

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
HOUSING & NEW HOMES COMMITTEE

4.00pm 13 MARCH 2019

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL, NORTON ROAD, HOVE, BN3 3BQ

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Hill (Chair); Councillor Mears (Opposition Spokesperson), Gibson (Group Spokesperson), Atkinson, Barnett, Cattell, Meadows, Moonan, Page and Wealls

PART ONE

64 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

64a) Declarations of Substitutes

64.1 Councillor Meadows substituted for Councillor Lewry, Councillor Page substituted for Councillor Druitt and Councillor Wealls substituted for Councillor Bell.

64b) Declarations of Interests

64.2 There were none.

64c) Exclusion of the Press and Public

64.3 In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 100I (1) of the said Act.

64.4 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public not be excluded from the meeting during consideration any items on the agenda.

65 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

65.1 Councillor Gibson referred page 34, Paragraph 58.9 where it stated in relation to Councillor Bell's question "Some time ago it was agreed to reduce the EDB budget to around £180,000...." Councillor Gibson did not believe the Committee had agreed to do that. He was interested in the process of how this was agreed. The Chair asked for clarification on that issue to be circulated to Committee members.

65.2 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the Housing and New Homes Committee meeting held on 16 January 2019 are agreed and signed as a correct record.

66 CHAIRS COMMUNICATIONS

66.1 The Chair stated the following:

PRS Bid

“We are very happy to report that we have been successful in our funding bid to Government for expanding access to private rented accommodation for homeless people and reducing reliance on Temporary Accommodation.

We will be receiving just over £728k in total to the end of the next financial year (19/20). We are aiming to support 300 households by enhancing the offer we make to private sector landlords and tenants while targeting the crucial areas of single homelessness and the Reduction of Temporary Accommodation.

We have a proven track record in linking with private rented sector landlords to acquire properties & prevent homelessness. However, access to private rented accommodation is becoming harder and we are still a high user of Temporary Accommodation.

However, we need to do more and this grant will help us build upon our strategic work with landlords under Trailblazer.

Housing Estates Services Hard Surfaces team

Towards the end of last year Housing Estates Services Hard Surfaces team were formed. They are improving our estates by removing weeds, moss and shrubs on hard areas. This makes them look nicer but makes them safer for residents, as they are less slippery. The feedback from residents has been very positive. The visuals circulated to members of before and after pictures are very impressive.

Field Officers' work with Housing

Housing officers are currently reviewing estate inspections before handing this function over to the Field Officers in a new format in spring 2019.

A Project Group is looking at innovative ways in which to deliver neighbourhood improvements, including looking at how this work can link in with Neighbourhood Action Plans.

Residents will be involved through an online survey and through community meetings to look at the survey outcomes (planned for summer 2019).

Field Officers have already been supporting Housing by carrying out tasks such as intelligence gathering about anti-social behaviour, investigation of noise complaints, and developing relationships with police prevention teams.

We will be monitoring all the developments and we anticipate being able to report back to tenants and members on progress from Q1 19/20.

Awards for Seniors Housing Schemes

I am pleased to be able to let you know that we have won a regional award in the Elderly Accommodation Counsel Older People's Awards. This is a Gold Award for Hazelholt and Bronze for Churchill House. The award is based on resident feedback. Further to this Hazelholt has also been selected as one of 27 schemes in the UK for a national award.

We're particularly pleased given some of the challenges we've seen in the city to be recognised by our residents in these schemes. Scheme manager, Kathy Boyce has done a fantastic job of developing this scheme and community into the vibrant one it is today."

- 66.2 Councillor Barnett commented that she had never seen the Field Officers in Hangleton. They appeared to be based in the centre of the city and the outside areas were neglected. She asked where the Field Officers were based and requested that contact information for the Field Officers could be sent to councillors in order for members to be able to directly get in touch with them. She also asked for information on how many hours the Field Officers were putting into other areas of the City. The Chair agreed that information could be circulated to members. Councillor Atkinson added his congratulations to Hazelholt which was in Chalky Road, Portslade and to Kathy Boyce the scheme manager. Councillor Page asked if the awards could be presented at full council. The Chair confirmed that the awards could be presented at the next Full Council meeting.

67 CALL OVER

- 67.1 It was agreed that all items be reserved for discussion.

68 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**(a) Petitions**

- 68.1 There were no petitions.

(b) Questions

- 68.2 Sam Zubaidi asked the following question:

"Objection Plans for Hollingbury Library Site

"What consideration has been given to the fact that the home will be built next to a pub, and within 100 metres of a primary school, and what plans are in place to mitigate issues that may arise as a consequence? And can I please have data which shows drug and alcohol related crime statistics in areas that have homeless housing?"

