

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

4.00pm 24 MARCH 2026

HOVE TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Evans (Chair) Cattell, Oliveira, Fowler, Goddard, Mackey, Meadows, Winder, Earthey and Shanks

Other Members present: Mark Strong (CVS), Michael Creedy (OPC)

PART ONE

65 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

65. Procedural Business

65a Declarations of substitutions

65.1 Cllr Earthey attended as a substitute for Cllr Fishleigh

65.2 Cllr Shanks attended as a substitute for Cllr Sykes

65.3 Michael Creedy was invited to the meeting to represent the Older Peoples' Council as Bernadette Kent was unable to attend.

65b Declarations of interest:

65.4 Cllr Cattell is a member of the Seafront Development Board.

65c Exclusion of the press and public

65.5 There were no Part Two items so the press and public were not excluded.

66 MINUTES

66.1 **RESOLVED–** that the minutes of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Meeting on 19th January 2026 were approved

66.2 **RESOLVED–** that the minutes of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Meeting on 21st January 2026 were approved

- 66.3 **RESOLVED**– that the minutes of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Meeting on 19th February 2026 were approved

67 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATION

- 67.1 The Chair gave the following communication:

Today we will be looking at three reports and will end with a discussion on our next topic for a Task & Finish Group. We will start with an update on the recommendations from our first Task & Finish Group that was on short-term lets. The recommendations were approved by cabinet in June last year although some were dependent on actions having been taken by central government before they can progress.

We're going to change the order of the agenda at this point to accommodate Cllr Taylor. We will be looking at the Seafront Development Board Prospectus which is being developed to present a unified vision for the seafront and attract investment. The prospectus belongs to the Seafront Development Board and they will be seeking an endorsement from Cabinet. We are being asked to note the report.

Our final presentation is looking at the Memorials Policy that aims to assist anyone considering installing a memorial on Council-owned land in the city. It explains the different options, timescales and the application process. We are being asked to note the report.

We will end with a discussion on our next Task & Finish Group topic.

In the interests of time, can I please request that both those asking and answering questions are as brief and to the point as possible, as we want everyone who wishes to contribute to have the opportunity to do so. We also don't want the meeting to overrun too much into the evening. I'm going to ask those presenting to keep their introductions as brief as possible to allow as much time as we can for questions. Thank you.

68 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- 68.1 There were no public engagement items.

69 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

- 69.1 There were no member questions.

70 UPDATE ON SHORT TERM LETS REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 70.1 The item was presented by Cllr Jacob Taylor, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance & City Regeneration, and Nicola Hurley, Head of Planning. Cllr Taylor summarised the recommendations from the last Task & Finish Group on short-term lets that were accepted and passed at Cabinet last year; he grouped them into 3 categories: lobbying, things that can be done now, and planning policy. They have been lobbying government to take action on this topic and encouraging the introduction of a licence or registration scheme that at some point will become mandatory. They are in discussions with the government who are developing an online platform for this, and the Council have made it clear that they would like to be part of shaping and testing it. The recommendations that can be implemented more immediately are the information on the website and assigning someone as the dedicated officer for this which is forthcoming. The changes to planning policy will be explored via the City Plan process, which is likely

to take 30 months. They have commissioned a Visitor Accommodation Study which is ongoing and this will inform their plans.

