

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

CENTRAL AREA HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL

2.00pm 27 JANUARY 2015

BARNARD CENTRE, ST JOHNS MOUNT FLATS, MOUNT PLEASANT, BRIGHTON BN2
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MINUTES

Present: Councillors Bowden (Chair)

Voting Representatives: Barry Hughes (Sylvan Hall), Ann Ewings (Mount Pleasant), Barry Kingston (Hampshire Court), Carl Boardman (Warwick Mount), Charles Penrose (Sloane Court), Jean Davis (Leach Court), John McPhillips (Albion Hill), Chris Row (St James' House), Alan Hale (Hereford Court), Jane Thorp (Highden , Westmount & Crown Hill)

Non-Voting Delegates: Christina Hadleigh (Hampshire Court), Jason Williams (Hereford Court), Clare Barnard (Hereford Court), Viv Crossweller (Highden, Westmount & Crown Hill)

Officers: Becky Purnell (Resident Involvement Manager), Laura Turner (Performance & Improvement Officer), Peter Huntbach (Senior Housing Manager), Graham Davies (Tenancy Enforcement Team), Sam Smith (Housing Programme Manager), Janine Healey (Performance Manager), Ododo Dafe (Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement), Rachel Chasseaud (Head of Tenancy Services), Keith Dadswell (Project Manager), Rebecca Mann (Resident Involvement Officer), John Peel (Democratic Services Officer), Mel Fraser (Neighbourhoods Team), Alice Matthews (Community Projects Team)

Guests:

33 APOLOGIES

33.1 Apologies were received from James Cryer.

34 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

34.1 Barry Hughes noted that at 29.3, the location should read "Hollybank" not Holbank.

34.2 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 December 2014 be approved and signed as the correct record subject to the above amendment.

35 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

35.1 The Chair relayed the sad news that John Melson had recently passed away. The Chair stated that John had been extremely active in the tenant movement over a number of years and his diligent work would be missed.

36 UPDATE ON NEW HOMES FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS PROGRAMME

- 36.1 The Panel considered a report that provided a progress update on the New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme.
- 36.2 Charles Penrose enquired as to the rental price of the new properties.
- 36.3 The Housing Programme Manager stated that it had been agreed to set rents on new builds at affordable rent status that was up to 80% of market rent.
- 36.4 Christina Hadleigh asked if there was any intention to build upwards on low rise properties.
- 36.5 The Housing Programme Manager replied that this was not currently on their programme but may be considered in the future.
- 36.6 Barry Hughes suggested that the development at Ardingly could be named 'Kift Court' in memory of Chris Kift who had recently passed away.
- 36.7 The Housing Programme Manager stated that this was a good suggestion that he would put to the street naming team.
- 36.8 Jane Thorp asked when the draft Housing Strategy might be agreed and specifically, discussion of any proposals on building upwards on medium rise properties.
- 36.9 The Housing Programme Manager stated that discussions on build upwards were at a very early stage and there were no firm plans. It was clarified that the draft Housing Strategy had been approved by Housing Committee at their meeting the previous week.
- 36.10 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

37 LEVEL ACCESS SHOWERS

- 37.1 The Panel considered a report that provided an update on the 6-12 month pilot to install level access showers in ground floor properties that became empty and requires a bathroom replacement.
- 37.2 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

38 HIGH RISE SECURITY OPTIONS

- 38.1 The Panel considered a report that provided information on the steps taken to manage and reduce unwanted visitors accessing low and high rise blocks, provided recommendations on a sustainable approach to manage the issue ongoing and expanded upon options raised such as CCTV systems and concierge service.
- 38.2 Ann Ewings stated that removal of the trades button would not have any impact at Tyson Place as their problems arose from residents providing access and people following residents in through the main doors. Therefore, she did not believe the proposal should be implemented everywhere.

- 38.3 Carl Boardman stated that whilst the removal of the trades button at Warwick Mount had helped to some extent, it had also led to a rise in tailgating and copying keys.
- 38.4 The Performance & Improvement Officer stated that Royal Mail had requested in discussions for the trades button to be available until 5-6pm instead of the current 1pm as they now required access much later. The Performance & Improvement Officer stated that the council hoped to introduce a key fob system that could be monitored remotely and the fobs easily cancelled in cases of misuse. Whilst this was a complete resolution to the issue of block security, it was a step forward.
- 38.5 Chris Row stated that St James' House were in support of the proposals and acknowledged that tailgating was a significant problem as well as unsecure emergency exits.
- 38.6 Alan Hale stated that he supported the recommendations as long as the costs were not passed on to residents.
- 38.7 Carl Boardman asked if the installation of multi steel doors would have an impact on daylight in the premises.
- 38.8 The Performance & Improvement Officer stated that the door design would be suited toward what was best for the building and the doors would have windows.
- 38.9 Ann Ewings asked if leaseholders would be charged for the installation of multi steel doors.
- 38.10 The Performance & Improvement Officer clarified that the doors would be installed as part of the overarching door replacement programme and leaseholders would be charged under that policy as per the terms of their lease.
- 38.11 Carl Boardman stated his uncertainty regarding the regular reporting of drug litter referenced at paragraph 3.8 as he felt this issue was not often reported.
- 38.12 The Neighbourhood Liaison Officer stated that a significant amount of work had recently been put in to encourage reporting to one point of contact and that information was collated and shared with other relevant agencies.
- 38.13 Carl Boardman stated that he believed a more extensive CCTV network would be very costly to maintain.
- 38.14 The Head of Tenancy Services stated that there was no clear case for the usefulness of CCTV as perpetrators of ASB and other crimes often found methods not to be recognised clearly and there were also related privacy issues.
- 38.15 Chris Row stated that St James' House was listed in the report and asked what actions had been or were intended to be implemented.
- 38.16 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement stated that improvements had been made to the car park including wire casing over lights, CCTV, additional lighting and whitewashing and additional improvements may include painting of floors and additional barriers.