- 68.3 The Chair replied as follows:

"Thank you for your question.

Our report on proposals for a Homeless Move On scheme on the former Hollingbury Library site seeks permission to commence extensive neighbourhood consultation

before any planning application is made. This will include consultation on the proposed use of the building as well as the building itself. We are very clear that feedback from neighbours is vital and our proposed development will be informed by the results of this consultation.

The proposed scheme will not be suitable for those with high level complex support needs. The proposed service will be a small medium needs service for people who are recovering from homelessness and are able to manage their accommodation with a lower level of support. Prospective residents will be assessed via an Allocation Panel as able to live independently with medium support. Resident compatibility for the service is considered as a key part of the referral process.

Specific support will be commissioned to meet residents' needs. This will be mindful of supporting them to live positively in the community. Adult Social Care will commission a service provider who will manage the support package. It is proposed that the service will be staffed during office hours and will offer an on call service over night for emergencies.

We would be happy to share information on drug and alcohol-related crime statistics across the city. That could be broken down in a number of ways. However, this will not necessarily relate back to areas that have 'homeless housing' because of the wide range of homeless housing needs we meet from families who we house requiring no support to those with high level complex support needs who may require 24 hour support."

68.4 As a supplementary question Mr Zubaidi asked if there was anyone on the Committee who lived near a shelter similar to the one that was being proposed and if so, what their experience had been of living near to something like this.

68.5 The Chair replied that that was not a question she could answer, but she did know that within her ward there were a number of supported housing schemes of various types and she had not necessarily as a Ward Councillor come to know about them because of any issues that had arisen. Sometimes she found out about them by accident. The Chair did not think it was necessarily inevitable that a supported scheme of this type caused problems for the local neighbourhood. However, the consultation with residents would be a very important part of the proposals, and the Council was very keen to discuss with residents what their concerns were and to ensure that the scheme was managed in such a way that their concerns were taken into account.

68.6 **RESOLVED-** That the Public Question be noted.

68.7 Max Scott asked the following question:

"The Brighton & Hove City Council Housing Allocations Scheme currently offers 10% of all lets to Council Interest Queue nominations, i.e. households nominated by Family Children & Learning, and Health and Adult and Social care. In 2017/2018 what was the actual percentage allocation to this group of all lets?"

68.8 The Chair replied as follows:

“The percentage lets to the council’s interest queue during the period January 2017 to March 2018 was 6%. The Council’s interest queue was currently performing to the expected 10% of properties being let to that group.

- 68.9 As a supplementary question Mr Scott asked that if it was currently 10% allocated in full, would the Committee consider allocating an additional 1% to the Housing First model.
- 68.10 The Chair replied that the council were committed to expanding Housing First and would like to expand it by another 10 units. It was currently working through the options for the expansion of Housing First, working through sourcing where these 10 units might come from. The queue was used for a variety of different reasons such as moving applicants out of supported accommodation, and move-on for Care leavers. There was constantly pressure on accommodation but Housing First was something the council was committed to expanding and it was actively working on achieving that at the moment.
- 68.11 **RESOLVED-** That the Public question be noted.

(c) Deputations

There were no deputations.

69 ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS

- 69.1 The Committee considered a letter from Councillor Wares and Councillor G Theobald as set out on the addendum to the agenda. The letter related to the Homeless Move On Scheme – Hollingbury Library Proposals. The letter requested that the recommendations be reduced to paragraph 2.1 only, and that recommendations 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 should not be progressed until the public consultation in 2.1 was completed and the results informed back to Committee.
- 69.2 Councillor Wares attended the meeting to speak to his letter.

69.3 RESOLVED:

That the letter be noted.

70 HOMELESS MOVE ON - HOLLINGBURY LIBRARY PROPOSALS

- 70.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing which concerning a final viable scheme for the Hollingbury Library site. The report would also be presented to the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee and the Estate Regeneration Members’ Board. The report was presented by the Estate Regeneration Manager and the Commissioning & Performance Manager – Rough Sleeping & Homeless Support Services.
- 70.2 In answer to questions from Councillor Page it was confirmed that there would be secure cycle parking and that the site was near to bus routes. No disabled parking spaces were currently planned.

