

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Implement a Policy for the Distribution of Free Sanitary Products to Schools to Counter Period Poverty - Petition for Debate</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>19 July 2018</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance &amp; Law</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	Mark Wall	<b>Tel:</b> 01273 291006
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<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE****1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 Under the Council's Petition Scheme if a petition contains more than 1,250 signatures and is not petition requesting officer evidence, it will be debated by the Full Council.
- 1.2 The e-petition has resulted in triggering a debate at the council meeting, having exceeded the threshold with a total of 1,520 signatures confirmed at the time of printing the report.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That the petition is noted and referred to the Neighbourhoods, Inclusion, Communities & Equalities Committee for consideration at its meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

**3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION / CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:****3.1 The Petition**

We the undersigned petition Brighton & Hove Council to implement a policy for the distribution of free sanitary products to schools to counter period poverty. We see this as an integral part of the Council's Health and Wellbeing strategy.

Lead petitioner: Samantha Whittaker

Additional Information:

Girls and young woman are feeling stigmatised, experiencing bullying and often missing school due to not being able to afford sanitary products. Research undertaken by Plan UK in 2017 found that:

- 1 in 7 girls (15%) have struggled to afford menstruation products.

- More than 1 in 10 (12%) have had to use items other than menstruation products to stem their menstrual flow (i.e. they have had to improvise menstruation towels/tampons).
- Almost half (48%) are embarrassed by their periods.
- Only 22% feel comfortable to talk to a teacher about their periods.
- More than a quarter (26%) said they did not know what to do when they started their period.
- 1 in 7 girls (14%) said they did not know what was happening when they started their period.

Brighton and Hove Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy is to make Brighton and Hove a healthier, more equal city, with a thriving population by 2020 including the goal to improve the emotional health and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

We believe that the provision of sanitary products for all girls and young women at school will remove the stigma and bullying experienced by these young women and help support their educational engagement and attainment in school.

#### **4. PROCEDURE:**

4.1 The petition will be debated at the Council meeting in accordance with the agreed protocol:

- (i) The Lead petitioner will be invited by the Mayor to present the petition and will have up to 3 minutes in which to outline the prayer of the petition and confirm the number of signatures;
- (ii) The Mayor will then open the matter up for debate by councillors for period of 15 minutes and will first call on the relevant Committee Chair to respond to the petition and move a proposed response. The Mayor will then call on those councillors who have indicated a desire to speak in the matter, before calling on the relevant Committee Chair to respond to the debate;
- (iii) An amendment to the recommendation in paragraph 2.1 of the report or to add additional recommendations should be submitted by 10.00am on the day of the meeting; otherwise it will be subject to the Chair's discretion as to being appropriate. Any such amendment will need to be formally moved and seconded at the meeting;
- (iv) After the 15 minutes set aside for the debate, the Mayor will then formally put:
- (v) (a) Any amendments in the order in which they are moved, and  
(b) The substantive recommendation(s) as amended (if amended).