

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: EAST AREA

7.00pm 17 AUGUST 2021

VIRTUAL MEETING - ZOOM

MINUTES

Present:

Representatives: Christine El-Shabba (Chair), Ben D'Montigny, Rosemary Johnson, Janet Gearing, Emma Lewis

Councillors: Mears & Platts

Officers: Bethan Hudson, Janet Dowdell, Justine Harris, Ododo Dafe, Glyn Huelin, Thomas Bald

Other: Frank le Duc (Press)

1 WELCOME, APOLOGIES, AND INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 Apologies from Cllr Gill Williams, Cllr Dee Simson, Rachelle Metcalfe, and Alan Cooke.

2 ACTIONS AND MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes

2.1 Rosemary Johnson raised that point 4.1 of the minutes should have included an answer about Council Officers expecting information back from residents quickly. Bethan Hudson agreed to take this away and come back with a response.

2.2 Rosemary Johnson also raised that point 6.4 should refer to all documents not just ASB documents.

2.3 Councillor Mears raised that it would be helpful to gather information from the East Area Panel members concerning the Charing arrangements. Rosemary Johnson also mentioned that the Chair should be consistent and knowledgeable but wouldn't need to specifically be a Councillor. Thomas Bald confirmed they would feed back at the next meeting if there were any updates on when this would be brought to Housing Committee.

RESOLVED:

- Bethan Hudson to get a response concerning officers expecting instant replies from residents;
- Thomas Bald to come back with any updates about when the Terms of Reference for Area Panels will be discussed at Housing Committee.

Actions

2.4 Glyn Huelin confirmed that the responses were included on page 15 of the Agenda.

2.5 Janet Gearing raised that the meeting with Rachelle Metcalfe to look around Langley Crescent, but no action has been taken since as the land has to be confirmed as being managed by either Highways or Housing. Janet Dowdell confirmed she would come back with a response.

RESOLVED: Janet Dowdell to come back with a response from about the progress of the issues on Langley Crescent.

3 RESPONSES TO RESIDENT'S QUESTIONS

EDB as a Resident Led Budget

1.1 Rosemary Johnson raised that the Leaseholders will get charged for services even if they don't live in the property. Chris El-Shabba raised that the EDB panel do consider Leaseholders and the costs they incur.

1.2 Janet Gearing was informed that 'residents' refers to tenants and leaseholders.

1.3 Councillor Mears raised a concern that the EDB is funded from the HRA which is made up from tenant's rents, and tenants must be careful not to use the HRA to compensate the general fund.

1.4 Councillor Platts asked if residents were informed about deadlines for EDB bids, as she had received some complaints from people wanting to put in a bid, but didn't have enough time to find help as they were unaware of the deadlines – and that it would be a good idea to publicise the deadlines so everyone is aware. Bethan Hudson confirmed she would email around the cut off dates for EDB bids to members of the panel.

1.5 Ben D'Montigny raised that he had found that all bids he had been involved with had been resident led, and his strong digital platform shows high engagement. Rosemary Johnson raised that it is easier to contact tenants as we know which addresses they live in, however it is much harder to reach the leaseholders renting out those addresses to tenants.

Resident Associations and Resident Involvement

There was no discussion.

Lack of Maintenance of Estates

1.6 Rosemary Johnson raised that in response to the West Area Panel's question, other areas are still experiencing problems with the maintenance of estates, and no information has been given regarding the Old Bin Store Community Workshop project.

1.7 Janet Gearing raised that someone she knows hasn't had her lawn mowed by the Council for months, and the overgrowing of grass verges, pavements, and the lack of

emptying of bins has made the city look dirty. Councillor Mears agreed that the pavements in the city are overgrown and dangerous.

1.8 Ben D'Montigny was informed that Rob Walker at City Parks would be the main contact to report overgrown weeds.

1.9 Janet Gearing raised that 2 tennis tables have been installed, and a gym is due to be installed soon.

4 HOUSING COMMITTEE WORKPLAN PROGRESS UPDATE AND HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 2021/22

1.10 Ododo Dafe summarised the report starting on 27 of the agenda.

1.11 Janet Gearing raised that a worker who came to her property recently for a repair was deaf, and the Council should text him not ring him going forward.

1.12 Janet Gearing was informed that everything is being done by housing to get empty properties let.

1.13 Rosemary Johnson raised that arrears system need to be updated sooner for rent payments, and that illegal anti-social behaviour such as drug dealing needs to be addressed too.

1.14 Ben D'Montigny was informed that the first few lockdowns created a backlog of about 4-6 months of routine repairs, meaning that extra effort is having to be put in going forward, as well as prioritising more important repairs such as roofs. He was also informed that the refurbishment of kitchens and bathrooms isn't operating at full capacity due to the challenges mentioned above.

Leasehold Payment Options and Updates

1.15 Glyn Huelin summarised the report starting on page 51 of the agenda.

1.16 Rosemary Johnson raised that if anyone would like to get involved with the Leaseholder Action Group please get in touch with Councillor Hugh-Jones or LAG via Rosemary Johnson. She also raised the following points in response to the report:

- LAG are glad to see the extension of the mix and match options and extension of provision to non-resident leaseholders.
- Some leaseholders are looking at bills of up to £65,000, so it might be worth extending the options to accommodate those.

5 POSITIVE COMMUNITY NEWS

- 1.17 Chris El-Shabba brought attention to the East Brighton Food Project starting on page 65 of the Agenda, and a farewell party will be held for Janet and Brian of the project on the 12 September for the residents of Robert Lodge.
- 1.18 Ben D'Montigny raised that he has gotten partial funding for a defibrillator to be installed at the community centre.
- 1.19 Rosemary Johnson raised that there is a welcome back to Craven Vale week of activities starting on August Bank holiday Monday, such as a quiz, pasta pizza and jigsaw puzzles day, woodland tours, beekeeping tours, and an all day barbecue. Rosemary Johnson also raised that an electric vehicle charging point has been installed, but without consultation of the residents, and the charging point was resting on the pavement in order to charge the car.
- 1.20 Chris El-Shabba raised that an extension of the bus stop has eliminated a parking space on the Broadway, and Cllr Platts confirmed she'd look into it and report back.
- 1.21 Ododo Dafe raised that she was very impressed by the work completed by Ben D'Montigny about the issues on Bristol Estate. Emma Lewis asked to share how the project was completed as an example going forward.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

The meeting concluded at 9.02pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of