- 70.3 Councillor Wealls commented that he was finding it difficult to define 'medium support'. He referred to a scheme in Seafield Road which had not been trouble free. He asked about the difference between this proposal and Equinox. Equinox had been surprised at the need of the clients. How could anyone who had experience of such schemes have confidence that what was proposed was medium support? The Commissioning & Performance Manager stated that officers had learnt a great deal from the experience with Equinox. The Allocations Panel process would be used and there would be a Move-On Co-ordinator. The flats would be self-contained and residents would need to manage their accommodation. They would still need some support but would be looking to branch out and live independently.
- 70.4 Councillor Gibson asked if there would be a lift in the accommodation and asked about the impact that the facility would have in providing services for people in this pathway. How would it impact on and release other accommodation? Officers confirmed that there would be one lift in the accommodation and that the accommodation would be supplied for people who were ready to move on, thereby releasing accommodation for people with higher support needs.
- 70.5 Councillor Mears proposed the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Barnett.

To delete recommendations 2.3, 2.4 & 2.5 as shown below in ~~strikethrough~~.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Housing & New Homes Committee approves commencement of resident consultation on proposals to provide a Homeless Move On scheme on the Hollingbury Library site.
- 2.2 That the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee be recommended to:
Approve an indicative budget of £2.750m financed by HRA borrowing and Homes England funding to form part of the HRA capital programme for 2019/20.
- ~~2.3 Housing & New Homes Committee approves the procurement by tender for a medium support accommodation service for homeless adults.~~
- ~~2.4 That Housing & New Homes Committee grants delegated authority to the Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care (HASC) to undertake the procurement of a medium support service to the value of £150,000 per annum, and to award the contract for Five (5) years.~~
- ~~2.5 That Housing & New Homes Committee delegates authority to the Executive Director of HASC to extend the contract at the end of the five year term for a further period of up to two years if it is deemed appropriate and subject to available budget."~~
- 70.6 Councillor Mears stated that she could not support recommendations 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5. Paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5 would be taking money from the HRA and the HRA would not be receiving rents for the property. The recommendations were asking the committee to delegate authority to the Executive Director, Health & Adult Social Care, and Housing & New Homes Committee would have no control over the scheme. The Housing

Allocations Policy would not be used. There was no recommendation to bring back a report.

- 70.7 Councillor Atkinson thanked officers for the report which he considered was a good news item. Although he could understand the concerns of residents he stressed that this type of accommodation was crucial and he hoped that the local community could be reassured. The scheme was aimed at move on individuals that did not need high level support. They were not the sort of people who were likely to cause problems.
- 70.8 Councillor Moonan concurred with Councillor Atkinson and stressed that moving people on through services was a challenge. The scheme would provide desperately needed move on accommodation and she hoped it would be approved. Councillor Moonan understood the issues with Seafield Road. One issue was about density. She stressed that it was important to spread these services across the city. Residents would be unaware of the schemes if they were managed properly. Consultation was vital.
- 70.9 Councillor Gibson supported the scheme and stated that he understood that the intention was for the proposal to be cost neutral for the HRA and that there was no question of tenants' rents being used to subsidise the project in any way even though it was being built through the HRA. This was confirmed by the Lead Regeneration Programme Manager. Councillor Gibson responded to the points made by the letter submitted by Councillors Wares and G Theobald. The council had a budget in place and a government grant. Councillor Gibson acknowledged that it was hard to find a building but the key for residents was that the consultation was meaningful and thorough.
- 70.10 Councillor Meadows stated that she was not against the scheme in principle; however, she was against giving a blank cheque to Adult Social Care for a service which was their responsibility. Paragraph 2.4 stated that they would have £750,000 for the five year contract. Paragraph 2.5 gave them another £300,000 to spend on something that was essentially an Adult Social Care service. Page 46 – Service Provision - Paragraph 4.3 mentioned that prospective residents would be assessed via an Allocation Panel. Councillor Meadows stressed that the government grant was for people at the end of the homeless process. It was not for new people coming off the homeless route. The Allocation Panel was adhering to the Allocation Policy in Adult Social Care. It was not adhering to the Housing Allocation Policy. An EIA would show that this would be totally unfair to those residents who were waiting on the housing register for a home. No report back was mentioned in the report. There was no mention of how the HRA was to be spent. Paragraph 8.9 on page 49 stated that "Health & Adult Social Care have allocated a budget of £0.150m...." Paragraph 8.6 stated that "the balance of funding would be met by HRA borrowing...". The report went on to say the building would be handed over to Adult Social Care. There was no best value and no best consideration to the scheme.
- 70.11 Councillor Page supported the scheme and stressed that Adult Social Care was another important service in the council and was working with the most vulnerable residents in the city. The scheme would provide homes and support to vulnerable people. The residents would require medium support and would be carefully assessed.
- 70.12 Councillor Mears stated that the Conservative Group would not support the recommendations in the report. The Committee were being asked to give delegated powers to the Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care. There was no

accountability regarding the budget, no mention of a report back to committee and no accountability over contracts. Councillor Mears had never known the Housing & New Homes Committee to give delegated powers to another Executive Director. The recommendation would take away responsibility from Housing Services.

