

# BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

## WEST HOVE & PORTSLADE AREA HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL

2.00pm 28 JANUARY 2015

MURIEL HOUSE, INGRAM CRESCENT WEST, HOVE, BN3 5NS

### MINUTES

**Present:** Councillors Pissaridou (Chair), Barnett

**Representatives:** Chief Black Bear (Ingram), Roy Crowhurst (Woods House), Simon Zapello (North Portslade), Beverley Weaver (Sanders House), June Baker (Valley Road), Ann Tizzard (Knoll), Alison Gray (Clarendon & Ellen), Mary Moore (Muriel House), Jean Carter (Evelyn Court),

**Non-Voting Delegates:** Vic Dodd (Ingram), Joe MacRae (North Portslade),

**Officers:** Becky Purnell (Resident Involvement Manager), Laura Turner (Performance & Improvement Officer), Peter Huntbach (Senior Housing Manager), Eve Hitchens (Neighbourhoods Team Leader), Richard Jordan-Penswick (Tenancy Enforcement Manager), Jaine Jolly (Project Manager), Janine Healey (Performance Manager), Ododo Dafe (Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement), Keith Dadswell (Mears), John Peel (Democratic Services Officer), Rachel Chasseaud (Head of Tenancy Services), Pat Liddell (Resident Involvement Officer)

### 33 APOLOGIES

33.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Gilbey, Muriel Briault, Arlene McRae, Pat Weller and Julie Fosberry.

### 34 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

34.1 Simon Zapello requested that the comments he had made on anti-social behavioural issues be included in the minutes. The request was agreed.

34.2 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4 December 2014 be approved as the correct record subject to the above amendment.

### 35 UPDATE ON NEW HOMES FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS PROGRAMME

35.1 The Panel considered a report that provided a progress update on the New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme.

35.2 Roy Crowhurst asked if the proposed premises would be set at 60% or 80% market rent.

35.3 The Project Manager clarified that Housing Committee had agreed to set the premises at 80% market rent.

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

### **36 LEVEL ACCESS SHOWERS**

36.1 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.

36.2 Roy Crowhurst asked if level access showers would be removed if a property remained vacant for a long period.

36.3 The Performance Manager confirmed that properties where conversions had taken place would always be advertised as mobility 3 properties.

36.4 Alison Gray asked if it was possible to receive A1 size maps showing the locations of converted flats.

36.5 The Performance Manager stated that this would be discussed with her team.

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

### **37 HIGH RISE SECURITY OPTIONS**

37.1 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.

37.2 Ann Tizzard asked if the cost of security sweeps would be passed on to tenants.

37.3 The Performance & Improvement Officer confirmed that it would not but was provided as an example in the report to demonstrate that the high cost could not be maintained.

37.4 Simon Zapello asked if council employees could conduct security sweeps of blocks as this would be lower in cost.

37.5 The Performance & Improvement Officer noted a concierge service was noted in the report as a potential option should the current proposals noted work.

37.6 Joe MacRae stated that he had been told the trade buttons should be turned off at noon every day and that he had experienced difficulties performing his role as tenant representative because of this.

37.7 The Performance & Improvement Officer stated that the council would work with tenant representatives to ensure they could distribute information effectively. She added that trade buttons were turned off at 1pm and there had been a request from Royal Mail that this be extended to 6pm. It was the council's view that this was too long and would present a security risk to blocks.

- 37.8 Alison Gray stated that other organisations apart from Royal Mail required access through the trades button.
- 37.9 The Performance & Improvement Officer clarified that the council only had a duty to provide access for Royal Mail adding that residents were required to choose if they wanted access to be granted at any time or to be provided through a key fob system.
- 37.10 Jean Carter stated that Evelyn Court currently operated a key fob system and experienced almost no security issues at all.
- 37.11 Tenant representatives conducted an indicative vote on the proposals that resulted in a 6 to 4 majority in favour of retaining the trades button.
- 37.12 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

### **38 IMPLICATIONS OF ASB AND POLICING ACT 2014**

- 38.1 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.
- 38.2 Simon Zapello stated that he welcomed the proposals but that he would also like to see prospective tenants vetted before they were offered accommodation.
- 38.3 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement stated that the council had a legal requirement to provide housing to those that needed it and could not pick and choose who was housed. Furthermore, the council made every effort it could in supporting tenants who had needs often alongside multiple agencies.
- 38.4 The Chair noted that even in instances where tenants were evicted through ASB, the council still had a legal duty for duty of care.
- 38.5 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

### **39 SHELTERED HOUSING**

- 39.1 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'.
- 39.2 Councillor Barnett stated that sheltered housing residents should have first priority within their own blocks when vacancies arise at a lower level and that the scheme should be asked before the premises was advertised.
- 39.3 The Older Persons Housing Manager confirmed that this was a priority in the local lettings plan. The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement added that

applications could be put in at any time and housing could offer support to complete the necessary forms.

- 39.4 Alison Gray asked if the council were working with Access Point for those that had needs but couldn't get accommodation.
- 39.5 The Older Persons Housing Manager confirmed that the council worked with Access Point and Public Health on how to extend the reach of current functions and was part of an emerging change in the sector.
- 39.6 Roy Crowhurst expressed his concern that the application needed a GP's letter confirming the applicant's status when it would be quicker and simpler for the lettings officer to confirm any priority need.
- 39.7 The Older Persons Housing agreed that the lettings process was currently quite lengthy and discussions were underway with the lettings team as to how to address some of the issues.
- 39.8 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

#### **40 ESTATES DEVELOPMENT BUDGET DECISION**

- 40.1 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.
- 40.2 Representatives chose to view a multimedia presentation to assist with consideration of EDB bids.

#### **41 ITEMS FROM TENANT ONLY MEETING**

- 41.1 (Item 1- Estate Inspections) Jean Carter stated that she found the council's performance on this issue as very poor and an estate inspection had not been carried out at Evelyn Court for a very long time.
- 41.2 Joe MacRae stated that the estate inspection process appeared not to be working at all.
- 41.3 Chief Black Bear stated that the last estate inspection at Ingram Court had been in 2013. There had been several planned inspections scheduled but no council officers had turned up.
- 41.4 Alison stated that Clarendon & Ellen were experiencing the same problems and notification was often advertised that the inspections had been completed with no clear evidence of that being the case.
- 41.5 It was agreed to relay these issues to the Neighbourhoods Team for resolution.

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

**42 CITY WIDE REPORTS**

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

**43 PERFORMANCE REPORT Q3 2014/15**

43.1 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.

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

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

The meeting concluded at 4.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of