

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

OLDER PEOPLE'S COUNCIL

10.15am 16 FEBRUARY 2016

CONFERENCE ROOM 2, JUBILEE LIBRARY, JUBILEE STREET, BRIGHTON

MINUTES

Present: Mike Bojczuk (Chair), Penny Morley, Colin Vincent, Francis Tonks, John Eyles and Lynne Shields

Co-opted Members: Jack Hazelgrove (Older People's Council)

PART ONE

171 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

The Chair welcomed everyone to this public meeting.

Apologies were received from Nick Goslett and Cllr Karen Barford.

When asked who represented Withdean, the Chair explained that there were currently a few vacancies in the OPC. He reassured those present that anyone from any part of the city could contact the OPC.

172 MINUTES

There were a few amendments to the minutes of the previous meeting:

Apologies were received from Cllr Karen Barford and Francis Tonks for the January meeting and a representative of Age UK was present.

163.1 add 'and residents' after manager and 'Mike arranged another talk at the HOP50+ on 1 Feb.

Under report backs add

Mike –add 'Also had discussion re: digital inclusion and the use of the roving mike from Grey Matters for case studies re: Fairness'

Colin – add '5 GP practices might close by the end of June due to the Practice Group Ltd withdrawing from their contract with NHS England. It was agreed to raise a question about this at the next Health & Well Being Board.'

The minutes were then agreed.

173 BUDGET - UPDATE ON OPC REPRESENTATIONS

BUDGET - OPC actions re: Budget Proposals

- **P&R 3rd December** - with details of cuts to ASC of £20 million over next 4 years
- **Chair - pulled draft together of Equality Impact Assessments of areas affecting older people.** Equality Impact Assessments on OPC website www.olderpeoplescouncil.org
- **9th December - OPC wrote to Head of Adult Social Care** - with detailed points with regard to the impact on older people of the proposed cuts to a range of ASC services.
- **OPC issued a press release - identifying areas of concern to be:**
 Home Care - cuts of £500,000 over 4 years
 Public Toilets - cuts of £200,000 over 4 years
 Community Meals - cut of £34,000 - 171 people currently have hot meals
 Day Centres - Tower House Day Centre
 Bus Passes - restrict use until after 9.30 in morning & 11.00 at night
 Libraries - as well as Hove library, Westdean & Hollingbury affected
- **Article in The Brighton & Hove Independent on 18th December "Older People's Council speaks our over cuts"** outlines the impact of the budget proposals on older people.
- **Response from Denise D'Souza - current client numbers of ASC = 1,100 residential and 2,111 care in the community.** Asked for her to attend January meeting for further discussion about budget impacts
- **The Argus sent press release - no response.** Drafted a note why bus pass changes would be bad for older people and for aims of reducing social isolation - which was circulated.
- **OPC members raised issues about budget & bus passes in a variety of forums** - including AFC Forum, Bus Watch, U3A, Senior Housing tenants, PPG, Healthwatch and other community groups.
- **Head of ASC attended OPC January meeting** - she confirmed that the precept money would be most likely to be used to fill some of the adult social care budget gaps
- **Vice Chair & Secretary went to meet users of Tower House to understand their views on two occasions.** OPC have argued that they needed more time to explore opportunities to cross subsidise the service and explore whether CCG could use facilities.
- **Wrote to all 3 political parties raising our concerns about the budget and seeking support**
- **Meeting with Council Leader on 2nd February where we went through the issues outlined in the letter sent to all political parties.** Given to understand that there may be some change re bus pass concessions and public toilet funding. This has now been confirmed by papers to P&R on

11th February.

• **P&R** 11th February - withdrawal of proposals on bus passes and £50,000 of proposed savings on public toilets put back into budget.

• **Budget Meeting of Council** - on Thursday 25th February at 4.30 at Sussex County Cricket Ground , Eaton Road, Hove. Some further changes to the budget possible at this meeting.

174 FAIRNESS COMMISSION - PROGRESS REPORT

Bill Randall the Vice Chair of the Brighton & Hove Fairness Commission began by explaining that financial pressures would see the council lose £100m in funding from 2010/11 to 2020. This would have a significant impact on services for both older and younger people including the 170 sleeping rough each night.