70.13 The Senior Lawyer confirmed that the Committee were being asked to make a decision that fell under the terms of reference for the Housing & New Homes Committee which had overall responsibility for the council's housing functions. The fact that the committee were delegating powers to another director was irrelevant. The Committee could make that director accountable for any monies spent and the committee could ask for reports back from the director. The council did not operate a system where one director was only responsible to one committee.

70.14 The Committee voted on the Conservative Group amendment as set out in paragraph 70.5 above. Members voted by 4 votes in favour of the amendment and by 6 votes against the amendment. The amendment was not carried.

70.15 The Committee voted on the substantive recommendations and these were agreed by 6 votes in favour and 4 votes against the recommendations. The recommendations in the report were carried.

70.16 **RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That Housing & New Homes Committee approves commencement of resident consultation on proposals to provide a Homeless Move On scheme on the Hollingbury Library site.
- (2) That the Policy, Resources & Growth Committee be recommended to:
Approve an indicative budget of £2.750m financed by HRA borrowing and Homes England funding to form part of the HRA capital programme for 2019/20.
- (3) That Housing & New Homes Committee approves the procurement by tender for a medium support accommodation service for homeless adults.
- (4) That Housing & New Homes Committee grants delegated authority to the Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care (HASC) to undertake the procurement of a medium support service to the value of £150,000 per annum, and to award the contract for Five (5) years.
- (5) That Housing & New Homes Committee delegates authority to the Executive Director of HASC to extend the contract at the end of the five year term for a further period of up to two years if it is deemed appropriate and subject to available budget.

71 PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR SELECTIVE LICENSING UPDATE

71.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing which reminded members that proposals to introduce a Selective Licensing Scheme in 12 wards in the city received cross party support from the Committee in November 2017. The scheme aimed to improve management and housing conditions across the private rented sector. An application was made to the

Secretary of State to confirm a designation for selective licensing on the grounds of poor property conditions and anti-social behaviour. The Secretary of State declined to grant the council's application in relation to anti-social behaviour. Officers still believed the scheme was the best way to improve management and housing conditions across the city's private rented sector. Given the withdrawal of Secretary of State's approval officers proposed to reconsider the extent and scope of any future Selective Licensing Scheme and report back to Committee on proposals at the earliest opportunity. The report was presented by the Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager.

- 71.2 Councillor Mears stated that she did not agree with the recommendations. She referred to the financial implications in paragraph 7.1 regarding one-off costs. Councillor Mears was concerned with paragraph 3.7 as the HRA would be paying for a private sector stock condition survey. She asked if and when there had been consultation on this issue. The Assistant Director, Housing explained that the HRA Stock Condition Survey was agreed by members as part of the budget setting process. Officers had sought to improve some of the qualitative data and as part of the stock condition process ask for expressions of interest in possible prices to look at private sector stock at the same time. Officers had not got a price back but the indicative financial comments stated that the cost would be covered by the Housing General Fund under the TBM process. Councillor Mears stated that she wished to see in writing that the money would not be coming out of the HRA.
- 71.3 Councillor Page referred to paragraphs 3.2 to 3.4 in the report and asked if the Government had given any technical specific reasons why the scheme was no longer approved. The Assistant Director, Housing explained that the report outlined that officers felt it was more productive and cost effective to look at how the council might make any information it had more robust. If the Council did ask for a judicial review of the Government's decision there would be no guarantee that the decision would be changed in the Council's favour. Officers would review options and report back to the committee.
- 71.4 The Chair asked if officers were sure that the action to be taken would be approved by the Government. The Assistant Director, Housing replied that the Government had withdrawn consent. Officers considered that the Government should have looked at anti-social behaviour. Officers wished to work with members and the Government to achieve the scheme required.
- 71.5 Councillor Moonan raised the issue of the sample. She assumed that this would be representative of all areas of the city, and all types of housing tenure. Councillor Moonan was keen to have a stock condition survey of the private rented sector. She stressed how fundamental housing was to the health and wellbeing of a family. A great deal of housing was in a shocking condition. Without stronger national legislation the council needed to use all the levers possible to improve the stock in the city.
- 71.6 Councillor Gibson made the point that the scheme was not funded by the HRA. He echoed Councillor Moonan's comments. He considered that a stock condition survey was essential. The council would then be able to discriminate between different types of property and quantify differences in accommodation. Councillor Gibson stated that he would like to see a report back to committee.

