



Cllr Jason Kitcat
Brighton & Hove City Council

Date: 20 January 2011

Our Ref: BudCon

Cc Catherine Vaughan
Mark Ireland

Dear Cllr Kitcat,

Joint submission from the Older People's Council, Age Concern Brighton, Hove & Portslade, Pensioner Action and the Pensioners' Association on the council's draft budget proposals.

We write following a briefing from Mark Ireland, James Hengeveld and Brian Doughty on the draft budget proposals to make comment and raise concerns over how the budget will affect older people within Brighton and Hove.

The extremely challenging nature of the cuts required to the council's budget were well understood by all. However there was a general feeling that those budgets relating to 'place' should be revisited to maximise savings to ensure that 'people' budgets can be further protected.

We strongly support the policy retaining current eligibility criteria with regards to accessing adult social care services. This will give peace-of-mind to many vulnerable people and recognises that early support will often save money in the long run as people can retain independence for longer.

There are a number of specific proposals that are worth mentioning as cause for concern for older people. Firstly the future of Community Meals and reassurance regarding the frequency of delivery and quality of the meals provided. Whilst Brian Doughty was able to provide some guarantee regarding this we would still like it put on record our views that the service level needs to be retained.

There has been much in the press locally regarding proposals to reduce public toilet provision. We strongly oppose any reduction in public toilets within Brighton and Hove. Public toilets are vital for older people and a number of other vulnerable groups in society. Surveys have found that around two thirds of older people will not go out as often as they would like due to a lack of public toilets in their area.



Continued moves towards supporting independent living and a move away from residential care homes are of course welcome, as is the freedom that comes with personalised budgets. We would however stress that these kind of initiatives need to be driven by the service users, meet their needs and not be in response to cost-cutting measures.

Whilst there is not a great deal of detail regarding exactly which routes will be affected we have considerable concern regarding any loss of bus routes which play a vital part in keeping older people independent and able to enjoy the vibrant city we live. More than any other group buses are at the centre of how older people move about the city.

We hope you can take our concerns and comments on board in future iterations of your budget.

Yours sincerely,

Jack Hazelgrove
Older People's Council

Isla Robertson
Pensioners' Association

Sue Howley
Pensioner Action

Frances McCabe
Age Concern

