

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

**OLDER PEOPLE'S COUNCIL**

**10.15am 14 NOVEMBER 2017**

**HOVE TOWN HALL, ROOM G79**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Colin Vincent (Chair), Mike Bojczuk and Penny Morley

**Co-opted Members:** John Cook (Older Peoples Council) and Jack Hazelgrove (Older People's Council)

**PART ONE**

**351 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

351.1 Apologies were received from Francis Tonks, John Eyles and Michael Whitty.

**352 PRESENTATION FROM ANDREW BOAG, BUSWATCH**

352.1 Andrew Boag, Chair, Brighton & Hove Buswatch, gave a presentation.

352.2 Brighton & Hove Buswatch is a local organisation which lobbies on behalf of bus users. Recent local achievements/activities for Buswatch include:

- Saving the Sunday 17 service between Brighton and Horsham
- Successfully lobbying for the introduction of a local one hour transfer ticket
- Putting forward suggestions for re-timing local bus routes
- Promoting bus use in the city
- Working with the city council on the bus network review.

352.3 Current challenges in the city include:

- The Valley Gardens scheme. These may well benefit pedestrians and cyclists, but it will make all bus journeys passing through Valley Gardens slower, with potential negative impacts on bus use and on fares. BHCC is aware of this, although their modelling, which is based on Mon-Fri peak times, does not fully reflect the likely scale of the problem at weekends (which are bound to be the busiest times). The city-wide bus network review

may recommend improvements that go some way to mitigating the impact of Valley Gardens. Valley Gardens may have a disproportionate impact on older people, as they are relatively heavy users of buses. However, it could be argued that older people are less sensitive to longer journey times than other groups (e.g. working age adults).

- Congestion. Congestion across the city makes buses run more slowly, which deters passengers and leads to higher costs/lower profits for bus companies. Congestion issues will be worsened by the Valley Gardens scheme (e.g. buses going north along Lewes Rd will be required to turn right at the York Place/London Rd junction which is already a bottle-neck rather than being able to avoid York Place as is currently the case). Pedestrianisation schemes may also slow down buses.
- Potential future cuts to BHCC support for non-self-financing bus routes (although 98% of routes in the city are run commercially).
- More needs to be done to encourage younger people to use buses.
- New services are needed – e.g. services that link outlying parts of the city directly rather than requiring passengers to go into the city centre and then out again.

352.4 In general, city bus services are excellent:

- Bus lanes work really well in most places (e.g. buses running between Peacehaven and Brighton account for 2% of vehicles but carry 45% of people travelling between the two locations)
- The real-time bus information system functions well. This is jointly co-ordinated by Brighton & Hove buses and by BHCC, but it features input from all bus operators and includes information on all routes. All buses have transponders with GPS that feed real-time information back to the roadside displays via a control centre (unlike many systems which just show scheduled arrival times).
- Brighton & Hove has the highest rate of bus use outside London, with 45 million passenger journeys per year (this is more than Southampton and Portsmouth combined). Lots of this is down to the work of Roger French and to support from BHCC. Operators also work well together in the city (e.g. jointly producing timetables and route maps).
- New methods of payment for tickets via the key card and an app have been successfully introduced. Contactless payment should be introduced in 2018.
- Brighton & Hove is an unusual city: there are lots of students, relatively low car ownership, a tradition of being eco-conscious and a vibrant night-time economy. All these factors encourage bus use.

352.5 In response to a question from the Chair about fares from the Marina car park to the Royal Sussex County Hospital, Mr Boag commented that there is an issue here as the cheap 'Centre Fare' does not cover journeys from the Marina (where there is plentiful

free parking) to the hospital, ending just a couple of stops short. Buswatch is lobbying about this as the Marina has plenty of free parking Mon-Fri when the hospital is at its busiest, and the 7 bus runs regularly between the two sites. It would therefore make sense to do everything possible to encourage people to park at the Marina and take the bus, given the paucity of parking in the vicinity of the hospital. However, the Marina management may not be enthusiastic about this use of their parking.

- 325.6 Mr Boag explained to members that the Bus Services Act (2017) introduces the possibility of creating franchised local bus services – i.e. the local authority would specify bus routes, frequency of services, fares etc. and then invite providers to bid to run a route. All authorities with an elected mayor can set up franchises; there is a route for other councils also, although it is more complex. To date there has been no Brighton & Hove interest in this: there seems to be little need given the high quality of local services.
- 325.7 Mr Boag also explained that there are a few remaining municipal bus companies – e.g. in Reading, Nottingham and Edinburgh. Some of these services are very successful (i.e. Edinburgh which uses its profitable coach tour arm to subsidise general bus fares which are the cheapest in the UK). However there are considerable risks involved in running a municipal bus company, particularly one operating with narrow profit margins.
- 325.8 In response to a question from Penny Morley on the concessionary passes scheme, Mr Boag told members that BHCC supports longer hours of use than are statutorily required.
- 325.9 In answer to a query from Penny Morley on bus shelters, members were informed that BHCC recently signed a new maintenance contract for shelters. However, there have been problems with this and the contract is now being re-tendered. Once a new provider is in place, some shelters will be improved and new shelters may be built. BHCC is happy to take public suggestions on possible sites for new shelters (contact Richard Johnson in BHCC Environment).
- 325.10 Mr Boag told members that bus stop locations are entirely historical and there has never been a thorough review of whether they continue to make sense. However, Birmingham is currently looking at rationalising stops, so this is something that might happen in the future.
- 325.11 The Chair thanked Mr Boag for his informative presentation.