71.7 The Chair stated that it should be recorded that there was a desire to see a report back as soon as possible.

71.8 **RESOLVED:-**

(1) That the Housing & New Homes Committee note the contents of the report and request a report be brought back to Housing & New Homes Committee detailing future options for selective licensing.

72 PROCUREMENT OF AN ASSESSMENT SERVICE FOR ROUGH SLEEPERS & HOMELESS ADULTS

72.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Health & Adult Social Care which sought approval for a competitive procurement by tender for an assessment support service for rough sleepers and homeless adults. The report was presented by the Commissioning & Performance Manager, Rough Sleeping & Homeless Support Services.

72.2 Councillor Mears stated that the Conservative Group could not support the recommendations to grant delegated authority to the Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care. Once again, the committee was seeing the impact of not having an Adult Social Care Committee and the need for a committee decision. Housing & New Homes Committee had no control over that directorate. She asked who would be using the 10% of allocation under the control of Adult Social Care. The Housing Allocation Policy was very clear on local connections which did not apply to Adult Social Care.

72.3 Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 10.2 – Legal Implications. This stated that Housing & New Homes Committee was the appropriate decision making body. Councillor Mears stated that she had never before been asked to give delegated powers to another Executive Director that did not have a committee. Paragraph 10.3 spoke about the estimated total cost of the contract. Councillor Mears was very interested to know what “light touch” meant (paragraph 10.3). Meanwhile, no EIA was attached to the report (paragraph 10.8). Councillor Mears asked when it would be available.

72.4 The Commissioning & Performance Manager explained that the EIA for the new service was ongoing and could be completed quickly. It would be circulated to members. She would be happy to bring back any outcomes to Housing & New Homes Committee.

72.5 The Senior Lawyer referred to paragraph 10.3. She stated that where there was a local government function it was subject to a lesser procurement advertisement regime. Publishing a notice was all that was necessary to engage the regulations. The Senior Lawyer stressed that the Committee did have control over the activities of the Executive Director. The Committee had delegated powers in relation to housing and homelessness. The Committee could delegate its powers to an officer including the Executive Director of Health and Adult Social Care. It did not have to be only to the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing.

72.6 Councillor Moonan stated that it would be helpful to explain how an assessment centre was different to a hub. Equinox had been mentioned in a previous item. This assessment centre would help. It would lead to more efficiency with regard to who was

going where. She stressed that the Housing and New Homes Committee was one of a number of Committees and was part of one council. As long as there was scrutiny it did not matter where items were considered.

- 72.7 A Chart showing Rough Sleeping Prevention and Intervention Services from March 2019 (Rapid Rehousing Pathway) was circulated to Members. Members were informed that due to the additional funding that had been secured from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government there were a number of new services which had opened and were separate to the assessment centre, which were detailed on the chart. The chart showed the hub services. Hub Services were for individuals who were rough sleeping and were new to the streets. The outreach team would find them on the streets and take them to the hub where an assessment would take place. The people may or may not have a local connection to Brighton & Hove. The role of the no second night hub was to take people from the street and either put them towards supported accommodation, private rented accommodation or help to relocate them outside the city if another council had a duty to them.
- 72.8 The assessment service was different and was for those people who have been identified and assessed as having a local connection. The assessment service was the route into supported accommodation for adults. This could be low, medium or high support accommodation. There would be a six week thorough assessment to determine the best route for an individual.
- 72.9 In answer to a question by Councillor Cattell it was confirmed that a building had not yet been procured. Officers had identified a building that they were interested in procuring, and they had been in touch with the councillors in that ward to let them know. A lease had not yet been signed on a property.
- 72.10 Councillor Page stated that he understood that the Health & Wellbeing Board was the committee for Adult Social Care, in joint working with health. Reference was made to paragraph 4.4 “the role of the Assessment Service will be to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the individual...” This sounded like a social care assessment for which the council retains responsibility in law. Reference was made to paragraph 3.4 regarding local connection. The criteria stated that a person must have lived in the city for at least 6 out of the last 12 months and sleeping rough would not count. If people were sleeping rough for six months their health would be at great risk. To exclude them in this way appeared inhumane. To meet the criteria for local connection the homeless person had to have an actual relationship with their close family. Councillor Page argued that many people with complex needs feel the city is their only home because their family are here but family relationships had broken down.
- 72.11 The Commissioning & Performance Manager remarked that the support provider would deal with certain elements of the assessment. This would be about what their housing needs were, what their strengths and aspirations for the future. They would also identify what external assessments needed to be made. That might be a social care assessment, a health assessment, a mental health assessment, or using the substance misuse service. When the person moved on to the next service there would be a comprehensive understanding of what their needs were and what sort of accommodation would be suitable for them. The definition of local connection for rough sleepers in the city had been used for a number of years.

