

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: NORTH AREA

7.00pm 4 FEBRUARY 2016

ST GEORGES HALL, NEWICK ROAD, MOULSECOOMB, BRIGHTON, BN1 9JJ

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Hill (Chair)

Representatives: Heather Hayes (Coldean), John Marchant (East Central Moulsecoomb), Bob Spacie (Laburnum Grove), Barbara Castleton (North Moulsecoomb), Tracey Cox (North Moulsecoomb), John Dean (East Central Moulsecoomb)

Non-Voting Delegates: Ray Metcalf (East Central Moulsecoomb), Jeanne Thomas (Coldean), Walter Sargison (Broadfields), Terrence Hill (Bates Estate), Jane Hunter (East Moulsecoomb), Andrew Hunter (East Moulsecoomb), Carol Hayes (East Central Moulsecoomb), Peter O'Connor (Bates Estate), John McCabe (Laburnum Grove), Glynis Shipley (Nettleton and Dudeney), Paulin Pike (Nettleton and Dudeney)

Officers: John Currell (Asset Manager), Delia Hills (Mears), Becky Purnell (Resident Involvement Manager), Martin Reid (Head of Housing Strategy) Gregory Weaver (Democratic Services Assistant)

Guests:

27 APOLOGIES

27.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Mo Marsh, Tracy Johns, Kath Davis, Jenny Simmons, Paul Wright, Ray Grovel and Peter Hartley.

28 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

28.1 Amendment on page 1 from 'North Castleton' to 'North Moulsecoomb.'

28.2 Page 3 item 6, point 19.40 Barkam Road should be changed to Barcoomb Road.

29 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

29.1 Councillor Tracy Hill, Chair, announced that letter and emails regarding the report discussed at the recent consultation meeting on the 26th January have been sent out. The chair also announced that letters have been sent notifying the panel that K and T Heating Services have been awarded the gas contract.

30 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME

30.1 (Item 1 - Setting start and end dates for repairs and improvements)

- 30.2 John Marchant stated that he was contact by 2 residents requesting a proper survey be taken.
- 30.3 Councillor Tracey Hill suggested Delia Hills meet John Marchant individually after the meeting concluded.
- 30.4 Heather Hayes commented on the length of time it took to get work done on properties. Some scaffolding was up for 5 months before being removed before Christmas. She noted a tenant requested a letter of complaint be written.
- 30.5 Councillor Hill stated that Ms Hayes should talk to officers outside once meeting has concluded.
- 30.6 Delia Hills apologised for timelines missing from the document.
- 30.7 (Item 2 – Scaffolding)
- 30.8 Councillor Daniel Yates, in regards to question 2, expressed surprise that there is an absence of details about time frames relating to scaffolding as the text in the contract is specific to safety issues.
- 30.9 Martin Reed stated the cost of major and planned works is monitored from the beginning and not a running total.
- 30.10 John Marchant stated if the scaffolding firm has nowhere to leave scaffolding, they will opt to leave it at the property.
- 30.11 Rachel Chasseud, Head of Tenancy Services, quoted Mears as having said; until recently they did not have a problem with scaffolding left up due to higher demand. She noted Mears have introduced new systems such as introducing penalties on contractors.
- 30.12 **AGREED**– that the report is satisfactory
- 30.13 (Item 4 – Review of RIOs)
- 30.14 Terry Hill stated that he raised this question at a resident meeting; he noted that he was not specifically worried about the resident involvement service rather specifically the officers.
- 30.15 John McCabe enquired if there will be cuts to officers or not.
- 30.16 Rachel Chasseud stated she didn't know yet, she noted the enquiry and offered to respond in due course pending the findings of the report.
- 30.17 **AGREED**-that the report is satisfactory
- 30.18 (Item 5 – State Development Budget)
- 30.19 Bob Spacie stated he attended a meeting with Health and Safety to remove a stud wall and input a shower. He noted a complete misinterpretation of the bad was what was concluded as RIO's do not understand buildings in which residents live. He

stated that he would like to see a resident attend meetings where bids that go out for consultation are discussed so as to clarify the proposal.

