

NOTICE OF MOTION**GREEN GROUP****ACTION ON DRUGS HARM**

“This Council Notes:

1. Brighton and Hove is once again Drugs Death Capital of the UK
2. 44 people died in the City as a result of drugs in 2008, ranking it above London, Manchester and Birmingham
3. This is the 6th time in 8 years the City has topped the list after falling to second place in 2006 and 2007.
4. Brighton and Hove has around 2,300 injecting heroin addicts, who are particularly at risk.
5. The majority of deaths in Brighton and Hove, compiled from coroners' reports, were from heroin but there were also 5 from cocaine and 2 from ecstasy
6. The partial contribution of dangerously strong street heroin to drugs deaths in 2008
7. National research suggests that between one half and two thirds of all crime in the UK is drug-related and three quarters of crack and heroin users claim they commit crime to feed their habit
8. The personal, social and public costs of drugs harm to the City,
9. The value of City frontline workers who assist people in accessing existing services and tackle street dealing.

It notes furthermore, that:

1. The recently published results of a national drugs treatment trial in Brighton and Hove, London and Darlington called RIOTT (Randomised Injecting Opioid Treatment) which gave heroin to injecting addicts in supervised clinics, along with psychological support and help with their housing and social needs, showed that in the study areas:
 - a) Three quarters 'substantially' reduced their use of street heroin
 - b) More than half were 'largely abstinent' and 1 in 5 did not use street heroin at all

- c) Criminal offences were down from 1,731 in 30 days to 547 in 6 months
- d) Spending on drugs was down from £300 to £50 a week

2. The Government stated in its National Drugs Strategy, published last year, that it would “roll out” clinics for the prescription of injectible heroin, subject to the findings of the pilot scheme.
3. The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs calls on the government to make the drug naloxone much more widely available and to allow frontline workers who may witness an overdose to retain and administer the drug. Naloxone is a drug that reverses heroin overdoses long enough for medical help to arrive and has been estimated could save 500 lives nationally every year.

Given the demonstrable success of the recent pilot and national calls for action, this Council now calls on the government to take urgent action that will reduce harm caused by heroin drug addiction in Brighton and Hove.

It therefore asks that the Chief Executive write to the Secretary of State for Health requesting the government to:

1. Honour its pledge to roll out clinics for the prescription of injectible heroin.
2. Respond to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs’ calls for the drug naloxone to be made more widely available.
3. Provide this Council’s Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an urgent report of additional proposals to enable the prevention of drugs deaths on the scale experienced in Brighton and Hove.”

This Council further requests that the Chief Executive writes to the City’s 3 MPs asking that they indicate their support for the actions set out under points 1, 2 and 3 above.

Proposed by: Councillor Georgia Wrighton

Seconded by Councillor Keith Taylor