The Fairness Commission (FC) had been set up to look at how to ensure these diminishing services were delivered more fairly. While its impact was limited, good ideas were surfacing. One of its key purposes was to get agreement with the community and the voluntary sector on how to spend funds. Three meetings have been held and tomorrow the Fairness Commission was looking at the vital issue of Housing. The 16th March meeting would look at Older People and well being.

It was beneficial that the majority of commissioners did not live in the city, as we needed to listen more to people from other locations. They came from organisations such as the GMB, the Child Poverty Action Group and Brighton University. A striking comment from one of the witnesses from the Bevy, a dedicated community activist, was that people should live in the wards they represent. The FC has taken a huge amount of evidence from the community.

The FC has the following Terms of Reference. These are to:

- Examine existing data and analysis to map poverty and inequality in Brighton & Hove
- Evaluate the effectiveness of existing council strategies, with partners, to deal with poverty and inequality
- Engage with stakeholders outside of the council and citizens to understand peoples experiences and priorities
- Examine how the council, with partners, can make significant, tangible improvements to reducing poverty and inequality
- Make specific and practical recommendations based on the findings of this process
- Produce ways of checking and measuring the impact of public services to address poverty and inequality
- Charge the council, with partners through Brighton & Hove Connected, to act on the recommendations of the commission in service delivery and budget setting

He praised the work of Public Health, including Tom Scanlon, including his 'bus route of inequality' which charted the life expectancy gap of 10 years across different locations in the city. Brunswick and Adelaide has the lowest life expectancy which was partly due to the poor housing conditions. The extension of the HMO registration scheme to this area, would address very different issues than in previous areas where it had tackled conditions in student housing.

Members asked what the FC could achieve and whether it was sufficiently diverse. Bill Randall confirmed that it was an ethnically diverse panel and could make practical suggestions relating to areas such as apprenticeships and the Living Wage. That organisations such as Due East had been involved in participatory budgeting and this could be productive in areas where the community wished this.

Members raised their concerns about the relatively high suicide rate amongst older people in the city, that people may not be claiming benefits they were entitled to and the digital exclusion of many older people. Bill Randall agreed that the impression of older people being well off was by and large untrue and that their appeared to be a lot of loneliness and isolation in this age group. The FC recognised that the council was good at delivering some services, while the third sector were better at other things. He was concerned by the much higher than national suicide rate and felt it was vital to accept that many people would not use social media. He agreed to raise the OPC's concerns over the location of the FC meeting in Portslade Town Hall as it may not be sufficient accessible for older people.

Bill Randall explained that the London Fairness Commission was also sitting at the same time and their might be a joint statement from them and Brighton FC about rent controls, such as those in Europe. There was concern that key workers such as teachers and junior doctors could not afford accommodation in the city. A recent survey had found that 18% of social housing in the south east would eligible for sale, which would represent a significant loss of provision and could result in money being taken away from the public purse. He highlighted the changing role of housing associations and that the last housing scheme by Hyde in the city contained no rented accommodation, with the cheapest unit at £300,000 for shared accommodation up to £820,000 for the most expensive. Much had been sold to private investors, rather than producing much needed affordable housing. This raised 2 key questions:

- Who will house the poor?
- Where will our sons and daughters be able to afford to live?

As mayor he had noticed that older people ran the majority of community organisations, which played such a vital role in reducing isolation, but many of these groups were struggling and also looking for people to take on their work in the future. He highlighted the success of a scheme in Alicante which had housed younger and older people together to offer support to each other.

Concerns were raised by members about Preston Barracks including the future housing of Community Transport, whether it would provide any social housing and if the price of the land was a good reflection of its value. It was also suggested that the FC had a final meeting where council officers spoke to the Commissioners in public. Bill Randall then spoke of the need to protect the most vulnerable such of those in receipt of council tax relief. He felt that the third sector should be a supplement, rather than a replacement for council services.

Members also expressed concern whether the FC would just highlight issues and then make recommendations which the council would be unable to fund the solutions. While Bill Randall shared the concern about whether the FC would be able to achieve the impact it would hope to, he thought it would achieve some of the things it would set out to – but it was unlikely to be given a lump sum to do this as suggested by a member of the OPC. One of the outcomes he favoured was increasing community participation in budgeting.