- 30.20 Rachel Chasseaud agreed that this sounds sensible and enquired if residents write the bids.
- 30.21 Bob Spacie stated that they do; however the misinterpretation that occurs changes the cost as officers end up deciding what residents are bidding for. He confirmed that officers are there to perform a feasibility assessment.
- 30.22 Rachel Chasseaud agreed with the suggestion for the presence of residents.
- 30.23 Dave Eve stated, in regards to point B, that the EDB form was for 1 dorm in one block, he also stated that as the doors used are made of aluminium and glass they do not provide much in the way of security, he enquired of the possibility of being provided sliding doors akin to those provided at St John's House.
- 30.24 Becky Purnell stated the one sliding door she was aware of at Essex Place however it is due to be placed with a normal doors due to fire regulations. She noted that after all the checks had been done in March 2015, a recommendation was made to Housing Committee that both front and rear entrance doors need to be made of steel which would also need a new door entry system the costs of which escalated to circa £50000 putting it beyond the reach of the real estate budget. She stated that there is a door replacement and door replacement programme that is being invested in and she will have more information in April.
- 30.25 Martin Reid, Head of Housing Strategy, stated more consultation was needed with leaseholders regarding new steel doors.
- 30.26 Rachel Chasseaud asked Becky Purnell about how the process is managed and reviewed.
- 30.27 Becky Purnell stated that it was the group's remit to look at the process, she noted that Central area reps felt strongly that a review of EDB was required. She also stated that there will be a task and finish group to also look at the process.
- 30.28 **AGREED**-that the report is satisfactory
- 30.29 (Item 6 – Charges to Tenants)
- 30.30 Bob Spacie attributed issues to bad communication between residents and officers as quotes given by officers to fix a fish pond diminished from £3400 to £2000 over the course of a year, residents were able to fix the pond themselves at a reduced cost of £400. He stated that the given example was a case where BHCC were not assuring value for money.
- 30.31 Martin Reid stated that risk assessment for legionella is important. He noted that there is a city wide issue surrounding legionella and that it wasn't just Laburnum Grove that was looked at.
- 30.32 John Marchant enquired when the last case of Legionella was reported.

- 30.33 Martin Reid stated he had no information at hand.
- 30.34 Bob Spacie stated that he scoured the internet and found no report of legionella outside of ponds.
- 30.35 Councillor Daniel Yates stated that Brighton and Sussex hospital was charged a million pounds due to a death attributed to Legionella to highlight the seriousness of legionella.
- 30.36 **AGREED**-that the report is satisfactory
- 30.37 (Item 7 – Competitive tendering for EDB Work)
- 30.38 John Marchant enquired if only Mears tendered for the work and further enquired why BHCC had not tendered out to the cheapest company.
- 30.39 Rachel Chasseaud stated that Mears have the contract however they may want to sub contract some work out to other companies.
- 30.40 Bob Spacie stated in defence of Mears that they do it at cost. He noted that their costing for EDB jobs is quite good.
- 30.41 **AGREED**-that the report is satisfactory
- 30.42 (Item 8 – Washing Machines)
- 30.43 Heather Hayes stated there was an issue that there was a lack of services as the machines are used by many flats. She noted that often they will be without use for weeks and enquired if there was going to be an improvement in the servicing of washing machines.
- 30.44 Rachel Chasseaud stated that she would expect that, as part of the contract, they would be regularly serviced.
- 30.45 John McCabe stated he had put forward a business plan for the CIC to run this. He explained that he hadn't seen a copy of the tender document and noted that CIC could deliver this for a lot less.
- 30.46 Rachel Chasseaud stated she was unaware of this and would look in to it.
- 30.47 John McCabe requested suggestions of new processes to save money as things such as the Housing Management Consultative Committee.
- 30.48 Bob Spacie noted stated that he wanted a decision on the consultation.
- 30.49 Martin Reid stated that the survey is meant to take in everyone's views; he noted that it would be best practice to wait for the consultation to finish.
- 30.50 Bob Spacie enquired if every resident will receive a copy of the survey or if it would only be provided to people who turn up to meetings.

