

NOTICE OF MOTION

JOINT AMENDMENT FROM THE GREEN AND LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUPS**FALMER ACADEMY**

The amendment is as shown by the text struck out and bold italics:

“This Council believes that all children should have access to a first class education regardless of where they happen to live and that good education provides the most effective route out of poverty for some of the most disadvantaged children in our society. ***Despite all the main teaching unions opposing City Academies,*** ~~Nationally and locally,~~ both Conservative and Labour parties ***nationally and locally*** recognise ***believe*** that Academies offer an effective means of achieving this. ~~through a vision and ethos based on success and high expectation.~~

In 2008, the number of pupils gaining five A* - C grade GCSEs increased by 2.9% in Academies compared to an improvement of 0.9% in all schools – ***At the same time over 30% of existing academies wer recently described as failing schools by Ed Balls due their low GCSE results.***

There is evidence to suggest that whilst some academies are failing, improvements at others are in part as a result of the changing demographics of the young people who attend them. A survey by Price Waterhouse Coopers shows that between 2002 and 2008 the number of children attending City Academy Schools in receipt of free school meals fell from 45 to 29 per cent. The same report comes to the conclusion that “there is insufficient evidence to make a definitive judgement about the academies as a model for school improvement.” And exclusion rates are much higher at City Academies, leaving local authorities to pick up the pieces for their failures.

Funding for any school is to be welcomed and improving the facilities and physical environment of a school is very likely to have a positive impact on education. However there is evidence to suggest that the vast sums of money spent on city academies could be better spent in other ways such as one-to-one tuition or by giving the money directly to the school to decide how to spend it as happened under the successful ‘Excellence in Cities’ scheme.

The principle of schools only being offered this funding through the City Academies route is unfair and it should be equally available to schools who do not wish to become City Academies. City Academies put the entire responsibility of the running of the school in the hands of a board which is appointed by one person who may not be an educational expert whilst taking the school out of authority control. In other authorities there is a higher turnover of staff and Principals and a lower proportion of qualified teachers at academies compared with other state schools. This has worrying implications.

A significant number of parents who live in the Falmer catchment area have expressed concerns about the appropriateness of the specialisms for their child yet they do not have another local school they can send their child to.

~~Furthermore, this Council welcomes the progress that has been made in developing the proposals for a new state of the art Academy at Falmer and congratulates the council officers whose hard work and dedication has allowed the project to progress so well to date.~~

Falmer High is already an improving school, ***having achieved the second highest value added results in the city last year. Despite our reservations, it is hoped that*** ~~but the proposed Academy will bring enormous additional benefits to the local children and families. and has strong support amongst the wider community. The choice of entrepreneurship and sport as specialisms for the Academy has met with an enthusiastic response from businesses, parents and young people.~~

~~Therefore, this Council supports continued close working with the Department for Children, Schools and Families, the Aldridge Foundation, governors, parents and the wider community to ensure that the proposed Academy makes a successful and enduring contribution to secondary education in Brighton & Hove."~~

This Council therefore

- ***Expresses its concern about the unfairness of the funding support for the city academy as opposed to maintained schools and requests the Chief Executive to convey its views to the Secretary of State;***
- ***Expresses its best wishes for the future success of the Falmer Academy."***

Proposed by: Cllr Rachel Fryer

Seconded by: Cllr Paul Elgood

NOTICE OF MOTION**AMENDMENT FROM THE LABOUR GROUP****FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

Add third point at the end of the NoM shown in bold italics:

"Families surviving on small budgets face many and increasing financial pressures, and while expenditure on rent, heating bills and council tax are fixed, the amount spent on food is in the flexible budget category. The high cost of healthy food is a major obstacle for many parents wanting to provide healthy food for their children.

Healthy school meals can play an important role in tackling health and social disadvantages, but uptake in Brighton and Hove is limited. Uptake can be increased by providing the right eating environment: a 'whole school approach' which sees pupils engage with food throughout their school day, being involved with growing and preparing their food, as well as given the time and space to enjoy eating healthy food together calmly as a social activity. But the cost of school meals can also be a barrier to uptake. Even where young people are eligible for Free School Meals, they don't always take this up as there can be a stigma attached to this entitlement.

