BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

4.30pm 21 OCTOBER 2010

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Wells (Chairman), A Norman (Deputy Chairman), Alford, Allen, Barnett, Bennett, Brown, Carden, Caulfield, Cobb, Davey, Davis, Deane, Duncan, Elgood, Fallon-Khan, Fryer, Hamilton, Harmer-Strange, Hawkes, Hyde, Janio, Kemble, Kennedy, Kitcat, Lepper, Marsh, McCaffery, Meadows, Mears, Mitchell, Morgan, K Norman, Older, Oxley, Peltzer Dunn, Phillips, Pidgeon, Randall, Rufus, Simpson, Simson, Smart, Smith, Steedman, C Theobald, G Theobald, Turton, Wakefield-Jarrett, Watkins, West, Wrighton and Young

PART ONE

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

20.1 The Mayor drew the Council's attention to Item No. 28(b), Review of Members Allowances, on the agenda and stated that all councillors held a personal and prejudicial interest in the item. However, it was not practical to prevent them from voting on the matter and therefore all councillors had a general dispensation, in order to be able to consider and vote on the matter. He therefore sought agreement, which was given, to take the declaration of personal interests from all councillors as having been declared.

20.2 No other declarations of interests in matters appearing on the agenda were made.

21. MINUTES

21.1 The minutes of the last ordinary meeting held on the 15th July 2010 were approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record of the proceedings.

22. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.

22.1 The Mayor offered his congratulations to everyone involved in enabling the council to gain 4 Silver Awards and 6 Silver Gilt Awards in the 2010 South and South East In Bloom Competition. He noted that the success showed the deserved recognition of all

the hard work that officers, community associations and countless individuals put into the floral displays across the City.

22.2 The Mayor informed councillors that the council had recently achieved certification for environmental management system standards ISO 14001 and the new British Standard BS 8901. He stated that these were the first such environmental standards for the council and covered events venues.

22.3 The Mayor then invited Mark Prior, Assistant Director Sustainable Transport to come forward and receive the award for Transport Local Authority of the Year 2010-11. He noted that the award had been won against strong competition from other worthy local authorities across the country and was a testament to the council's commitment to innovative as well as practical Transport solutions that made a real practical difference to people's lives. Talking Bus Stops, for example, had helped blind and partially sighted people use the city's buses independently and electric vehicle charging points would help reduce pollution in the city.

22.4 The Mayor then offered the Council's congratulations to the Democratic Services Team on achieving ISO9001 Accreditation and noted that they were one of only a few Democratic Services Teams in the South-East to have gained such recognition.

22.5 The Mayor then drew attention to the council's aim for excellent customer service and as such the running of the Institute of Customer Service Awards. The scheme enabled members of staff to work with an appointed coach from across the council, to take one of three levels of award. He then offered the Council's congratulations to the following people who had successfully achieved an award to date:-

<u>Communications Award</u>

Euna Dawkins	-	Registrars Office
Carolyn Bristow	-	Schools Admissions
Graham Standing	-	Housing Benefits
Reuben Sibanda	-	Revenues & Benefits
Alex Luxton	-	ICT Helpdesk
Raluca Jarvis	-	Housing Income Management
Andrew Phillips	-	Systems Administration

<u>Solutions Award</u>

Anita Gandhi	-	Inspections Team, Revenues
Lisa Johnson	-	Democratic Services
Mark Wall	-	Democratic Services

<u>Innovations Award</u>

Myfan Jordan	-	Policy, Performance & Community Participation
Angela Woodall	-	Democratic Services

22.6 The Mayor also noted that Councillor Fallon-Khan was about to complete his assessment for the Communications Award and wished him good luck. He hoped that other Members would follow the example and consider supporting the scheme in this way in the future.

22.7 The Mayor stated that he was aware of the high level of interest in regard to the Connexions Service demonstrated by the deputation, Member questions, the petition and the notice of motion on the agenda. In view of this, he proposed to change the order of the agenda so that Item 27(c) was taken together with Item 40(a) immediately after Item 25. He would then revert back to the order of items as listed on the agenda. He also noted that a copy of the procedure to be followed for the debate on the matter had been circulated.

22.8 Finally, the Mayor reported that Councillor Bennett had joined the Conservative Group and noted that there was a paper later on the agenda dealing with the allocation of seats as a result of the change in membership.

23. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS AND E-PETITIONS.

23.1 The Mayor invited the submission of petitions from councillors and members of the public. He reminded the Council that petitions would be referred to the appropriate decision-making body without debate and the person presenting the petition would be invited to attend the meeting to which the petition was referred.

23.2 Councillor Morgan presented a petition signed by 125 residents concerning playground equipment in Whitehawk.

23.3 Councillor Turton presented a petition signed by 562 residents concerning parking in East Brighton.

23.4 Councillor Janio presented a petition signed by 105 residents concerning the installation of cctv in Hangleton Way.

23.5 Councillor Older presented a petition signed by 16 residents concerning parking in Connaught Road.

23.6 Councillor Young presented a petition signed by 1,242 residents concerning the provision of Adult Education at the Connaught Centre.

23.7 The Mayor noted that two e-petitions had been submitted and invited Councillor Morgan to present the first e-petition.

23.8 Councillor Morgan presented an e-petition signed by 562 residents, concerning frontline policing.

23.9 Councillor Fryer presented the second e-petition signed by 132 residents, concerning the provision of public seating throughout the city.

24. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

24.1 The Mayor reported that ten written questions had been received from members of the public and invited Ms. Weir on behalf of Mr. Kirk to come forward and address the council.

24.2 Ms. Weir asked the following question; "Does the Council agree that the government's plans for the NHS in its recent white paper, involve such a degree of reorganisation that it should be implemented only once adequate consultation with the medical profession and the wider public has taken place, and only when the policy has been proved effective by pilot schemes? Further, the timing of this policy, involving massive transitional costs when the government is planning extensive cuts in public spending, is ill advised"

24.3 Councillor K Norman, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health replied, "The Coalition Government's plans for NHS reorganisation are contained in the White Paper as you probably know: it is commonly known as Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS. A White Paper, by definition, is a consultation document and I've heard a lot about consultations in meetings this morning and other meetings recently about what consultation is, and a wide range of organisations and individuals have already been asked to respond to the initial proposals. Legislation will be introduced which will reflect the results of this consultation. Further consultations will be taking place on particular aspects of the plan at a later date – for example, adult social care, patient choice, public health. We've already had some announcements yesterday and so we will be looking forward or expecting other announcements within the next few weeks or months. Extensive and ongoing local consultations are also taking place between GPs, health managers and the local authority. Therefore, I really don't accept the premise of your question.

In terms of the transitional costs, the important point here is the overall savings figure once the reforms have been implemented. The Government has guaranteed that health spending will increase in real terms, and we've heard that already, for the duration of this Parliament whilst at the same time making efficiency savings and reductions in management costs. These figures dwarf even the most pessimistic estimates of reorganisation costs and will allow more money to be invested in NHS frontline services and treatments."

24.4 Ms. Weir asked the following supplementary question, "In that case and if the consultation has been a real one, does the council agree that the White Paper should now be withdrawn as the range of opinion of the professional bodies is against many aspects of the White Paper proposals? The British Medical Association believes it will pit clinicians against each other in a complex healthcare market place creating waste, bureaucracy and inefficiency and that removing the private patient income cut for Foundation Hospitals could lead to a two-tier health service and potentially destabilise local hospitals.

The question is whether the council agrees that if it has been a real consultation that the council would agree that the White Paper should be withdrawn because of the opposition of the professional bodies to many of the White Paper proposals?"

24.5 Councillor K Norman replied, "The consultation on the White Paper has yet to be concluded, I mean that's an ongoing process and there are still discussions taking place between many organisations, individuals and bodies and that is something that will come out in the following weeks, months or even further ahead, so I'm not prepared to try and answer the detail of some of the statements that you have made because that is

totally irrelevant to the question that you originally asked and it's irrelevant to your supplementary question."

24.6 The Mayor thanked Ms. Weir for her questions and invited Mr. Lowe to come forward and address the council.

24.7 Mr. Lowe asked the following question, "How confident are the council about youth services continuing to meet the needs for disabled young people?"

24.8 Councillor Brown replied, "The council remains confident that both specialist and universal youth services will be accessible to and meet the needs of the city's disabled young people. Two key reviews - youth services and services for disabled children - are being carried out in the city and are due to report in January 2011. Both of these have included all key stakeholders, children and young people and parents and carers in the development of themes and strategies.

Within the youth services review the aims are to develop a commissioning strategy that:

- Jointly commissions inclusive activities for all young people across the city. There will be a process for involving young people from each community of interest in decision making about the services they want.
- Commissions youth access points for young people who are most in need and at greatest risk of poor outcomes.
- Implements a workforce development programme which will include mandatory training to ensure services meet the needs of all young people – including those with disabilities.

The review of services for disabled children is designing a continuum of provision to meet a range of needs. Currently there are specialist youth clubs, holiday schemes and befriending activities specifically for young people with disabilities and all other city youth provision aims to be inclusive. Where there are access problems these are addressed on an individual basis as appropriate.

The task in going forward is to ensure that the current reviews and those in the future take a joined-up approach to the needs of all young people, including those with disabilities or other additional needs. Joint working between commissioners in the new structure of the council will enhance this approach and ensure coherent and appropriately focussed services built on current knowledge, expertise and experience to address the needs of all young people."

24.9 Mr. Lowe asked the following supplementary question, "So, obviously you don't know the findings of the report until the New Year. I was going to say how do you intend to carry on with your services but you don't really know the outcomes until the report has been published, do you Councillor Brown?"

24.10 Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People replied, "No, we don't know the outcomes but we will make them very public in January and so I thank you very much for your question and please be assured that we will look very favourably towards any services for disabled children."

24.11 The Mayor thanked Mr. Lowe for his questions and invited Mr. Walter to come forward and address the council.

Mr. Walter asked the following question, "In June of this year a large piece of concrete fell nearly 8 floors outside the front entrance of Dudeney Lodge on Upper Hollingdean Road. To date, the only action taken by the Council has been the construction of scaffolding at the bottom of the building. Will the Cabinet Member commit to carrying out a full maintenance survey of Dudeney Lodge to determine the cause of the incident and to reassure the residents that a similar episode can be prevented?"

24.12 Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing replied, "The scaffolding was erected as a safety measure to help protect residents from any possibility of future falling concrete debris as it was not possible from the ground to identify the condition of the concrete and the possibility of further concrete falling, so a specialist survey was commissioned by the Housing Repairs service, both for Nettleton and Dudeney because both blocks are of a similar age so we need to look at both of them together.

I am pleased to inform you that a detailed concrete report has now been produced; and the report concludes that although there are several areas that require remedial concrete repairs none of these areas are in any danger of breaking free from the building.

As there is no danger of further concrete falling, the scaffolding covering the entrance to Dudeney Lodge is now being safely removed.

Our repairs contractor, Mears, is currently providing a cost for the concrete repair work and this will be programmed into a proper Programme of Works in the near future.

A newsletter was delivered to residents last week to inform them of the outcome of the concrete survey and the repair work to be undertaken. A further newsletter will also be sent out nearer the time when the future works are to be undertaken."

24.13 The Mayor thanked Mr. Walter for his question and noted that there was no supplementary question so invited Mr. Philo to come forward and address the council.

24.14 Mr. Philo asked the following question, "I am a concerned resident of Withdean Ward and user of the facilities of Withdean Stadium. At a time of cuts in public spending I am concerned about its future post the departure of the football club next year. Can the Council please reassure me that that the stadium will not be closed down or the facilities reduced next year?"

24.15 Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation & Tourism replied, "I can say definitely that Withdean Stadium is there as far as this authority is concerned forever and it's going to be improved but I will give you the official answer here. The Council is fully committed to retaining the wide range of facilities at Withdean Sports Complex. In fact, we hope to retain some of the additional facilities that have been brought in by Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club such as the West Stand and the new changing rooms. A planning application is to be submitted to retain these with a view to securing the Stadium's future as a top class regional athletics stadium.

