent consultation and if appropriate how these would align with the existing Bikeshare contract. If approved, the e-scooter trial is not expected to create additional budget pressures, as the financial risk sits with the operator, and it would generate income to help reduce annual loan-servicing costs

9) Councillor McNair - Large Panel Systems Building and Estates Renewal

Why are secure tenants of the 8 blocks due to be demolished being helped to buy property (paragraph 3.14), possibly in the private sector? How many tenants do they envisage the £0.4m helping?

Response: Cllr Williams

The introduction of a Home Ownership Pact will provide tenants in our council homes the opportunity to move into home ownership without exercising their Right to Buy option. This helps us to retain our housing stock which can then be relet to applicants on the Housing Register including those in temporary accommodation (TA). Taking a

test and learn approach we will be piloting this initially with tenants in the LPS blocks. The option of home ownership was raised by some tenants in the LPS blocks during the consultation period who were keen to still move into home ownership including moving outside of the city. This scheme provides those tenants with another rehousing option. It is envisaged that £0.4m will support up to 10 households in 2026/27.

10) Councillor Raphael Hill - Modernising our recycling centre

The Hollingdean Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) has a significant visual impact on the Round Hill Conservation Area. A proposal for a green roof and green walls proposed for the MRF were part of the original design intentions but were not formalized as enforceable planning conditions in the approved application BH2006/00900 in June 2006. These features were ultimately not implemented. While I appreciate this report is largely about new machinery, could investment in the MRF also consider ways to include improvements that were part of the original design?

Response: Cllr Rowkins

Thanks, Councillor Hill, for the question. And it's a fairly brief answer, which is which is that to add new features to the facility at this point would obviously increase the funding requirements set out in the report and potentially the burden on the general funds through the MTFs, either through the additional financing costs or potentially reserve contributions in future years to ensure that the waste PFI reserves are balanced by the end of the term of the contract. I do see the case though, you know, the underlying point that you're making is the visual impact of those very, very functional buildings and I'll certainly keep that in mind and consider how we might be able to do that in the future.

11) Councillor Ollie Sykes - Modernising our recycling centre

Concerning the loan for the capital works, a likely PWLB rate of 4.5% is indicated, giving a financing cost of £0.130m annually over 25 years. The current PWLB fixed rate is about 6% for infrastructure investment, so where does 4.5% come from and how would a 6% rate affect the business case?

Response: Cllr Rowkins

The council bases project financing costs on its average borrowing rate, not individual rates at any one time. Whilst interest rates are high right now, the council manages its exposure to interest rates over a much longer period. The treasury management strategy is proactive and officers work closely with the council's treasury advisors to monitor rate movements and expectations closely. If it is considered more financially prudent, the council may use the Waste PFI reserve for this project, and that is detailed in the financial implications section.

12) Councillor Ollie Sykes - Cleaner City Centre

A roving Field Officer role was piloted a few years ago with elements of similar remit to the City Centre Manager role. What lessons have been drawn from the Field Officer pilot, which was not continued?

Response: Cllr Rowkins

Thank you Cllr Sykes.

The Field Officers primarily acted as a responsive city wide regulatory and enforcement presence, liaising with services when issues required escalation.

The City Centre Manager role is focussed more on improving the cleanliness and look and feel of the city centre by working proactively with teams across the Council and external partners. The first project, the 'Station to the Sea' test & learn pilot' has received good feedback and the learning from this and other Council programmes is being used to inform future work.

13) Councillor Ollie Sykes - LA Bus Grant Delivery Plan

Will there be any consideration of corridor strengthening of the Western Road /Church Road bus corridor which is seeing damage and degradation from heavy vehicles including buses?

Response: Cllr Muten

Thank you Cllr Sykes.

Strengthening work is planned to take place on Western Road between Holland Road and Montpelier Road as part of this Local Authority Bus Grant capital delivery programme. This funding has been carried forward to 2026/27 so that works can be delivered as part of the red route project, subject to the outcome of the consultation.

14) Councillor Pete West - Modernising our recycling centre

Yet again, another thin cabinet report that proposes significant investment over a long time period yet fails to present a full case; leaving obvious and major questions unaddressed. The financial implications give some indication of the loan and staff cost modelling, but don't consider the income/cost of marketing additionally separated materials. It is only when we read the Risk Implications do we see mention that the investment may offer opportunities for additional income. There are, of course, no figures offered for what that income might be, whether it will be able to help address the further 'pressure funding', or whether it may potentially end up with further cost for reprocessing, storage or disposal of poor value materials. I don't wish to seem cynical, but this report tells us too little to be confident the decision is being based on sound thinking. What are the full costings, please?