This council notes that:

- A 3 year experiment by Hull Council which saw free school meals provided to all primary school children led to Heads and teachers reporting that children were 'more relaxed and better behaved', and 30 per cent of parents said they were trying healthier food at home as a result of the trial.
- The Child Poverty Action Group has called for universal free school meals.
- The Government recently announced a two-year pilot programme which will see free school meals given to all pupils aged four to 11 in two areas over two years, to measure the impact of healthy eating on health, behavior and academic results.

This council notes with concern that:

- 13.5 per cent of children in Brighton & Hove are already obese in the year they start school.
- Less than a third of children aged 10 – 15 in the city eat five or more portions of fruit or vegetables a day.
- A third of Brighton & Hove children are obese by year 6.

- Take up of school meals is around 43 per cent in primary schools and around 34 per cent in secondary schools in Brighton & Hove. More than a third of those entitled to them do not take-up free school meals at primary school, and around half of those entitled to them do not take-up free school meals at secondary school.

This council therefore requests that the Chief Executive writes to the Secretary of State requesting:

1. Funding for pilot schemes similar to that in Hull which will provide all young people at both primary and secondary schools with free school meals.
2. In the event of successful trials, the rollout of a nationally-funded free school meal programme for all primary and secondary students across the country.”

And also:

This council expresses its support for local schools, where they can, to take advantage of European and National programmes that fund free fruit and vegetables in schools and continue to work with all schools to promote healthy lifestyles and healthy eating.”

Proposed by: Cllr Anne Meadows

Seconded by Cllr Pat Hawkes

NOTICE OF MOTION

AMENDMENT FROM THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

“Families surviving on small budgets face many and increasing financial pressures, and while expenditure on rent, heating bills and council tax are fixed, the amount spent on food is in the flexible budget category. The high cost of healthy food is a major obstacle for many parents wanting to provide healthy food for their children.

Healthy school meals can play an important role in tackling health and social disadvantages, but uptake in Brighton and Hove is limited, **as it is nationally**. Uptake can be increased by providing the right eating environment: a 'whole school approach' which sees pupils engage with food throughout their school day, being involved with growing and preparing their food, as well as given the time and space to enjoy eating healthy food together calmly as a social activity. But the cost of school meals can also be a barrier to uptake. Even where young people are eligible for Free School Meals, they don't always take this up as there can be a stigma attached to this entitlement.

This council notes that:

- A 3 year experiment by Hull Council which saw free school meals provided to all primary school children led to Heads and teachers reporting that children were 'more relaxed and better behaved', and 30 per cent of parents said they were trying healthier food at home as a result of the trial.
- The Child Poverty Action Group has called for ~~universal free school meals~~ **entitlement to free school meals to be extended to all children who live in poverty.**
- The Government recently announced a two-year pilot programme which will see free school meals given to all pupils aged four to 11 in two areas over two years, to measure the impact of ~~healthy eating~~ **school meals** on health, behavior and academic results. **However this council notes that Government funding will only cover half of the costs of running the pilots, leaving local authorities and local Primary Care Trusts to make up the shortfall (estimated to be around £5m each).**
- **All schools in Brighton & Hove have achieved the Government's healthy schools status.**

This council **also** notes ~~with concern~~ that:

- **The proportion of children in Brighton & Hove who are obese or overweight in the year they start school (13.5%) is significantly lower**

than other local authorities in South East England. 13.5 per cent of children in Brighton & Hove are already obese in the year they start school.

- Less than a third of children aged 10 – 15 in the city eat five or more portions of fruit or vegetables a day.
- **The proportion of children in Brighton & Hove who are obese or overweight by year 6 is lower than the average for local authorities in South East England. A third of Brighton & Hove children are obese by year 6.**
- Take up of school meals is around 43 per cent in primary schools and around 34 per cent in secondary schools in Brighton & Hove. More than a third of those entitled to them do not take-up free school meals at primary school, and around half of those entitled to them do not take-up free school meals at secondary school.

