

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: NORTH AREA

7.00pm 15 MARCH 2018

THE HOUSING CENTRE, EASTERGATE ROAD, BN2 4QL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors; Hill (Chair) and Meadows

Representatives: Walther Sargent (Broadfields), Heather Hayes (Coldean), Jenny Simmonds (Coldean), Ray Metcalfe (East Central Moulsecoomb), John Marchant (East Central Moulsecoomb), Sarah Rowntree (North Moulsecoomb), Barbara Castleton (North Moulsecoomb), Carol Reed (East Moulsecoomb), Theresa Biggs (East Moulsecoomb) and Terrance Hill (Bates Estate)

Officers: Rachel Chasseaud (Head of Tenancy Services), Glyn Huelin (Business & Performance Manager), Sharon Davies (Business & Performance Project Manager), Eddie Wilson (General Manager, Mears)

35 APOLOGIES

35.1 Apologies had been received from Councillor Yates.

36 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

36.1 The Chair stated:

“There will be a questionnaire handed out during today’s meeting about Area Panels. You will remember we did a similar survey last autumn. This survey is designed to get your feedback on how effective the changes we have made together following the last survey have been. Please complete it before you go.”

37 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

37.1 **Resolved:** That the Panel agreed the minutes to be a correct record of the previous meeting.

38 ROUND ROBIN

38.1 Residents were invited to share their views on ‘what is one thing in your area you would like to see improve’:

- The area cleared of rubbish and bushes and weeds cut and cleared especially where this was creating a health and safety risk.
- Investment in infrastructure to make the area move liveable rather than just small cosmetic improvements. There was a need for a more strategic long-term approach to estate management.

- More robust enforcement action on fly tipping
- More action enforcement action against private households to ensure that properties are maintained and waste properly disposed of.
- Enforcement action against illegally parked vehicles.

38.2 Officers responded to the issues raised:

- The Private Sector Housing Team would take action against landlords of Houses in Multiple Occupation where waste was not being properly disposed of. The landlord would have been issued with a license by the council to operate the property and this would include conditions concerning rubbish.
- Where trees or bushes where on private land the council could not take immediate action to cut them back. The council first had to contact the individual responsible for the land and instruct them to rectify the issue before enforcement action could take place. There was a variable timetable for how long this process could take.
- Fly tipping was a city wide issue and the council had successfully pursued prosecutions against individuals for fly tipping. However the majority of illegally dumped material included nothing which could identify the perpetrator.
- Resident Involvement Officers were chasing City Clean to clear weeds and rubbish where residents had reported it as an issue.

39 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME

Installation of digital central heating thermostats

- 39.1 Barbara Castleton stated that the tenant referred to in the item was her. She felt that the answer was unsatisfactory as it blamed faulty equipment despite the fact that the engineer she had spoken to had stated that improper training was too blame.
- 39.2 Officers responded that they would follow up with K&T Heating to ensure that all engineers had received the appropriate training.

K&T Heating Out of Hours repairs service

- 39.3 Officers stated that they would not have expected the engineer responding to the call to have responded in the manor reported and that cases such as the reported one could be reported directly to the Business and Performance Team. The Chair stated that she wanted to encourage residents to report these issues as this would help the council manage the contract.
- 39.4 **Resolved:** That the Panel noted the responses

40 FIELD OFFICERS

40.1 Field Officers were a new role which would help to join up council services, would aid enforcement action and help residents to navigate council services.

40.2 In response to Residents' questions officers stated:

- The job descriptions for the new roles were being finalised and these would determine what areas the Field Officers focused on.
- The Field Officers would be working with the existing housing officers but would not be replacing them. The Field Officer may assist in carry out estate inspections.

41 UPDATE FROM CITYCLEAN

41.1 The Head of Operations – Cityclean had sent his apologies and had offered to either come to a future meeting or for residents to come to the depot for a meeting. The Panel resolved to invite him to the next meeting.

41.2 **Resolved:** That the Head of Operations – Cityclean be invites to the next meeting.

42 PROCUREMENT PROGRAMME FOR HOUSING REPAIRS, PLANNED MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL WORKS

42.1 Officers stated that nothing about how the new housing repairs contract would look had been decided yet. The current contract with Mears expired in 2020. Officers wanted to ensure that every one had the opportunity to feed into the contract. The engagement strategy for residents was currently being drawn up and would be brought back to residents at a future meeting.

42.2 In response to questions officers stated:

- The length and scope of the contract had not yet been set. The council operated contracts of between 3-10 years in length. The repairs contract currently covered all repairs but it could be split geographically or by types of work.
- Resident engagement would include large engagement events as well as feedback from surveys and through resident representatives.

42.3 **Resolved:** That the report was noted

43 TENANCY FRAUD AMNESTY

43.1 The amnesty was focused on people who were subletting their council home or lived elsewhere but still kept their home. The last tenancy amnesty led to six properties being handed back. 12 Homes had already been handed back in 2018 and it was hoped this would rise to 18.

43.2 In response to questions officers clarified that renting out a room was allowed in a secure tenancy as long as the tenant was still living at the property as well

and that renting out a room to foreign students for a few weeks at a time was not an issue.

43.3 **Resolved:** That the Panel noted the report

44 PERFORMANCE REPORT

44.1 Officers introduced the report and in response to questions stated:

- Lifts were included in the bottom five scores and top five improvements as these figures related to different aspects of the lift management contract.
- The 100% passed cleaning inspection was based on the spot checks carried out by officers of which all were passed.
- The decommissioned property referred to in the report was an ex-sheltered housing scheme which now provided temporary accommodation.
- The energy efficiency rating given was out of 100 but was a score not a percentage.
- 'Calls answered' referred to the time before a resident was speaking to an operator.

44.2 **Resolved:** That the Panel noted the report

45 THE PROCUREMENT OF LEGIONELLA ASSESSMENT AND CONTROL SERVICES FOR HOUSING STOCK

45.1 Officers stated that the current contract would expire in September 2018. The new contract would be focused on domestic water sources and frequency of testing would be determined by risk.

45.2 **Resolved:** That the Panel noted the report

46 INFORMATION FROM MELINDA KING, COMMUNITY CO-ORDINATOR

46.1 **Resolved:** That the Panel noted the report

47 CITY WIDE REPORTS

47.1 **Resolved:** That the Panel noted the reports

48 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

48.1 There was none

49 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

49.1 The next meeting was due to be held on 22 May 2018

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of