Response: Cllr Rowkins

The full costings relating to the new resource requirement of the facility have been outlined in the financial implications section of the report, with consideration having been given to ensure that the investment represents value for money. The report sets out how the investment is required to ensure that the council meets its obligations and ambitions in relation to the recycling of additional materials.

While it is recognised that there would be potential opportunities for income generation, it is an emerging economic area with amounts that are, to be honest, quite difficult to quantify at present, although it is worth noting that the extended producer responsibility,

or EPR, legislation and associated payments are designed precisely to help local authorities with the additional costs of recycling and waste management. We'll be working with residents this year and really going very hard on communication and messaging to improve, well reduce the amount of contamination we get, improve the uptake and participation with the now expanded recycling service and ultimately to improve the quality of the recycling that we collect and reducing contamination and maximising the potential for income from ensuring a good quality product.

15) Councillor Shanks - Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy 2026 - 2029

Why was the opposition given no chance to scrutinise this important document, why do we have only administration councillors on this important partnership body. Will you consider giving other voices a seat.

Response: Cllr Daniel

As you know, the Community Safety Partnership is a statutory multi-agency partnership. So the members of the partnership are defined in law. It's not a political committee, and therefore attendance at that committee relates only to cabinet oversight of those issues. So that's the answer to that part of your question. In terms of scrutiny and member engagement, the strategy was supported by a widely advertised public consultation process which ran for seven weeks and I hope you participated in that. It was open to all residents but it was open to obviously elected members as well and all Councillors had the opportunities to submit comments, representations, and members were available, I mean, sorry, officers were available on request to provide briefings or to respond to enquiries for members should they have wished to engage in more detail. But I understand that wasn't requested during that period.

In terms of scrutiny, I welcome thematic scrutiny going forward of any of the themes in the community safety strategy. I think that would be great. However, rightly, that's not a matter for Cabinet, that's a matter for scrutiny itself and the chairs of scrutiny. So I hope that answers your questions.

16) Councillor McLeay - Middle Street- Statutory Notices

We wanted to ask for a comprehensive external and independent investigation. I'm glad to hear Councillor Taylor saying that this is a commitment that would be made. I'm just wondering if there's anything else that can be shared on that investigation at this point?

Response: Cllr Taylor

I think probably not in that it's been discussed with officers, and they will think about the best way to find someone that's independent and do it. Clearly, I will. It's something that Councillor Thomson as a ward councillor and Councillor Goldsmith have raised directly with me, and so we'll communicate obviously with you and ward Councillors and obviously parents that the next steps on that.

17) Councillor McLeay - Large Panel Systems Building and Estates Renewal

What is the current annual availability of 3 and 4 bed council properties, and how does this compare with the projected need arising from decanting the LPS blocks?

Response: Cllr Williams

Thank you for your question. In fact, Councillor Taylor and myself this morning, paid a visit to some homes that we've repurchased, rescued back from student HMOs, and are at this very moment being converted to 4 bedroom homes, and I'm absolutely delighted that were able to do this. So, this significantly adds to that stock. But more specifically for your question, across the eight blocks, the majority of households requiring rehuses are in need of one and two bed properties. In fact, some are going to be downsizing, and there is a small minority, of course requiring 3 and four bedroom homes. So, this means while the overall decamp demand is high, the projected need for three and four bed homes from those blocks is likely to be with the level of supply generated by our repurchasing and we are of course building more homes as well. So, I hope that answered your question.

18) Councillor McLeay - Large Panel Systems Building and Estates Renewal

The financial implications highlight £0.4m for the Home Ownership Pact pilot, a £7.489m capital allocation for LPS-related work, and an anticipated loss of £2.9m in annual rental income across the eight LPS blocks. Given these pressures, can Cabinet explain how the HRA will absorb these costs while ensuring the programme remains financially sustainable?

Response: Cllr Williams

A budget of £0.4m is allocated for a scheme for 2026/27. This is revenue expenditure and has been highlighted in the budget as a service investment for 2026/27. These costs are being managed within the HRA as part of a planned, long-term programme. The pilot is within a limited time period, the capital investment is phased, and the income impact has already been built into our financial planning. We will offset any pressures with ongoing underspends where they arise and savings and mitigation strategies. This allows the programme to proceed while keeping the HRA financially sustainable.