This council therefore **states its support to: requests that the** Chief Executive ~~writes to the Secretary of State requesting:~~

~~1. Funding for pilot schemes similar to that in Hull which will provide all young people at both primary and secondary schools with free school meals.~~

~~2. In the event of successful trials, the rollout of a nationally-funded free school meal programme for all primary and secondary students across the country.”~~

- **Continue to promote the uptake of free school meals amongst those who are eligible**
- **Continue to promote and publicise the school meals service and to work with the contractor, and schools not covered by the contract, to improve the quality and choice on offer.**
- **Monitor the outcomes of the two-year Government pilot to establish whether eating school meals has any substantial impact on health, behaviour and academic results of school children.**

Proposed by: Cllr. Vanessa Brown

Seconded by: Cllr. Trevor Alford

NOTICE OF MOTION

AMENDMENT FROM THE GREEN GROUP

CREDIT CRUCNH

Amend the motion by striking out text and inserting new text as shown in bold italics:

“This Council:

Recognises that the world economy is entering a period of significant downturn and Britain, and more particularly Brighton & Hove, is likely to feel the effects of the difficult financial times. Independent forecasts from the IMF and European Commission predict that Britain’s economy is very poorly positioned to weather the economic storm, despite Government claims to the contrary.

Believes that local business and jobs are vital to the continued prosperity of Brighton & Hove and the Council has a duty to support the local economy ***protect and enhance the city’s social, environmental and economic well being***. This Council is therefore delighted to be taking prompt action by offering local businesses a ‘recession relief’ package which includes a range of measures designed to help hundreds of businesses with cash flow as the credit crunch tightens. These measures have been widely welcomed.

Recognises the importance of continued publicity of help available to city businesses from local and central government.

Welcomes the agreement by utility companies to match the council’s decision to cease all major city centre roadworks from 5 December until the end of the Christmas period; this will have a positive impact on local businesses as access the city centre will be improved for Christmas shoppers.

Notes with concern that one of the most serious consequences of the credit crunch has been its damaging impact on the housing market and homeowners. Some people in Brighton & Hove may struggle to make mortgage repayments and risk being evicted from their own homes, which would create a demand on many of the council’s services, particularly the homelessness services.

Acknowledges and welcomes the investigatory work already being undertaken by the Council’s Administration to consider the feasibility of a local scheme to help homeowners deal with the effects of the serious economic downturn.

Despite having taken a number of steps to support the economy of Brighton & Hove, the Council continues to investigate what more it can do. ***In particular this Council will welcome consideration of development initiatives that create employment and increase social capacity while seeking to reduce the negative effects of the economic downturn, rising energy costs and rising carbon dioxide emissions. In consideration of such initiatives the Council’s possible role as an enabler***

COUNCIL

4 December 2008

Agenda Item 40(e)

Brighton & Hove City Council

should be remembered while it is recognised ~~but recognises~~ that its powers are limited by the Government.

Therefore, this Council resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to ask her to give councils more discretion to set business rates locally, as suggested by the Local Government Association.”

Proposed by: Cllr Keith Taylor

Seconded by: Cllr Amy Kennedy

NOTICE OF MOTION

AMENDMENT FROM THE LABOUR GROUP

CREDIT CRUNCH

To remove the last sentence of the first paragraph and to replace the last paragraph with a new recommendation as shown with text struck out and bold italics:

“This Council:

Recognises that the world economy is entering a period of significant downturn and Britain, and more particularly Brighton & Hove, is likely to feel the effects of the difficult financial times. ~~Independent forecasts from the IMF and European Commission predict that Britain's economy is very poorly positioned to weather the economic storm, despite Government claims to the contrary.~~

Believes that local business and jobs are vital to the continued prosperity of Brighton & Hove and the Council has a duty to support the local economy. This Council is therefore delighted to be taking prompt action by offering local businesses a ‘recession relief’ package which includes a range of measures designed to help hundreds of businesses with cash flow as the credit crunch tightens. These measures have been widely welcomed.