We are also in discussions with local football clubs regarding the future use of the facilities and aim to make the most of the legacy left by the Albion when they move to Falmer next June."

24.16 Mr. Philo asked the following supplementary question, "Just really to have a little bit more detail on it. I am interested myself in all of the facilities which go on round the running track and in the ex-football stadium like the indoor tennis, the various keep fit activities and the squash court and things like that. Is that part of the package?"

24.17 Councillor Smith replied, "It definitely is, everything that's at Withdean at the moment and what we want to do is to enhance the stadium as I said to make it a regional centre for sports."

24.18 The Mayor thanked Mr. Philo for his questions. He noted that Ms. Shanks was unable to attend and therefore a written response would be sent to her. He then invited Mr. Jarrett to come forward and address the council.

24.19 Mr. Jarrett asked the following question, "Would Councillor Theobald please ask Highways to investigate the feasibility of installing pedestrian crossing lights at the junction of Cromwell Road and The Drive in Hove, on the two arms of the junction which do not currently have them? This would remove an anomaly and make it safer for residents to cross these busy roads road rather than taking their lives in their hands. This would be of particular benefit to parents with pushchairs and people in mobility buggies."

24.20 Councillor G Theobald, Cabinet Member for Environment replied, "All requests for pedestrian crossings, including this one at Cromwell Road and The Drive, are always taken seriously and will be assessed and implemented if they deliver some basic criteria.

As part of the development of our third Local Transport Plan (which is called the LTP3), and in conjunction with the Environment & Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee (ECSOSC), my officers are currently revising and developing a detailed assessment methodology to determine the relative priority of pedestrian crossing requests throughout the city. However, in the meantime I will ask officers to fully investigate this location which is one that I know well."

24.21 Mr. Jarrett asked the following supplementary question, "As I recently experienced when accompanying my elderly aunt that crossing many of the road junctions in Hove is extremely difficult in a mobility scooter, will the officers investigating and carrying out this survey please take into account the ability of the scooter to get across in any central reservation space, particularly where it's chicaned with steel railings?"

24.22 Councillor G Theobald replied, "I think that's a very good point and I will certainly ensure that officers take that point into account."

24.23 The Mayor thanked Mr. Jarrett for his questions. He noted that Ms. Ogmore was unable to attend and therefore a written response would be sent to her. He then invited Mr. Guy to come forward and address the council.

24.24 Mr. Guy asked the following question, "Could the Cabinet Member provide me with the following information with regard to the proposal to turn Portslade Community College into an Academy:

Where the funding to finance the proposal is coming from;
How much will be earmarked for the new build;
The time-scale for the release of these funds;
What conditions are going to be imposed on the sponsor in order to secure the sponsorship and therefore the funding; and

Is the sponsor going to be required to make any financial commitment at all in order to secure the agreement of the local authority to award the sponsorship deal?"

24.25 Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People replied, "The proposal for PCC to become an Academy was submitted to Government in July 2010. This proposal was put on hold by the new Government until the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

Once the CSR has confirmed what spending will be made available for future academies and school building developments we expect to receive indicative figures for refurbishment of the existing PCC site and an allocation for project development costs. These figures will also include any conditions identified by government for the proposal to be accepted.

The likely timescale is that we would expect to hear from government by the end of December. Any allocation of funding would then enable planning and development work at the PCC site to begin after Easter 2011 with an expected completion date in 2014.

The proposal for PCC to become an Academy includes the possibility that PCC could become an Academy in September 2011 prior to any building works. For this to occur a formal consultation would have to be carried out as part of the statutory process for closing the existing school.

Under current academy rules sponsors are not required to make a financial commitment to an academy nor do they have to seek the agreement of the local authority. However the Council as co-sponsor have worked closely with the Aldridge Foundation on the PCC proposals as we believe this development is in the best interests of the school, its students and the local community."

24.26 Mr. Guy asked the following supplementary question, "In view of the pressures on the public purse, especially after yesterday's swingeing announcement by the Chancellor, should not the sponsor be required to make a financial contribution, at the very least to the public consultation for which I believe the figure of £100,000 has been mooted. If Mr Aldridge is so keen to run the Academy should he not be required to make at least some financial commitment towards it, would the council not agree?"

24.27 Councillor Brown replied, "I'm afraid as a local council we can't change Government rules, Mr Guy. Mr Aldridge committed to working with us to have an Academy at Portslade and I am sure he will do everything he can to help that process."

24.28 The Mayor thanked Mr. Guy for his questions and invited Ms. Statham to come forward and address the council.

24.29 Ms. Statham asked the following question, "The report Agenda Item 34 presented 11th October is flimsy - literally and metaphorically. Could the councillor(s) substantiate claims therein by providing:

i) details of all subsidies from CYPT budget for comparison;
ii) revised figures showing how subsidy/deficit reduction with a) 10% increase in fees and b) full occupancy rate;
iii) justification that the future of this city and Bright Start attendees will be best served by having another library, art gallery or museum instead of pre-school nursery provision
iv) evidence that £12K is a meaningful overspend in the overall budget;
v) the difference between bottom and top end of staff pay scales"

24.30 Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People replied, "No decision has yet been taken at all about closing Bright Start Nursery. We propose to commence a consultation with parents and staff at the nursery shortly when the issues raised by you can be more fully explored.

I can, however, confirm at this time the answers to some of the factual issues you have raised. There is no other council nursery that receives a council subsidy from core CYPT council budgets. The Children's Centre nurseries are subsidised from the Sure Start revenue grant for Children's Centres which comes directly from the Government.

The Children's Centre nurseries are based in the areas of most disadvantage and we give priority to children in the most need, including those with child protection plans and special needs. The costs of these subsidies for Cherry Tree, Acorn, Tarnerland, Roundabout and Jump Start are between £100,000 and £193,000.

The issues you raised with regard to the subsidy and deficit reduction and an increase in fees are best dealt with in the consultation process. With regards to the alternative use of the buildings, the officer's report merely illustrated examples of what could be abuses of the building, although until decisions are taken no alternative usage is being explored.

With regards to your point about the overspend highlighted within the officer's report, the £12,000 is an overspend above the budget of £87,000 and was based on the September occupancy figures of 70%. The occupancy rate slightly increased in October and if they remain at the same level the final subsidy would be approximately £87,000. However, it needs to be noted that this is not the true cost of the subsidy to the nursery from the core budget as it doesn't include the indirect costs from finance and HR, for example, so it is a high cost and it's an ongoing cost year upon year.

You also asked about the nursery practitioners and in Bright Start they are on Scale 4 of the Local Government pay scale and the difference between the bottom of this particular scale and the top is approximately £2,000."

24.31 Ms. Statham asked the following supplementary question, "An announcement was made in yesterday's Comprehensive Spending Review that 15 hours of free nursery care per week will be extended to 2 year olds from disadvantaged backgrounds under the fairness premium.

Considering the knock-on effect that this is likely to have on the demand for nursery places do you, Councillor Brown, agree that a consultation with the possible outcome of closure is at best ill-timed at this moment? Would it be more prudent to put any decisions on hold until details about the expected level of increased demand are available and the future need for nursery provision and how and where it is located can be assessed?"

24.32 Councillor Brown replied, "All these matters will be looked at during the consultation period but I can tell you that we have already extended the Roundabout Nursery so that it is capable of taking a lot more 2 year olds."

24.33 The Mayor thanked Ms. Statham for her questions and invited Mr. Jones to come forward and address the council.

24.34 Mr. Jones asked the following question, "Could the councillor please explain why the report to CYP Cabinet Member meeting on the 11th October on Bright Start nursery contained misleading information such as the cost of building work, some of which wasn't seen as necessary a year ago, and was only £5000? It appears the building work will happen regardless of what will happen to the nursery in April 2011."

24.35 Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young people replied, "The report to the CMM did not contain misleading information. The report stated that the flooring in the children's toilets and the heating needed urgent attention and that the estimated cost was £5,000. The work is being done this month together with essential maintenance on the lighting.

The report also stated that a feasibility study estimated that the total cost of bringing the nursery up to a good standard was £230,000. More information about the feasibility study will be included in the consultation document."

24.36 Mr. Jones asked the following supplementary question, "I put it to you that it was deliberately misleading information as with all the stuff about vacancies to parents offering individual consultation and offering individual help. My question is do you not think that by saying oh well all these things we'll deal with it in consultation is actually very damaging to the staff, the parents and the children of the nursery? It will make parents take their children out of the nursery and do you not think that you should have done your report in a way that answers all the questions that have been raised before you did this damaging thing of putting it out to consultation, which is going to cause a lot of damage to some of the children in this town, including the ones with special needs that you talked about the importance of?"

24.37 Councillor Brown replied, "We considered that the report was full enough to make a recommendation to go out to consultation and we do know that the state of the building is very poor. It has high windows, little light, damp, we've had rodent infestations, so we

do know that that building needs a lot of money spent on it but all these issues will be talked about in the consultation period."

24.38 The Mayor thanked Mr. Jones for his questions and noted that this concluded the public questions.

25. DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

25.1 The Mayor reported that two deputations had been received from members of the public and invited Ms Summers as the spokesperson for the first deputation to come forward and address the council.

25.2 Ms Summers thanked the Mayor and presented the deputation:

Deputation on Connexions

"There's nothing much along this street: a cafe' that shuts early, a convenience store, hairdresser...hardly a hub of youth activity and interest. Yet at Hollingdean Dip the flagship centre for Brighton & Hove Connexions services has never been busier. In the two years since its opening more than 140 13-19 year-olds receive careers and personal advice at their Tuesday drop-in facility per month. And that's not all. The rest of the week is set aside for many other services for youngsters such as crime prevention, school inclusion, sexual health work and NEET engagement and prevention. It is labour intensive employing 14 regular staff alone in this deprived area of the city.

Two years is not long enough to see a young person through troubled times - particularly at school - and set them on the right tracks to a meaningful and fulfilling academic, work or social life; it's not enough time to equip them and reassure them of their enormous value in society. The staff at Connexions committed to their work for the long haul and if the staff (who are modestly paid) are willing to do that so likewise should their employer.

Yet despite the overwhelming need, and proven success, of this centre the Administration has chosen to abort it. We understand the difficulties of this decision and we recognise the challenges for any local council in navigating through the current climate of reduced spending and imposed cuts. However, there are surely those times when an authority, such as this Administration, ought to make a stand for the city which it governs. It ought to protect the services that help the most vulnerable and it ought to make a case to central government for doing so.

There is a "To Let" sign outside the Connexions building in Hollingdean because the contract with the private owner expires in 10 days time, so we have to ask: what will happen to all the local young people on the 1st November? Where will they go? The nearest alternative is the Young People's Centre in Ship Street; by no means within walking distance and an entirely different environment. And what about the staff in Hollingdean? Their jobs have now been secured until the New Year but where do they go next month? Some of them are here now and would very much like to know where they should turn up for work on Monday 1st November and what work they will be expected to do. It's the not knowing that is so upsetting and rightly so.

So why close the Hollingdean centre? Is it because the rent is unaffordable? At £8,000 per year this simply does not compare with Marmion Road in Hove, for example, where rent is three times this amount and not even for frontline services – it is purely administrative support.

The Administration have made reference to evidence of outcomes from the money spent on the services being not as positive as they could be. We are curious to understand the nature of this evidence and what would be considered as positive outcomes by the Administration, when the staff and young people themselves continue to report good news. If, as was also stated, funding will continue for careers advice in schools what happens to the young people who attend schools that don't have a careers teacher? What happens to children from broken families who need advice that teachers simply are not trained to give? And what happens to the really vulnerable older ones who are not in education, employment or training?

Many questions, not many answers, and one struggles to believe that the Cabinet has done its homework properly. Do they really appreciate the long-term effects on a struggling young generation of closing down any of the city's youth services let alone the busiest at Hollingdean Dip?

