

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

3.00pm 7 MARCH 2011

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Mears (Chairman); Allen, Barnett, Fallon-Khan, Fryer, A Norman, Randall, Simpson (Opposition Spokesperson) and Simson

Tenant Representatives: Ted Harman (Brighton East Area Housing Management Panel), David Murtagh (Brighton East Area Housing Management Panel), Jean Davis (Central Area Housing Management Panel), John Melson (Central Area Housing Management Panel), Stewart Gover (North & East Area Housing Management Panel), Heather Hayes (North & East Area Housing Management Panel), David Avery (Deputy West Hove & Portslade Housing Management Area Panel), Beverley Weaver (West Hove & Portslade Area Housing Management Panel), Chris Kift (Hi Rise Action Group), Tom Whiting (Sheltered Housing Action Group) and Barry Kent (Tenant Disability Network)

In Attendance:

Councillor Gill Mitchell and Councillor Ken Norman.

PART ONE

84. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

84A Declarations of Substitute Members

84.1 Councillor Fallon-Khan declared that he was attending as a substitute for Councillor Pidgeon. Councillor Ann Norman declared that she was attending as a substitute for Councillor Caulfield. Dave Avery declared that he was substituting for Tina Urquhart.

84B Declarations of Interests

84.2 Councillors Barnett, Randall, and Simpson, Heather Hayes and Ted Harman declared a personal interest in any discussion on the LDV as they are Board Members of Brighton and Hove Seaside Community Homes (the Local Delivery Vehicle). Councillor Simpson

also declared a personal interest in any discussion relating to Age Concern as she is an employee of the charity.

84C Exclusion of the Press and Public

84.3 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.

84.4 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

85. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

85.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Housing Management Consultative Committee Meeting held on 24 January 2011 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

86. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

Financial Assistance for Council Leaseholders - Introducing Equity Loans

86.1 The Committee received a presentation from the Business Improvement Manager. The presentation mentioned that high levels of investment in council homes was taking place, including major works projects to blocks of flats. These works would have a significant financial impact on leaseholders. Leaseholders paid a % share of the council's costs in carrying out works at their building. Cost for over cladding and new windows could be in excess of £10,000 for a leaseholder. Lift replacements and re-wiring could double this figure. Decent Homes by the end of 2013 could mean several costs incurred in a short period.

86.2 The presentation set out how leaseholders could receive help to meet these payments, including council loans. The Government now allowed councils to offer equity loans as well as interest loans and the presentation set out how equity loans worked. Officers were currently looking at how equity loans might be introduced.

86.3 Councillor Randall thought equity loans sounded a good idea, not unlike equity release loans in the private sector. He asked if people would have to pay back interest on the loans. The Business Improvement Manager replied that there were no interest payments.

86.4 Councillor Fallon-Khan asked about the flexibility of the loans if leaseholders had difficulty making payments. The Business Improvement Manager explained that the council would have an equity stake in the property. This percentage share of the selling price of the property would be repaid to the council at the next sale or transfer.

86.5 Chris Kift asked what would happen if someone took out an equity loan, and needed another loan the following year. Could this be added to the first equity loan? The Business Improvement Manager confirmed that another loan could be added.

- 86.6 Stewart Gover expressed worries about the costs of works to leaseholders. Some people were on fixed mortgages. If they were just managing to pay the mortgage, this would add to their burden. The Head of Housing and Social Inclusion shared his concern and stressed that this was why the council were looking at the additional help equity loans might give. Individual leaseholders would be able to receive advice about their own set of circumstances.
- 86.7 The Chairman stressed that the council were trying to put in a safety net for leaseholders. They had bought their properties and some repairs were very expensive. It would be important to inform leaseholders about the proposal. This would give them the opportunity to discuss the proposals with officers.
- 86.8 Stewart Gover was relieved that there was a safety net. He knew of several young couples who had bought their flats. A big bill would affect the retail price of their flats.
- 86.9 Councillor Simpson welcomed the proposal to explore this option. She stressed the importance of explanation and publicity of this important proposal. It would rely on there being enough equity in the property.
- 86.10 The Chairman thanked the Business Improvement Manager for the excellent presentation. There were many options to investigate and the matter would be brought back to the HMCC for further discussion.