- 72.12 Councillor Gibson welcomed the offer to report back on this issue. He hoped that there would be a progress report. He referred to national guidelines regarding local connection and asked for an estimate of how many people did not have a local connection. The Commissioning & Performance Manager explained that 50% of rough sleepers did not have a local connection. If a person did not have a connection anywhere they could access services.
- 72.13 Councillor Wealls mentioned that some of the terminology in the report was hard to follow. There needed to be a clear and sensible pathway. Meanwhile the fragmentation of these services across three committees was a problem.
- 72.14 Councillor Meadows noted that the report was by the Executive Director for Health and Adult Social Care who was not in attendance. It was not a housing services report. The recommendations would be taking money from the HRA and caused much concern. Paragraph 3.7 referred to New Steine Mews which was owned by Adult Social Care and was their responsibility. This was another report asking for more money from tenants. She considered that the report was full of contradictions and asked if it was only the HRA that would be funding the Assessment Service. The financial implications in paragraph 10.1 showed that it was clearly not a housing related project. Councillor Meadows asked why housing services was picking up the bill and stated that the report was talking about people who were coming into the city and who had been here a short while, who could override people who had been on the housing waiting list for years. The Housing & New Homes Committee had agreed a period of five years or over for people on the housing register. The report demonstrated no accountability and no monitoring.
- 72.15 The Executive Director, Finance & Resources confirmed that the £5.4m quoted in the report was in the general fund. He would provide more specific information to members on how that money was split.
- 72.16 The Commissioning & Performance Manager referred to a question about “Safe Place to Stay”. “No First Night Out” and “No Second Night Out” were national terms. “No First Night Out” meant preventing people spending their first night out. The local term was “Safe Place to Stay”. The “No Second Night Out” hub meant people not spending a second night out. In terms of the discussion about the allocations policy, the assessment service was about allocation to supported accommodation. It was not part of the allocation to general needs. It was about people with support needs in the city. Every contract that was let was thoroughly monitored and officers could provide data around how many people come into services and what their outcomes are and where they go to. The Chair stated that some of that information might be of interest.
- 72.17 Members voted on the recommendations which were approved by 6 votes to 4.
- 72.18 **RESOLVED:-**
- (1) That the Housing and New Homes Committee grants delegated authority to the Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care (HASC) to take all necessary steps to

(i) procure and award a contract for Five (5) years for the provision of an Assessment Service for homeless adults with a local connection requiring supported accommodation to the value of £360,000 per annum,

(ii) to approve an extension to the contract referred to in 2.1(i) for a period or periods of up to two years in total if it is deemed appropriate and subject to available budget.

73 CONTRACT AWARD FOR THE PROVISION OF A “SAFE SPACE TO STAY” SERVICE FUNDED FROM THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

73.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Health & Adult Social Care which sought authority to direct award of a contract to St Mungos for the provision of a “Safe Space to Stay” service which would provide accommodation and a rapid assessment service for homeless persons and those at risk of rough sleeping. The funding for the contract was being made available to the Council by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (“MHCLG”) following a successful bid by the Council for funding to establish a Rapid Rehousing Pathway. Final confirmation of funding was received on 20 February 2019. The report was presented by the Commissioning Manager, Health & Adult Social Care.

73.2 Councillor Gibson proposed the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Page.

To amend the recommendations as shown in ***bold italics*** below:

2.2 Grants delegated authority to the Executive Director of HASc to approve an extension to the contract term for a further period or periods of up to two years in total subject to performance and subject to the availability of funding. That the committee receives a report on the initial effectiveness of the safe space to stay service after 9 months of its operation and in the light of this report, considers options for continuation.

73.3 Councillor Gibson explained that his main concern was that the proposed extension in recommendation 2.2 was for a further two years. This did not seem appropriate. He also wanted to remove the reference to delegated authority. The Government would be determining progress. It seemed appropriate to review the contract after 9 months.

73.4 Councillor Wealls asked what powers were possible in asking for future reports to committees following the local elections. The Senior Lawyer explained that future committees could not be bound but reports could be added to the committee timetable.

73.5 Councillor Mears stated that the Conservative Group would not be supporting the Green amendment. Not enough information was supplied. She could not agree the recommendations that asked to give delegated authority to the Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care. Councillor Mears disagreed with Councillor Moonan’s previous comments about a joined up council. To be fully informed committee members would also need to read the agendas from the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Neighbourhoods, Inclusion, Communities and Equalities Committee. Councillor Mears did not believe that the council was joined up and considered it was dysfunctional.