Bill Randall welcomed the increasing digital industry in Brighton & Hove. Although each company tended to have a small number of employees, this sector brought millions to the city. Many other coastal towns envied us for having something other than tourism to depend on. However there were a lot of minimum wage jobs, and the decline of the manufacturing sector had meant the loss of many entry level jobs in that sector. Mike Bojczuk who works in the digital sector spoke of his work with Digital Eagles to encourage older people to become digitally included.

Bill Randall finished by flagging up the city council's equality work. He used the trans equality work as an example. The council is seen as a national leader in this work and other public services and the universities are working with it on transgender needs.

175 AGE FRIENDLY CITY UPDATE

Lynne Shields explained that the Steering Group were being asked if there was a preference to look at sexual health or mental health in the city? They would have preferred to look at both issues, although there was concern that sexual health may be a subject that some older people could find difficult to talk about, given the level of mental health related issues in the city (such as suicide). Given the national focus on mental health and the situation in the city, it was felt that this should be made a priority if a choice had to be made. Age UK were looking for someone to facilitate the Age Friendly Forum. It was hoped that a way forward could be found at the March meeting and the OPC would offer support in any way that it could.

176 OPC BUDGET

Lynne Shields has taken on the role of Treasurer for the OPC. At present they were working with the council to identify its budget and how to gain control over this budget. This would enable them to make cost effective decisions about issues such as insurance and their annual report. They would like to be able to include a financial statement in the next annual report. In addition the OPC had a small grant from the Hedgecock Fund to print materials.

177 SECRETARY'S UPDATE

SECRETARIAL REPORT - FEBRUARY 2016

- **Budget** - Letter sent to Council leaders of all 3 political parties outlining our concerns on a range of Adult Social Care & other issues about the impact of the proposals on older people. Separate note about the impact of bus passes circulated to a range of organisations. Letters sent to The Argus on bus passes not published. Vice-Chair & Secretary went to Tower House & attended meeting with clients re personal budgets and discussed their views about the budget proposal for Tower House. OPC officers met with Councillor Morgan on the 2nd February and went through all of the issues of concern re the budget. Separate item on agenda.
- **Age Friendly City** - As requested, Age UK sought volunteer to co-ordinate the Age Friendly City Forum. One response received but after contact did not wish to proceed. The next Forum meeting in March will need to decide way forward. The next AFC Steering group on 3rd March on Sex & relationships as we age.

- **Fairness Commission** - OPC members attended range of meetings including: Leach Court & St Johns (Hop 50+) and held discussions re issues of fairness and concern to older people. These included communications, cost of living in Brighton, traffic lights and pedestrians, lack of internet use, getting GP appointments, bus passes, housing maintenance, wheelchair users and bicycle problems, lighting for pedestrians at night, access to seats in shops & public areas and public toilets.
- **CCG** - attended meeting on 26th January and asked question in session prior to the meeting about the GP situation re The Practice PLC which has 5 practices. Under the new style inspection 2 "require improvement" (Whitehawk & North Street) and a report is imminent on Hangleton Manor but it is of concern. Patients have received letters about the withdrawal of contract by The Practice and Healthwatch have information on their website about current developments.
- **Health & Well Being Board** - OPC sent a written question for the meeting on the 2nd February re The Practice Group Ltd & the Chair & Vice Chair spoke at the meeting.
- **CSTS Beds - CCG** - The OPC were asked if we wanted to have a lay person involved in the procurement process. After consideration we did not feel it appropriate due to confidentiality issues. OPC officers met with CCG on 3rd February and put a range of issues concerning the procurement process to him re: evaluation, conflicts of interest, quality of service etc. The timetable has gone back. The contract will be covered by ECJ rules and be on CCG website.
- **Review of Senior Housing criteria** - they are developing a new criteria as part of a wider allocations policy and the OPC have been invited to participate in discussion meetings that form part of the consultation. These are on the 19th Feb at Laburnum Grove, 23rd February at Muriel House, 24th February at Sloane Court & 25th February at Walter May House. Details circulated.
- **National Pensioners Convention** - Brighton branch have a meeting 16th February at 2.00 in Brighthelm with speakers from Unison, Labour & Green Parties. National newsletter circulated.
- **Stanmer Park Restoration Project** - due to OPC previous response to a consultation we were approached about the next phase of this project which is creating an activity plan. They wanted to speak on the phone which I did and we await further information about progress of project.
- **Care Quality Commission** - consultation re the way they regulate services in the future. More data & targeting. Current CQC rated as Good show Primary at 81%, ASC at 63% and NHS & Independent hospitals at only 40%. Do we want to respond to this consultation?
- **Caroline Lucas MP** - forwarded a response from the HWBB to her raising the issue of loneliness of older people. Circulated.

