

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

OLDER PEOPLE'S COUNCIL

10.15am 18 MARCH 2014

JUBILEE LIBRARY JUBILEE STREET BRIGHTON BN1 1GE. TEL: 01273 - 290800

MINUTES

Present: Mike Bojczuk (Chair), Jack Hazelgrove, Val Brown, John Eyles and Colin Vincent (Vice Chair)

Co-opted Members: Penny Morley (Secretary), Sue Howley

Others Present: Councillor Bowden

PART ONE

58. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

58.1 Apologies were received from Marion Couldery, Harry Steer, Francis Tonks, Janet Wakeling and Jess Sumner (Age UK, Brighton & Hove). There were no declarations of interest.

59. MINUTES

59.1 The following amendments were agreed:

- Jess Sumner (Age UK, Brighton & Hove) had asked to amend the minutes for paragraph 48.2 to change the name to Bea Gahagan and any reference to Age UK should be featured as Age UK, Brighton & Hove, as the organisation is a local charity and not the national charity Age UK.
- Paragraph 49.3 should read "...1.99% Council tax increase"
- Paragraph 49.6 amend to say "JH informed members that the OPC were "non-party political..."

59.2 Matters arising from the minutes:

- Paragraph 50.9 Intergenerational Youth Council meeting, the date had been changed and this would be discussed in Item 62
- Paragraph 50.11 VB had been sent the Accounts for 2013 for Brighton's Women's Centre who did receive funding from the Council
- Paragraph 50.15, to be discussed in Item 60.

60. GREY MATTERS

- 60.1 The Chair had spoken to Harry Steer (who was the Secretary of Grey Matters Productions) and wanted it noting that the Production company had received their £500 grant funding from the Council.
- 60.2 Grey Matters came from a trial organised by the OPC, Age Concern and the Pensioner. The programme was called “At home this morning” and was broadcasted by Radio Reverb. Members noted it was important to find out how Grey Matters would operate in the future, how many listeners there were, how the production company were planning to increase publicity and to find out about their accounts.
- 60.3 This item would be deferred to the next meeting that HS would be present at.
- 60.4 Councillor Bowden was attending the Sloane Court AGM (Sheltered Housing) and would ask tenants how many listened to the radio programme.

61. MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 61.1 The Secretary informed members that the list of responsibilities and Council committees needed to be updated. The Chair had produced a spreadsheet with the list of AFC areas and a list of Council Committees to help members decide what areas could be covered by them. Members who were not present were asked to inform the Secretary of any amendments to the list below. The following was agreed:

OPC member	Council Committee’s and other memberships
Mike Bojczuk (Chair)	OPC website and Housing Committee
Colin Vincent (Vice Chair)	Adult Care & Health Committee, Licensing Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Penny Morley (Secretary)	Economic Development & Culture Committee
Harry Steer (Treasurer)	Secretary of Grey Matters Production, Chair of the Bluebird Society for the Disabled
Jack Hazelgrove	Health & Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Policy & Resources Committee, working with the Universities on research projects
Marion Couldery	Adult Care & Health Committee
Janet Wakeling	Planning Committee
John Eyles	Environment, Sustainability & Transport Committee
Val Brown	Economic Development & Culture Committee, Planning Committee, LGBT, Women’s organisations/ associations , and other community based work
Francis Tonks	Communities of the Level Forum, Community Safety and a member of the Stanmer Park Committee.
Sue Howley	Communications and The Pensioner

- 61.2 There were proposed changes to the Health & Wellbeing Board; combining this with Adult Care & Health Committee.

There was a discussion about publicising older people's issues at the committee meetings by having OPC members present at the committees. Members were informed that the OPC could also ask public questions at the committee meetings.

The OPC could present information at Scrutiny Panels and put forward older people's issues and ideas.

The OPC could ask for a scrutiny on a particular topic. The process would involve writing to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, who approved the scrutiny panels.

- 61.3 Members felt that during the Budget Scrutiny process there was not a clear enough opportunity to feed in their concerns as the budget presented to members seemed final. Members agreed that they would prefer to shape the budget in the future and be involved much earlier.
- 61.4 Councillor Bowden explained that at present it was uncertain how the 1.99% Council Tax increase would affect services. **Action-** to ask James Hengeveld to present information on the impacts of the budget to services so that the OPC can understand how services had been affected.
- 61.5 **Action** – Job description roles for OPC members at council committees to be sent to out to members.