- 70.2 Cllr Evans asked for clarification on the name “City Plan 2041” as it sounds like there will be no changes until 2041. Cllr Taylor explained that this is misleading and the policies will be effective from the date the City Plan is approved.
- 70.3 Cllr De Oliveira asked about the issues with data on the number of short-term lets in the city and what enforcement measures are being put into place now. Cllr Taylor said that the Council does enforce against improper short-term lets at the moment. Nicola Hurley added that the use of a property as a short-term let might need planning permission depending on the duration and frequency it is being used for that purpose. If it is investigated and found to be a full time short-term let then it constitutes as a change of use and needs enforcement. The government are introducing a licensing scheme which should provide more reliable data on the number of short-term lets in the city as it will be mandatory and they must be registered in order to operate.
- 70.4 Cllr Meadows asked about the timelines for the licence, Visitor Accommodation Study and Cabinet member oversight as everything rests on central government and could all get held up. Nicola Hurley said that they are in discussions about the named officer and it depends which department will be operating the license scheme. City Plan will come back to scrutiny once it has been developed more. The testing of the government’s licensing scheme should be late 2026 or early 2027.
- 70.5 Mark Strong (CVS) asked whether the Visitor Accommodation Study will say what the capacity will be for short-term lets in certain areas, and whether a specific parking permit will be introduced for short-term lets. He suggested leaving information in the property to inform visitors of public transport and parking advice. Cllr Taylor said the licensing scheme is key for this as the Council will then know exactly who is registered and who needs to be aware of this. In relation to parking, owners can use their limited supply of visitors parking permits if they wish. Mark Strong asked about hotels block booking parking spaces; Cllr Taylor said some have permission to do so but it is essentially using their visitor permit supply to do so.
- 70.6 Cllr Shanks said residents in her ward in the North Laines are annoyed that it’s become “Air BnB Land” and is there more the Council can do with their existing powers to visit the address and investigate. Nicola Hurley said there is information on the website that tells residents what they can do regarding short-term lets, there is an enforcement enquiry form that assigns the case to an officer who will go out and investigate. However, they are very short staffed. Cllr Taylor said that if someone thinks a property is being used as a short-term let, they can report it. At the moment this is the only way they can find out about them without the license. Cllr Evans added that funding is the issue here and that Westminster Council has a large number of enforcement officers, but it is sometimes difficult to prove how often a property is being used as a short-term let.
- 70.7 Cllr De Oliveira asked about safety standards and equalities assessment. Cllr Evans said if the license comes into force, a full EIA will be undertaken.

- 70.8 Cllr Shanks asked about the Visitor Accommodation Study. Cllr Taylor said they can put any policy they want into the City Plan but there needs to be evidence to support it. They will look into the amount and usage of visitor accommodation and whether it is having a disproportionate effect on certain areas. They need to see what's needed for the tourist economy and local businesses as they rely on visitors for income. Nicola Hurley said they will be looking at hotels, BnBs, and short-term Lets as there is no definitive information out there. The study will help inform policies like zones etc.
- 70.9 RESOLVED – that the report is noted.

71 MEMORIALS POLICY

- 71.1 This item was presented by Cllr Jacob Allen, Cabinet Member for Customer Services and the Public Realm, and Ian Baird, Outdoors Events Development Manager. Cllr Allen said that this is pre-decision scrutiny and the Memorials Policy has been drafted to bring clarity to a situation where there is very little. It is looking at both temporary and longer-term memorials and that an application is required for those lasting longer than 14 days. He gave the example of flowers left at a bus stop after a road traffic accident that was there for years, which upset some people. There needs to be due diligence and accountability. They go via the Tree Trust Fund for those wanting to plant a tree and they need to plan properly for those wanting a memorial bench, to ensure the proposed location is appropriate. The application process asks for the design, location and materials for the memorial, a plan to fund ongoing maintenance and evidence of community support. For much longer-term memorials, the policy says they need to wait for 20 years to ensure the longevity and relevance of memorialising something. For any public gathering or vigil, the Safety Advisory Group needs to be involved. Ward councillors are also involved, particularly if the memorial is divisive. The subject of memorials needs to be approached sensitively, compassionately and inclusively and meet the needs of the public realm.
- 71.2 Cllr Evans said she wasn't sure about asking someone who has just had a bereavement to go online and complete a form within 14 days. 28 days might be better.
- 71.3 Cllr Fowler said there was a memorial in her ward for a baby and lots of people left flowers and teddy bears but after a while it looked bad with dying flowers. It will hopefully now be replaced with a nice tree. She said a resident wanted a bench in a park as a memorial but was told "no". In Telscombe Cliffs, there is a park with a memorial area with lots of butterflies and insects; it is a wooden post in a circle with people's names on it. Cllr Allen said there is some wider work being done in cemeteries, which is more of a reflective space. There is no tension there because people are generally sombre and respectful in a cemetery.
- 71.4 Michael Creedy (OPC) said that longer standing memorials, such as in the Peace Park in Patcham are very run down. Cllr Allen said that there are some very old monuments around the city that are in a sorry state. There are lots of heritage assets in the city and the Grade 1 listed sites take priority over the others which tend to miss out on funding.
- 71.5 Mark Strong (CVS) said this policy was catalysed by the memorial in Palmeira Square which was incredibly important to people; it is not mentioned and should be acknowledged, to recognise people's strong feeling to commemorate an event. 20 years

is too long. They should differentiate between local, national and international memorials and the waiting period should be somewhere between 14 days and 20 years. An authorised semi-permanent memorial could be there for a year. Expecting someone to apply for a memorial is difficult. He gave the example of ghost bikes laid where cyclists have died. He said that the Southampton Memorials policy is clear and well-defined with a 10-year period rather than 20 years. Cllr Allen said they are discussing the policy, not past events; that there maybe be exceptions to the 20-year rule which will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and with locals. It has been built into the policy that there maybe cases where the 20-year rule may not apply. Memorials pop up in conservation areas and there are planning considerations and listed building consent to consider. Ian Baird said that public spaces need to be maintained for everyone who moves through them and there is an impact when things are put in the public realm.