For the sake of the city's young people and the enormously dedicated staff that make such a difference to their lives we strongly urge the Administration to take the following actions:

1. rescind their decision to close down the centre in Hollingdean Dip,
2. commit to a full Equality Impact Assessment as required by law,
3. depending on the results that emerge, guarantee that the centre will remain open and continue to be fully staffed,
4. lobby central government for the return of their grant."

25.3 Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People replied, "The Hollingdean Dip Connexions plus access point is not closing in 10 days' time nor does the lease expire at that point. This has never been our intention. By the terms of our lease, we are required to give 6 months' notice to the landlord. This is because of the need for good stewardship of public monies. We are anticipating going out to consultation with staff in November with regards to the redesign of Connexions Service. This consultation will cover the issue of location and delivery points throughout the city. Because of the possible changes, notice was given to the landlord. However, we have the ability to extend the lease of the Dip Plus Connexions location depending on the outcome of the consultation.

Staff presently based in the Dip have been informed of this and in the meantime Connexions staff will continue to be based there and to see young people just as at present. It's business as usual at the moment.

As with the Dip, all other Connexions access points across the city remain open.

An Equalities Impact Assessment in relation to the proposed changes to Connexions funding is currently underway. An initial EIA will have been completed by the time the options go out for consultation to all affected staff in November. As a matter of good

practice, the EIA will be concluded following the consultation and so able to take into account issues that are raised during that process contributing to the ultimate service redesign."

25.4 The Mayor thanked Ms. Summers for attending the meeting and speaking on behalf of the deputation. He explained that the points had been noted and the deputation would be referred to the Cabinet meeting for consideration. The persons forming the deputation would be invited to attend the meeting and would be informed subsequently of any action to be taken or proposed in relation to the matter set out in the deputation.

25.5 The Mayor then invited Ms Tindall as the spokesperson for the second deputation to come forward and address the council.

25.6 Ms. Tindall thanked the Mayor and stated that:

"Portslade Community College IS the heart of the community.

It is central not just to the education of our children but hosts a whole range of extra curricular activities for children and a whole range of extra curricular activities for adults.

It provides facilities for recreational events from the sporting and leisure to the celebratory to the entertaining.
Local charities rely on its facilities, such as Quad, the charity for those suffering from Downs Syndrome.

From very small children to those residents in their mature years, PCC provide a COMMUNITY service, responds to the needs of the community, is at the heart of the community.

All this is under threat, or felt to be under threat by the proposal to transfer the school from the jurisdiction of the local authority to that of Mr. Aldridge and his proposal to turn it into an academy.

From being an institution which is accountable to the community directly, and politically through its status as a maintained school, it will pass into the hands of an unaccountable businessman (or some other party bidding for the sponsorship) with no links to the community, and quite frankly, with no interest in the educational welfare of our children; in fact he has conceded on previous occasions that he is not an educationalist.

The decision making will be concentrated in the hands of Mr. Aldridge and his appointees, (or some other party bidding for sponsorship) with no obligation in law for him to consult or even discuss what he does with the school once it passes into his hands.

The record of Mr. Aldridge's involvement in the education system in our city does not inspire confidence if the academisation of Falmer High School is anything to go by, and since the current head has overseen such significant improvements in academic performance, we are alarmed that that progress will be severely disrupted by this development.

We, the concerned stakeholders in the school therefore urge the local authority to reconsider the whole proposal, and move away from any further consideration of Mr. Aldridge's (or any other interested party) involvement, and instead make a firm decision to keep the school under local authority jurisdiction, as a COMMUNITY school.

And if the local authority is in any doubt about the strength of feeling regarding this issue, then at the very least they should organise a GENUINE consultation exercise, and ballot all those involved with the school: parents; staff; residents, those with a stake in the future of the school, and those who, at present feel that the local authority is moving forward on this issue without taking their views and concerns into consideration."

25.7 Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People replied, "The proposal for PCC to become an academy was submitted to Government in July 2010. This proposal was put on hold by the new government until the outcome of the CSR.

The council and the Aldridge Foundation, as lead sponsor and co-sponsor working together, have emphasised their wish and that expressed in the deputation that PCC continues to be the centre of its community.

The council is delighted that under the new Principal the college is now moving forward under strong leadership as evidenced by the recent rise in GCSE results.

The council and the Aldridge Foundation remain committed to their initial proposal and believe that this will bring about acceleration in the pace of change at the college and a continued improvement in the achievement of high academic standards. The council also believes that this change will help strengthen the relationships and increase the successes that you have highlighted.

Discussions continue with Government and we anticipate a decision being taken regarding the proposal for PCC to become an academy towards the end of the year. If sanctioned by Government the proposal can only go ahead with Cabinet approval following a formal consultation period with the school and the community carried out as part of the statutory process for closing the existing school."

25.8 The Mayor thanked Ms. Tindall for attending the meeting and speaking on behalf of the deputation. He explained that the points had been noted and the deputation would be referred to the Children & Young People Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration. The persons forming the deputation would be invited to attend the meeting and would be informed subsequently of any action to be taken or proposed in relation to the matter set out in the deputation.

Note: Items 27(c) Petition for Debate and 40(a) Notice of Motion, concerning Connexions were taken by the Mayor at this point, but the minutes for each item have been detailed in the order of the agenda item number for ease of reference.

Refreshment Break

25.9 Following the debate on items 27(c) and 40(a) the Mayor then adjourned the meeting for a refreshment break at 6.30pm.

25.10 The Mayor reconvened the meeting at 7.05pm.

26. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

26.1 The Mayor reminded the Council that councillors' written questions and the replies from the appropriate councillor were now taken as read by reference to the list included in the addendum, which had been circulated as detailed below.

Written Members' Questions

26.2 **(a)** Councillor Hamilton asked:

"I understand that as part of the current organisational transformation the council intends to produce a comprehensive approach to the management of talent. When do you expect to have this in place? Will career pathways be part of the employment framework of the council? Will this lead to greater career and development opportunities for all employees who seek them, and will there be a structured approach for all abilities as a way of motivating and retaining the existing workforce?"

26.3 Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services replied:

<u>When do you expect to have this in place?</u>
"We hope to begin work on a talent management strategy for the organisation from April 2011. This allows time for the leadership team to work with HR to analyse the current workforce profile, predict the future needs and develop a workforce plan by end of March 2011. The thinking involved in doing this will allow the talent management plan to be targeted to BHCC needs."

<u>Will career pathways be part of the employment framework of the council?</u>
"We already have career pathways in some areas of the organisation e.g. legal services. It is intended with the introduction of job families, for this practice to widen, however we are at early stages in our thinking. Job families enable more flexible use of the workforce and for employees themselves to identify development needs required to move up in their existing job family or transfer to another job family."

<u>Will this lead to greater career and development opportunities for all employees who seek them? Will there be a structured approach for all abilities as a way of motivating and retaining the existing workforce?</u>
"Our intent would be for any talent management strategy that we put in place to be about motivating, retaining and developing the talent that the organisation needs to be successful. It is not clear yet how it will be applied across the organisation."

26.4 **(b)** Councillor Elgood asked,

"Can the Cabinet Member for Finance give a progress up-date on the implementation of the Coalition Government's requirement for councils to publish items of expenditure over £500, and to explain why the council has yet to implement it when other councils already have?"

26.5 Councillor Young, Cabinet Member for Finance replied,

"The Council will publish items of expenditure over £500 on 25 October 2010. This will include both a detailed breakdown of expenditure incurred in 2009/10 accessible through a user friendly free software package "Spotlight on Spend" and monthly files showing expenditure for 2010/11 derived from our creditor system. This provides a huge amount of information on council spending for example the April 2010 spending data file alone runs to 8,875 lines, and at has taken some time to process all this data in a form that satisfies the draft regulations. A recent survey has shown that so far 27% of all councils in the South East Region had published their spending data, but most of the authorities were small districts and only 16% of Unitary and County Councils had published their data."

26.6 **(c)** Councillor Elgood asked,

"Can the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People confirm the number of users of the Connexions service (for the year from September 2009) listed by council ward?"

26.7 Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People replied,

"We are currently not able to give the requested information listed by council ward. However, the citywide figures for the period requested, by age of young person, are as follows:

Age	Number of young people using Connexions 1/9/2009 – 31/8/2010
13	73
14	228
15	629
16	1375
17	1392
18	1233
19	1312
20	803
21	159
22	61
23	36
24	29
25	23
Total	7353

Please note that this table shows individual, different young people. The vast majority had more than one intervention over the year. Interventions can range from sending out information, telephone support through to a full intensive one-to-one interview."

26.8 **(d)** Councillor Kitcat asked,

"The latest Sitemorse local government website benchmarking report placed Brighton & Hove City Council's site in 331st place out of 429 Local Authority sites reviewed. Among other things the report flagged the site's accessibility as being 'impaired'.

Given the key role the new media industry plays in the local economy, can the Cabinet Member responsible explain what plans are in place to remedy this situation so that the site is improved and is accessible to users of all abilities?"

26.9 Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services replied,

"1. Accessibility is a key requirement for the ongoing development of the Council website. The website has been designed to meet established industry standards and conforms to recognised accessibility guidelines.

2. The council subscribes to The Society for IT Management (SOCITM), an association for ICT professionals in the public and third sectors. In the 2010 SOCITM review of all local authority websites, the Brighton & Hove website received a 3 star rating. This is assessed against a range of different factors including accessibility.

3. Sitemorse is a private organisation which sells its consultancy and audit services to organisations. The Sitemorse ranking of the Council website is based on their own diagnosis and prioritisation of a range of different factors.

4. We are currently implementing the first of a three phase web development program as part of a channel shift strategy which underpins our commitment to citizen centric services.

5. Stage 1 will review and improve the design and navigation aspects of the existing website. Working with Community Contact Point staff we will incorporate user feedback to inform future design and accessibility needs.

6. Stage 2 will include significant changes to the structure and architecture of the website to move it closer to the council's ambition of a personalised, transactional and transparent web experience which meets the needs of all its customers.

7. Officers are establishing an approach using the established Equalities Impact Assessment process which will directly address accessibility issues across all services impacted under this programme."

26.10 **(e)** Councillor Kitcat asked,

"Will the Leader of the Council commit to wherever possible now publishing Council information, including spending data, under an open licence such as Creative Commons or the National Archive's new Open Government Licence?"

26.11 Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council replied,

"The Council is committed to openness and transparency and will always make information available to the public unless there are good legal or other reasons not to do so, such as the need to protect people's privacy.

The exact form in which information is published depends on the subject and the intended audience. We will always adopt the most appropriate means taking into account legal requirements, good practice as well as government guidance.

On the issue of publishing expenditure, I confirm that we will publish items of expenditure over £500 on 25 October 2010. This will include both a detailed breakdown of expenditure incurred in 2009/10 and monthly files showing expenditure for 2010/11 derived from our creditor system. We will be using Data.Gov terms and conditions for our published information which is in line with government guidance to ensure that the data is presented in a usable format.

I hope this answers your question"

26.12 **(f)** Councillor Kitcat asked,

"The option of a return to the committee system for this Council as a part of the Localism Bill is not to be even voted on in Parliament until late 2011. Given this fact, can the Leader of the Council explain why the Independent Remuneration Panel's report on councillor allowances still has not been voted on by this Council?"

26.13 Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council replied,

"As you will be aware, the Independent Remuneration Panel's report was deferred at Full Council in March because of concerns raised by some of the Members over a number of the recommendations put forward. Since then Group Leaders have had an opportunity to put forward any comments for the Panel's consideration and as you will have seen, their report is on the agenda for today's meeting together with an officer report.

The matter of a possible return to the committee system is a subject for separate debate and in no way affects the decision we will be making today."

26.14 **(g)** Councillor Duncan asked,

"Does the Cabinet Member believe that American Express is doing enough to compensate residents suffering severe inconvenience, and in some cases loss of earnings from working at home, as a result of the construction of the firm's new facility in the Carlton Hill area of the Queen's Park ward?"