Recognises the importance of continued publicity of help available to city businesses from local and central government.

Welcomes the agreement by utility companies to match the council's decision to cease all major city centre roadworks from 5 December until the end of the Christmas period; this will have a positive impact on local businesses as access the city centre will be improved for Christmas shoppers.

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Acknowledges and welcomes the investigatory work already being undertaken by the Council's Administration to consider the feasibility of a local scheme to help homeowners deal with the effects of the serious economic downturn.

Despite having taken a number of steps to support the economy of Brighton & Hove, the Council continues to investigate what more it can do, but recognises that its powers are limited by the Government.

~~Therefore, this Council resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to ask her to give councils more discretion to set business rates locally, as suggested by the Local Government Association.”~~

“That this council also welcomes the support package that has been made available to local businesses, by the Chancellor and notes its particular importance for small and new businesses in Brighton and Hove, which includes;

- ***Temporary reduction in VAT by 2.5% to 15%, from 1st Dec to 31st Dec 09.***
- ***Create a £1bn Small Business Guarantee Facility to enable new Government-supported lending by banks for sums between £1,000 and £1m, at cheaper rates and for longer periods.***
- ***Create a £1bn Export Credit Guarantee scheme with the banks to support smaller exporters with short-term working capital and trade finance.***
- ***Provide more generous temporary tax relief for businesses suffering losses – with up to £50,000 of new losses set against taxable profits from the last three years.***
- ***Introduce a new HMRC Business Payment Support service to help with temporary difficulty in paying bills. Paying VAT, corporation tax, income tax and NICs on a timetable businesses can afford.***
- ***Create a transition fund, brokered by (Regional Development Agency) to secure private sector funding for viable businesses with short-term funding issues. In addition, a national £50m capital fund targeted on highly leveraged but viable small businesses.***
- ***Exempt some properties from business rates. From 09-10 – empty commercial properties with a rateable value below £15,000 will be exempt from business rates, this covers 70% of all empty properties.***
- ***£25 million investment fund for women-led businesses.”***

Proposed by Cllr Les Hamilton

Seconded by Cllr Gill Mitchell

NOTICE OF MOTION

AMENDMENT FROM THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP

FUEL POVERTY

Insert a final bullet point as shown in bold italics:

“This Council notes with concern that in 2008, millions of people still struggle to heat their homes properly because of their inability to pay their fuel bills; which are on average more than £1000 annually. The Government’s own figures estimate that the number of ‘fuel poor’ households in England is now higher than at any time recorded since Labour came to power.

In 2000, the Government introduced a Fuel Poverty Strategy and the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act and committed itself to ending the fuel poverty of vulnerable people by 2010, and to end fuel poverty for everyone by 2016. However since 2004, the number of English households in fuel poverty is estimated to have risen almost three-fold, when it stood at 1.2 million. Even the Government now accepts that it will fail to meet its legal duty to reduce fuel poverty in the time frame that it created.

This Council notes with concern that the package the Government announced in September was inadequate and is likely to result in energy companies passing on £910 million in extra charges to consumers.

This Council recognises that local authorities are doing what they can to protect people from fuel poverty. Last month, Brighton & Hove City Council began a programme of works to establish how it could cut the fuel bills of council tenants and increase the energy efficiency of their homes.

However local authorities can only do so much, therefore this Council calls on the Government to fulfil its responsibilities to help the residents of Brighton & Hove who are struggling to pay their energy bills and as a result face a bleak, cold winter.

This Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change to ask him to:

- Take more effective practical steps to help homeowners reduce their energy bills, ensuring additional costs are not passed on to consumers.
- Use OfGem’s powers more effectively to ensure energy companies give customers a better deal.