- 38.17 Charles Penrose stated that gaining evidence from CCTV was often a complicated process, an issue that representatives needed to be made aware of.
- 38.18 The Head of Tenancy Services clarified that only council officers could view and share CCTV footage with police for the prevention and detection of crime. Residents were not permitted to view CCTV footage and it was a system that could be manipulated for those who knew how to escape detection.
- 38.19 Chris Row stated that he felt there needed to be better feedback on what had been found on CCTV within the scope of data protection and even if the footage did not lead to prosecution.
- 38.20 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

39 IMPLICATIONS OF ASB AND POLICING ACT 2014

- 39.1 The Panel considered a report that provided an update on the new provisions for tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) contained within the Anti-Social bad Policing Act 2014.
- 39.2 Chris Row noted the difficulties in compiling evidence of ASB and conveyed his view that the current legislation appeared to protect perpetrators of ASB rather than victims.
- 39.3 The Senior Tenancy Enforcement Officer stated that under the current legislation, the council had to demonstrate a provision of support to resolve the problem. The Head of Tenancy Services added that the provisions were an attempt to redress the perception of an imbalance in duty of care and support and it was important for residents to be encouraged to report ASB.
- 39.4 Chris Row asked if tenants undertaking a mutual exchange were vetted.
- 39.5 The Senior Tenancy Enforcement Officer confirmed that mutual exchanges were subject to reference checks.
- 39.6 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

40 SHELTERED HOUSING

- 40.1 The Panel considered a report that set out recommendations to better define the aims and purposes of the sheltered housing service following a review conducted in collaboration with the Chartered Institute of Housing in 2013. The recommendations also proposed a name change to 'Seniors Housing- Independent and Community Living'
- 40.2 Charles Penrose expressed his view that Senior Housing should be exclusively for older people as the environment and facilities were not suitable for younger people.
- 40.3 Carl Boardman commended the report that he found to be very thorough. Carl asked for more information on the proposal to convert studio properties to 1 bedroom premises.

- 40.4 The Older Persons Housing Manager clarified that when most of the premises concerned had been built in the 1970's and 1980's there had been a different attitude toward what was acceptable for older people. The feedback from residents had indicated a very clear preference for 1 bedroom properties over studio premises. In practice, there was a far lower take up and demand for studio flats particularly amongst female residents and that often led to a gender imbalance in the population of senior housing. The Head of Tenancy Services added that the shift in policy could also be seen in terms of other issues such as mutual exchange and the quality of the housing stock.
- 40.5 Carl Boardman noted his concern regarding the placement of younger vulnerable tenants as there appeared an inadequate provision of housing to cater for their needs.
- 40.6 The Head of Tenancy Services agreed that individual need was a very complex topic and each person needed to be catered for in different ways. Housing Services were currently identifying and commissioning work into how the problem could be addressed.
- 40.7 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

41 ESTATES DEVELOPMENT BUDGET DECISION

- 41.1 The Panel considered a report that requested a decision on whether to use a bus tour or a multimedia presentation to gather information on the Estate Development Budget (EDB) bids submitted in the area ahead of the main meeting.
- 41.2 **RESOLVED-** That representatives agree to view a multimedia presentation.

42 ITEMS FROM TENANT ONLY MEETING

- 42.1 (Item 1 Estate Inspections) Barry Hughes stated he found the response to be very poor. Barry noted that the Neighbourhoods Team had attended the March 2014 Area Panels with many proposals and none had been actioned to date. Barry added that the Neighbourhoods Team should accommodate tenant representatives more in reporting and resolving issues. Barry supplemented that Sylvan Hall had last had an inspection in July 2014 and no action had been undertaken arising from that inspection.
- 42.2 The Resident Involvement Manager stated that the Neighbours Team Manager had requested that tenant representatives report issues in between inspections.
- 42.3 Barry Kingston stated that various inspection dates had been listed as complete for Hampshire Court yet most had never happened. Barry noted that there was an extremely poor standard of communication from the Neighbourhoods Team.
- 42.4 The Head of Tenancy Services stated that whilst estate inspections were one part of the Neighbourhood Teams work, they were clearly not working as they should. She stated that a review of the service was required and would be done so with proper consultation.

42.5 **RESOLVED-** That the responses provided to the issues raised at the Tenant Only meeting be noted.

43 CITY WIDE REPORTS

43.1 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes and reports of the various Citywide groups be noted.

44 PERFORMANCE REPORT Q3 2014/15

44.1 The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement presented a report that covered Housing Management Performance during Quarter 3 of the 2014/15 financial year. The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement stated that unfortunately it had not been possible to provide the full report, only the briefing sheet although the latter still provided information on key indicators. The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement asked tenant representatives for their permission that representatives were satisfied for the full report to still be submitted to Housing Committee once ready and for any comments to inform the fuller report.

44.2 Representatives stated their approval for the full report to be submitted to Housing Committee.

44.3 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 4.30pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of