Ainsworth House

- 86.11 The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Housing Strategy and Development and Private Sector Housing on the development of a scheme to deliver 15 social rented homes to meet housing need in the city, including 3 four bedroom family homes and 2 two bed fully wheelchair accessible flats, on the Ainsworth House site. The scheme would be presented to Planning Committee on 6 April 2011. Tenants had been involved in the design of the development.
- 86.12 The Chairman congratulated the tenants in their work on this project and on their involvement with the design.
- 86.13 Stewart Gover stated that he was delighted with the proposal. Tenants had worked hard on this project. It was an amazing development of houses and flats. He congratulated the Head of Housing Strategy and Development and everyone else involved in the project.

87. CALLOVER

- 87.1 The Chairman asked the Committee to consider which items listed on the agenda it wished to debate and determine in full.
- 87.2 **RESOLVED** - That all items be reserved for debate and determination.

88. PETITIONS

- 88.1 There were none.

89. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

89.1 There were none.

90. DEPUTATIONS

90.1 There were none.

91. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

91.1 There were none.

92. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

92.1 There were none.

93. ALLOCATIONS POLICY REVIEW

- 93.1 The Committee considered a report of the Lead Commissioner for Housing which explained that the current Housing Register Allocations Policy was approved by committee on 6 January 2005 with an update in March 2009 agreed by the Housing Cabinet Member Meeting. However, following tenants dissatisfaction it was agreed that the area of Choice Based Lettings and systems for allocating accommodation be subject to a fundamental review. This review had now been undertaken resulting in recommendations for changes to the way the Housing Register was to be operated. The recommended changes to the Allocations Policy were attached as Appendix 1 for approval. If approved the changes would be implemented by May 2011.
- 93.2 John Melson informed the meeting that he had discussed the recommendations with tenants from the Central area. He reported that they did not like the proposal relating to 50% of all permanent social housing stock being advertised with a priority being given to those who could show that the ingoing primary tenants were working or making a positive contribution to Brighton & Hove City. Mr Melson asked if this could be changed to 50% of any new build or any additional properties. The current proposal for 50% should either be reduced or not in the document at all.
- 93.3 Mr Melson also expressed concern about Right to Buy. There did not appear to be any restrictions in place to prevent Right to Buy. As the country came out of recession, the take up would become easier.
- 93.4 The Chairman stated that the proposals came from the Tenant Led Focus Group. Next week she would be meeting Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. She would raise some of these issues with him.
- 93.5 David Murtagh stated that he agreed with the recommendation for 50%, and most of the tenants he represented in East Moulsecoomb agreed with this proposal. He stressed that the council houses in the area were originally built for people who were working. There was a lack of community in East Moulsecoomb. The 50% proposal would bring more committed people into the area.

- 93.6 Councillor Simson referred to wording in the second paragraph of page 35 of the report. "For the purposes of determining local connection, living in Brighton & Hove will not include the following:
Occupation of a mobile home, caravan or motor caravan which is not placed on an official Council approved site or other Council approval obtained (toleration on unauthorised sites is not included)." Councillor Simson asked for an explanation of this wording.
- 93.7 The Head of Temporary Accommodation and Allocations explained that the wording came from the legal department. It referred to local people who were on an unauthorised site.
- 93.8 Stewart Gover agreed with David Murtagh. He stressed that 50% did not mean 50% of the total lettable dwellings. It was 50% of what was left over.
- 93.9 Councillor Fryer asked for clarification regarding priority changes. She also asked which properties would and which would not be included in the 50% proposal. The Head of Temporary Accommodation and Allocations explained that under the current system, homeless households in bed and breakfast were in Band A. They would now be in Band C. The 50% would apply to all properties except sheltered housing.
- 93.10 Councillor Fryer stated that she was disappointed that the report did not include all the consultation responses. She requested that these were emailed to all HMCC members and were put in the report when it was presented at the Housing Cabinet Member Meeting. Councillor Fryer stated that the Green councillors proposed a reduction to 25%. She stressed that there were many people who wanted to work who could not find work. Meanwhile, the Right to Buy take-up might increase.
- 93.11 Councillor Barnett reported that she had chaired the working group. She stressed the importance of encouraging people to go out to work. Employment was the most important way out of poverty. Working could mean paid employment or voluntary work. Meanwhile, there needed to be a more flexible age limit with regard to sheltered accommodation. She thanked all residents who had been involved in the review.
- 93.12 Tom Whiting referred to the section on Sheltered Housing on page 45 of the report. He mentioned that on 22 June 2009, the HMCC agreed a report on the Local Lettings Plan for Sheltered Housing. He asked which report would now apply to sheltered housing tenants. The Head of Housing and Social Inclusion explained that the Allocation Policy presented at this meeting was a city wide allocation policy and applied to all housing. The Local Lettings Policy only applied to sheltered housing owned by the council. Both policies would apply to sheltered housing tenants.
- 93.13 Councillor Allen referred to David Murtagh's comments. He expressed concern that there was a move away from meeting peoples' housing needs to considering their contribution to society. The 50% policy would be acceptable if there were plenty of jobs. This was not the reality. When people lost their job, it was not easy to immediately find more work. He also stressed that many voluntary organisations were in trouble due to the economic situation. The demand for accommodation was greater than the supply. The logic of the proposals was to have 50% of people gainfully employed or in voluntary work. Some people would lose out, and this would include