26.15 Councillor Fallon-Khan, Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Employment and Major Projects replied,

"I would like to thank Councillor Duncan for his question. It is my understanding that Amex is doing a great deal to assist local residents who may be suffering inconvenience.

In addition to a range of long term community benefits secured through the planning permission under a section 106 Agreement, AMEX has arranged a range of measures to reduce the impact of the works on the local community. These include:

- Monthly residents' liaison meetings and a monthly newsletter distributed by hand to 250 neighbours informing them of the progress of the works.

- An information website.

- Providing residents with prior warning of any particularly disruptive construction activities which are unavoidable.

- Appointing a full time neighbour liaison manager who is contactable on a freephone number during working hours.

- A free fortnightly window and car cleaning service to 166 households around the site. I understand that 108 households have taken up the window cleaning and 54 households the car cleaning.

- An off site community room for home workers and residents to use free of charge. This has been equipped with four computers, a printer, wi-fi, 2 sofas, TV, kitchen facilities and is available by pre-booking. This room has been available for two months now, although I understand that only 4 passes have been issued and 5 bookings made to date.

I am aware that senior officers of the council are continuing to work with local residents and Amex representatives to help ensure that any inconvenience is kept to a minimum."

26.16 **(h)** Councillor Duncan asked,

"The weekend of October 9th-10th was one of the warmest October weekends in years. Temperatures reached 20 degrees, and the beach in many areas was packed, both with tourists and local residents, some of whom were enjoying swimming in the sea. How many council-provided lifeguards were on duty?"

26.17 Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism replied,

"The council provides a full beach lifeguard service from the end of May until the first week of September. The service is made up of 26 seasonal lifeguards and patrol boat crew and covers 11 stations across our 13 km of Seafront.

During the summer months byelaws come into place which provide designated bathing zones which are identified by yellow marker buoys. These zones are lifeguarded from 9.30 am – 7.00 pm 7 days a week and red and yellow flags are used to inform the public

when it is safe to swim. All buoys and flags are removed at the end of the season and anyone choosing to swim does so at their own risk.

Outside of the summer season the Seafront is managed by a team of 6 permanent full time Seafront Officers. The team is based at the Seafront Office and operates 365 days of the year.

On the weekend in question there were 4 full time Seafront Officers on duty who are all beach lifeguard qualified. The Seafront Officers patrol the seafront but are not permanently based on the beaches as lifeguards are in the summer.

The water temperature drops considerably after the summer season and Seafront Officers would not encourage people to swim unless they are equipped for these conditions. A rescue undertaken by Seafront Officers on 25th September this year resulted in one officer and 2 casualties being taken to hospital suffering from hypothermia after having been in the water for only 20 minutes."

26.18 **(i)** Councillor Duncan asked,

"Do you think the system by which tenant participants are involved in decision-making about the council's housing policies, through Housing Management Consultative Committee meetings, and in other ways, could be improved in any way?"

26.19 Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing replied,

"Council housing residents have a very powerful influence in the development of housing policies in Brighton & Hove. Our recent annual report demonstrates how closely a wide range of residents are involved in shaping our housing policies and priorities and in checking on our performance.

We currently support around 70 resident associations, four Area Housing Panels and nearly 20 other resident groups, including the City Assembly. Housing Management Consultative Committee is the meeting where final policy proposals are debated by both Members and residents, but much wider consultation takes place before reports are presented to the committee.

During the last 12 months we have increased the range of ways in which tenants and leaseholders can get involved. We now have a database of nearly 2000 residents who are interested in getting involved. We use the database to involve residents from under-represented groups and to involve residents in ways which suit them, including using social networking media.

Through our involvement of residents we empower them to gain new skills. We've trained resident volunteers as 'mystery shoppers' to test our customer service, involved residents in a 'rate your estate' initiative and offered training for residents to become energy advisers.

Residents are involved in the procurement of new contractors such as the new repairs partnership, and a new group looking at building new Council homes. Residents also control a yearly Estate Development Budget for improvements to their neighbourhoods.

The Council is continuously working with residents to further improve their meaningful involvement in the management of their homes and neighbourhoods. Residents are currently working with us on the development of our Resident Involvement Strategy and over the next two weeks we are holding a series of 'Tell us what you think!' events to find out resident priorities for our services."

26.20 **(j)** Councillor Duncan asked,

"Members of Brighton and Hove Older People's Council have warned that the withdrawal of the Free Swimming Scheme for over-60s will have a negative impact on some people's health, and ultimately will cost society more money than it saves.

Will you reconsider the council's decision not to subsidise entirely swimming locally for all under-18s and over 60s, and reinstate free swimming for all children and older people in the city's public swimming pools with immediate effect?"

26.21 Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism replied,

"The Free Swimming Initiative was originally to be funded for a limited period of 2 years.

Following the government announcement in June that the funding would cease 8 months earlier than planned, the Council explored the option of retaining the initiative. With the continued support funding from NHS Brighton & Hove, we have been able to continue to offer free swimming to children aged 11 and under until 31st March 2011.

We shall continue to work in partnership with NHS Brighton & Hove to explore further options to extend the initiative beyond this date. This will be subject to available Council and NHS Brighton & Hove funding.

In the meantime, over 60s continue to benefit from the concessionary rate for swimming which provides a discount of approximately 40% off the standard price.

There are also plans to develop a leisure card scheme to encourage further use of the Council's sports facilities.

*Note – We have yet to begin discussions with NHS Brighton & Hove on the extension of an initiative beyond 31st March 2011."

26.22 **(k)** Councillor Randall asked,

"Can Councillor Caulfield tell us when the survey of potential sites for social housing in the city on council-owned land will be published?"

26.23 Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing replied,

"As reported at Housing Management Consultative Committee, the Cabinet Member for Housing has announced that the Council wish work with tenants to take advantage of potential investment opportunities to build new Council homes. The Proposals are being developed in partnership with a Tenants Working Group on Building New Council Homes Chaired by Cabinet Member for Housing and consisting of representatives from the Repairs & Maintenance Monitoring Group and Asset Management Panel. A paper is being brought to HMCC and Cabinet in November updating on progress.

The aim of the Tenant Working Group is to 'To work together to provide quality new council homes that meet the needs of our residents'. The objectives are:

- Identify suitable sites for development
- Advise on acceptable design and unit mix for sites
- Assist with the tender process to identify a suitable build contractor
- Assist with the design of a local apprenticeship programme
- Monitor the contract to ensure the necessary standards are achieved
- Advise and assist with promotional activity for any new scheme
- Advise and assist with local lettings plans for new developments
- Help with the official opening and welcoming new tenants onto the scheme."

26.24 **(l)** Councillor Randall asked,

"Can the Leader of the Council give an assurance that charitable organisations running public events in the city that require street closures will not be charged for loss of parking revenue?"

26.25 Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council replied,

"Historically there has been no charge for loss of parking revenue due to road closures for a defined number of events on Madeira Drive. In addition to this, we do not currently charge for suspended parking bays during the London to Brighton Bike Ride or during Pride.

The council also facilitates a number of other charitable events and community events that can involve road closures, often without charge.

It would not be possible to offer a blanket no charging policy otherwise we would face an avalanche of requests for road closures that could be disruptive to general movement across the city. However there is normally only a nominal fee for charitable organisations where it is possible to accommodate such requests."

26.26 **(m)** Councillor McCaffery asked,

"Petitions to the council demand a lot of time and work from residents who believe they will be listened to. I therefore ask this Council:

1. How many petitions were received by the Council between May 2009 and May 2010?

2. How many of these petitions resulted in the outcome requested by the petition?"

26.27 Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services replied,

"I can confirm that for the municipal year 2009/10 a total of 77 petitions have been received by the council.

Individual petitioners themselves will be best placed to follow up on any actions they have asked for. It would be extremely time consuming for officers to determine exactly how many of the 77 petitions have resulted in the outcome requested by the petition, not least because the outcome is often not clear cut.. Petitions may be noted at the time by the Cabinet Member or other body and, whilst often not resulting in any immediate action, can be built into future work programmes. Examples of this are many road safety and parking related petitions. I would, therefore, recommend to residents that it is always worthwhile petitioning the Council to raise awareness of any matter of concern to them – the Council agenda before us today perfectly illustrates why."

Members' Oral Questions

26.28 The Mayor noted that notification of six oral Members' questions had been received and invited Councillor Simson to put her question to Councillor Duncan.

26.29 Councillor Simson asked, "As the council's sole representative on the Sussex Police Authority, Councillor Duncan should represent the views of the whole city in policing matters, including demonstrations, even if this clashes with Green Party policy. Could Councillor Duncan give us an example of when this has happened recently?"

26.30 Councillor Duncan replied, "Obviously as the council's representative on the Sussex Police Authority, I've been given the opportunity by the officers and Chief Executive of that Authority to sit on a number of Scrutiny Committees within the Police Authority looking at individual aspects of policing and I am, in fact, the Vice-Chair of the Sussex-wide Neighbourhood Policing Scrutiny Committee.

Taking your question entirely at face value I contribute widely to those meetings and indeed have just recently put in a submission on the future of neighbourhood policing as a Member of that Committee and I regret that we don't have a representative, if you like, that means that the Tory Group on this council feels able to express their views on policing via me and in the past at Police Authority meetings we've had to endure veiled attacks from Brighton & Hove City Council on the police delivered by Conservative Members from East Sussex County Council because they convey, if you like, more faith from the Conservative Group here than this council's representative."

26.31 Councillor Simson asked the following supplementary question, "I wonder if it maybe should be my first question again because I don't think that was an answer at all to the question I asked, but I will ask the supplementary. Does Councillor Duncan agree with the MP for Brighton Pavilion, Caroline Lucas, that spending over £1M of taxpayers'

money in two years on policing 'Smash EDO' demonstrations in her constituency is justified?"

26.32 Councillor Duncan replied, "The short answer is yes."

26.33 The Mayor then invited Councillor Hawkes to ask her question.

26.34 Councillor Hawkes asked, "It is part of every council employee's terms and conditions of their contract that they should be given the opportunity to apply for a place at Bright Start Nursery. The response given at the call-in earlier today described access to Bright Start as a benefit for staff, rather than a right.

Would the Cabinet Member care to comment on the terms and conditions of this current staff contract that I happen to hold in my hand. Under Maternity Provisions and Support it clearly states the Employees Rights and Responsibilities document Section B, Part 3, issued to you on appointment give details of family-friendly policies adopted by the council. Page 45 of that document, Employees Rights and Responsibilities, details Bright Start Nursery as a facility for children of council employees. What are the potential implications, financial and legal, on the council for a change in contract for this large number of staff?"

26.35 Councillor Brown replied, "I have to say it was a very technical question, Councillor Hawkes, and I haven't personally seen the terms and conditions but we have been advised by Legal, by the solicitors here, by the lawyers, that it is a benefit and it's not a term and condition."

26.36 Councillor Hawkes asked the following supplementary question, "Well I'm questioning that, of course, that was why my question was so. I will pursue it. Why were there no other viable alternatives offered other than the closure of Bright Start Nursery and will there be an Equality Impact Assessment carried out before you possibly decide to close this wonderful facility?"

26.37 Councillor Brown replied, "There are other alternatives, Councillor Hawkes, because we do have a lot of nursery provision in this city and you will know that when this Bright Start was first set up it was when there was hardly any nursery provision in the city. We now have a very good coverage of nursery provision and there are other alternatives, Tarnerland which is an excellent nursery is very close and we will, of course, bring out all the rest of those queries in the consultation."

26.38 The Mayor then invited Councillor Duncan to ask his question.

26.39 Councillor Duncan asked, "Will you join me in offering congratulations to Brighton & Hove Albion for currently being top of League Division 1 and then wish the club well for the rest of the final season at Withdean before moving to the Amex Community Stadium in Falmer?"