142 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE

142.1 There were none.

143 REPRESENTATIONS FROM OPPOSITION MEMBERS

143.1 Cabinet received a representation from Councillor McLeay on Item 156: Middle Street - Statutory Notices.

144 MODERNISING OUR RECYCLING CENTRE

144.1 Cabinet considered a report that sought approval for a number of enhancements to the Hollingdean Materials Recovery Facility.

144.2 Councillors Muten and Sankey asked questions and contributed to the debate of the report.

144.3 Resolved-

- 1) That Cabinet approves the procurement and installation by Veolia of a new optical sorter, chutes, conveyors and bays, along with the associated adaptation works required at the Hollingdean Materials Recovery Facility.
- 2) That Cabinet approves a capital budget of £2.3m to be funded by PWLB borrowing.
- 3) That Cabinet delegates authority to the Corporate Director for City Operations, in consultation with the Lead Member for Environment and Net Zero, to finalise, approve and enter into any required contractual amendments with Veolia, including agreeing detailed terms of all necessary Deeds of Variation.

145 ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT SERVICE

145.1 Cabinet considered a report that sought approval for a proportionate, prevention-focused Environmental Enforcement model, including a revised Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) schedule for minor fly-tipping and littering.

145.2 Councillors Daniel, Muten, Taylor, Robins and Sankey asked questions and contributed to the debate of the report.

145.3 Resolved-

- 1) That Cabinet approves a set of changes that will introduce a fairer system of environmental enforcement, with a shift towards early engagement, prevention and collaboration with residents and businesses to improve the look and feel of the city, whilst ensuring a robust approach to tackle persistent and more serious offences.
- 2) That Cabinet approves the introduction from 1st April 2026 of a lower-tier, proportionate FPN schedule for minor fly-tipping (residential and commercial) and littering, as set out in appendix A.
- 3) That Cabinet approves taking the high-profile none payers to court, to get a clear message out to businesses, that they have a legal duty to ensure that their waste is disposed of correctly and that failure to do so could result in them having a criminal record.
- 4) That Cabinet delegates authority to the Corporate Director, City Operations, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services, to finalise operational policies and procedures, and to make minor amendments to the FPN schedule within national parameters.

146 A CLEANER CITY CENTRE

146.1 Cabinet considered a report that sought approval for various measures to enhance the appearance and cleanliness of the city centre.

146.2 Councillors Williams, Muten, Miller, Allen and Robins asked questions and contributed to the debate of the report.

146.3 Resolved-

- 1) Cabinet agrees to note progress to date on the Station to the Sea – Test & Learn Pilot.
- 2) Cabinet agrees to endorse the continued focus provided by the City Centre Manager.
- 3) Cabinet agrees to approve the introduction of an overnight cleansing service for the city centre from May 2026.

147 LOCAL AUTHORITY BUS GRANT DELIVERY PLAN 2026-27

147.1 Cabinet considered a report that set out the current proposed Delivery Plan for the 26/27 Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG) from the Department for Transport (DfT) (formerly Bus Service Improvement Plan or BSIP) and sought agreement for how the £5.752m in revenue and £3.259m in capital funding is allocated for 2026-27.

147.2 Councillor Alexander, Rowkins, Allen, Taylor, Sankey and Miller asked questions and contributed to the debate of the report.

147.3 Resolved-

Cabinet agrees that:

- 5) the £5.752m in revenue and £3.259m in 2026/27 LABG funding is allocated as set out in Table 2.
- 6) the Corporate Director City Operations is granted delegated authority to adjust, cancel or re-instate the allocations set out in Table 2 as the Corporate Director may consider necessary or appropriate from time to time provided that any allocations remain as permitted by any conditions attached to the LABG.

148 COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME REDUCTION STRATEGY 2026 - 2029

148.1 Cabinet considered a report that sought endorsement for the Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy 2026–2029, the statutory three-year strategy required under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Strategy sets out the city’s multi agency approach to reducing crime, tackling harm, supporting victims, and strengthening safety and cohesion across Brighton & Hove.

148.2 Councillors Daniel, Sankey, Czolak and Muten contributed to the debate of the report.

148.3 Resolved-

That Cabinet:

- 1) Recommends to Full Council that it approves the Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy 2026–2029, attached in Appendix 1.