- 71.6 Cllr Goddard said he was conflicted and was this bureaucratising something that shouldn't be, he asked what other Local Authorities did. He expressed concern over the 14 days and that 20 years was too long; what would happen if the Council didn't get back to the applicant after 14 days, which wouldn't be humane. He wasn't sure if this was something the Council should get involved in and was the policy needed. Cllr Allen said the policy was solving a problem where ward councillors and council officers are put in a difficult situation, such as with Palmeira Square and had no clarity. It's not fair for them to make decisions on this and a policy is needed to have a process to follow and have clarity for everyone. Staff had been put under stress and the Council has a duty of care for them.
- 71.7 Cllr Winder said there should be a policy and was in support of SAG getting involved to make sure it's safe. However, the rules are restrictive and could be toned back. She asked when the application comes in, who makes the decisions and suggested there could be a standing committee that comes together in difficult situations to give more of an independent view, not necessarily involving the ward councillors because they might know the person who died. It needs more consultation. Cllr Allen liked the idea of a standing committee but explained that they included the ward councillors because they know their area best. There are pros and cons with the idea but it is worth considering. Ian Baird said they do need to make sure the right decision makers are in that group and that ward councillors are best placed to get the right people in the room. The SAG is there to provide support for gatherings of people, not to make decisions; they will give resources and advice. It is the police's remit to say whether a vigil can go ahead or not.
- 71.8 Cllr Meadows said there needs to be a middle ground and gave the example of the Hillsborough disaster where people wouldn't have waited 20 years to memorialise. 28 days is still a tight timescale for people who are grieving. Ward councillors understand the sensitivities of issues and have more of a background context as to why flowers may be placed in certain areas. Cllr Meadows thought it was a good idea to formalise this but it needs discretion and respect.
- 71.9 Cllr Shanks wanted clarification on whether people were being asked to apply to put flowers on a lamppost following the death of a loved one and agreed that the memorial at Palmeira Square had been problematic. Cllr Shanks said you can get a dead person's name on a bus fairly quickly and didn't understand why people couldn't put a plaque on an existing bench, especially if it was their favourite place to sit. She wasn't sure what the point was with the policy and felt it was heavy handed. It makes sense for a

permanent memorial but not a temporary one. Cllr Allen said the application was for memorials present for more than 14 days.

- 71.10 Cllr Earthey said he is also conflicted and would prefer 28 days over 14, but wouldn't want to interfere in spontaneous outbursts of grief. He has a lot of older people in his ward having road accidents as well as people sadly jumping off the cliff. There are issues with long-term monuments as yesterday's heroes are today's villains and to be careful about celebrating people who turn out to have done wrong. Memorialising conflict is difficult because there are always two parties involved and he wouldn't want to be a referee in a situation like the Palmeira Square memorial and felt the Council should either let people commemorate what they want or say no and memorialise in your own way but not in a public place. Mark Strong said the whole point was for others to realise that these things happened. He said that they would need to be really careful about removing anything they saw as "politically divisive".
- 71.11 Cllr Fowler asked if flowers would be removed after 14 days following a road traffic accident. Cllr Allen said the flowers will have probably withered by then. If they were being refreshed then the Council needs to know about it so they don't accidentally remove them. Cllr Fowler said there are sites where flowers are being constantly refreshed and have been there for years, it would feel wrong to tell them to stop.
- 71.12 Cllr Goddard said that the reasoning for the policy has not been articulated clearly enough. He gave his own personal example of the solace gained from visiting a tree memorial and how profound it is. He wasn't sure if this is something the Council should be involved in and that the language in the policy needs re-working.
- 71.13 Cllr De Oliveira said the underlying premise is grief which is complex, it comes and goes, and this policy is pigeon holing grief.
- 71.14 RESOLVED – that the report is noted.

