

NOTICE OF MOTION**LABOUR GROUP AMENDMENT****HOUSING BENEFIT**

Insert additional paragraphs 4 and 6 and the wording at the end of paragraph 5 as follows and shown in bold italics:

“This council recalls the period in the 1990s when Housing Benefit changes led to a crisis in rough sleeping and homelessness.

It acknowledges the excellent work of the city housing team, Brighton Housing Trust, the Sussex Central YMCA, CRI and others who have dramatically reduced the problems.

However, it fears the Coalition Government’s recent proposals to cut Housing Benefit and the Job Seeker’s Allowance could result in a return to the homelessness and rough sleeping levels of the 1990s, with younger single people and families with children particularly affected.

This council notes that cuts in housing benefit made by the Conservative and Lib Dem Government will unfairly hit the poorest families and individuals of our City the hardest. The poorest 10% of households in the Country will see their income cut by more than one fifth, the second poorest group earning below £16,900 will see the largest cuts at 13.6% of their income and the richest will see a cut of just 3.6%.

The changes could have a profound effect on Brighton and Hove, a city with double (24 per cent) the national average of private rented housing and a critical shortage of social housing ***as well as being one of the most expensive areas in the UK to live.***

This council requests that a report setting out the impact of these cuts to Housing Benefit claimants in Brighton and Hove be brought to Cabinet as soon as possible with proposals for shaping local support services accordingly and how the recently produced Housing Strategy will be adapted to also reflect this.

This council therefore *also* requests the Chief Executive to write to:

1. the Coalition Government asking the government to withdraw the proposals affecting Housing Benefit and Job Seeker’s Allowance and to consult with the Local Government Association, the National Housing Federation, private landlords’ organisations, the CAB and other advice agencies to find a way forward; and

2. the city's three MPs asking them to support the council's request by making a direct approach to Ministers.

Proposed by: Cllr Christine Simpson Seconded by: Cllr Pat Hawkes

Supported by: Cllrs Gill Mitchell, Anne Meadows, Mo Marsh, Juliet McCaffery, Les Hamilton, Bob Carden, Jeane Lepper, Warren Morgan, Craig Turton and Mel Davis.