62. 15 APRIL 2014 MEETING WITH THE YOUTH COUNCIL

- 62.1 The Youth Council meeting date had been changed to the 8 April. Members agreed to take a copy of the Pensioner and the Annual Report to the meeting.
- 62.2 The meeting had been arranged to improve intergenerational working, discuss common issues and work together to improve these. The Chair had told members how successful the Intergenerational Ping Pong Work at Elwyn Jones Court had been and whether this scheme could be expanded to other areas. Would the Youth Council get involved to help with the growth of this?
- 62.3 Members noted that the Youth Council Draft Issues paper highlighted that the new bus times were problematic for students to get to school on time. It was suggested that the Youth Council could invite Mike Best (Operational Manager for Brighton & Hove Buses) to come and speak at one of their meetings. Members heard how sometimes the bus company came to listen to communities about their issues; however it was not possible to resolve all issues.

63. OPC WORK PROGRAMME AND UPDATE

- 63.1 Members agreed the following:

20 May - Local Account and the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment.

The OPC would also have a virtual meeting about the Local Account before the 20 May, to assist with the shaping of the plans. It was suggested that it would also be useful to invite the Pharmacy Senior Lecturer from Brighton University to hear their views.

17 June- Health would be the topic for this public meeting, and the merging of Adult Social Care & Health and the Health & Wellbeing Board. Invite Fran McCabe the Chair of Healthwatch to speak about their views on the subject.

63.2 Members thought it would be useful to be informed about the changes to GP's surgeries to larger clusters and the moving of targets and responsibilities. Members concerns were around how this would affect patients and the loss of personal service offered to some patients.

64. 12PM - COLLATING OPC COMMENTS FOR THE DRAFT CITYWIDE HOUSING STRATEGY

64.1 Martin Reid- Head of Housing Strategy and Development and Private Sector Housing presented the Scoping Paper for the City Wide Housing Strategy. This paper provided information on the city's challenges, successes and timescales to help facilitate discussions during the consultation period and capture points raised by the OPC.

64.2 Key priorities of the strategy included:

- **Improving housing supply** through providing new affordable housing and bringing more empty homes into use
- **Quality of housing** by investing in homes in the private sector, through energy efficiency, enforcement of licensing of houses in multiple occupation and council housing meeting the decent homes standard
- **Improving housing support** by delivering adaptations to disabled people living in the city, supporting independent living for vulnerable people, preventing homelessness and extra
- care housing (as an alternative to residential care)for the increasing older population.

64.3 The strategy would be aligned to the City Plan and the Health Trusts. The final draft would be produced for approval by the Housing Committee, Strategic Housing Partnership, Brighton & Hove Connected and the council, for the end of the year.

64.4 This new Housing Strategy would incorporate the previous Student, Older People's, LGBT, BME Housing Strategies and would have specific sections for families, people with physical disabilities and other groups in need. The current Housing Strategy expires in 2014.

64.5 The city faced many housing challenges which included a growing population, low income economy and the provision of affordable housing.

64.6 Private rented housing was increasing and older people preferred to live in their own homes.

64.7 The city was a popular place to live, with the largest demographic age profile being 20-39 years.

64.8 Homes that don't meet the decent homes standard tended to be older with a single skin house structure, and poor thermal comfort. The council have secured Green Deal funding to help improve insulation in private sector homes which in turn helped tackle fuel poverty. There were over 1,000 properties that were leased by the Council from private landlords.

64.9 A key housing pressure was family home provision. An option for the council was to work with West Sussex to secure grants for family homes.

64.10 There were also commercial changes to the traditional housing associations as Government funding had been significantly reduced, for example from £75k to £25k. This had meant that housing associations were borrowing more and charging more. Government had capped housing associations rent at 80% of the market rent to help deliver affordable rental accommodation.

With this reduction in Government funding, developers who may have agreed at Planning Committee to build 40% of affordable homes within a site, may later change this to 20%; through the approval of the District Viability Office.

64.11 Questions raised included:

64.12 How did the city plan to provide more affordable housing as half the population of Brighton cannot afford to buy property, which has meant the private rented market had increased? Members were told how the new Greater Brighton Economic Board, which consisted of the council, partner authorities, business leaders, University and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) were working together as an investment decision making body to build new homes for the region's increasing working population and more business accommodation. There were other initiatives around the council buying new properties "off plan".