- ***Take urgent steps with the Chancellor of the Exchequer to extend the Winter Fuel Payment to severely disabled people who are in receipt of the Disability Living Allowance.***

Proposed by: Cllr Paul Elgood

Seconded by: Cllr David Watkins

NOTICE OF MOTION

AMENDMENT FROM THE LABOUR GROUP

FUEL POVERTY

Remove paragraph three and add the recommendation to the end of the NoM as shown with text struck out and bold italics:

“This Council notes with concern that in 2008, millions of people still struggle to heat their homes properly because of their inability to pay their fuel bills; which are on average more than £1000 annually. The Government’s own figures estimate that the number of ‘fuel poor’ households in England is now higher than at any time recorded since Labour came to power.

In 2000, the Government introduced a Fuel Poverty Strategy and the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act and committed itself to ending the fuel poverty of vulnerable people by 2010, and to end fuel poverty for everyone by 2016. However since 2004, the number of English households in fuel poverty is estimated to have risen almost three-fold, when it stood at 1.2 million. Even the Government now accepts that it will fail to meet its legal duty to reduce fuel poverty in the time frame that it created.

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- Take more effective practical steps to help homeowners reduce their energy bills, ensuring additional costs are not passed on to consumers.
- Use OfGem’s powers more effectively to ensure energy companies give customers a better deal.

This council welcomes government, charity and energy provider services that offer information and help to lower fuel costs as well as providing practical advice for people that are finding it difficult to pay bills. This council also notes the importance of getting timely information to residents when fighting fuel poverty and encourages greater awareness of the following points;

- *The Winter Fuel Allowance with over 60's households receiving £250 and the over 80's getting £400, paid directly to them.*
- *Those that own or rent their homes privately and receive benefits can apply for grants of up to £2,700 under the government's Warm Front scheme.*
- *The Citizens Advice Bureau, based in Hove have trained debt advisers to help people find the best solutions for getting out of debt and to pay the bills.*
- *Most energy suppliers now have a charitable trust or fund to help low income customers who are struggling with their bills. These grants could be used to write off existing debt or to help pay off incoming bills.*
- *Many energy suppliers have special, cheaper social tariffs available for lower income households*
- *The provision of an extra winter payment in January for pensioners of £60 and £120 for couples, benefiting over 12 million pensioners."*

Proposed by: Cllr Christine Simpson

Seconded by: Cllr Les Hamilton

NOTICE OF MOTION

AMENDMENT FROM THE GREEN GROUP

FUEL POVERTY

Insert an additional request and two points at the end of the motion as shown in bold italics:

“This Council notes with concern that in 2008, millions of people still struggle to heat their homes properly because of their inability to pay their fuel bills; which are on average more than £1000 annually. The Government’s own figures estimate that the number of ‘fuel poor’ households in England is now higher than at any time recorded since Labour came to power.

In 2000, the Government introduced a Fuel Poverty Strategy and the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act and committed itself to ending the fuel poverty of vulnerable people by 2010, and to end fuel poverty for everyone by 2016. However since 2004, the number of English households in fuel poverty is estimated to have risen almost three-fold, when it stood at 1.2 million. Even the Government now accepts that it will fail to meet its legal duty to reduce fuel poverty in the time frame that it created.

This Council notes with concern that the package the Government announced in September was inadequate and is likely to result in energy companies passing on £910 million in extra charges to consumers.

This Council recognises that local authorities are doing what they can to protect people from fuel poverty. Last month, Brighton & Hove City Council began a programme of works to establish how it could cut the fuel bills of council tenants and increase the energy efficiency of their homes.

However local authorities can only do so much, therefore this Council calls on the Government to fulfil its responsibilities to help the residents of Brighton & Hove who are struggling to pay their energy bills and as a result face a bleak, cold winter.

This Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change to ask him to:

- Take more effective practical steps to help homeowners reduce their energy bills, ensuring additional costs are not passed on to consumers.
- Use OfGem’s powers more effectively to ensure energy companies give customers a better deal.”