26.40 Councillor Smith replied, "I used to play for Brighton & Hove Albion at one time for a few years and I think some of our colleagues in this room would be Brightonians and they have supported Brighton & Hove Albion all their lives. Their achievements this season and we've got to keep our fingers crossed they are there now but we want them to be

there at the end of April next year, that's the most important time: next year with the new stadium and what I said to that gentleman from Westdene earlier that we intend to make the athletics stadium at Withdean a super place, so that we can be the regional sporting capital of the city. Obviously I will thank the Albion on your behalf."

26.41 Councillor Duncan asked the following supplementary question, "I was interested to see a council issued press release issued earlier this month in which it was explained that there would be block letting of the football facilities, the all-weather pitches at the Stanley Deason Leisure Centre to City College and I just wondered how you square that enthusiasm for football in the city with the policy that will reduce public access to relatively inexpensive facilities to play football?"

26.42 Councillor Smith replied, "I look through the years that we are very supportive of all sports, not only football but everything else but you have to err when its pricing realistic ones and when you think through the years we've got all-weather pitches with floodlights now, whereas before it used to be playing just the daytimes in the park on grass. I know when I used to play and probably when you were young you put a couple of jumpers down and someone would bring the ball and you played there. The facilities are there, Albion in the Community are doing a hell of a lot of things for the ones there. I think we're doing well and a lot of the clubs have raffles and other things like that to raise money so they can hire those pitches and I know when I was playing at the end of my career, about your age I should think it was, we had to pay so much each week to play."

26.43 The Mayor then invited Councillor Harmer-Strange to ask his question,

26.44 Councillor Harmer-Strange asked, "One of the recommendations of the Environmental Industries Scrutiny Panel on which I served was to look at how more suitable office space could be made available in this city. Could the Cabinet Member tell me whether the recently unveiled plans for New England House could potentially provide a contribution towards this?"

26.45 Councillor Fallon-Khan replied , "New England House is just one of the projects that we will be looking at to increase inward investment into the city but as from the Cabinet last week it's not going to be exclusively just for the digital media industry or creative industries it will also be hopefully for some of the green industries coming into the city as well.

In terms of what we have managed to do so far, we're very pleased that Eon have decided to set up a base here. They could have done it anywhere on the south coast but the offshore wind farm is going to be eight or ten miles off the coast here. We're delighted that they're coming to our city and we're hoping that a lot of the other green technology, green industry companies will be coming in to follow.

There is a big issue about employment regeneration. This Administration believes very much in spending the next few years trying to get as much employment regeneration as well as housing into the city and these are the kind of industries that we would love to be able to come to Brighton and Hove.

We're talking to the universities trying to align some courses that they're going to be doing with these other industries as well. But in terms of the specific question about

office space, the Leader of the Council and her Administration, we are looking to knock on the door of lots of people who own big chunks of land in the city which haven't been used for five or ten years and perhaps get a bit of flexible use in planning terms for them to be able to build more offices, because one of the issues that we've had in the last seven or eight years is that a lot of these companies love starting up here and then when they get to 14, 15, perhaps 16 people there's not an awful lot of office accommodation for them to move into. Therefore we sometimes lose them to competitor cities, those being at the moment Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, so we do want to keep them here.

Office space is important but there are three elements really that businesses who are going to come into the city, green industries in particular, that they will be looking for. One is proactivity from the council, now we've helped businesses network despite the recession and we will continue to help new businesses start up in this way and also reputationally, now we have the Sustainable Cities Index results that were published a couple of days ago and we are in the top three again. In fact every year that we have had this Brighton and Hove has been in the top three, so we are consistently hitting the top three which no other city has done. Also in terms of Leadership we've got to actively go out and try and encourage these industries by providing the right kind of conditions that they can come and work here.

On the subject of leadership here, it's a real shame actually that before I did an interview with Radio Sussex the people who actually did the assessment, the Futures Forum, on us said how brilliantly we had done and how regularly and across the board how brilliantly we do. It was just a bit of a shame that one of the local newspapers kind of dampened that down but I think it's very encouraging for Brighton and Hove that we get these industries here amongst others and we are planning on positioning ourselves to come out of the recession in a much better place than other cities and part of this regeneration work is some of the stuff we are doing at the moment."

26.46 The Mayor then invited Councillor Allen to ask his question.

26.47 Councillor Allen asked, "The CYPT Performance Report presented to CYPOSC at its meeting on 15 September contained the following statement*: 'Clearly the recent cabinet decision to significantly reduce funding for the Connexions Service will have a significant impact on our ability to both support and track outcomes for young people in relation to education, employment and training in the future.'* Would Councillor Vanessa Brown care to comment?"

26.48 Councillor Brown replied, "I'm not sure that actually was in the official report. Obviously if you try to reduce any service it's going to have some kind of impact but we are working to ensure that Connexions will still work and be of good service in the future."

26.49 Councillor Allen asked the following supplementary question, "First of all to clarify, it was in the official report This was the performance report written by the CYPT about the CYPT and that's official surely and yes when I first read this I thought, 'well that's letting the cat out of the bag' and it clearly still is letting the cat out of the bag.

You know at a time when whatever one's view of what will happen in the future, in the immediate future it's going to be very rocky, particularly for young people, and isn't it

absolutely essential that we actually know what is happening out there in society as far as the NEET figures are concerned and if Connexions isn't there in its current form to compile the figures, who's going to do it, the schools?"

26.50 Councillor Brown replied, "As I have to keep saying we do still have £1.5M in the budget which is a lot of money. It will be coming back to Cabinet to be talked about again and we will be very careful in looking at our NEET figures and there will be PAs to deal with the NEET in this city."

26.51 The Mayor then invited Councillor Kitcat to ask his question.

26.52 Councillor Kitcat asked, "There are studies, including work by the new Economics Foundation, which show that when a local authority spends locally each pound can be worth as much as four times to the locality as when it's spent elsewhere. This highlights the critical role this council plays directly and indirectly in our city's economy, so, as I'll explain later, given that the public deficit is at manageable levels, how can the Leader of this council justify the economic damage of 28% cuts to local government budgets which will be unleashed on our city's economy?"

26.53 Councillor Mears replied, "I just think I need to respond firstly about the Greens national response to the financial crisis. Finances for the Future says something you need to know about their approach: one of the chapters is entitled: 'Debt is not the huge issue it's claimed to be'. I think that's slightly contradictory to Councillor Kitcat's statement then, but I would like to put on record this Administration's commitment to this city.

We have set up through this Administration: Be Local, Buy Local. When we were going into the recession we worked with businesses in the city. Our staff proactively went out and knocked on over 2,000 doors to ensure small businesses could claim rate relief and we have worked right across the city. As Councillor Fallon-Khan has already said we are now looking at New England House to improve the offer for small businesses, so I do find Councillor Kitcat's comments quite amazing really.

I know he's very busy but he obviously doesn't read what the Administration does around these issues and I think, you know, Councillor Kitcat, you need to put it in perspective. You can't talk about debt as if it's not an issue and then say actually what impact you think it's going to have on the city.

I mean some of the responses you had nationally were to recommend raising taxation by a massive £71 billion a year. I wonder what effect you thought that may have on Brighton & Hove city's small businesses and that includes raising council tax by £1.7 billion. Now Councillor Kitcat I have to assure you that would have an impact on small businesses in this city and also raising £2 billion from 'buy to let' landlords which would have a massive negative effect on the availability of property to rent in the city. Not only are you proposing to tax people to the hilt, you are also proposing that they won't be able to afford to have somewhere to live, so Councillor Kitcat I really do think you need to look at the economics in this city and understand why in this Administration one of the first things that we took on board was Be Local, Buy Local, support the city."

26.54 Councillor Kitcat asked the following supplementary question, "I do feel that my original question was completely misunderstood but we'll try again another time. My

supplementary question is, given the importance of creative professions and arts to our city what is the Leader's response to the Government's cuts to arts funding?"

26.55 Councillor Mears replied, "I think if Councillor Kitcat carefully read the response from the Arts Council they were confident that actually they would be able to deliver and I think it's important to recognise actually the culture element within this city. We have some fantastic culture and art within the city but they also work collectively, Councillor, right across the city themselves, it isn't just about what the Arts Council brings in. They are able to create themselves.

I think you need to recognise, I'm not quite sure if you really follow some of the projects that go on around art and culture within the city. I think we've got a fantastic offer. It creates a real boost to our tourism. We have over 8 million visitors a year so I'm sure Councillor you would like us in this Chamber to support everything that goes on within the city."

26.56 The Mayor thanked the Members for their questions and moved to the next item on the agenda.

27. PETITIONS FOR COUNCIL DEBATE

27. (a) Stop the Clearance

27.1 The Mayor noted that under the Council's petition scheme, if a petition contained more than 1,250 signatures it could be debated by the Full Council and such a request had been made in respect of the petition concerning Wild Park.

27.2 The Mayor welcomed Ms. Fluendy to the meeting and invited her to present her petition.

27.3 Ms. Fluendy thanked the Mayor and outlined the history behind the petition, which had resulted from action being taken by the council to clear areas of Wild Park. She noted that over 1,700 people had signed the petition and were concerned about the lack of consultation over the clearance work and information on why it had taken place. She acknowledged that further consultation was now planned and hoped that this would result in a better understanding of people's expectations for the future of the park. She then read out the petition:

"We the undersigned petition the council to stop the deforestation and scrub clearance on the hillsides around Wild Park and to stop putting up barbed wire fences in the park. We believe the work is destroying a valuable habitat for wild birds and other flora and fauna. We also believe that barbed wire has no place in a public park and that the work is a waste of public resources."

27.4 Councillor Theobald thanked Ms. Fluendy for presenting the petition and stated that the council had not intended to cause any concern over its actions, which were aimed at preserving the natural chalk environment that existed in the Park. He accepted that the initial consultation process had not been as effective as hoped but noted that the council was working with a number of interested groups to take matters forward. A further consultation exercise was underway with 16,000 newsletters being issued, workshops

and walks arranged to inform interested parties of the proposals and get feedback. A Wild Park representative group had been established and it was hoped that this would provide a means for people to have a greater involvement in the management of the Park.

27.5 Councillor Simpson stated that a number of people were concerned about the clearance action and the lack of consultation that had taken place. She believed that there was a need to rebuild the trust between the council and the various communities that had been affected and therefore wished to move an amendment and add a further recommendation at 2.2 of the report as follows:

"That the strength of the public feeling on this issue be taken into account, and in future the Cabinet Member be requested to ensure that:-

- Full and meaningful consultation takes place with local people and adequate environmental impact surveys are carried out before any clearance work is done in areas like the Wild Park;
- Clear explanations are given as to the scale, nature and justification of any such proposed work; and
- Any work carried out should be done with care and precision."

27.6 Councillor Morgan formally seconded the amendment.

27.7 Councillor West stated that there was a need to protect the park and acknowledged that the need for further consultation had been recognised, which he welcomed. However, he also wished to move an amendment to add a further recommendation to the report as follows:

"That the Cabinet Member be recommended to acknowledge and express support for the new model of consultation that is now underway; and to acknowledge that this presents a fresh and positive opportunity for the aspirations of the different park users and interest groups to be taken on board in shaping a new plan for future work on this project."

27.8 Councillor Rufus formally seconded the amendment.

27.9 Councillor Caulfield noted that action had been taken to help protect the environment of the park such as the introduction of sheep grazing, however she also agreed that the initial clearance work had appeared to have been rushed. She was aware that the situation had also caused disagreement between the two local communities and hoped that this could be resolved by people working together.

27.10 Councillor Theobald noted the comments and stated that lessons had been learnt and it was hoped that with the new consultation process people would be able to work together to ensure that the park's best interests were protected.

27.11 The Mayor thanked Ms. Fluendy for attending the meeting and then put each amendment to the vote in turn, which were carried and therefore moved that the report and the recommendations as amended by approved.