149 CRISIS AND RESILIENCE FUND

149.1 Cabinet considered a report that sought approval for the proposed allocations and delivery approach for the government's Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF), which replaces the Household Support Fund (HSF) from April 2026.

149.2 Resolved-

- 1) Cabinet agrees the allocation set out in Sections 4.3 to 4.29 and Appendix 1 for the allocations of the CRF.
- 2) Cabinet delegates authority to the Section 151 Officer, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Regeneration, to make alterations to the allocation of the CRF to maximise its use.
- 3) Cabinet delegates authority to the Section 151 Officer, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Regeneration, to approve a revised Housing Payment Scheme.

150 BEST START IN LIFE STRATEGIC PLAN

150.1 Cabinet considered a report that sought approval of the Best Start in Life Strategic Plan 2026-2029 and for the plan to be published on 31st March 2026 in line with DfE requirements.

150.2 Councillors Taylor, Miller, Williams, Allen, Daniel and Sankey contributed to the debate of the report.

150.3 Resolved-

- 1) Cabinet agrees the Best Start in Life Strategic Plan 2026-2029 (Appendix 1) and for this to be published on 31st March 2026 and authorises the Corporate Director - Families, Children and Wellbeing to make any necessary minor non-material text and illustrative alterations prior to its publication.

151 PLANNED MAINTENANCE BUDGET AND ASSET MANAGEMENT FUND ALLOCATIONS AND EDUCATION CAPITAL RESOURCES AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2026-2027

151.1 Cabinet considered a report that sought various approvals relating to the Planned Maintenance Budget and Asset Management Fund Allocations and Education Capital Resources and Capital Investment Programme 2026-2027.

151.2 Councillors Allen and Robinson contributed to the debate of the report.

151.3 Resolved-

- 1) Cabinet notes the level of available capital resources totalling £5,569,000m for investment relating to education buildings.

- 2) Cabinet agrees the allocation of funding as shown in Appendix 1 for inclusion within the council's Capital Investment Programme 2026/27.
- 3) Cabinet grants delegated authority to the Director of Property & Finance to procure the capital maintenance and basic need works required, as set out in Appendix 1, and enter into contracts in accordance with Contract Standing Orders.
- 4) Cabinet approves the annual programme of planned maintenance works within the Planned Maintenance Budget for 2026/27 as detailed in Appendix 2, at a total estimated cost of £4,509,540.
- 5) Cabinet approves the allocations from the Asset Management Fund for 2026/27, totalling £1,000,000, as detailed in Appendix 3.
- 6) Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Property & Finance to take all steps necessary to procure the Planned Maintenance Budget works and Asset Management Fund improvement works and award contracts within these budgets and in accordance with Contract Standing Orders.

152 PRIDE IN PLACE

152.1 Cabinet considered a report that provided information on the inclusion of Whitehawk area in the Government's Pride in Place Programme and sought approval for the actions required from the City Council to support the establishment of a Neighbourhood Board and the facilitation of early community engagement, using grant funding received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

152.2 Councillor Williams contributed to the debate of the report.

152.3 Resolved-

- 1) That Cabinet approves the acceptance of the Pride in Place funding award by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) as set out in section 3 of this report.
- 2) That Cabinet agrees that the Council shall provide support to the Pride of Place Programme in the terms specified by MCHLG, including acting as the Board's Accountable Body, in accordance with the obligations and requirements of the Programme.
- 3) That Cabinet delegates authority to the Council's S151 Officer, in liaison with the Leader of the Council, to take all actions necessary to support the establishment of the Neighbourhood Board, including appropriate governance arrangements, and to oversee the administration of all Pride in Place grant funding received from the MHCLG in accordance with published guidance and legal responsibilities.
- 4) That Cabinet notes the intention for the ward councillors for Whitehawk ward to be appointed by full Council at its AGM in May 2026 as members of the Neighbourhood Board.

- 5) That Cabinet notes a further report will come to Cabinet in January 2027 to update on the governance and administrative arrangements that have been put in place with the Neighbourhood Board and to report on the long-term plan.

153 AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLANNING ADVICE NOTE

153.1 Cabinet considered a report that sought approval to formally adopt and publish an Affordable Housing Planning Advice Note (PAN).

153.2 Councillors Rowkins and Robins contributed to the debate of the report.

153.3 Resolved-

- 1) Cabinet agrees to adopt the Affordable Housing Planning Advice Note (PAN) at Appendix 1 and authorises the Head of Planning to make any necessary minor non-material text and illustrative alterations prior to its publication.

