

PaCC Position Statement: Brighton and Hove Budget 2026/27

Whilst acknowledging the significant financial challenges faced by Brighton and Hove City Council, we ask that Councillors ensure that budget decisions align with the administration's City Values and Accessible City Strategy (ACS), in order to redress the ongoing inequalities that children and young people with SEND (0–25) and their families face, and that statutory duties to this protected cohort are addressed and met.

PaCC continue to share the high levels of parent carer concerns around the significant lack of equitable Social Care Provision for Children and Young People with Learning Disabilities, and high support needs in the city.

Homes & Adult Social Care Adult Social Care:

The proposed closure of Wellington House. Saving 400k

Summary of proposal:

Learning Disabilities - In-house Services (Adults) - In-house Day Service In-house Residential In-house Respite Services In-house Shared Lives Service In-house Supported Living Summary of proposal: Reprovision of in-house day services currently located in Wellington House. This would follow a statutory review of all service users' needs under the Care Act 2014. Reprovision would be sought in the independent and nonprofit sector. If this proposal proceeds, Assessment staff would be relocated to office space elsewhere and the building repurposed or create a capital receipt. Delivery risk & impact: Net of reprovision costs within Community Care budget. Assessment staff to be relocated to office space elsewhere. Capacity in day options market to meet need.

PaCC acknowledge that if the budget is passed then BHCC will carry out a 12-week consultation with the community ahead of a final Council decision on Wellington House.

PaCC ask will the Consultation be fully coproduced with stakeholder groups in the city; PaCC flag the 12-week period may be an insufficient timeframe for this work with stakeholder groups and ask Cllrs to ensure the consultation period is sufficient for meaningful engagement and fulfils Strategic Priority 1 “engages early, accessibly, sensitively, empathetically, flexibly, and innovatively with disabled residents and disabled people-led organisations”

PaCC share key concerns relating to Wellington House and Young adult (19-25) day service concerns.

- **Placement risks** for current and future families using Wellington House Day services; BHCC must avoid a costly crisis model going forward.
- **It is unclear** if any other services housed at Wellington House are at risk.
- **Parent carers** report Ambito is full; historically, Grace Eyre has not supported young people with higher support needs. Both settings lack

suitable physical space and outdoor space for young people with higher support needs.

- **Recommissioning timeline** for Adult Day Services and Wellington House must be considered together; Councillors need access to complete data on projected need. PaCC have been consistently asking for this too.
- **The workforce development strategy** remains unclear.
- **Risk of losing highly skilled staff** is a concern.
- **Direct Payments as a solution to meet social care needs** remain problematic; families cannot recruit PAs, leaving statutory assessed needs unmet. Families feedback they want regular social opportunities for their adult children.
- **Overdue adult annual social care assessments** mean up-to-date info on statutory provision for adults with high support needs waiting on a review is unavailable, including young people with 1:1 and 2:1 support leaving education in July 2026.
- **Wider development opportunities** at Wellington House require a full review to ensure effective use of both staffing resource and the building resource.

Homes & Adult Social Care Adult Social Care: Saving 292k

Summary of proposal: Reducing the demand for council run or council funded services by increasing signposting and redirecting of individuals at the first point of contact with the local authority. This will include utilising alternative offer such as community and voluntary provision in the city. (page 47) Delivery risk & impact: None.

PaCC flag there is insufficient detail in this budget line

- **It is unclear which service users or specific requests would be redirected** and how these fit with BHCC statutory duties
- **Which Community and Voluntary sector (CVS) organisations** have been identified to take up the signposting for service users.
- **What evaluation/modelling of the demand increase on the CVS** has been carried out; what is the confidence level that the transferred needs will be sustainably and equitably met.

Family Help & Protection:

Services for children with disabilities Saving 40k

Summary of proposal: Management, assessment, operations and administration. Direct payments, Family support services and short breaks Summary of proposal: Renegotiate contracts for services for children with disabilities to achieve efficiencies and improved value for money. No impact on service delivery anticipated Delivery risk and impact: High profile with parent carer community.

PaCC flag ongoing pressures across all areas included in this saving proposal:

- **Clarity is needed from BHCC re which contracted providers will be affected**, as the community cannot give informed feedback without this information.
- **Clarity is needed around contract management** for Direct Payment support for families.
- **Families continue to struggle to recruit PAs** and surpluses are clawed back by BHCC, meaning assessed need and statutory duty is not being met in these cases.
- **Workforce development across all areas of specialist social care** needs a robust overview as part of the intended workforce strategy.

Short Breaks:

- **PaCC remind Councillors of the high volume of concern** around Short Breaks; an increasing number of families applied for short breaks in 2025 meaning the overall number of sessions per child/young person was lower than the previous financial year.
- **The Send Us a Break campaign group mobilised both a deputation and a petition last year** to highlight the inequities across Short Breaks; however, provision remained low for families in comparison to non-disabled peers and the HAF holiday scheme. PaCC and the SEND community seek equity in provision for CYP with high support needs.
- **PaCC recognise that the increase in the size of the Commissioning team** and the recruitment of the Designated Social Care Officer are steps to progress this essential area of provision where budgets are sufficient.
- **PaCC recognise the £100k investment that BHCC made to the Short Breaks budget across financial years 2024/25 and 2026/27**; however significant pressures remain. Children and young people requiring 1.1 and 2.1 support remain significantly disadvantaged within the Short Breaks scheme, and more places are needed to address inequity in social opportunities.
- **PaCC ask again that Commissioners work with both Special School and Mainstream Headteachers** to ensure data sets around CYP with complex and high support needs are accurate to inform Short Breaks planning, in line with ACS Strategy 2: 'Organisational data-driven insights'
- **Officers and Councillors cite BHCC's Short Breaks spend compared to statistical neighbours.** PaCC remind decision makers that significant inequities in Short Breaks and Social Care opportunities for Children and Young People remain a serious national failing. This report remains relevant [The Loneliest Summer - Disabled Children's Partnership](#)

Commissioning & Brokerage teams, School Traded Service Team and Home to School Transport:

Summary of proposal: *Due to a reduction in predicted numbers of pupils requiring home to school transport there will be reduction in overall costs. Delivery risk and impact: None Saving – 204k*

- **The Home to School Transport Service continues to work hard to ensure safe reliable travel arrangements that underpin eligible children and young people's access to education**, and we thank them for their commitment. Passenger numbers continue to rise, and the service has seen a 43% increase in children on hired transport since September 2023 to present.
- **PaCC are aware that there are 837 +/- children reliant on hired transport.**

- **A further 110 +/- Personal Transport Budgets (PTBs) are in place** as a cost-effective alternative solution that works for some children and their parent carers.
- **Based on this data and forecasts for Sept 2026, it is difficult** to see where a projected £204k saving would be made.

PaCC asks BHCC to commit that Councillors and Officers will continue addressing gaps in social care for Children and Young People with SEND (0–25) not covered in this Position Statement.

PaCC welcome any communication on any of the issues contained in this document. You can contact us by emailing Fiona England, PaCC Interim Lead fiona@paccbrighton.org.uk

The Parent Carers' Council (PaCC) is a parent-led forum which represents parent carers with children and young people with any kind of physical disability, learning disability, complex or long-term medical/health condition, SEMH (Social, Emotional, Mental Health) issues or special educational need.

The group was formed to enable parent carers to work closely together to help improve services and support. It aims to help parents get more directly involved in the strategic delivery of services for disabled children in Brighton & Hove and now has over 780 signed up members.