27.12 **RESOLVED:**

(1) That the petition be referred to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration;

(2) That the strength of the public feeling on this issue be taken into account, and in future the Cabinet Member be requested to ensure that:-

- Full and meaningful consultation takes place with local people and adequate environmental impact surveys are carried out before any clearance work is done in areas like the Wild Park;

- Clear explanations are given as to the scale, nature and justification of any such proposed work; and

- Any work carried out should be done with care and precision; and

(3) That the Cabinet Member be recommended to acknowledge and express support for the new model of consultation that is now underway; and to acknowledge that this presents a fresh and positive opportunity for the aspirations of the different park users and interest groups to be taken on board in shaping a new plan for future work on this project.

27. (b) Parking in Preston Park

27.13 The Mayor noted that under the Council's petition scheme, if a petition contained more than 1,250 signatures it could be debated by the Full Council and such a request had been made in respect of the petition concerning Parking in Preston Park.

27.14 The Mayor invited Councillor Kennedy to present her petition.

27.15 Councillor Kennedy stated that 2,201 people had signed the petition which read as follows;

"Cars parked day and night, even days a week in Preston Park. Since the council introduced parking restrictions in Preston Park Avenue, residents and commuters are leaving cars parked in the park as long as they like because it's free (some even go off on holidays!).
We believe parking in the park should be for people using the park."

27.16 Councillor Theobald thanked Councillor Kennedy for presenting the petition and stated that he was aware of the difficulties referred to in parking in the park. With this in mind, he proposed to establish a small Working Party, including the Ward Councillors and appropriate officers to look into the matter and report back to his Cabinet Member Meeting.

27.17 Councillor McCaffery welcomed the proposal and stated that she hoped the Working Party would be able to include officers from the relevant departments so that the parking

problems throughout the park could be addressed as a whole. She then moved an amendment to add a further recommendation as follows:

"That the Cabinet Member be requested to instruct officers to ensure that the issue of parking in Preston Park is looked at holistically by the Highways and Parks Department working together to seek a solution to the benefit of park users bearing in mind the impact of the recently introduced controlled parking areas in Preston Park Avenue and south of the railway."

27.18 Councillor Kennedy welcomed the opportunity to have a working party, and stated that she also wished to move an amendment to add a further recommendation to the report as follows:

"That the Cabinet Member give consideration to the regulation of parking use within Preston Park under Road Traffic regulations or by securing other effective means for the benefit of park users, and to deter all-day parking by commuters."

27.19 Councillor Rufus formally seconded the amendment.

27.20 Councillor Theobald noted the comments and stated that he would anticipate that the Working Party would take on board the aims of the two petitions as part of its review.

27.21 The Mayor thanked then put each amendment to the vote in turn, which were carried and therefore moved that the report and the recommendations as amended by approved.

27.22 **RESOLVED:**

(1) That the petition be referred to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration;

(2) That the Cabinet Member be requested to instruct officers to ensure that the issue of parking in Preston Park is looked at holistically by the Highways and Parks Department working together to seek a solution to the benefit of park users bearing in mind the impact of the recently introduced controlled parking areas in Preston Park Avenue and south of the railway; and

(3) That the Cabinet Member give consideration to the regulation of parking use within Preston Park under Road Traffic regulations or by securing other effective means for the benefit of park users, and to deter all-day parking by commuters.

27. (c) Connexions

27.23 The Mayor stated that in view of the high level of interest in the issue affecting the Connexions Service, he had decided that it would be appropriate to take both the petition, Item 27(c) and the notice of motion, Item 40(a) together in one debate. He noted that under the Council's petition scheme, if a petition contained more than 1,250 signatures it could be debated by the Full Council and such a request had been made in respect of the petition concerning Connexions.

27.24 The Mayor welcomed Mr. Knutson to the meeting and invited him to present his petition.

27.25 Mr. Knutson thanked the Mayor and outlined the history behind the petition, which had resulted from the proposal to cut the service and which he presented on behalf of the past, present and future users:

"Brighton and Hove city council has announced £700,000 of cuts to the Connexions service to be implemented by March 2011.

This will mean a substantial reduction of the frontline connexions service, or even the complete closure of the service. We are deeply concerned about the implications of this decision. Quite apart from the impact on the frontline staff, all of whom are very skilled and qualified in working with young people, we are extremely disturbed about the potentially very damaging impact these cuts will have upon the future and wellbeing of the young people living in Brighton and Hove.

To be substantially reducing the level of support to young people at the very time when more advice and support is needed in these difficult economic times, we feel is very short-sighted. Young people are the country's future and to reduce the level of support available to them, we feel is a very damaging development.

We call on the council to rescind this decision and explore other means to meet the budget cuts without impacting the frontline services.

Your support would be very much appreciated. Please sign our petition to save the Connexions service in Brighton and Hove."

27.26 Mr. Knutson stated that 2,885 people had signed the petition in support of maintaining a valuable front-line value for money service. He did not believe the service could be put back into schools and asked that the council review the decision and ensure that young people had someone to go to for help and advice outside of the school environment.

27.27 Councillor Hawkes then moved the Labour Group's notice of motion, which called on the Cabinet to continue with the Connexions Service whilst undertaking a review and bringing a report to a future meeting.

27.28 Councillor Mitchell formally seconded the motion and stated that she believed the decision had been taken in haste without fully accounting for the staff and service implications of such an action.

27.29 Councillor Brown thanked Mr. Knutson for presenting the petition and stated that the council had been faced with a 28% cut in the Area Based Grant it received from the Government and as such had had to look at where savings could be made. The Connexions Service overall budget was £2m and therefore it was felt that this could be reduced proportionately and the remaining £1.5m budget used to support a redesigned service. She also wished to confirm that at present things remained as they were and no changes had been made as a consultation process was about to begin. She also stated that she wished to withdraw the Conservative Group's amendment to the petition as the Group would be supporting the Labour notice of motion.

27.30 Councillor Fryer stated that she felt to date the staff had been treated badly and the council could face legal challenges to the proposed action and lack of completing an equalities impact assessment. She therefore wished to move an amendment to the report on the petition and add a further two recommendations at 2.2 and 2.3 of the report as follows:

"That the Cabinet reconsiders its in-year budget cuts to ensure that Connexions services are protected; and

That the Cabinet immediately holds discussions with Connexions staff about how to approach the impending cuts from central government without compromising the quality of the service."

27.31 Councillor Phillips formally seconded the amendment.

27.32 Councillor Fryer stated she wished to move an amendment to the notice of motion, which she believed added weight to the motion itself.

27.33 Councillor Phillips formally seconded the amendment and stated that she believed the decision to cut the service had left the futures of young people uncertain and with no support. The service was needed if vulnerable young people were to be given every opportunity to succeed and feel that they had someone to help them. She believed that there was a choice on how to meet the savings that were required and maintain the service rather than simply cut it and place future costs on other services.

27.34 Councillor Kemble stated that Connexions was a nationally recognised service, however it had not been as good as it could be and that a proposed redesign based on the £1.5m budget was the best way forward. There were other services that supported young people and he believed that these could be utilised more effectively.

27.35 Councillor Hamilton stated that he believed there was a need for the Connexions service and expressed his concern over the proposal to rely on the schools to fulfil the role as they would need greater resources. He also believed that one of the strengths of the service was that it was based outside of the schools so that young people felt confident to use it.

27.36 Councillor Elgood stated that it was a flagship service which needed to be retained and noted that the council now had the opportunity to set priorities with the removal of ring-fencing and therefore suggested that the service should be maintained.

27.37 Councillor Cobb stated that she was aware of people who had not received the support they had expected and had found it difficult to access the service. She believed that there was a need to review what was provided and how, in order to meet the needs of those who required support.

27.38 Councillor Simson stated that the service was not being closed and remained in operation. There was a need to review how it was to be provided in view of the reduction in the budget provision and hopefully this would ensure that a more effective service was provided.

27.39 Councillor Mears stated that many authorities were in a similar position to the council in terms of the savings that had to be made. The Administration was looking across all areas of the council to find ways of reducing costs and the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People was fully aware of the concerns raised and was in the process of consulting with the staff affected.

27.40 Councillor Janio noted that a total of £1.5m remained in the budget for the service and suggested that this could be utilised effectively once the consultation and redesign of the service had been completed. The aim had to be to ensure that young people were given the support for and opportunity to get on in the world of work.

27.41 Councillor Brown restated that £1.5m was held in the budget for the Connexions Service and that the service had not been stopped to date. The consultation process was due to start in November and she hoped that it would result in a way forward for the service. She would much prefer not to have to make any cuts; however there was a need to account for the reduction in the area based grant provision. She was happy to accept the first Green amendment to the report on the petition but not the second and as such asked that they be taken individually. She could not support the Green amendment to the notice of motion.

27.42 Councillor Hawkes stated that she hoped the consultation process and redesign proposals would involve all those with an interest in the matter so that the situation that had resulted would not be repeated and things could be taken forward.

27.43 The Mayor thanked Mr. Knutson for attending the meeting and presenting the petition. He noted that a request had been made to take the Green amendments to the report on the petition separately and put the first recommendation to the vote which was carried. He then put the second recommendation to the vote which was lost. He therefore moved that the report and the recommendations as amended be approved.

27.44 **RESOLVED:**

(1) That the petition be referred to the Cabinet for consideration; and

(2) That the Cabinet be requested to reconsider its in-year budget cuts to ensure that Connexions services are protected.

28. REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

28.1 Councillor Oxley introduced the report and thanked the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel for their continuing work and their report. He noted that consideration of the matter had been deferred at the March meeting of the council to enable further discussions to take place between the Leaders of the Groups and the Panel. Both the Leader and the Leader of the Opposition had met with the Panel. Whilst the Panel had taken on board the concerns raised in relation to their recommendations for the Members Allowances Scheme, which they were willing to look at as part of their next review, their report remained unchanged. He stated that there was a statutory requirement to publish an agreed scheme for Members Allowances and

in view of the lack of consensus that existed at this time he therefore wished to propose that the Panel's report should be noted and that the current Members Allowances Scheme remain in operation for the 2010/11.

28.2 Councillor Mitchell stated that she also wished to thank the Panel for their work and offering to take into consideration the points she had raised in regard to their proposals which were quite different. However, she could not support the Panel's report at this stage and would therefore be voting in favour of retaining the current scheme.

28.3 Councillor Peltzer Dunn stated that he believed further consideration and understanding of the role of Members was required and that there should be recognition of the Deputy Chairmen's roles within the scheme. He also expressed concern over the question of limiting the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's allowances should they be confined to an extended period of sickness absence.

28.4 Councillor Randall stated that he believed the Panel had undertaken a great deal of work and that their recommendations should be supported. His only concern remained over the question of Child Care and he hoped that this could be looked at further in their next review.

28.5 Councillor Elgood stated that he believed the Independent Panel should be recognised for his independence and whilst he did not necessarily support all the recommendations, he felt it was only right to accept the Panel's report. However, he could not vote for the report on this occasion as the recommendations were based on a 1% increase to the Basic Allowance' and he felt that this was inappropriate in the current economic climate.

28.6 Councillor Oxley noted the comments and stated that he did not feel it was beneficial for the council to seek to amend the Panel's recommendations at this point in time. He believed that it was better for the Panel to complete its next review and report to council in the New Year, having taken on board the concerns expressed at the Governance Committee and by the Leaders and in the meantime to retain the current scheme.

28.7 The Mayor stated that in view of the differing recommendations detailed in the Acting Director's report, he proposed to take a recorded vote and asked Members to indicate their preference for either recommendation.