families. Councillor Allen considered 50% too high. With regard to Right to Buy, it might be difficult to buy council housing at the moment but this situation could change.

- 93.14 John Melson considered that the allocation policy would be a good piece of work if there was plenty of stock. It did not address the issue of providing affordable social housing to people. The group should have considered how to solve the housing problem in the city.
- 93.15 Councillor Simpson expressed concern about the 50% level. The pilot scheme did not give enough information. The report stated that people who were not accepted under the pilot scheme were helped at some later point. With the higher percentage, these people would need to wait longer. Meanwhile, Right to Buy could become an issue in the future. Councillor Simpson asked for clarification about the waiting list. She was concerned that the council were no longer letting to people in great housing need.
- 93.16 Barry Kent stated that he had lived in Brighton all his life and had waited for 10 years for a council property. People were coming in from outside and being housed before local people.
- 96.17 The Head of Temporary Accommodation explained that people with a local connection would be in Band C for 2 years. If there was no local connection the proposal would remain the same as in the previous paper.
- 96.18 Heather Hayes stated that the 50% proposal included carers like her. She was a full time carer and she did voluntary work. She mentioned a case of a young couple who had moved into a block in her area. They did not work and had late night parties. They had not come with a support package. They could have gone into private rented accommodation with support and encouraged to work.
- 96.19 Tenant representatives were asked to give an indicative vote on the proposals. 10 voted for the recommendations and one against. Councillors voted 5 for, 2 against with 1 abstention.
- 93.20 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the changes recommended in Appendix 1 be commended for approval to the Housing Cabinet Member Meeting. (The full policy document was attached at Appendix 6 with the changes highlighted)

94. OUT OF HOURS SHELTERED SERVICE

- 94.1 The Committee considered a report of the Head of Housing and Social Inclusion concerning recommended changes to the weekend call service and the service to sheltered housing tenants after out of hours.
- 94.2 Twelve proposals to revise the out of hours and weekend service provided to sheltered tenants were identified by the tenant led focus group, and agreed by the Sheltered Housing Action Group.
- 94.3 The Older Peoples Housing Manager particularly thanked Tom Whiting, Chair of the Sheltered Housing Action Group for his work on the proposals.

- 94.4 Tom Whiting thanked the Older Peoples Housing Manager and Brian Balchin and Kath Davies for the work carried out. The proposals would save money and should provide a better service delivery. The quality of service delivery would need to be monitored. This was a starting point. Sometimes it could take a long time to implement proposals. That should not happen in this instance.
- 94.5 The Chairman concurred. Tom's comments should be taken on board and actioned.
- 94.6 John Melson supported the proposals. He referred to paragraph 3.12 (proposal 7). This stated "Sheltered Services should consider key safes to enable better access for the emergency services only. Key safes could either be provided on a scheme basis (with a key safe installed in the main lobby containing a "master key") or on an individual basis." Mr Melson stated that he would like more clarity on this issue. A number of residents were nervous about this proposal.
- 94.7 The Older Peoples Housing Manager agreed that he would not want to see the master key falling into the wrong hands. The working group had looked at this issue and felt it was a good proposal.
- 94.8 Councillor Simpson welcomed the report. Telecare was becoming increasingly important. She was pleased with the proposals for the weekend service. This was important for old people. She asked how long CareLink had been set up locally.
- 94.9 Councillor Ken Norman confirmed that CareLink had been in place for 22 or 23 years.
- 94.10 Chris Kift stressed the importance of people being informed that CareLink did not just apply to tenants in sheltered housing. He used the CareLink facility and received reminders three times a day to take his medication. Ted Harman informed that meeting that he also used the facility.
- 94.11 Councillor Ken Norman confirmed that CareLink was available to most residents if they required the service. CareLink was a much improved service.
- 94.12 Councillor Fryer congratulated the Sheltered Housing Action Group for the work carried out.
- 94.13 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the proposed changes to the weekend call service and the service to sheltered housing tenants after out of hours be recommended for approval to the Housing Cabinet Member Meeting.

