

Brighton & Hove City Council

Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item 21

Subject: City Plan: Balancing Homes and Employment Land

Date of meeting: 8th September 2026

Report of: Chair of Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

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Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Key Decision: No

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 Brighton & Hove's Local Plan (known as the City Plan) is the city's key planning policy document. It sets out a vision for the city's future development and evolution. The City Plan will set the direction for how the city will grow and thrive, shaping the places where people live, work and enjoy to create a better Brighton & Hove for all. It will show where new homes and commercial spaces should go, how development should respect the city's unique character and heritage, and how sustainable growth will be matched with the right infrastructure and green spaces.
- 1.2 Members are being asked to input into the discussion on balancing homes and employment land to inform the development of the City Plan and help shape future engagement plans on this topic. Presentation slides can be found at Appendix 1.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee is being asked to provide feedback on balancing provision of homes and employment land to inform the development of the City Plan.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1 Brighton & Hove's new Local Plan (which will now be known as the 'Brighton & Hove City Plan' rather than 'City Plan 2041' as previously) will, on adoption, be the primary development plan document for the city and will set a clear vision and planning strategy for the city moving forward. It will replace the existing City Plan Part One and Part Two with a single document.

- 3.2 The City Plan is required to plan for and seek to meet the city's housing, office and industrial needs:
- Housing: Need for approximately 2,500 additional homes per annum based on the government's standard method for calculating housing need. The emerging identified supply is sufficient to meet approximately 30% of this need over the plan period.
 - Offices: Evidence shows an overall need for 87,000m² additional floorspace over the period of the plan. This could be theoretically met through the existing pipeline of planning permissions and sites allocated for office use in the existing City Plan which have not yet come forward for development. There is a strong demand for Grade A office suites up to 1,000m², but weaker demand for older stock. A further question is therefore how to support the refurbishment and upgrade of older stock where possible whilst also supporting conversion of genuinely redundant space to residential use.
 - Industrial Space: Need for 56,000m² additional industrial floorspace over the period of the plan. Since 2010/11 16,000m² has been lost and there is a constrained supply of sites.
- 3.3 The amount of land required to meet all of these needs significantly exceeds available supply. There is pressure on industrial sites from higher-value residential. It is much harder to accommodate industrial floorspace than office space which is easier to reprovide in mixed-use schemes. Office stock needs to be upgraded to meet modern needs.
- 3.4 Policy options include:
- Maintain existing safeguarded industrial sites.
 - Release of some safeguarded employment land for mixed use redevelopment
 - Re-provide industrial space in other locations
- 3.5 The committee is being asked to consider how the City Plan should respond to balance needs. Comments will be used to inform the development of the City Plan and help shape future engagement plans on this topic.
- 4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options**
- 4.1 Not applicable for this report
- 5. Community engagement and consultation**
- 5.1 The feedback provided by Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee will inform the ongoing development of the City Plan. Public consultation will continue throughout the process in line with government guidance.
- 6. Financial implications**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report which is seeking feedback.

Name of finance officer consulted: John Lack Date consulted: 19/08/2026

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 This report is seeking comments and input from this Committee to help inform the new City Plan. No planning policy decisions are being made through this report, and therefore there are no direct legal implications arising from its recommendations.
- 7.2 In considering the balance between housing and employment land, the Council will need to have in mind national planning policy, identified needs for both housing and economic development and all other material planning considerations. The chosen approach will need to be supported by evidence and justifiable through the plan examination process.

Name of lawyer consulted: Katie Kam Date consulted (20/08/2026):

8. Risk implications

- 8.1 None for this scrutiny report

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 Decisions regarding the balance between housing and employment land may have differing impacts on residents and workers, including people with protected characteristics. Potential effects on access to housing, employment opportunities and sustainable travel will be considered through the development of the City Plan.

10. Sustainability implications

- 10.1 Decisions regarding the balance between housing and employment land have the potential to affect the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the city. Providing sufficient housing can help meet identified housing needs and support sustainable communities. Retaining an appropriate supply of employment land can support local jobs, reduce the need for commuting and contribute to the city's economic resilience. The City Plan will seek to achieve a balance between these objectives.

11. Health and Wellbeing Implications:

- 11.1 Decisions regarding the balance between housing and employment land may affect health and wellbeing through their impact on housing availability, employment opportunities, access to services and the quality of the local environment.

12. Conclusion

- 12.1 The committee is being asked to consider how the City Plan should respond to balance needs. Comments will be used to inform the development of the City Plan and help shape future engagement plans on this topic.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices

1. Presentation slides