	NAME	**FOR** Rec 2.1 (i)	**FOR** Rec 2.1 (ii)	**AGAINST**	**ABSTAIN**
Cllr	**Alford**		✓		
	Allen		✓		
	Barnett		✓		
	Bennett	Absent			
	Brown		✓		
	Carden		✓		
	Caulfield		✓		
	Cobb		✓		
	Davey	✓			

	Davis		✓		
	Deane	✓			
	Drake	Absent			
	Duncan	✓			
	Elgood				-
	Fallon-Khan		✓		
	Fryer	✓			
	Hamilton		✓		
	Harmer-Strange		✓		
	Hawkes		✓		
	Hyde		✓		
	Janio		✓		
	Kemble		✓		
	Kennedy	✓			
	Kitcat	✓			
	Lepper		✓		
	Marsh		✓		
	McCaffery		✓		
	Meadows		✓		
	Mears		✓		
	Mitchell		✓		
	Morgan		✓		
	Norman, Ann		✓		
	Norman, Ken		✓		
	Older		✓		
	Oxley		✓		
	Peltzer Dunn		✓		
	Phillips	✓			
	Pidgeon		✓		
	Randall	✓			
	Rufus	✓			
	Simpson		✓		
	Simson		✓		
	Smart		✓		
	Smith		✓		
	Steedman	✓			
	Theobald, Carol		✓		
	Theobald, Geoffrey		✓		
	Turton		✓		
	Wakefield-Jarrett	✓			
	Watkins				-
	Wells		✓		
	West	✓			
	Wrighton	✓			
	Young		✓		
	Total	**13**	**37**		**2**

28.8 The Mayor confirmed that the recommendation to note the Independent Remuneration Panel's report and approve the current Members Allowances Scheme had been carried. He then put the remaining recommendations to the vote which were carried.

28.9 **RESOLVED:**

(1) That the IRP's recommendations be noted and that the existing Members' Allowances Scheme be adopted for the payment of allowances in 2010/11;

(2) That the Independent Remuneration Panel be thanked for their work and it be noted that the Panel would be reporting in March 2011;

(3) That the Chief Executive be authorised to issue the Brighton & Hove Members' Allowances Scheme in accordance with the regulations; and

(4) That the allowance payable to each of the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel be increased by the council's salary inflation of 1% in 2009 with effect from 14 May 2010 in recognition of their time commitment and their important role.

29. REPORTS OF THE CABINET, CABINET MEMBER MEETINGS AND COMMITTEES.

(a) Callover

29.1 The following items on the agenda were reserved for discussion:

Item 32 - Environmental Industries – Scrutiny Panel Report
Item 33 - Street Access Issues – scrutiny Panel Report
Item 34 - Winter Service Plan – Scrutiny Panel Report
Item 35 - Annual Audit Report
Item 36 - Consequential Changes to Procedural Rules in the Constitution
Item 38 - Member Appointment to the Sussex Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority

(b) Receipt and/or Approval of Reports

29.2 The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that Item No's. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, and 38 had been reserved for discussion; and

29.3 The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that the following reports on the agenda with the recommendations therein had been approved and adopted:

Review of the Code of Conduct and Arrangements for the Register of Members' Interests – Item No.30;
Review of the Code of Conduct for Member/Officers' Relations – Item No.31;
Appointment of Independent Members to the Standards Committee – Item No.38; and
Review of Committee Allocations – Item No.39

(c) Oral Questions from Members

29.4 The Mayor noted that there were no oral questions.

30. REVIEW OF CODE OF CONDUCT AND ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING THE REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

30.1 **RESOLVED:** That the Review of the Code of Conduct and Arrangements regarding the Register of Members' Interests be noted.

31. REVIEW OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS/OFFICER RELATIONS

31.1 **RESOLVED:** That the Review of the Code of Conduct for Members/Officers Relations be noted.

32. ENVIRONMENTAL INDUSTRIES - SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL REPORT

32.1 Councillor Randall introduced the report and stated that he wished to thank all those involved in the scrutiny process and the production of the final report. He was pleased to see that the recommendations from the Panel had been taken on board. It was important that the council worked with various partners as well as environmental and digital industries and the universities to take aspects forward. He also welcomed the news of the wind farm that was to be located off the coast and noted that the company involved was based in Brighton.

32.2 Councillor Davis stated that she had found the process to be a very positive experience and wished to add her thanks to the Panel Members and officers supporting the Panel. She also believed that those who had attended the Panel's meetings had found it beneficial and been able to build relations that would not have occurred without the review.

32.3 Councillor Fallon-Khan welcomed the report and stated that he believed the city was in a good position in terms of coming out of the recession. He stated that officers were in discussion with landholders/office accommodation holders with regard to finding ways of releasing available space to enable small businesses to grow and develop.

32.4 Councillor Caulfield stated that in regard to housing, she was hoping to make an announcement shortly about an agreement with an energy company to improve efficiency and tackle fuel poverty.

32.5 Councillor Harmer-Strange welcomed the report and stated that he believed it had led to a number of positive outcomes.

32.6 Councillor Randall thanked everyone for their comments and stated that he believed the whole review had shown the value of the scrutiny process and commended the report to the council.

32.7 The Mayor noted that the report had been moved and asked that the recommendation be agreed.

32.8 **RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

33. STREET ACCESS ISSUES - SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL REPORT

33.1 Councillor Rufus introduced the report and stated that the Review Panel had received a number of representations and it had become clear that where the council had control over the land there was a need to get a better balance for the enforcement regime. He welcomed the acceptance of the recommendations in general and felt that a lot of progress had been made already. He noted that the traders had been willing to find solutions with all the parties concerned and wished to thank all the Panel Members, the witnesses and officers who supported the review.

33.2 Councillor Carol Theobald welcomed the report and noted that the issue of A Boards had always been a matter for discussion and that the Licensing Committee had recently agreed to limit one board to each premises which had had a positive effect.

33.3 Councillor Elgood stated that he wished to thank the Panel for their work which was a good example of tackling an issue that had proved to be an area of frustration for a number of years.

33.4 Councillor Watkins stated that he wished to add his thanks to all those involved in the review and to draw attention to the positive attitude of the North Laine Traders Association who had recognised the importance of addressing the need for access to the establishments.

33.5 Councillor McCaffery welcomed the report and stated that she looked forward to the monitoring report on the recommendations.

33.6 Councillor Geoffrey Theobald stated that the question over enforcement had been addressed and noted that Brighton and Hove was one of a few cities to have a policy covering the placement of objects on pavements and in the streets.

33.7 Councillor Rufus noted the comments and noted that there was a need to move forward on some of the recommendations, however in general improvements had been made and he therefore recommended the report to the council.

33.8 The Mayor noted that the report had been moved and asked that the recommendation be agreed.

33.9 **RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

34. WINTER SERVICE PLAN - SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL REPORT

34.1 Councillor Morgan introduced the report and noted that the review had resulted from the severe weather conditions experienced in December, which had presented the council

and other organisations with a number of difficulties. He wished to pay tribute to al of the council staff who met those challenges at that time and on many occasions went beyond their duties to ensure the city kept moving. The review had looked at how such challenges could be met in the future and he welcomed the Administration's response to the recommendations. He also wished to place on record his thanks to the Panel Members and officers involved in the process.

34.2 Councillor Rufus stated that he wished to add his thanks to the staff and in particular to those at the front-line. He believed that lessons had been learnt and the range of evidence given had enabled the Panel to put forward its recommendations. He hoped that communication processes with the public would be improved further in such instances.

34.3 Councillor Mears welcomed the report and the comments for the staff at the time of the disruption from the weather. She believed that the authority should be very proud of its staff who worked through the day and night to ensure people were safe and services were maintained. The community spirit that evolved at the time showed how people could come together to resolve matters.

34.4 Councillor Theobald stated that he wished to thank the Panel for their work and noted that all the recommendations had been taken on board. He also noted that officers were working with colleagues in both East and West Sussex with a view to addressing some of the points that had been raised.

34.5 Councillor Morgan noted the comments and recommended the report to the council.

34.6 The Mayor noted that the report had been moved and asked if the recommendation was agreed.

34.7 **RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

34.8 The Mayor noted that the meeting had been in session for four hours and in accordance with Procedure Rule 17, he was required to move a closure motion to effectively terminate the meeting.

34.9 Councillor Kitcat requested that a recorded vote be taken on the motion moved by the Mayor, which was supported by a sufficient number of Members.

34.10 The Mayor noted that a recorded vote had been requested and put the motion to terminate the meeting to the vote:

	NAME	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Cllr	**Alford**		x	
	Allen		x	
	Barnett		x	
	Bennett	Absent		
	Brown		x	
	Carden		x	

	Caulfield		x	
	Cobb		x	
	Davey		x	
	Davis		x	
	Degne		x	
	Drake	Absent		
	Duncan		x	
	Elgood		x	
	Fallon-Khan		x	
	Fryer		x	
	Hamilton		x	
	Harmer-Strange		x	
	Hawkes		x	
	Hyde		x	
	Janio		x	
	Kemble		x	
	Kennedy		x	
	Kitcat		x	
	Lepper		x	
	Marsh		x	
	McCaffery		x	
	Meadows		x	
	Mears		x	
	Mitchell		x	
	Morgan		x	
	Norman, Ann		x	
	Norman, Ken		x	
	Older		x	
	Oxley		x	
	Peltzer Dunn		x	
	Phillips		x	
	Pidgeon		x	
	Randall		x	
	Rufus		x	
	Simpson		x	
	Simson		x	
	Smart		x	
	Smith		x	
	Steedman		x	
	Theobald, Carol		x	
	Theobald, Geoffrey		x	
	Turton		x	
	Wakefield-Jarrett		x	
	Watkins		x	
	Wells		x	
	West		x	
	Wrighton		x	
	Young		x	

41

	Total	**1**	**51**	

34.11 **The motion was lost.**

34.12 The Mayor noted that the motion was lost and therefore continued with the meeting.

35. ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT

35.1 Councillor Hamilton introduced the report and stated that a number of internal audits which were undertaken during the year had been reported to the Audit Committee. The Committee also worked with the Audit Commission and had received the Annual Accounts before their submission to the council. He wished to thank the Committee Members and officers who supported it and noted that it had begun work on the management of risk.

35.2 Councillor Oxley welcomed the report and stated that the Committee had worked collaboratively and looked at a number of important issues such as risk management and the counter fraud strategy. He believed it was well placed to be able to work with whatever replaced the Audit Commission.

35.3 Councillor Watkins stated that he wished to draw Members' attention to the importance of risk management and the need for it to be used more widely throughout the council.

35.4 Councillor Hamilton noted the comments and recommended the report to the council.

35.5 The Mayor noted that the report had been moved and asked that the recommendation be agreed.

35.6 **RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

36. CONSEQUENTIAL CHANGES TO PROCEDURAL RULES IN THE CONSTITUTION

36.1 Councillor Oxley formally moved the report in view of the time.

36.2 The Mayor noted that the report had been moved and asked that the recommendation be agreed.

36.3 **RESOLVED:** That the amendments to the Contract Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Officer Employment Procedural Rules as detailed in appendices 1, 2 and 3 to the report be approved.

37. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

30.2 **RESOLVED:** That the appointments of Mr. Peter Rose and Mr. Paul Cecil as independent members of the Standards Committee be approved.

38. MEMBER APPOINTMENT TO THE SUSSEX INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

38.1 Councillor Oxley introduced the report and noted that the Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee was due to be replaced in April 2011 by the Sussex Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (SIFCA) as a result of legislation. The new SIFCA was due to operate in a shadow form up to March 2011 and the Council had been asked to nominate a representative to the Shadow Authority. He therefore wished to put forward Councillor Kemble as the council's representative as he already served on the Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee.

38.2 Councillor Mears formally seconded the nomination.

38.3 Councillor Mitchell noted that Councillor Davis also served on the Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee and had a keen interest in the area. She therefore wished to nominate Councillor Davis as the council's representative to the SIFCA.

38.4 Councillor Hawkes formally seconded the nomination.

38.5 The Mayor noted that two nominations had been moved and therefore put each nomination to the vote, following which he declared that Councillor Davis had been appointed as the Council's representative on the SIFCA.

38.6 **RESOLVED –** That Councillor Davis be appointed to the Sussex Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority for the remainder of the municipal year.

39. REVIEW OF COMMITTEE ALLOCATIONS 2010

39.1 **RESOLVED** - That the revised membership of the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Commission and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee be agreed as follows:

(a) Overview & Scrutiny Commission on the basis of 5 Conservative, 2 Labour, 2 Green and 1 Liberal Democrat Member;

(b) Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the basis of 4 Conservative, 2 Labour and 2 Green Members.