Furthermore, it calls on the city’s three MPs to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer asking him to:

- 1. Ring fence the at least £700 million extra he has collected this year in VAT from the increase in domestic energy bills and use the money in***

this and subsequent years for energy improvements to the homes of low income families, including pensioners.

- 2. Impose a windfall tax on the power generators. Price rises apart, UK power generators will reap a £9bn windfall from the EU Emissions Trading scheme, according to Ofgem, which suggests the UK Government tap into this pool of money to help relieve poorer households. Put together the earmarking of the VAT income and the windfall tax will cut energy bills, significantly lower energy use, reduce the national carbon footprint and create thousands of jobs.***

Proposed by: Cllr Bill Randall

Seconded by: Cllr Amy Kennedy

NOTICE OF MOTION

AMENDMENT FROM THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP

GOVERNMENT SURVEILLANCE OF COMMUNICATIONS – THE DATA BASE STATE

Insert a final bullet point as shown in bold italics:

“This Council notes with grave concern the Home Secretary’s recent announcement of an Interception Modernisation Programme which will establish a central database of the electronic communications data records of all individuals in Britain. The proposals are as a result of the Government’s adoption into UK law of the EU Data Retention Directive 2006, which requires the introduction of such a scheme for internet communications by 1st April 2009. A public consultation on the proposals is due to take place in early 2009.

Whilst this Council recognises the increasingly complex nature of investigating the terrorist threat, it believes that a database of this sort would represent a serious and unnecessary infringement of the ancient and hard-fought civil liberties of the people of Brighton & Hove and the rest of the country.

This Council agrees with the Information Commissioner who stated recently that such proposals would be “a step too far for the British way of life”. Indeed, such an approach is counter-productive and hands a moral victory to the terrorists, and their apologists, who oppose the very democratic principles upon which our liberal society is founded.

This Council expresses concern with the proposals on the following grounds:

- Cost – Government IT schemes are notoriously expensive. Initial estimates put the potential costs of the Interception Modernisation Programme at up to £12 billion.
- Data security – The Government has an abysmal record of protecting personal information and sensitive data. Indeed, the Prime Minister recently admitted that “we cannot promise that every single item of information will always be safe”.
- Efficacy – a recent report from the U.S. National Academies concluded that such a surveillance system would be inefficient, would create huge numbers of false leads and would be highly unlikely to detect or pre-empt terrorist attacks.
- Surveillance overload – this is another in a long line of intrusive surveillance measures introduced or proposed by this government such as ID cards, the National DNA Database (which stores the DNA of innocent people) and the Contact Point child database.

Therefore, this Council instructs the Chief Executive:

- To write to the Local Government Association and the Office of the Information Commissioner, requesting that they join the council in conveying to the

Government their concern about the potential adverse impact on civil liberties of establishing a central electronic database.

- ***To express the views set out in this motion as part of the Home Office's consultation on the secondary legislation for ID Cards, which amongst other issues is seeking comment on the information held on the National Identity Register and the agencies required to share information held on citizens.***

Proposed by: Cllr Paul Elgood

Seconded by: Cllr David Watkins

NOTICE OF MOTION

AMENDMENT FROM THE GREEN GROUPGOVERNMENT SURVEILLANCE OF COMMUNICATIONS – THE DATA BASE
STATE

Insert after the current second paragraph:

Notes that Home Office ministers describe the Intercept Modernisation Programme as a 'cross-government programme' which will lead to unprecedented data sharing of our information in tax records, educational achievements, National Identity cards, the National Vehicle Tracking Database, CORE (the proposed central electronic electoral roll system as well as our personal internet use).

Insert after the current fourth paragraph:

This Council resolves to:

Take no part in any pilot scheme or feasibility work in relation to the introduction of the Interception Modernisation Programme, National Identity Cards or the CORE central electoral roll system.

Insert after the final bullet point:

To write to the Home Secretary expressing the views resolved in this motion and asking her to reconsider her decision to push forward with such a wide array of hugely expensive programmes which threaten our civil liberties.

Proposed by: Cllr Jason Kitcat

Seconded by: Cllr Bill Randall