95. THE PROVISION OF LOFT CONVERSIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO ASSIST OVERCROWDED COUNCIL TENANTS

- 95.1 The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director Place which explained that the HRA Capital Programme for 2011-2014 included setting aside £388,000 per annum to fund a programme of loft conversions and extensions to alleviate overcrowding in HRA properties. The report set out how a loft conversion and extension programme could operate.

- 95.2 Councillor Simson considered it to be an excellent programme. She queried the length of the construction period. 12 weeks seemed a long time and she asked if this was a worst case scenario.
- 95.3 The Head of Housing and Social Inclusion confirmed that 12 weeks was a worst case scenario. Officers would want to see construction moving more quickly if possible. The loft conversions would be delivered through the Mears partnership.
- 95.4 David Murtagh felt that the three year period for construction was not enough. The Head of Housing and Social Inclusion replied that the programme was a guideline to show the council was not investing in properties that would be under occupied.
- 95.5 Councillor Simpson welcomed the move to extend properties. She referred to the section of the report on page 30 that dealt with prioritisation for working households. This reported that 50% of properties selected would be tenanted by working households. She did not agree with that aspect of the report.
- 95.6 Councillor Randall supported the proposals. He considered that there should be a similar scheme for new build. Houses could be built with lofts already available for use. There was a need to look at all possibilities for using space.
- 95.7 Chris Kift considered the proposal to be a brilliant idea. It would be following what the private sector had done for years
- 95.8 Ted Harman agreed it was a good idea. He welcomed the proposals as it was one way of having more 3 and 4 bedroom houses.
- 95.9 Councillor Norman was pleased to see the proposals. Even if the current occupants of the properties moved out, the council would still have extended properties.
- 95.10 An indicative vote was taken by the tenant representatives. 10 tenants voted in favour of the proposals. A vote was taken by council representatives. The proposals were accepted by 7 votes with 2 abstentions.
- 95.11 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the selection criteria, set out in Appendix A, be recommended for approval at the Housing Cabinet Member Meeting.
- (2) That the Cabinet Member for Housing be recommended to award discretion to the Head of Housing & Social Inclusion to amend the selection and prioritisation criteria in accordance with any relevant changes agreed to the council's Allocations Policy. (These will primarily concern priority for working households and those making a positive contribution to the city).
- (3) That the key events in the process and the estimated timetable for each event to be completed, set out in Appendix B, be noted.

96. HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY INVESTMENT OPTIONS

- 96.1 The Committee considered a report of the Lead Commissioner Housing which explained that the Housing Revenue Account Capital programme for 2011-14 included home energy efficiency investment as a housing commissioning investment priority for possible future investment. In order to maintain the Council's current level of performance and meet the Council's strategic priorities it was necessary to explore alternative funding streams to enable the continued delivery of home energy efficiency programmes in both the private sector and council stock. Previous reports and presentations to the HMCC and Housing Cabinet Member Meeting had noted the importance of continuing the work with potential partners such as energy companies to explore means of maximising investment to meet the Council's strategic housing goals, including potential opportunities offered by the Government backed Feed in Tariff scheme.
- 96.2 The Council had the opportunity to install solar PV panels onto its Council owned residential properties. This had arisen out of the Government's new Feed-in-Tariff incentive scheme.
- 96.3 John Melson considered that energy companies should investigate home energy efficiency investment options in blocks where there was no opportunity for Feed in Tariffs. There were 96 flats in his high rise block and it would not be possible to fit 96 panels on the roof. Options for blocks with high density residents and with a small area should be investigated.
- 96.4 Councillor Fryer welcomed many of the proposals in the report. However, she asked for more detail about funding. She understood that Feed in Tariffs finished in April 2011. Councillor Fryer asked about Renewable heating centres.
- 96.5 The Chairman pointed out that Feed in Tariffs would be reduced in April 2011 but would not stop.
- 96.6 Councillor Simpson asked if this was an initiative that would be aimed at the 50% of households who were employed.
- 96.7 The Head of Housing Strategy and Development and Private Sector Housing explained that officers were looking at a whole range of options not just Feed in Tariffs. Renewable heating centres were a new initiative. Options were being applied to a whole range of council tenants. There was a need to look at the orientation of the property and whether it was south facing.
- 96.8 Councillor Randall welcomed the options and was pleased it they were being applied to private as well as public sector housing. He considered that where there was limited space available for solar panels there should be partnerships with other organisations. For example, the Council should be looking at school buildings with flat roofs.
- 96.9 Chris Kift referred to paragraph 3.5 (first bullet point – Reducing residents' electricity bills as they can use electricity that is being generated by the Panels, either free of charge or at a reduced rate). This statement worried him.

