

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

OLDER PEOPLE'S COUNCIL

10.15am 17 OCTOBER 2017

HOVE TOWN HALL, ROOM G79 - HTH

MINUTES

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

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

PART ONE

341 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

341.1 Apologies were received from Michael Whitty.

341.2 The Chair announced that Lynne Shields has resigned from the OPC. Members noted this resignation with regret and unanimously expressed their appreciation to Lynne for all her contributions to the OPC.

342 MINUTES

342.1 The minutes from the 12 September 2017 meeting were agreed subject to two amendments: (1) that Mike Bojczuk be shown as having not attended the September meeting; and (2) that at point 339.1 10/9 'depravation' be corrected to 'deprivation'.

Matters Arising

342.2 **Open Market Toilets.** The Chair told members that he had recently spoken with Cllr Allen about improving access to the Open Market toilets. He had been informed that there is a need for limiting access due to problems with anti-social behaviour. The Chair has also been trying to contact the Market Manager, thus far without luck. Jack Hazelgrove suggested that market traders might consider funding security, perhaps in concert with security for the public toilets on The Level.

- 342.3 **Bus Works.** The Chair had contacted Richard Johnson at BHCC to enquire about the possibility for an additional stop to be added between West St and Palace Pier on the diverted bus route in place while works on North St are ongoing. He was told that the bus company does not want an additional stop as they fear this would cause delays. The work on North St is progressing well and is currently ahead of schedule.
- 342.4 **Grey Matters.** John Cook clarified that Grey matters has received no grant, but has accepted the offer of a donation of approximately £2,000. This has not yet been received.
- 342.5 **STP Presentation.** John Cook asked that the presentation from Tom Gurney (Sep 2017 OPC meeting) be circulated to members.

343 SECRETARIAL VACANCY

- 343.1 Members discussed the vacant OPC secretary post. Since no one has volunteered to be secretary it was agreed that members should seek to split the secretary's duties between them. For example, where the OPC needs to write a letter, this should become the responsibility of the member who raised the issue.
- 343.2 The Chair told members that he had met with Possibility People to discuss them being commissioned to take on OPC administrative tasks, and the potential use of their offices to host OPC meetings.
- 343.3 Members agreed that the promised transitional funding of £5,000 would be required if Possibility People or any other organisation were to provide administrative support. The OPC Chair will write to the Head of Policy, Partnerships & Scrutiny at the council to request that arrangements are made to transfer this money to the OPC by April 2018.

344 EMAIL AND ENQUIRY PHONE CONTACTS

- 344.1 Mike Bojczuk told members that the OPC telephone enquiry line is not working properly. Callers should hear a recording welcoming them to the OPC mailbox and inviting them to leave a message. Instead, there is just a recorded voice asking for a mailbox number. When the number is entered, however, the caller is informed that the line is busy and asked to call back later. There is no facility to leave a message.
- 344.2 Members agreed that the OPC will need to find another way of taking messages when BHCC support ends in March 2018. This could be via a cheap pay-as-you-go mobile phone used only for this purpose. In the meantime Giles Rossington (BHCC support officer) offered to take up the current mailbox issues with the council's ICT department.

345 FUTURE OF THE OPC

345.1 Members discussed the future of the OPC. Issues covered included:

- Whether the OPC should remain a directly elected body; and if so how future elections were to be funded.
- Whether the OPC should re-position itself as a membership organisation; and if so whether there was scope for election to be determined by members once a critical mass of members had been recruited.
- Whether the OPC should seek to form closer contacts with other older people representative bodies: e.g. the National Pensioners' Convention (NPC)
- Changing the OPC constitution to reflect changing circumstances
- Meeting venues.

345.2 Constitution

345.2(A) Mike Bojczuk noted that the OPC constitution would need to be amended to remove references to Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) once the council withdrew its support for the OPC. The OPC was also now free to consider whether it wished to alter its ways of working: for example, members could be elected for each of the 21 city council wards rather than for the current nine areas.

345.2(B) Penny Morley argued that the OPC needed to work out how it wanted to re-define itself before undertaking extensive revision of the constitution.

345.2(C) Jack Hazelgrove noted that the OPC constitution states that members should have a four year term in office. This means that the OPC will need to be re-elected in 2019 (an election must be held within two months of the May 2019 council elections). There is a risk that the electoral future of the OPC will not have been decided by this date, particularly if the OPC intends to lobby prospective council candidates for the restoration of election funding in the run-up to the 2019 local elections. Even if funding was restored, it would not be realistically possible to hold OPC elections before 2020. It would therefore be sensible to amend the constitution to allow for terms of office to be extended by up to a year so as to ensure continuity until 2020.