Timelines were a concern. Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 3.6 and stated that there had been no briefing for members or a brief update regarding successful bid. The graph was not clear. The report was last minute and Housing & New Homes Committee was being asked to implement the recommendations by the end of March.

- 73.6 Councillor Meadows was astounded that the report had been submitted to the Committee. No figure had been placed anywhere in the report, yet the Committee were being asked to delegate authority with a blank cheque. Councillor Meadows stated that the Green amendment was weak and that there should definitely be a report back to the Committee. There was no mention of monitoring the recommendations and no value for money for tenants. The financial implications did not say where the money was coming from. There was no EIA. Adult Care & Health were using a six month allocation policy, whereas the Housing & New Homes Committee had agreed a 5 year Allocations Policy. There were inequalities for people who lived in the city. She could not support a report that gave delegated powers to the Executive Director, Health and Adult Social Care for an unspecified amount of money.
- 73.7 Councillor Moonan thanked the Adult Social Care Commissioning Team for their hard work on commissioning services. Money was being spent in an accountable way. Funding was coming from the Government and not a penny would come from council tax payers in Brighton & Hove. There was an efficient team in Adult Social Care and the pilot service could be implemented quickly. The service had nothing to do with council tenants. People who used supported accommodation were very vulnerable people in the city. The way to support them was not to give them a council property. They were put through a carefully commissioned pathway. It was a different service for different people. It was stressed that there had been a councillor briefing session on this subject.
- 73.8 Councillor Meadows commented that if Housing Services were not paying for the service why was the Committee being asked to delegate authority to the Executive Director, Adult Social Care? She wanted to be reassured that there was nothing in the report that was housing funded.
- 73.9 The Executive Director, Finance & Resources confirmed that money for the service was not HRA money but was money that arrived in the General Fund as a grant from the Government.
- 73.10 In answer to a question from Councillor Mears the Assistant Director, Housing stressed that there was one housing allocation policy, however the service outlined in the paper was not operating through that policy.
- 73.11 Councillor Atkinson stated that the report should be celebrated as good news. These types of arrangements were commonplace and made perfect sense to him. He fully supported the recommendations.
- 73.12 Councillor Gibson welcomed the service and the report. He stressed that the proposals had nothing to do with value of money for tenants and nothing to do with the HRA. This was about funds that came into the housing general fund. The amendment had been submitted to achieve some monitoring. 9 months seemed to be the best time to review the service.

- 73.13 The Committee voted on the Green amendment as set out in paragraph 73.2. Members voted in favour of the amendment by 6 votes in favour and 4 against. The amendment was carried.
- 73.14 The Committee voted on the substantive recommendations as amended and these were agreed by 6 votes in favour and 4 against.
- 73.15 **RESOLVED:-**
- (1) That the Housing & New Homes Committee: Grants delegated authority to the Executive Director of Health and Adult Social Care to enter into a contract with St Mungos for the provision of an accommodation and rapid assessment service for homeless people at risk of rough sleeping for a period of 13 months; and
 - (2) That the committee receives a report on the initial effectiveness of the safe space to stay service after 9 months of its operation and in the light of this report, considers options for continuation.

74 HRA BORROWING CAP

- 74.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing which updated on progress on removing barriers to accelerate delivery of new homes. In response to the Notice of Motion to full council in December 2018 the current report provided information on capacity and resources to expand delivery of housing following the lifting of the HRA cap. The Government launched a consultation regarding the options for reforming the rules governing the use of RTB receipts. The council responded to the consultation, welcoming both an increased flexibility on the amount of RTB receipts that can be used and also an extension of the deadlines for when existing receipts must be spent. The Government had not yet announced the outcome of this consultation or any changes to the current rules. The report was presented by the Lead Regeneration Programme Manager and the Housing Strategy & Enabling Manager.
- 74.2 Councillor Cattell stated that she was pleased to see the report which was an example of two lead officers working well together. Councillor Cattell was pleased to see the chart on page 82, paragraph 3.12 which confirmed that there would be additional resources. This was a good example of one council working.
- 74.3 Councillor Mears expressed concerns about the report. She referred to paragraph 3.24 on page 86. This stated that "Part of this capital strategy update would need to factor in a full stock condition survey to assess what work is required to existing homes to keep them maintained to the required decent homes standard." Councillor Mears referred to Budget Council where a decision was made to take over £7m from the HRA. By taking that money away from the HRA the council were potentially depriving the housing stock of investment. Councillor Mears stressed that at this moment in time there were no changes to the Right to Buy receipts. Paragraph 7.2 highlighted that the council needed to be mindful about reserves. Paragraph 7.3 stated that "the expectation is that there would still need to be a 10% margin maintained between actual borrowing and the cap to ensure that is a contingency of funding in place to use in case of emergencies." It was stressed that the committee was the freeholder of the council's housing stock and

had a duty as landlord to maintain the property. Taking money from the HRA would have consequences.