- 30.51 Councillor Daniel Yates stated that there was no point having a tenant's participation structure if the Council did not use it. He noted that he has attended face to face meetings, he furthered that it was possible BHCC may not agree with tenant's, if this were the case then consideration would be needed on choosing a different course.
- 30.52 Rachel Chasseaud stated that it was not the case that there was an extended consultation in order to get a different answer. She emphasised the importance of a tenant participation structure and highlighted that the tenant representative's voice was not diminished by those who choose to not attend meetings but wanted to simultaneously be involved in decision making; a position declared by the regulator.
- 30.53 Dave Eve enquired if it would be better to start with the survey.
- 30.54 Rachel Chasseaud agreed and apologised for the mishandling of the situation at the beginning. She stated that officers had nothing to gain from a specific outcome.
- 30.55 John McCabe criticised the process.
- 30.56 **AGREED**-that the report is satisfactory
- 30.57 (Item 1 on 3 star – Homing in)
- 30.58 Becky Purnell explained the newly introduced 3 star system.
- 30.59 **AGREED**-that the report be noted.
- 30.60 (Item 2 on 3 star – Timing of meetings)
- 30.61 Becky Purnell stated she would welcome the views of the panel regarding proposals to spread the date of panels over the year more fairly. She proposed to replace Area Panel meetings in January with March.
- 30.62 John McCabe has stated that area panels were convened to consider this, he noted that 1 month to consider the budget would not be long enough.
- 30.63 Becky Purnell stated that area panels would get further information in December.
- 30.64 **AGREED**- To put on the online diary.

31 DRAFT ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 31.1 John Currell presented the Draft Asset Management Strategy report
- 31.2 Terry Hill enquired if this linked in with the discussion held at the Planning HRA.
- 31.3 John Currell stated that it was a long term income and expenditure program not a capital program, he noted that it will go to Housing Committee in March.
- 31.4 Terry Hill enquired what was rejected.
- 31.5 John Currell stated that the HRA capital program was rejected.

- 31.6 Martin Reed stated that the program looks at how we are going to spend on investment in new homes, he noted that this was subject to the financial management plan. He also stated that people can still have input in the strategy.
- 31.7 John McCabe enquired if there was a possibility of having solar panels.
- 31.8 John Currell stated that there are commitments in this program to help residents reduce bills, there are already 300 houses with solar panels. He noted that where it didn't provide value for money, it was not decided upon.
- 31.9 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

32 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 32.1 Rachel Chasseaud presented the Quarter 3 Performance Report highlighting that rent collection is generally good, ASBO performance is good, there is a mistake at the bottom of the which should read, "quarter 3", finally in response to tenancy fraud 19 properties have so far been taken back. She stated that by the time of print, the full details hadn't been finalised, there will be a more substantial report going to housing and new homes committee and it will be circulated once it has been uploaded to the website. She furthered that residents will receive the full report in April.
- 32.2 Dave Eve stated his surprise about the number of tenancy fraud cases.
- 32.3 Rachel Chasseaud stated that there were some cases where they fraud was suspected but often no actual case was found. She noted the positive fact that more people are reporting cases of suspected fraud and as a result more investment cases are being chased.
- 32.4 **RESOLVED**-That the report be noted.

33 REVIEW REPORT

- 33.1 Becky Purnell presented the Review Report explaining that the resident involvement review in 2012 has to be reviewed and assessed every 3 years. She further explained that some work has started such as residents reviewing the code of conduct, that residents are experiencing difficulty recruiting new panel members; out of 1450 tenants and 200 leaseholders most affirm that they would be happy to provide a view via a comprehensive survey but not to attend a meeting. She noted there will be an update at the next July Area Panel.
- 33.2 Jane McCloughlan enquired by what medium will the survey become available.
- 33.3 Becky Purnell stated surveys will become available by phone interview or online.
- 33.4 Jane Hunter stated that area panel meetings often get bogged down in irrelevant chat as a result there is a short amount of time to discuss any other business at the end of the agenda.
- 33.5 Becky Purnell suggested that residents and officers arrive half an hour before in advance in order to take on concerns of residents 1-2-1.

33.6 Rachel Chasseaud agreed that an early start for officers could be achieved.

33.7 **AGREED** – that the report be noted.

34 CITY WIDE REPORTS

34.1 **AGREED** – that the reports be noted.

35 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

35.1 John Marchant stated that the attendance figure at the recent City Wide Conference was roughly 49-50.

The meeting concluded at 21:10.

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of