

**POLICY, RESOURCES & GROWTH
COMMITTEE**

Agenda Item 6(a)

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Save Hove Library - Extract from the proceedings of the Council Meeting held on the 24 March 2016
Date of Meeting: 9 June 2016
Report of: Executive Lead for Strategy, Governance & Law (Monitoring Officer)
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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of the Policy & Resources:

To receive the item referred from the Council for consideration:

Recommendation:

That the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee give consideration to the petition's request.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**COUNCIL****4.30pm 24 MARCH 2016****COUNCIL CHAMBER, BRIGHTON TOWN HALL****MINUTES**

Present: Councillors Hyde (Chair), West (Deputy Chair), Allen, Atkinson, Barnett, Barradell, Bell, Bennett, Bewick, Brown, Cattell, Chapman, Cobb, Daniel, Druitt, Gibson, Gilbey, Greenbaum, Hamilton, Hill, Horan, Inkpin-Leissner, Janio, Knight, Lewry, Littman, Mac Cafferty, Marsh, Meadows, Mears, Miller, Mitchell, Moonan, Morris, Nemeth, A Norman, K Norman, O'Quinn, Peltzer Dunn, Penn, Robins, Simson, Sykes, Taylor, C Theobald, G Theobald, Wares, Wealls and Yates

PART ONE**98 PETITIONS FOR COUNCIL DEBATE****(a) Save Hove Library**

- 98.20 The Mayor then invited Councillor Mac Cafferty to present the petition calling on the Council to Save Hove Library.
- 98.21 Councillor Mac Cafferty thanked the Mayor and presented the petition which called on the Council to Save Hove Library. He thanked all those that had signed the petition that had now reached over 4000 signatures; he also noted the large amount of correspondence he had personally received on the matter. Previous moves to close the facility over twelve years ago had been abandoned following a local campaign from residents. In relation to the consultation there was some feeling that the wording had been 'loaded', and he was of the view that a more realistic appraisal of the building could see the costs potentially reduce in the context of the work needed to make Hove Museum a suitable relocation site for the service. He highlighted that the building was purpose built and there had been investment in recent years to ensure the building was compliant with modern access standards. He highlighted that there was considerable will in the city to retain the service in the historic building.
- 98.22 Councillor Morgan thanked Councillor Mac Cafferty for presenting petition and stated that the petition suggested the service was to be withdrawn in Hove, instead he highlighted that the service was being relocated to the nearby Hove Museum where the service would be better and have extended opening hours. He noted that the majority of responses in the consultation had been supportive of the proposals and the costs to retain the service in its current location would be significant over the next few

years – the equivalent to the running costs of seven local community libraries. The position of the administration was to retain library service across the city; increase opening hours and entrench libraries as community hubs.

- 98.23 Councillor Druitt moved an amendment to the report's recommendation to request officers to present a worked up financial plan to keep Hove Library in the purpose-built Andrew Carnegie building. He went on to add that the Brighton Society were of the view that the provision would be reduced if the service was relocated to Hove Museum, and refuted the administration's position that the service would not be reduced. He noted that the Green Group's amendment sought to provide a full financial plan to keep Hove Library operation in its current location so that Members could be in possession of all the necessary information before a final decision was taken.
- 98.24 Councillor Mac Cafferty formally seconded the amendment.
- 98.25 Councillor Meadows reiterated that the library provision and service would remain in Hove, and she stated her view that the service would flourish in its new location.
- 98.26 Councillor Peltzer Dunn noted his agreement that the petition should be referred to the Special Policy & Resources Committee on 28 April 2016 as that meeting would be considering a full report on the future provision of the library. He went on to add that it was important the Policy & Resources Committee be provided with a full business plan to ensure that they were in possession of all relevant information before a decision was taken.
- 98.27 Councillor Bewick noted that residents in his Ward would be affected by the proposed changes to Hove Library, and he highlighted some of the literature in circulation in relation to the issue and stated his view that it was misleading. Councillor Bewick went on to add that the administration were aiming to provide a cultural centre for the residents of Hove that would be open 7 days a week.
- 98.28 Councillor Sykes stated that the decision to move the library was a political decision; whilst the service would be moved he highlighted that the building itself would be closed and no longer in use as a library.
- 98.29 Councillor Littman stated that the Green Group were proud on their record in relation to libraries during their time in administration, and they had replaced the mobile library with an improved service; he noted that the Labour & Co-Operative Group had previously tried to close the library whilst in administration and noted that it had been the weight of the resident's campaign that had stopped this going forward.
- 98.30 Councillor G. Theobald noted that the view of the Conservative Group was to see a full business plan at the Special Policy & Resources Committee on 28 April 2016; for this reason they would not support the proposed amendment.
- 98.31 Councillor Barradell highlighted the reduced funding from Central Government and the necessity to take these types of difficult decisions; she went on to add that the Special Policy & Resources Committee would be able to consider a full business plan.

- 98.32 Councillor Wealls noted that the Green Group had not proposed any amendments to Library's budget at the recent Budget Council meeting in February; which would have provided an opportunity to consider alternative funding for the Library's service.
- 98.33 Councillor Mears noted that these types of decisions were political as it was the responsibility of the administration to set priorities and the budget.
- 98.34 The Mayor noted the information and called on Councillor Morgan to respond to the debate.
- 98.35 Councillor Morgan stated that the proposed amendment was unnecessary as a report was due to be considered at the special meeting in April, and that the Green Group had the opportunity to propose amendments to the Library's budget at Budget Council in February.
- 98.36 The Mayor noted that an amendment had been moved and put it to the vote as detailed below:

		For	Against	Abstain		For	Against	Abstain
1	Allen		X		Mac Cafferty	✓		
2	Atkinson		X		Marsh		X	
3	Barford	<i>Absent</i>			Meadows		X	
4	Barnett		X		Mears		X	
5	Barradell		X		Miller		X	
6	Bell		X		Mitchell		X	
7	Bennett		X		Moonan		X	
8	Bewick		X		Morgan		X	
9	Brown		X		Morris		X	
10	Cattell		X		Nemeth			Abs
11	Chapman		X		Norman A		X	
12	Cobb		X		Norman K		X	
13	Daniel		X		O'Quinn		X	
14	Deane	<i>Absent</i>			Page	<i>Apologies</i>		
15	Druitt	✓			Peltzer Dunn		X	
16	Gibson	✓			Penn		X	
17	Gilbey		X		Phillips			
18	Greenbaum	✓			Robins		X	

19	Hamilton		X		Simson		X	
20	Hill		X		Sykes	✓		
21	Horan		X		Taylor		X	
22	Hyde			Abs	Theobald C		X	
23	Inkpin-Leissner		X		Theobald G		X	
24	Janio		X		Wares		X	
25	Knight	✓			Wealls		X	
26	Lewry		X		West	<i>Absent</i>		
27	Littman	✓			Yates		X	
					Total	7	40	2

98.37 The Mayor confirmed that the amendment had been lost by 40 votes to 4 with 2 abstentions.

98.38 The Mayor then put the recommendation to refer the petition to the Policy & Resources Committee for consideration at its special meeting on the 28th April 2016, to the vote, which was agreed.

98.39 **RESOLVED:** That the petition be referred to the Policy & Resources Committee for consideration at its special meeting on the 28th April 2016.