- 96.10 The Head of Housing Strategy and Development and Private Sector Housing explained that some people would get reduced electricity bills. It might not be cost effective to provide people with free electricity.
- 96.11 Councillor Simson stated that the proposals had been well received at the Housing Area Panel she chaired. She asked if these options could be looked at when loft conversions were being completed. The Chairman confirmed this was the case.
- 96.12 Councillor Fallon-Khan welcomed the proposals, which were a creative way of helping people in the city.
- 96.13 Stewart Gover applauded the proposals, but made the following observations. He had noticed windows and doors on his estate with large gaps. He raised the problem of seagull droppings in relation to solar panels. He observed that most flats did not have lofts and cavity wall insulation was not always useful. If pellets were pumped into cavities it could cause rising damp. Meanwhile, some blocks of flats had large boilers and could not have combination boilers fitted. These were areas that needed to be looked at.
- 96.14 The Chairman noted Stewart's concerns and considered that the report was proposing a forward looking and different way of working.
- 96.15 John Melson stated that he had discussed the issue of seagulls with the Head of Housing Strategy who had confirmed that this matter had already been considered along with the problem of the salt corrosion of panels.
- 96.16 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Cabinet Member for Housing note the Home Energy Efficiency Investment options and opportunities available to the Council, its tenants and residents through installation of solar photovoltaic panels on council and other homes to take advantage of the Feed in Tariff scheme.
- (2) That the Cabinet Member for Housing note the outcome of the initial options appraisal undertaken by Climate Energy, indicating that there is an outline business case to support delivery of a solar photovoltaic scheme across the council housing stock and to meet strategic housing and other council priorities, including private sector housing renewal, reducing fuel poverty and reducing carbon emissions.
- (3) That the Cabinet Member for Housing note that existing sub-regional local authority partners in the BEST consortium are also undertaking similar initiatives to install solar panels to take advantage of the Feed in Tariff scheme and that we have identified significant potential advantages to working in partnership to move quickly to enable economies of scale to be explored through procurement arrangements.
- (4) That the Cabinet Member for Housing be recommended to agree that BHCC works with partners in the current BEST consortium to ascertain whether BHCC can take forward any procurement of the supply and installation of solar PV panels together with those partners in order to establish actual costs to inform economies of scale and further consideration of business case and appropriate funding model. In addition, consideration will be given to procuring the supply and installation of solar PV panels with our partner Mears Ltd.

- (5) That the Cabinet Member for Housing notes any final decision on funding options, level and source of funding to progress this scheme together with any procurement supply and installation of solar PV panels as set out in this Report will be subject to Cabinet approval.

97. BUILDING NEW COUNCIL HOMES AND ESTATES MASTER PLAN UPDATE

- 97.1 The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Housing Strategy and Development and Private Sector Housing. HMCC and Cabinet had agreed that an Estates Master Plan be developed in partnership with tenant representatives to inform best use of HRA assets and identify opportunities to build new council homes. The procurement, design and delivery options for new council housing on identified sites were being developed.
- 97.2 The Chairman congratulated the tenants on their key involvement in these developments.
- 97.3 Councillor Fryer asked if it would be possible for ward councillors to have a list of potential sites. The Chairman replied that this would be possible once tenants had had the opportunity to discuss the potential sites. The initiative would be tenant led.
- 97.4 Councillor Fryer asked about the type of housing to be provided. The Chairman replied that some sites might be set aside for people with disabilities. The Lead Commissioner Housing explained that all the housing provided would be affordable social housing of some kind.
- 97.5 Councillor Simpson welcomed any new housing but considered that a great deal of work was required to reach the numbers of homes proposed. She hoped councillors could be involved in the proposals. It would be important for councillors to be informed of these plans as they were developed. Councillor Simpson considered it would have been helpful to have received a presentation much earlier.
- 97.6 Councillor Simpson asked about the Localism Bill in relation to the proposals and raised an issue relating to Right to Buy. She understood that the government were now saying that the proceeds from Right to Buy would be restricted to 25%. The Chairman replied that there would be a need to look at the Localism Bill when it was published. She agreed councillors should be involved with the proposals but stressed that tenants should have time to discuss and bring forward proposals.
- 97.7 The Head of Housing and Social Inclusion explained that Councillor Simpson was right in saying that in the latest information from the government, the council would retain 25% of the proceeds from Right to Buy. The debt settlement had been adjusted accordingly. This was a different approach but had a compensatory effect.
- 97.8 Councillor Randall welcomed the proposals and the tenant's involvement. He stressed that the tenants and councillors had worked well together on the LDV and he considered that the tenants and councillors should work together on these proposals. Councillor Randall stressed that the LDV could have a role in funding some of the new build.
- 97.9 Councillor Allen considered that Members should be involved in the process in a positive way. Meanwhile, he did not consider the proposals a master plan at the