345.2(D) Mr Hazlegrove proposed that the OPC's constitution at 7. (c) (i) be amended to include the following text: "in exceptional circumstances the period of office may be extended by one year." John Eyles proposed an amendment to this resolution, deleting the text "by one year". The amendment was defeated, but the original resolution was unanimously approved.

345.3 Forming Links with Other Older People Organisations

345.3(A) John Cook argued that the OPC needs to recognise that it is not the only organisation in the city representing older people's interests, and that other bodies have more success in attracting members of the public (e.g. the Older People's Festival). The OPC needs to explore whether it would have more influence in the city if it worked more closely with like-minded organisations.

345.3(B) Mr Bojczuk noted that the OPC is uniquely placed in that it is intended to scrutinise the activities of the city council and has a direct link to council officers and elected members that other bodies in the city do not.

345.3(C) Mr Hazelgrove suggested that the OPC should consider collaborating with the National Pensioners' Convention (NPR), perhaps holding alternate meetings.

345.3(D) The Chair noted that there had been talks with Possability People (PP), to explore the potential for PP to be commissioned to take on OPC administration from April 2018. There was also an opportunity to use PP's headquarters as an OPC meeting venue.

345.3(E) Mr Bojczuk proposed that the OPC continue talks with PP on taking on administrative support roles, and also with Age UK and Community Works. This was unanimously agreed.

345.4 Meeting venues

345.4(A) Members discussed the OPC's failure to attract significant numbers of people to its meetings in public at the Jubilee Library. Some alternative venues were proposed, such as Patching Lodge or Tower House.

345.4(B) Mr Hazelgrove proposed that the OPC ceases to hold its public meetings in the Jubilee Library from April 2018. This was unanimously agreed.

345.5 The OPC as a Membership Organisation

345.5(A) Francis Tonks suggested that the OPC should move to become a membership body, either on a subscription model or as a federation of like-minded organisations.

345.5(B) Mr Cook agreed that there was an urgent need to increase membership, given that only two members of the public out of an older person population of 35,000 had turned up to vote at the AGM. It would be important to build a critical mass of membership before considering any move to a membership-based electoral model.

345.5(C) Mr Bojczuk agreed that the OPC would need to attract a number of members before contemplating membership-based elections. Establishing a facebook presence might be one way to achieve this.

345.5(D) Ms Morley noted that a successful move to a membership model would require a major publicity drive. However, membership elections would be much simpler to arrange than direct election.

345.5(E) Mr Hazelgrove opposed any move away from the current city-wide voting arrangements.

345.5(F) Mr Bojczuk agreed that the OPC should remain an elected body, but noted that the OPC had spoken with the Electoral Reform Society to explore options going forward. There is unfortunately no way to run citywide elections without funding. Mr Tonks agreed that the current electoral model was preferable, but it needed to be recognised that elections are expensive.

345.5(G) Mr Tonks proposed that the OPC further explores becoming a membership organisation. This was agreed (with Mr Hazelgrove abstaining).

345.6 Elections

345.6(A) Members discussed different electoral models.

345.6(B) Mr Hazelgrove argued that the current system of members representing geographical areas does not work well, particularly since members ought not to take up individual 'constituent' cases. Electing from a city-wide list would be simpler and less expensive.

345.6(C) Mr Bojczuk suggested that the OPC could elect a representative from each of the 21 city council wards rather than from the nine OPC areas.

345.6(D) Mr Hazelgrove argued that the OPC should seek to lobby incoming city council members in May 2019 to restore the OPC's electoral funding. If this was successful it would not be possible for the OPC to hold its election in 2019, so members needed to be prepared to delay these. Mr Hazelgrove proposed that the OPC explored the potential for holding elections in 2020. This was agreed (with Mr Bojczuk abstaining).

346 OPC WORK PROGRAMME

346.1 Members agreed that David Brindley (Public Health lead for Age Friendly Cities) should be invited to the December meeting to talk about AFC.

346.2 Members also agreed that James Hengeveld, BHCC Head of Finance (Planning & Reporting) should be invited to talk about the 2017/18 council budget strategy.

346.3 Members further agreed that Rob Persey, BHCC Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care, Brian Doughty, Head of Adult Assessment, and a CCG representative should be invited to the January OPC meeting to talk about the detailed budget plans for adult social care services.