40. NOTICES OF MOTION.

(a) Connexions

40.1 The Mayor noted that the Conservative Group's amendment had been withdrawn and that a Green Group amendment to the Labour Group's Notice of Motion had been moved and put it to the vote which was lost.

40.2 The Mayor then put the following substantive motion as unamended to the vote:

"This council recognises and values the work of the Brighton and Hove Connexions Service that provides high quality, impartial guidance to 13 – 19yr old young people relating to personal development, training and careers and seeks to ensure that young people make a smooth transition to adulthood and working life. It also recognises the specialist work undertaken with young people who have special educational needs.

This council acknowledges that the work of the Connexions Personal Advisors has directly contributed to the reduction in entrants to the Youth Justice System and numbers of teenage pregnancies in the city, where the council's own performance indicators demonstrate falling numbers.

In addition, there have been early signs of a welcome reduction in the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training. (NEET).

Therefore, this council expresses its great concern at the total reduction of £700,000 funding to the Connexions budget that has put the jobs of up to 40 Connexions workers at risk as well as significantly reducing the service to young people and jeopardising the progress made.

It calls on the Cabinet to continue the Brighton & Hove Connexions Service while urgently carrying out the following work:

- To properly examine the government proposals for the future of careers guidance and support contained within the Education Bill, due to be published in Autumn 2010.

- To fully consult with schools as to their capacity and willingness to take on this work and the implications for the transfer of statutory responsibilities.

- To carry out an Equality Impact Assessment to show how the impact of closing the Connexions service will affect service users, particularly those with SEN.

- To take into account the implications of the Government spending review.

- To bring forward a report to Cabinet that sets out how a personal development, careers advice and training guidance service will be maintained in the city and supported so that young people can be best helped to make decisions affecting their future."

40.3 **The motion was carried.**

(b) National Public Sector Debt and Local Response

40.4 The Notice of Motion as detailed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Mears and seconded by Councillor Oxley.

40.5 Councillor Kitcat moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group, which was seconded by Councillor Steedman.

40.6 The Mayor noted that the amendment moved by Councillor Kitcat had not been accepted by Councillor Mears and therefore put the proposed amendment to the vote which was lost.

40.7 The Mayor then put the following substantive motion as unamended to the vote:

"This Council notes with regret that national debt interest payments now total £120 million a day or £44 billion a year. To put this in context, these debt payments are higher than the national schools budget (£41 billion), transport (£15 billion), defence (£37 billion) and crime/justice (£21 billion).

This Council further notes the comments of the Institute for Fiscal Studies that the previous Government's approach to the public finances from 2001 had, even before the financial crisis hit "left the UK with one of the largest structural budget deficits in the developed world".

Furthermore, this Council welcomes the recent comments of the independent International Monetary Fund who have endorsed the Coalition Government's deficit reduction plans concluding that they "greatly reduce the risk of a costly loss of confidence in fiscal sustainability and will help rebalance the economy".

At a local level, this Council welcomes and endorses the work being undertaken to prepare the organisation for expected central Government funding reductions in the Comprehensive Spending Review. In particular:

- The Intelligent Commissioning proposals which will focus scarce resources more effectively on the outcomes which residents want.
- The ongoing work through the City's Public Service Board, towards implementing Place Based Budgets which the LGA estimates would save £100 billion nationally over the lifetime of a Parliament and notes that this would not be possible without an Intelligent Commissioning approach.
- The Value for Money review which will achieve savings of up to £35 million over 4 years with potential ongoing savings of up to £18 million. This will be in addition to the £30 million which has been saved over the last 3 years.
- The Improving Customer Experience programme – working towards a one stop shop for residents accessing Council services.

This Council seeks to reassure residents that these pre-emptive measures put the organisation in a very good position compared to many other local authorities, to absorb its contribution to the national debt reduction programme without adversely affecting vital frontline services.

Therefore, this Council resolves to:

- Endorse the pre-emptive measures outlined above.
- Write to the City's 3 MPs urging them to highlight the innovative work of Brighton & Hove City Council in Parliament.

- Urge the Cabinet to continue to maintain a constructive dialogue with Government, both directly and through the City's local MPs, in order to get residents the best possible deal from the changes announced in the June emergency budget, the CSR and the forthcoming Local Government Finance Settlement."

40.8 **The motion was lost.**

Motion to terminate the meeting:

40.9 In accordance with Procedural 17, Councillor Peltzer Dunn moved that the meeting should be terminated in view of the time and length of the meeting.

40.10 Councillor Kemble formally seconded the motion.

40.11 Councillor Kitcat requested a recorded vote, which was supported by a sufficient number of Members.

40.12 The Mayor noted that a recorded vote had been requested and put the motion to terminate the meeting to the vote:

	NAME	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Cllr	Alford	✓		
	Allen			-
	Barnett	✓		
	Bennett	Absent		
	Brown	✓		
	Carden	✓		
	Caulfield	✓		
	Cobb		x	
	Davey		x	
	Davis			-
	Deane		x	
	Drake	Absent		
	Duncan		x	
	Elgood		x	
	Fallon-Khan	✓		
	Fryer		x	
	Hamilton		x	
	Harmer-Strange	✓		
	Hawkes		x	
	Hyde	✓		
	Janio	✓		
	Kemble	✓		
	Kennedy		x	
	Kitcat		x	
	Lepper		x	

	Marsh	✓		
	McCaffery		x	
	Meadows	✓		
	Mears	✓		
	Mitchell		x	
	Morgan		x	
	Norman, Ann	✓		
	Norman, Ken	✓		
	Older	✓		
	Oxley	✓		
	Peltzer Dunn	✓		
	Phillips		x	
	Pidgeon	Absent		
	Randall		x	
	Rufus		x	
	Simpson		x	
	Simson	✓		
	Smart	✓		
	Smith	✓		
	Steedman		x	
	Theobald, Carol	✓		
	Theobald, Geoffrey	✓		
	Turton		x	
	Wakefield-Jarrett		x	
	Watkins		x	
	Wells	✓		
	West		x	
	Wrighton		x	
	Young	✓		
	Total	**25**	**24**	

40.13 **The motion was carried.**

40.14 The Mayor noted that the motion had been carried and therefore the remaining items would be put to the vote unless the mover chose to withdraw the item.

(c) Support for Neighbourhood-Based Policing in Brighton and Hove

40.15 The Mayor put the amendment moved by Councillor Simson on behalf of the Conservative Group and seconded by Councillor Hyde to the vote, which was lost.

40.16 The Mayor then put the following Notice of Motion as detailed in the agenda proposed by Councillor Duncan, on behalf of the Green Group and seconded by Councillor Randall to the vote:

47

"The Neighbourhood-based policing model adopted in Brighton and Hove has been successful in reducing the fear of crime, actual crime – and improving public confidence in the police and residents' belief that they live in safer communities.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) have played a key role in the delivery of Neighbourhood Policing in the city, by attending Local Action Team and other community group meetings, listening to communities and setting local priorities for policing in line with residents' wishes, and holding regular 'street briefings'.

Their regular patrols are welcomed and appreciated by neighbourhoods across the city, and they have built excellent relationships with all sectors and all ages in the community.

PCSOs do not have the power of arrest, as they are not 'warranted officers' – and this has been key to their success in many ways – not least as they have been able to develop relationships based on trust and confidence rather than power and hierarchies in the communities they serve.

Yet all this is under threat. As a result of successive cuts, by this Government and the last, to Sussex Police's budget, the Chief Constable of Sussex Police has warned that more that 1,000 people currently employed by Sussex Police are set to lose their jobs.

This council expresses its support for the Neighbourhood Policing model so successfully used here in Brighton and Hove in recent years, and its support for the valuable work of our PCSOs.

Accordingly, it:

(i) Requests the Chief Executive to write to the city's MPs, and the Home Secretary, asking them to reconsider any cuts to Sussex Police budgets;

(ii) Urges Sussex Police Authority to ensure that Neighbourhood Policing remains at the heart of the way policing is delivered in Brighton and Hove, and that numbers of PCSOs serving the city are maintained at current levels in the 2011/12 budget;

(iii) Requests officers to consider ways this council could directly fund PCSOs in the city, either through direct sponsorship or through the BID system; and

(iv) Welcomes Sussex Police's commitment to ensure that the proposed cuts in staff are assessed for their impact on equalities as a way of maintaining community support for the way policing is delivered in the city."

40.17 **The motion was carried.**

(d) The Impact of Cuts on Children and Young People

40.18 The Mayor noted that the amendment moved by Councillor McCaffery on behalf of the Labour Group and seconded by Councillor Davis had been accepted by Councillor Fryer.

40.19 The Mayor then put the following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Fryer on behalf of the Green Group and seconded by Councillor Kitcat, as amended to the vote:

"This Council recognises that children and young people are uniquely vulnerable. As a result they mostly depend on adults to voice their needs to government and in political debate, and we acknowledge that responsibility.

This Council notes that proposals by the national government and the Local Administration unfairly target children and young people by:

- Withdrawing funding for Connexions services;
- Restricting child benefit in a way which can unfairly penalise certain types of families;
- Withdrawing free school meals for those families on low incomes;
- Requiring significant cuts to the education budget whilst also preparing the way for increased university tuition fees;
- Significantly reducing road safety budgets when 13 children have been killed or seriously injured on the city's roads;
- Drastic NHS reorganisations and budget freezes which will inevitably impact the city's Children & Young People's Trust.
- Cutting the £1.1m playbuilder scheme that would have seen children's playgrounds across the city renovated or rebuilt.
- Scrapping guaranteed 1to 1 tuition in schools.

Excessive cuts have dampened the economy leading to a lack of job creation which risks a lost generation for our young people

This Council disputes the need for such rapid and hard hitting cuts especially when they affect the most vulnerable in our society and calls on the Cabinet to:

- Reconsider budget cuts affecting children and young people;

- Consider children and young people as a specific 'at risk' group in the equality impact assessment of the 2011-12 council budget;

- Carry out an urgent consultation with schools to assess their readiness to take any further responsibilities and capability to deal with the impact of the National Coalition Government's cuts to Children and Young People;

- To carry out an Equality Impact Assessment to fully show how the impact of cuts will affect children and young people."

40.20 **The motion was carried.**

(e) Improvements to Education Provision in Brighton & Hove

40.21 The Mayor put the amendment moved by Councillor Phillips on behalf of the Green Group and seconded by Councillor Fryer to the vote, which was lost.

40.22 The Mayor then put the following Notice of Motion as detailed in the agenda proposed by Councillor Brown on behalf of the Conservative Group and seconded by Councillor Kemble to the vote:

"This Council warmly welcomes recent developments around schools and education provision in the City. These include:

- The acquisition of the Connaught Centre in Hove to form part of a new 3 form entry primary school in the City.
- The expansion of Davigdor, Somerhill, West Blatchington, Goldstone, Westdene, Benfield, Balfour and Queen's Park Schools.
- The opening of the new Brighton Aldridge Community Academy in September 2010, with the brand new campus due to open in September 2011, representing a £25 million investment in young people for one of the most deprived areas of the City.
- The City's best ever GCSE results, with the number of students gaining five or more A*-C grades including English and Maths, going from 44.5% to 49.1%. Three schools in particular – Hove Park, Portslade Community College and Varndean – improved their results by more than 10%.
- 28% of the City's nursery, infant, primary and junior schools have obtained an outstanding Ofsted rating compared to a national figure of 19%
- 80% of the City's childcare providers have a good / outstanding rating compared to a national average of 68%.

Therefore, this Council would like to place on record its thanks to all the pupils, parents / carers, teachers, childcare providers, officers and partners across the City who have made these successes possible."

40.23 **The motion was carried.**

41. CLOSE OF MEETING

41.1 The Mayor noted that the motion to terminate the meeting had been carried and that all outstanding items had been dealt with accordingly and therefore closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 10.25pm.

Signed Chairman

Dated this day of