154 ANNUAL PROCUREMENT FORWARD PLAN

154.1 Cabinet considered a report that sought approval of the Annual Procurement Forward Plan for 2026/27.

154.2 Councillors Rowkins, Allen, Muten and Williams contributed to the debate of the report.

154.3 Resolved-

- 1) That Cabinet agrees the Procurement Forward Plan for 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 1.

155 LARGE PANEL SYSTEMS BUILDING AND ESTATES RENEWAL - S105, REHOUSING POLICY AND LEASEHOLDER OFFER CONSULTATION PROGRAMME

155.1 Cabinet considered a report that set out the outcomes of the consultation undertaken in relation to St James's House (Kempton); Nettleton Court and Dudeney Lodge (Hollingdean); and the Whitehawk "Bird Blocks": Falcon, Heron, Kestrel, Kingfisher, and Swallow Courts and sought various approvals in relation to regeneration of the sites.

155.2 Councillors Muten, Robins, Robinson and Sankey asked questions and contributed to the debate of the report.

155.3 Resolved-

- 1) Cabinet is asked to note that each site has been subject to a distinct options appraisal and consultation process, and that the recommendations set out in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.4 constitute separate decisions for each site, presented collectively for ease of reference.
- 2) Cabinet is asked to note the outcomes of the consultation (Appendix 2) relating to the preferred option and to approve the taking forward of the recommended option to

demolish and replace St James's House (Kempton); Nettleton Court & Dudeney Lodge (Hollingdean); and Heron, Kestrel, Swallow, Falcon and Kingfisher Courts (collectively the Whitehawk 'Bird Blocks') with new homes in keeping with the housing needs of the city, and regeneration of the sites.

- 3) Cabinet agrees to authorise the service of "initial demolition notices" for St James's House (Kempton); Nettleton Court & Dudeney Lodge (Hollingdean); and Heron, Kestrel, Swallow, Falcon and Kingfisher Courts (collectively the Whitehawk 'Bird Blocks') in accordance with Schedule 5A of the Housing Act 1985.
- 4) Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Corporate Director Homes and Adult Social Care to determine the timing and service of the initial demolition notices for each site.
- 5) Cabinet is asked to note the outcome of the consultation (as detailed in this report) relating to the preferred option and agrees to approve the Rehousing Policy at Appendix 3 and Local Lettings Plan at Appendix 4 for the eight LPS blocks.
- 6) Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Homes and Adult Social Care to actively engage with all impacted leaseholders to facilitate the acquisition of the leaseholders' legal interests within the 8 LPS blocks.
- 7) Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Homes and Adult Social Care to take all steps necessary to develop an offer for the provision of lease/property swaps for those resident leaseholders within the eight LPS Blocks who are experiencing financial hardship and are unable to purchase an alternative property on the open market.
- 8) Cabinet approves the launch of a pilot Home Ownership Pact Scheme for eligible tenants residing in the eight LPS blocks, as detailed in Section 8.
- 9) Cabinet agrees to approve a budget of £0.4m to operate the Pilot Home Ownership Pact scheme in 2026/27.

156 MIDDLE STREET- STATUTORY NOTICES

156.1 Cabinet considered a report that detailed the response to the recent public consultation on the proposal to close Middle Street Primary School on 31 August 2026 and sought approval to publish a statutory notice.

156.2 Councillors Daniel, Muten, Taylor, Robins and Sankey asked questions and contributed to the debate of the report.

156.3 Resolved-

- 1) That Cabinet agrees to the publication of a statutory notice in respect of the proposed closure of Middle Street Primary School with effect from 31 August 2026. The committee notes that publication of the statutory notice will trigger a four-week representation period which will run from 8 April 2026 to 5 May 2026 during which interested parties can comment on the proposal.

- 2) That Cabinet notes that following the representation period a further report will come back to Full Council on 21 May 2026 at which a final decision will be made.

157 PART TWO PROCEEDINGS

- 157.1 **Resolved-** That Cabinet agreed that the confidential items listed on the agenda remain exempt from disclosure to the press and public.

158 LARGE PANEL SYSTEMS BUILDING AND ESTATES RENEWAL - SECTION 105, REHOUSING POLICY AND LEASEHOLDER OFFER CONSULTATION PROGRAMME (EXEMPT CATEGORY 3)

- 158.2 As per the Part One minutes.

The meeting concluded at 6.20pm