72 SEAFRONT DEVELOPMENT BOARD PROSPECTUS

- 72.1 This item was presented by Cllr Taylor, Max Woodford, Director for Place, and Sam Smith, Head of Place Making. Cllr Taylor presented the slides and explained that the Seafront Development Board was established last year with 3 councillors as members (Cllrs Taylor, Miller and Cattell) and 9 other members who have experience in areas like leisure, retail, development, etc. The Board was set up to give a strategic vision for the seafront, treating it as one asset. Its areas of focus are infrastructure improvement, place making, zero carbon, and stakeholder engagement. There was a consultation event that sold out quickly with 100 people in attendance. The discussions there fed into the survey asking how people felt about the seafront, what they liked about it and what they would like to see improved. The Council and the Board will publish a shared strategic vision for the seafront looking at assets and attractions, which is genuinely exciting. They hope to attract funding over the next 2 -3 years. They are looking at specific sites and potential areas for development to get investors interested. They are looking at commercialisation or new activities for areas like Madeira Terrace to give visitors a reason to visit that section of the seafront. Black Rock is ready to be

developed but, in the meantime, will be host to temporary events such as the NoFit State Circus and the fan zone for the World Cup. The King Alfred has a live planning application and is progressing. Pool Valley is being reimagined and they are looking at “station to the sea”, Queens Road that acts as the gateway to the seafront and is the first place visitors see. There are plans for active travel schemes. They are looking at the smaller things too including more cafes, places for children to play, more sports facilities and accessibility initiatives like the new boardwalk that allows wheelchair users to access the beach. The document sets out the ambition for the seafront to take to the government and other funders to generate excitement and money.

- 72.2 Cllr Earthey asked if the undercliff walk will feature in the plans as it needs some love, currently being covered in shingle which impedes pedestrians and cyclists. The path is currently cleared by volunteers but as it is a 3 mile pathway, it is a major contribution to active transport. Cllr Taylor spoke favourably about the undercliff walk and the entrance to Rottingdean. It is unlikely there will be big developments to the east but there are areas to be unlocked for cafes or sports. People are excited by big projects but maintenance is important, such as the seafront shelters and shingle clearance.
- 72.3 Cllr Mackey said that residents to the east of Palace Pier are on board with the development and asked how they will ameliorate while construction is going on to ensure older people and those with disabilities are not adversely affected. Cllr Taylor said the new lift on Madeira Terrace will be completed at the end of this year, and that the 2 entrances, one by the pier and the ramp by Dukes Mound will enable access and it is important to keep the parking spaces there. Cllr Cattell said there is a wheelchair user on the Seafront Development Board who provides insight into accessibility issues.
- 72.4 Cllr De Oliveira asked about democratic accountability for the Seafront Development Board as it is independent to Cabinet and how will they ensure the seafront is shaped by residents. Cllr Taylor said the Board cannot make Council decisions and is there to make recommendations to Council. The individual members are involved in different projects and are very experienced people. Any decision made by Cabinet can be called-in and are subject to member questions and deputations.
- 72.5 Michael Creedy (OPC) said that at both Brighton and Hove train stations, it is unclear how to get to the seafront and that he has seen people take a taxi there because they didn't know it was within walking distance. It would be good to have a circular bus route that served both stations and went to areas like Black Rock to take visitors to other parts of the city rather than staying between the two piers. He asked about toilets provision if more events are going to happen and that the seafront plays a part in the bigger picture, which is the Sussex Bay Project and is a great financial benefit to Sussex, not just Brighton & Hove. Cllr Taylor said the bus idea was good and they will need to get the transport provision right once something more permanent has been set up at Black Rock. The front of Brighton station is the welcome to the city but at the moment it doesn't look immaculate, and he would like to see a boulevard to the sea with more planting, footpaths and good signage. Toilets for events need to be provided and are included as part of the event planning process.
- 72.6 Cllr Meadows said she would like to advertise the survey to her ward residents but can't find it on the website, and asked if the new attractions will be for wealthier residents or free. Cllr Taylor said the link to the survey had been emailed to all councillors and would

welcome promotion of it. It is also on the Your Voice platform. The seafront will always be open and free for everyone and this is just looking at ways to commercialise through more shops, art galleries, attractions etc.