Invitations

- **The Changing Face of Equalities** - Community Works - 10th February
- **Active Forever** - taster event for older people on 30th June at King Alfred 10.00 to 1.00. Festival June 18th to 3rd July will including being active as part of Falls prevention.

- **Mayors Fundraiser** - at St Nicholas Church on 26th February at 7.30
- **City Wide Connect** - East meeting on 2nd March, North/Central meeting on 9th March and West meeting on 16th March.
- **Know My Neighbour Partnership Meeting** - 4th February 3.00 at One Church, Gloucester Place
- **Strike a Light** - a range of cultural events re WW1 project during February
- **South East TUC** - Crisis in Care & Caring Tuesday 15th March at 10.00 to 3.30 at Congress House, Great Russell Street

Newsletters/Petitions

- **Later Life Newsletter - DWP**
- **Age Action Alliance - DWP**
- **Portslade LAT meeting & newsletter** from Police. Cuts to community police.
- **Age UK** - Petition re combatting loneliness
- **Age UK** - Cold Homes week 1st February - 408.000 older people in England & Wales died of cold last winter - campaign for warm homes
- **Healthwatch Newsletter** - with Keep Warm Leaflet attached
- **DWP** - contact details for a range of government services e.g. Pensioner Credit etc

178 MEMBERS' UPDATE

- John – attended a meeting of the Environment Committee. He was to attend a meeting with Southern Railway about the potential to integrate bus and rail travel.
- Lynne – has been focussing on budget related meetings. She would like to thank Peter Huntbach and Seniors' Housing Team for the visits. She would like to encourage more new people to become involved and give them a voice.
- Colin – attended the following meetings: Tower House, Buswatch (to outline the OPC position on bus pass times), the Sheltered Housing Action Group, a procurement meeting with the CCG re: short term beds provision & the OPC determining whether to take a place on this commissioning group, the Health & Wellbeing Board to ask 2 formal questions about GP practices under threat of closure and what the HWB intended to do to prevent such a situation happening again. He will be attending an Overview & Scrutiny Committee workshop on GP sustainability on 26.02.16.
- Mike – also attended the meeting re: short term beds and had suggested Tower House as a possible provider & the Health & Well Being board meeting to hear about the GP practices sustainability and the impact this could have on certain patients and communities, as well as the possible loss of services to the homeless. Also been focussing on Fairness Commission work, work with Albion in the Community, a meeting with the Leader Warren Morgan, a digital inclusion meeting with Barclays as well as attending the Tower House meetings.
- Francis – reported on the work by the patient participation group at Pavilion Surgery in relation to healthy eating and a possible newsletter for older people. He was to attend a number of housing and health related meetings including with Andy Winter. He had checked on the OPC phone line.
- Jack – had rejoined Radio Free Brighton and was hoping to set up a session on older peoples' issues.
- Penny – nothing to add.

179 OPC WORK PROGRAMME

March – had invited Mike Holdgate to hear about his work as the Lay Member for Patient and Public Participation for the Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Unfortunately he is not available but can come to a future meeting.

April – monitoring the Home Care contract

Future items could include:

- the City Plan & Housing
- the 5 year sustainability plan of the CCG
- the falls prevention project
- mental health services and older people

180 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Attendees were reminded of the National Pensioners Association meeting that afternoon.

The OPC agreed to post a list of the future public meetings on its website and the next meeting in public would take place on May 17th at Jubilee Library.

The meeting concluded at 1pm.

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of