moment. It was just a handful of sites. He asked to see the full details as soon as possible. The Chairman took on Councillor Allen's comments but stressed that the tenants must carry out their work first.

- 97.10 Heather Hayes stated that she was pleased to hear about Ainsworth House. She asked if St Gabriel's and some other derelict buildings at the side of Ainsworth House could be developed at some point. The Chairman replied that the council were not the leaseholders of these buildings.
- 97.11 Chris Kift praised the presentation and stated that it underlined how far ahead the tenants movement in the city was, in relation to the rest of the country. Brighton & Hove could show other local authorities and tenants how things should be done.
- 97.12 John Melson remarked that the council could only develop a small number of properties at the moment. He agreed with Councillor Randall that the LDV could help. By 2013 the LDV would have caught up with a good deal of the homes work. There was no reason why part of the money could not be used for compulsory purchase orders to fund new building.
- 97.13 Stewart Gover stated that the council were not in the business of building new estates. Ainsworth House was at the vanguard of these proposals. He was keen to see some garage sites developed.
- 97.14 **RESOLVED** – That the presentation be noted.

98. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT (QUARTER 3)

- 98.1 The Committee considered a report of the Head of Housing & Social Inclusion which set out the Housing Management Performance for the year 2010-2011.
- 98.2 Councillor Fallon-Khan referred to paragraph 3.1.0 in the report, relating to Rent Collection and Current Arrears. He commented that he would like to see a column showing the targets for previous years, in order to measure success.
- 98.3 The Head of Housing and Social Inclusion explained that there had been much discussion on how to present the report in the future. The next HMCC would discuss services pledges. A future HMCC would discuss a performance compact. At that point, the performance report would be presented in a different way.
- 98.4 Councillor Randall considered the performance figures to be good, but noted that there had only been 37 evictions in the year. He also asked if figures were kept for people who left without paying arrears. The Head of Housing and Social Inclusion explained that 37 people had been evicted for non payment of rent. There would have been other evictions in addition to this figure. He would ensure Councillor Randall was sent figures for people who left their properties without paying arrears.
- 98.5 Ted Harman noted that there seemed to be a vast improvement on rent arrears. Meanwhile evictions were fewer each year.

- 98.6 The Chairman stated that officers should be thanked and commended for the work they had done to achieve these improvements.
- 98.7 John Melson agreed that 37 evictions was a good figure for rent arrears. He raised two areas of concern relating to the Estates Service in paragraph 3.5.0. These were the figures for the completion of cleaning tasks, and a concern about lights in public ways being left on in the daytime.
- 98.8 The Head of Housing and Social Inclusion explained that officers were visiting sites with tenants in the East area to be shown problems with lights. He would arrange for this review of lights to be extended to the Central area.
- 98.9 Ted Harman mentioned that some lights were left on in the daytime. The Head of Housing and Social Inclusion asked tenants to let officers know if lights were not working or left on in the daytime.
- 98.10 Stewart Gover referred to the target for total recharge debt (paragraph 3.1.0). He stressed that more should be done to claim recharge debt payments. These payments should be paid for damage to properties.
- 98.11 Councillor Simson commented that under the old allocations policy, allocations were made to people who could not manage properties well. There should be a vast improvement with the implementation of the new allocations policy.
- 98.12 Jean Davis mentioned a problem she was experiencing with condensation on her windows. She had been told that windows could only be repaired one at a time. The Head of Housing and Social Inclusion replied that James Cryer from Mears Ltd would arrange to send someone to look at her windows.
- 98.13 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the report and the above comments be noted.

The meeting concluded at 5.37pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of

