

NOTICE OF MOTION**CONSERVATIVE GROUP****NATIONAL PUBLIC SECTOR DEBT AND THE LOCAL RESPONSE**

“This Council notes with regret that national debt interest payments now total £120 million a day or £44 billion a year. To put this in context, these debt payments are higher than the national schools budget (£41 billion), transport (£15 billion), defence (£37 billion) and crime/justice (£21 billion).

This Council further notes the comments of the Institute for Fiscal Studies that the previous Government’s approach to the public finances from 2001 had, even before the financial crisis hit “left the UK with one of the largest structural budget deficits in the developed world”.

Furthermore, this Council welcomes the recent comments of the independent International Monetary Fund who have endorsed the Coalition Government’s deficit reduction plans concluding that they “greatly reduce the risk of a costly loss of confidence in fiscal sustainability and will help rebalance the economy”.

At a local level, this Council welcomes and endorses the work being undertaken to prepare the organisation for expected central Government funding reductions in the Comprehensive Spending Review. In particular:

- The Intelligent Commissioning proposals which will focus scarce resources more effectively on the outcomes which residents want.
- The ongoing work through the City’s Public Service Board, towards implementing Place Based Budgets which the LGA estimates would save £100 billion nationally over the lifetime of a Parliament and notes that this would not be possible without an Intelligent Commissioning approach.
- The Value for Money review which will achieve savings of up to £35 million over 4 years with potential ongoing savings of up to £18 million. This will be in addition to the £30 million which has been saved over the last 3 years.
- The Improving Customer Experience programme – working towards a one stop shop for residents accessing Council services.

This Council seeks to reassure residents that these pre-emptive measures put the organisation in a very good position compared to many other local authorities, to absorb its contribution to the national debt reduction programme without adversely affecting vital frontline services.

Therefore, this Council resolves to:

- Endorse the pre-emptive measures outlined above.

- Write to the City's 3 MPs urging them to highlight the innovative work of Brighton & Hove City Council in Parliament.
- Urge the Cabinet to continue to maintain a constructive dialogue with Government, both directly and through the City's local MPs, in order to get residents the best possible deal from the changes announced in the June emergency budget, the CSR and the forthcoming Local Government Finance Settlement."

Proposed by: Cllr Mary Mears

Seconded by: Cllr Brian Oxley

Supported by: Cllrs Young, Alford, Brown, Fallon-Khan, Caulfield, G. Theobald, Smith, Simson, K. Norman, A. Norman, Peltzer Dunn, Older, Cobb, Bennett, Pidgeon, C. Theobald, Hyde, Kemble, Harmer-Strange, Barnett, Smart, Janio and Drake.