347 GREY MATTERS

347.1 John Cook told members that the plan is to have a weekly programme from January 2018. Discussions have been held with the University of Brighton about the university providing technical support. The coming year's budget has been agreed, and the next meeting date has been set for 13 November.

347.2 In order to raise funds for Grey Matters, a voluntary contribution is being proposed. For example, some of the directors have pledged to give £20 per month.

348 SECRETARY'S UPDATE

349 MEMBERS' UPDATE

349.1 Francis Tonks

- Attended the Pavilion Patient Participation Group meeting
- Attended a Pensioners Association meeting. There was a good presentation by South East Coast Ambulance Trust. However, the event was sparsely attended
- Attended the Older Peoples' Festival open day and sung with the Open Market Choir
- Attended the Trust for Developing Communities Annual General Meeting – there was a presentation from a DR Bird on how getting involved in nature can increase wellbeing
- Attended the University Adult Social Care self-funders group.

349.2 Penny Morley

- **Possability People** - Meeting with Geraldine DeMoulins & Tracey Maitland on 18th September to discuss situation with regard to OPC. They offered free access to rooms and would consider further support if OPC decided to take up the offer.
- **University of Brighton - Collaboration in Ageing Research** – attended seminar on 19th September with a range of presentations about latest research on issues of concern to older people.
- **Local Account** - Community works sent details. Jessica Harper BHCC (Engagement & Health & ASC) requested input from various groups. OPC previously had direct input & Chair to follow up.
- **Older Peoples Festival** - attended the launch on the 25th September at Brighton Station with speakers and photo exhibition. Participated in the OPC Great Debate with pupils of Portslade Academy (PACA) held at the school on the 28th September. Interesting intergenerational debate, Chaired by Frank Le Duc of Brighton & Hove News. Our panel included Phillipa Russell from the National Childrens Bureau. Also attended Trust for Developing Communities event with the Mayor where a film about a range of actives they undertake across the City was shown at Brighthelm.

- **Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)** - Attended “Meet the Governing Body” event on the 26th September. Poorly attended by public but provided an opportunity prior to their formal meeting to question the Commissioners about matters e.g. GP closures, the latest at Woodingdean.
- **CCG** - Attended session on GP practices held on the 27th September at the Friends Centre. Raised issue re Woodingdean closures and the problems this causes for older people. See also Guardian article on same day re GP closures which directly refers to Brighton & Hove.
- **Local Area Team (LAT)** London Road attended meeting on 10th October which discussed a range of issues but in particular issues re policing and drugs and conflict in London Road. Chair had written to Police but we agreed answer insufficient given the number of issues and concerns locally and he would write further about our concerns.

Events to come

31st October - Brighton NPC - Political Parties & Older People at 2.15 Community Base

7th November - Tower House Transition Research on 7th November 11.30 to 2.00 with Possability People.

9th November - GMC Focus Group at Community Base at 2.00

16th November - Mayors Event - Brighton Town Hall - tour of old Police Cells

21st November - Health & Social Care Network - Community Works at 1.00 to 3.30

22nd November - Local Hubs North/Central at 8.00 am at 68 Middle Street

349.3 John Eyles

- Attended West Hove Men’s Group – presentations from British Legion and Blind Veterans UK
- Attended West Hove discussion group

349.4 Mike Bojczuk

- Attended Senior Housing Action Group meeting. SHAG now meets quarterly and is seeking to develop better links with BHCC officers
- Attended Tower House opening. Services are being gradually expanded and now include lunches and a minibus that will pick people up and drop them off
- Attended a safeguarding course
- Attended the Older People debate at Portslade Academy
- Attended an Ageing Research meeting at Brighton University
- Attended West Hove Men’s Group

394.5 Jack Hazelgrove

- Gave a talk to ‘working over 50s’
- Took part in university research proposals panel (proposals include research into ‘super lenses’ for cataracts)
- Attended research group for Adult Social Care self-funders

394.6 Colin Vincent

- Attended a National Pensioners’ Convention regional meeting in London (this focused on the People’s Parliament event in Blackpool)
- Attended a meeting with Possability People to discuss OPC support
- Attended a research meeting at Brighton University

- Attended a HOSC STP working group meeting (Carl Walker presented his Brighton Citizen Health Survey)
- Attended the Older People Festival launch
- Attended the Older People debate at Portslade Academy
- Attended and presented a trophy at the Action for Life event (discussed with the city mayor her possible attendance at an OPC event: e.g. in 2018 top celebrate 15 years of the OPC).

350 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

350.1 There was none.

The meeting concluded at 1pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

1.

2.

A.

B.