64.13 Sussex University was looking to increase their student intake by 5,000. What impact would this have on the city? Members heard how there was purpose built accommodation at Circus Street Market (the old Co-op site) and the Preston Barracks development. The University would push the positive economic impact to the city by an increase in the number of students. The challenge was how many more students could the city take as housing was at a premium. Student housing provision may need to be sourced from nearby towns which had public transport links into the city. City College also provided student accommodation. The new Greater Brighton Economic Board which included both the Council and university were working together to make decisions on joint housing investment.

64.14 What was the impact of the Bedroom Tax? Members noted that the previous decision of not pursuing evictions was reviewed. The Council were looking at the impacts on a wider scale for Welfare Reform and the loss of private sector tenancies which could result in people less inclined to accept benefits.

64.15 The Greater Brighton Economic Board, consisting of partner authorities, would be able to make decisions on Brighton's housing, was this feasible? Members were informed

that our council could not meet the city's housing needs and therefore had to look at additional sites outside the city boundary.

- 64.16 A member had commented that Sheltered housing was in big demand. Older people would not move from their current homes unless they knew what the options were. Older people felt safe in sheltered accommodation. The Shoreham Harbour development made no reference to an older people's community and more consideration must be given to the aging population. Members heard that in the past there had been a separate Older People's Housing Strategy but with the new strategy there were options available from Extra Care housing, adaptations, mutual exchanges within council housing stock, and down sizing within private housing eg. the Hanover. An event was being arranged in June to capture ideas for the new Housing Strategy.
- 64.17 Provision of information for older people detailing their options was important, as was the opportunity for older people to input into decisions about future housing. Members noted that Public Health colleagues were available to signpost people and GP's would work with deprived individuals/groups.
- 64.18 The Chair presented data that had been gathered on Tenant Distribution by Age Band. This showed that there were more single females. It was important that non-decent homes were swapped for decent homes within the private sector. 99% of social housing is to the decent standard. It was agreed to share this useful data with the council.
- 64.19 It was suggested that data was mapped for student accommodation, houses in multiple occupation and the demographic information of areas; visually it was easier to digest.
- 64.20 Could the council put pressure on developers who say they are unable to deliver the previously agreed percentage of affordable homes or to consider the community's needs and provide extra care/supported housing? Members were told that Councillors and Officers did put pressure on developers at Planning Committee. However developers sought approval from the District Viability Office on the acceptable percentage of affordable homes for that area. There had been cases that the District Viability Office had approved a reduction from 40% to 20% in building affordable homes in a given area. Extra Care Housing was a part of Health Strategy.

65. SECRETARY UPDATE

- 65.1 Members noted that information on Age UK's Lottery Bid was available on their website. There was a National Pensioners Convention on the 5 April, at the Friend's Centre, New England House. AFC were having a steering group meeting in April.
- 65.2 Councillor Bowden informed members that he had forwarded information about a B&H Mental Health Wellbeing meeting on the 22 April. This clashed with the OPC public meeting. Members would decide whether to send a representative to the meeting.

66. MEMBERS UPDATES

66.1 JH would be presenting a talk at the Speaker's Corner on 17 April and informed members of the petition to reject the current plans for an 8 screen cinema at the Brighton Hippodrome building.

66.2 The Vice Chair informed members of his and JH's involvement with the Palliative Care trial at King's College London University and Sussex Health Trust. The trial was due to start shortly.

CV had also attended the National Pension Convention (South East Regional branch) about organisations Dignity Codes and promoting these both nationally and locally.

66.3 SH attended the Big Lottery Fund follow up bid organised by Age UK, Brighton & Hove. There were several services involved in the bid.

The Spring Issue of the Pensioner magazine was being distributed. There was a deficit of £800. The magazine was looking to subscribing to readers, for £10 per year having copies delivered by post to make the magazine more financially sustainable.

66.4 JE had attended the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee where the Brighton & Hove Allotment Strategy was heard, the strategy would give a wider variety of choices to residents. Phase 2 of the 20 mph was being consulted on and there were problems with the safety barriers at a school on Dyke Road.

66.5 VB attended the Brighton Women's Centre - International Women's Day; the Centre should consider also support the needs of older women.

66.6 MB updated members on the new style of the OPC website.

67. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

67.1 There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at 1.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of