- 72.7 Cllr Shanks said Brighton beach is always so crowded and that visitors don't realise they can go to other sections of the beach. She asked about Hove Beach Park and the trees that are now dead; that new things need to be maintained to continue to look as good as they did when they first opened. Padel is really well used and why isn't the Council running it themselves? Cllr Taylor said the wrong type of trees were planted at Hove Beach Park and that lessons have been learned. There used to be lots of people working for councils maintaining the areas such as mowing lawns and pruning trees but there isn't enough staff to do that now. The Council does get some income from the Padel Courts. They have recently hired a Commercial Director to bring in more new opportunities. Sam Smith added that capital budgets include maintenance costs.
- 72.8 Mark Strong said there was a concern in the Community Voluntary Sector that the people on the Board were chosen to be developer-lead rather than resident-lead. The consultation event was full and so, the CVS members could not attend; it would be good to have a long-term relationship with the Board for co-engagement and wider participation. He asked about the active travel corridor and whether it includes Marine Parade and whether a bus could run along the upper road linking to the marina. The marina has a lot of shops closing and is looking a bit desolate. Max Woodford said that the Council owns the freehold for the marina and that the leaseholder is on the Seafront Development Board. Cllr Taylor said it was not developer-lead and that they have all sorts of people on the Board: an award-winning gardener, rugby player, heritage expert, yoga business owner etc. The Board does a lot of engagement with local groups such as the Hove Civic Forum, schools and colleges and putting on events. They will look to do more and work with the Community Voluntary Sector. Cllr Miller said that the marina wants to work with the Council and are interested in the direction of travel for Black Rock; there are some interesting plans for it to become a very exciting part of the city.
- 72.9 Cllr Winder asked how we get from vision to reality in a reasonable timeframe and how will we identify funding limitations. They need to find a way to extend the use of the community along the coast and involve them in plans. The shape of the city might need to change and more resource might be needed for the seafront. Cllr Taylor said this gives a chance to be aspirational and that the prospectus sets out steps and individual opportunities to build investment. They need to think of the whole stretch of the seafront and how things lead into another. Considering the development of Black Rock, there is a big car park at the marina that is never full, the terraces could be used as a gateway to facilities at Black Rock, and these areas are not as well used and accessed; there is a real chance to unlock the space and make it available to communities. He suggested that area could have a more wellness and arts vibe.
- 72.10 Cllr Goddard said this was exciting and very positive, it is not only a visitor bonus but for residents as well. It is about having a holistic view of a major asset for future residents and about people having a connection to where they live. He agreed that there is no welcome at Brighton Station and looking at the "station to the sea" needs big thinking and he liked the boulevard concept.

- 72.11 Cllr De Oliveira said they need to be mindful that the commercial regeneration doesn't deepen carbon emissions, flooding and coastal erosion and they need to consider climate resilience. Cllr Taylor said there will always be inherent tension between construction and climate resilience and a lot of this will form part of the planning application. As part of the local visitor economy, there is a benefit for residents to visit parts of the seafront they normally wouldn't go to. This is also good for the environment as people stay local and use the train or walk to the seafront. Max Woodford said that it is difficult to invest in an area of flood risk and that Black Rock had the seawall heightened to prevent this.
- 72.12 Mark Strong said people in Whitehawk have their access to the sea blocked by the road and that other cities don't have the same level of traffic as Brighton. He raised the issue of the information monoliths around the city that are out of date and covered in graffiti, and that wayfinding is unclear. Cllr Robins said that the seafront goes further west than people think and it includes the fully working port bringing wood over from other countries. People living in Portslade have the road and canal blocking access to the sea. Cllr Mackey said as soon as visitors get off the train there should be signs directing them to where they want to go, using the example of illuminated signs in Barcelona.
- 72.13 RESOLVED – that the report is noted.

73 DISCUSSION OF THE NEXT TASK & FINISH GROUP

- 73.1 Cllr Evans introduced the two notices of motion being considered as the next topic for the committee's Task & Finish Group and asked for other ideas from members. The suggested topics were:
1. Co-operative Housing (NoM)
 2. Winter and nighttime economy (NoM)
 3. Public realm
 4. Educating for climate change – possibly more relevant for People Committee
 5. Green spaces and community support
 6. Transport in the city
- 73.2 Cllr Goddard said that it would need to be something that the Council can actually affect and not to be reliant on national government
- 73.3 Cllr Meadows felt the winter economy topic would be timely as it would end before the winter and it is something that needs looking at.
- 73.4 Cllr Evans said that the co-operative housing topic would be timely as legislation is going through government and they would be pushing at an open door ahead of other councils. It could also offer a solution to the housing crisis, citing Zurich where 20% of people live in co-ops.
- 73.5 Cllr Mackey said the co-operative housing topic is good because it is a moving piece at the moment with changing legislation and we need to be on top of that. The nighttime economy is also a good topic because it is fundamental to Brighton & Hove as a city.

- 73.6 Cllr Evans said as there is not consensus, we will email around the full texts of the two notices of motion and ask for votes from the shortlist.

The meeting concluded at 6.43pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of