### **353 MINUTES**

353.1 The following amendments to the draft minutes were proposed and agreed:

- 343.3 change 'Possibility People' to 'Possability People'
- 345.6(D) change 'incoming council members' to 'candidates for local elections'

- 345.6(D) change '20120' to '2020'

353.2 The minutes were accepted with the above amendments.

353.3 Matters Arising:

(345.3) Penny Morley noted that she has emailed Community Works concerning this and is awaiting a formal response.

(342.2) The Chair noted that he has met with the manager of the Open Market regarding access to the market toilets. There is an upstairs toilet that is available for use, although its presence is not advertised. There have been problems with drug use and dealing in the downstairs toilets, and maintenance is also required. The manager will raise this issue at the next Management Board meeting.

### **354 OPC WORK PROGRAMME**

354.1 Members were informed that David Brindley (BHCC Public Health) has agreed to speak at the December OPC meeting; and Brian Doughty (BHCC Head of Adult Assessment) at the January meeting. The OPC is still awaiting a response from James Hengeveld (BHCC Strategic Finance) who had also been invited to the December meeting.

354.2 Members agreed that Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) should be invited to the February 2018 meeting to talk about the recently announced CCG Alliance, and also about GP services in the city.

354.3 Members also discussed when best to discuss the idea of the OPC moving to a more membership-oriented model (it was agreed to explore this issue at the previous OPC meeting).

### **355 GREY MATTERS**

355.1 John Cook told members that Grey Matters is progressing. The website has recently been updated, and programmes can now be downloaded from there. The next meeting will be at 2pm on 04 December. The intention is eventually to double the number of programmes produced.

355.2 In response to a query from the OPC Chair on bus advertising, Mr Cook replied that Grey Matters was still awaiting £100 from the OPC to part-fund this project. Mr Cook also confirmed that Grey Matters is not funded by BHCC. Any possible BHCC funding would require Grey Matter to share data on audience size and composition. However, this data is not currently collected and Grey Matters does not have the funding available to commission such work. Mike Bojczuk suggested that some information might be gleaned from looking at Radio Reverb's audience data. Mr Cook agreed to look into this.

355.3 Mr Cook also noted that there are plans to change the Grey Matters tagline in order to broaden its appeal to communities and to younger people.

355.4 Mr Bojczuk suggested that the idea of having individual programmes sponsored should be explored. Colin Vincent agreed to raise this at the next meeting of the Grey Matters Directors.

## **356 MEMBERS' UPDATE**

356.1 Penny Morley

356.2 John Cook told members he had:

- Been in contact with St Vincent de Paul about becoming a volunteer coach driver taking people to and from Tower House. Tower House is progressing well and there may be interest in setting up a dementia café there.
- Attended a CCG meeting on dementia. The meeting was well attended, but almost all those present were providers, to the consternation of the few carers who attended. JC has written to the CCG Chair about the fragmentation of local dementia services.
- Been invited to the House of Lords as part of a friends & families of Travellers event to recount issues with Travellers and the local community in Patcham. JC has also met with Sussex police who are seeking to improve community relations between the Traveller site and the settled community.

356.3 Mike Bojczuk told members that he had:

- Attended an Age Friendly City Forum meeting
- Attended a research meeting at King's Hospital on palliative care
- Attended BHCC Housing Committee to ask a question on ICT and housing
- Attended the South East Forum for Ageing meeting in London. The Forum has recently seen its Government funding withdrawn but has successfully remodelled itself to seek support from businesses.
- MB is currently working on OPC finances.

356.4 Jack Hazelgrove told members that he had recently been watching lots of Brighton TV, particularly the news channel which is very locally focused, and Talking Pictures.

356.5 Colin Vincent told members that he had attended:

- the 18 Oct HASC performance meeting for HOSC and Health & Wellbeing Board members). Support officers will ascertain whether the document pack for this meeting can be more widely disseminated.
- the 23 Oct Age Friendly City Forum
- the 25 Oct National Pensioners' Convention National Council meeting
- the 27 Oct Older People Care Advisory Group

- the 32 Oct Brighton & Hove NPC Action Group
- a 10 Nov meeting with David Brindley (Public Health)
- an 11 Nov meeting with the Open Market Manager
- CV also met with Penny Morley to discuss making contact with community groups to explore possible future support arrangements. Possability People have asked for a copy of an OPC business meeting and minutes so they can gauge the amount of work involved.

**357 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

357.1 Members discussed OPC finances. Mike Bokczuk noted that the OPC account currently has around £900 in it. Three cheques for small sums were recently drawn, but the reasons for the payments were not recorded. MB has recently contacted BHCC to begin the process of drawing-down £5,000 for 2018/19.

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

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