

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: WEST HOVE & PORTSLADE AREA

2.00pm 15 FEBRUARY 2023

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors: Allcock (Chair), Pissaridou and Barnett

Representatives: Roy Crowhurst (Woods House Residents Association), Graham Dawes (Philip Court Residents Association), Ted Chapman (Clarendon and Ellen Residents Association), Muriel Briault (North Portslade Residents Association) and Joe Macrae (North Portslade Residents Association)

Officers: Geof Gage (Head of Housing Investment & Asset Management), Sam Warren (Community Engagement Manager), Sabina Karabasic (Community Engagement Administrator), Martin Reid (Assistant Director Housing Management), Grant Ritchie (Head of Housing Repairs & Maintenance), Rob Keelan (Housing Manager), Matthew McCaw (Democratic Services Apprentice) and Emma Thomson (Democratic Services Officer)

Guests: Sarah Booker-Lewis (Local Democracy Reporter)

1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

1.1 Cllr Peter Atkinson and Pat Weller (Knoll Community Association) sent apologies.

2 MINUTES AND ACTIONS OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 The minutes were agreed as a correct record, however, following the panel it was highlighted that an older set of minutes had been included in the agenda rather than those from the previous meeting.

2.2 **RESOLVED:** The minutes from the 14th December will be included in the agenda for agreement at the next panel.

2.3 It was agreed that actions WAO1, WA4 and WA5 would be carried forward to the action log for the next panel as they were ongoing or the designated officer wasn't in attendance to confirm they were complete.

3 EDB REVIEW CONCLUSION REPORT

3.1 The Community Engagement Manager, Sam Warren, introduced the Estate Development Budget (EDB) Report which sought discussion and comment on the recommendations for the EDB Review Group.

- 3.2 Graham Dawes raised points about the impact of the 2018 audit on the Task and Finish Group, the importance of reflecting on the past going forward, representation and voting, and funding ongoing costs.
- 3.3 Cllr Pissaridou was informed that bids could be more outcome focused. Therefore, if the outcome remained the same and the group would still achieve what was initially envisioned, the bid wouldn't require to come back to panel. However, if there was a major change in the bid then it would.
- 3.4 Roy Crowhurst was advised that the Area Panel would still vote on all main bids and that the aim was for the panel itself to have a more representative membership such as those from marginalised groups.

4 RESIDENTS QUESTIONS - 3 STAR

Damp and mould

- 4.1 Cllr Barnett and Roy Crowhurst highlighted that it would be useful for tenants to receive instructions at the start of their tenancy regarding how to maintain their property to reduce damp, mould and condensation.
- 4.2 Cllr Pissaridou stated it would be beneficial if the number of cases and what was happening with the homes was reported to the panel on a regular basis.

Street sweeping

- 4.3 Cllr Barnett raised ongoing issues with street sweeping and guttering in her ward.
- 4.4 Muriel Briault highlighted issues relating to pavements and overgrown gardens at Valley Road and stated nothing was being done.
- 4.5 The panel found the response to be inadequate and requested that housing officers spoke to CityClean and the transport department to coordinate their activities.

Remit of Estate Walkabouts

- 4.6 Martin Reid advised that a commitment had been given to the Housing Committee and Area Panels regarding the roll out of the Estate Walkabouts, for which a pilot had been undertaken. Martin also highlighted that while the walkabouts were a programme of planned works, they didn't preclude residents from requesting a visit when issues arose.

Records of housing repairs

- 4.7 Graham Dawes advised that the question had been raised due to concerns that the Council did not hold records of all the works that had historically been undertaken on their buildings.

Working with residents

4.8 Graham Dawes stated that no discussion was undertaken with residents regarding the token laundry system and increased charges and requested an agreement that officers would engage with residents before taking such decisions.

4.9 Sam Warren advised that a paper would be brought to the next panel on the issue so specific concerns could be addressed then.

4.10 Graham Dawes stated that he was unhappy with the response provided.

5 AREA PANEL REVIEW: TERMS OF REFERENCE AND REPORT

5.1 The Community Engagement Manager, Sam Warren, introduced the report which outlined changes to the terms of reference for Area Panels.

5.2 In response to a query about reports, Graham Dawes was advised that information would be included in the 'Community Engagement' section of all Committee reports to outline if the report had come to Area Panels and the discussion that was held. Further, Sam Warren advised that a proposal had been made to include a front sheet on reports which outlined to tenants and leaseholders what was being asked of them.

6 HOUSING COMMITTEE WORKPLAN PROGRESS UPDATE AND HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3 2022/23

6.1 Martin Reid advised there was very good performance in emptying council homes, there were challenges around income collection though the team was working hard to support residents through cost-of-living and more staff had been recruited, and progress had been made within the repairs service, though further work had to be done to catch up post-COVID-19.

7 RESIDENTS QUESTIONS - 2 STAR LOCAL AREA

Subsidence at Stevens Court

7.1 Geof Gage advised that work was ongoing on the matter and consultants had been appointed to investigate the issue.

8 POSITIVE COMMUNITY NEWS

8.1 Cllr Barnett shared that a community garden had opened in one of the homes in her ward which had given residents motivation to get up and out. Additionally, various parties had been held for the elderly.

8.2 Ted Chapman offered his thanks to a Housing Officer that had visited Conway Court for a walkabout who arranged for the gardening team to come out.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Martin Reid advised he would confirm the response to Cllr Barnett's request for the Homing In newsletter to be emailed to her.

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- 9.2 The Chair advised that the meeting was his last Area Panel and thanked residents and officers for their work and continued support and wished them all the best for the future.
- 9.3 Martin Reid advised Roy Crowhurst that work would commence on the Housing Strategy, which would include an older persons housing strategy, in the next financial year.

The meeting concluded at 4.00pm