- 74.4 The Assistant Director, Housing confirmed that with regard to the HRA budget, there had been investment in the existing stock. Investment had been increased to reassure members with regard to fire health and safety. Any scheme coming forward in terms of new homes would need to be submitted to Housing & New Committee and Policy, Resources & Growth Committee to see if the schemes were viable and to consider the impact of the scheme on the HRA budget before any approval was given.
- 74.5 Councillor Gibson stated that it was not right to suggest tenant's rents were being raided. Budget Council had restored the budget to its previous level. Councillor Gibson welcomed the paper as the council moved towards greater ambition. There was a need to be building more homes and a need to get ahead of the game in terms of using Right to Buy receipts. Meanwhile Right To Buy receipts were already being used for temporary accommodation with no resulting problems. Councillor Gibson hoped that the council could double or treble its council housing accommodation.
- 74.6 Councillor Page stated that he had hoped that all parties would welcome the wider opportunity to invest and provide homes for all residents of the city.
- 74.7 The Chair commented that the report was excellent.
- 74.8 **RESOLVED:-**
- (1) That the committee note the contents of this report.

75 UPDATE ON PROCUREMENT OF THE MAIN IT SYSTEM FOR HOUSING

- 75.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing which updated members on progress made on the procurement of, and project to implement, a new housing management IT System for Housing Services. The contract for the new system had now been awarded to Northgate Public Services (NPS). The aim was for the first phase deliverables to go live in September 2020. The second phase deliverables target date was in December 2020 (depending on how well the initial phase had bedded in), and the third and final phase deliverables was March 2021. The report was presented by the Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement.
- 75.2 Councillor Mears thanked officers for the report and commented that the IT system would take a long time to implement. She asked if the committee could be reassured that by the time the IT System was in place it would not be out of date. The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement confirmed that officers could not guarantee that the system would be completely up to date when fully implemented. However, if there were updates they would be added to the system. Officers were confident that the company were keeping up to date with developments in this field.
- 75.3 Councillor Cattell was pleased to see the work being carried out and commented that a brand new system in the Planning Team had made a significant difference. A company such as Northgate Public Services would provide updates to the system.

75.4 RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Housing & New Homes Committee notes the contents of this report.

76 HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3 2018/19

76.1 The Committee considered a housing management performance report of the Executive Director, Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing which covered Quarter 3 of the financial year 2018/19. Members were informed that a draft version of the report was submitted to the Area Panels in February 2019. As a result of resident feedback, the tables in section 6.6 and 7.5 had been amended to include the council housing stock in each ward. Following a councillor query, future reports would also include performance information about Field Officers' work with Housing from Quarter 1 2019/20. The report was presented by the Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement.

76.2 Councillor Atkinson referred to pages 97/98 - rechargeable debt collected. It was stated that the target of 20% was aspirational. He asked if this was a national target. It was confirmed that when officers set targets they looked at the performance of other similar local authorities. It was recognised that it had become increasingly difficult to collect money from people. This would be reviewed next year.

76.3 Councillor Mears referred to page 109 – Lifts - Average time to restore service when not within 24 hours – Target 7 days. She was pleased to see the recent changes to the lift contract. How would this impact on whether there would be a better response time? Councillor Mears also referred to a recent visit to Spain by tenants. She asked if feedback on that visit would be made to the Area Panels or to the Committee. It was confirmed that officers hoped that the new arrangement with lift engineers would make a difference, and shorten the response time and improve the service. The initial work on the visit to Spain would be fed to the Service Improvement Group and would then be submitted to the Area Panels.

76.4 Councillor Gibson welcomed the report and the targeted support tenants received from officers when transferring to Universal Credit.

76.5 RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report and comments of the Committee be noted.

77 ITEMS REFERRED FOR FULL COUNCIL

77.1 Councillor Mears referred Item 72 – Procurement of an Assessment Service for Rough Sleepers & Homeless Adults to full Council for information. (She later requested that Item 73 – Contract Award for the Provision of a “Safe Space to Stay” Service Funded from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government should also be submitted to Council for information).

The meeting concluded at 6.47pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of