

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
CENTRAL AREA HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL

2.00pm 3 DECEMBER 2014

HAMPSHIRE LODGE

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Bowden (Chair)

Voting Representatives: Alan Hale (Hereford Court), Barry Kingston (Hampshire Court), Charles Penrose (Sloane Court), Carl Boardman (Warwick Mount), Barry Hughes (Sylvan Hall), Ann Ewings (Mount Pleasant), Jane Thorp (Highden Westmount & Crown Hill),

Non-Voting Delegates: Tomm Nyhuus (Somerset Point)

Officers: Jane White (Performance & Improvement Officer), Anna Lee (Housing Customer Service Team Leader), Keith Dadswell (Project Manager- Mears), Janine Healey (Performance Manager), Simon Pickles (Housing Stock Review Manager), Sharon Terry (Resident Involvement Officer), Becky Purnell (Resident Involvement Manager), Ododo Dafe (Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement), Rachel Chasseaud (Head of Tenancy Services), Keely McDonald (Resident Involvement Officer), Laura Gibson (Web & Social Media Officer), Tom Matthews (Performance & Data Analyst), Lucie Royal (Housing Customer Service Team Leader) John Peel (Democratic Services Officer)

Guests:

22 APOLOGIES

22.1 Apologies were received from Theresa Mackay, Chris Row, Jean Davis and James Cryer.

23 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

23.1 Carl Boardman noted that Item 21.2 was incomplete and did not specify which document should be circulated.

23.2 The Resident Involvement Officer clarified that the lift replacement programme was the document unidentified.

23.3 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 September 2014 be approved and signed as the correct record subject to the above amendment.

24 PERFORMANCE REPORT Q2 2014/15

24.1 The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement presented a report that covered Housing Management Performance during Quarter 2 of the 2014/15 financial year. The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement stated that the table provided figures

and a RAG rating system against key performance indicators adding that the intention of the report was to provide Area Panels with information on Housing services performance and, as with previous versions of the report, comments and feedback on its presentation was welcomed to improve future versions.

- 24.2 Barry Hughes noted the housing stock figure had reduced from 11,687 to 11,576 and asked if this was due to right to buy sales and stock transfer to Seaside Community Homes.
- 24.3 The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement confirmed that the stock figure had reduced and often fluctuated up and down.
- 24.4 The Chair asked why there no previous figures for 'repairs completed at first visit'.
- 24.5 The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement clarified that this was a new category in response to issues raised by tenants.
- 24.6 Tom Nyhuus stated that the term Sheltered Housing should be amended to Senior Housing as recently agreed by that group.
- 24.7 The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement noted that the report had been prepared in advance of the agreement to change the group's name and the new term would be used as soon as it was ratified by Housing Committee.
- 24.8 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

25 STAR SURVEY RESULTS

- 25.1 The Panel considered a report that provided feedback from a satisfaction survey carried out by Housemark of a selection of council tenants in June 2014. The results provided an up-to-date and statistically significant indication of customer satisfaction on a range of council services.
- 25.2 Tom Nyhuus enquired as to the other six authorities that had been benchmarked.
- 25.3 The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement stated that the six authorities were similar sized council organisations.
- 25.4 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

26 DISCRETIONARY SCHEMES

- 26.1 The Panel considered a report that provided the findings of the recent review of the Discretionary Decorating and Gardening Scheme and set out the recommended changes for comment.
- 26.2 Anne Ewings stated that she hoped the qualifying age for the Discretionary Scheme could remain at 65.

- 26.3 Carl Boardman requested that the recommendations be made clear that only one room could be decorated every two years.
- 26.4 Tomm Nyhuus stated that further clarification was required on what was in the decorating pack for example, what type of paint was provided and how much it would cover and if other materials such as soapwash would be included.
- 26.5 The Housing Customer Service Team Leader clarified that a pack was at the meeting to view and sufficient materials were provided to cover a specific room with two coats of paint. Additional items such as soapwash could be considered for inclusion.
- 26.6 Tomm Nyhuus noted his concern that ensuring a standard of decoration could be a problem for a small number of residents and asked if advice would be provided.
- 26.7 The Housing Customer Service Team Leader replied that an advice sheet was provided in the pack and workshops were also conducted to assist.
- 26.8 Alan Hale stated that if the age of eligibility was raised to 75, he would like it made mandatory that the work be carried out on applicants behalf.
- 26.9 The Housing Customer Service Team Leader answered that there were two parts to the scheme; residents could apply for a pack and do the work themselves or by a family member or friend or they could apply for Mears operatives to carry out the work.
- 26.10 Charles Penrose asked that officers attend the Senior Housing Action Group to speak on the proposals.
- 26.11 Barry Hughes asked for better promotion of the scheme using other forms of media than electronic such as rent forms.
- 26.12 The Performance & Improvement Officer clarified that the scheme would be advertised in Homing In and the online application could be completed by the Customer Service Team upon request from residents.
- 26.13 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

27 CITYWIDE PARKING ENFORCEMENT ON HRA LAND

- 27.1 The Panel considered a report that proposed that parking areas that have enforcement are increased to include all council HRA land (with some exceptions) and to the 99 Housing garage sites to provide residents with preferred parking and provide consistent arrangements.
- 27.2 Barry Hughes stated that whilst he welcomed the proposals, there was currently an absence of maintenance on the spaces.
- 27.3 The Housing Customer Service Team Leader clarified that an agreement had been made for RJ Dance to complete maintenance work and there would be a roll out of linage and signage forthcoming.

- 27.4 The Chair asked the basis upon which spaces were allocated.
- 27.5 The Housing Customer Service Team Leader stated that spaces were assigned on a priority basis (category 1-4) that was weighted toward residents with contractors last in those priorities.
- 27.6 Carl Boardman asked if allocations to the priorities were reviewed on an annual basis.
- 27.7 The Housing Customer Service Team Leader stated that allocations were not reviewed every year and the authority used a prioritised waiting list for oversubscription. Furthermore, during times of major works when fewer spaces might be available, those in the lower categories were moved as necessary.
- 27.8 Carl Boardman relayed problems encountered with Mears vehicles blocking access for service vehicles such as Cityclean.
- 27.9 The Housing Customer Service Team Leader replied that such incidents were reported to Housing by Cityclean and addressed as quickly as possible and she would encourage residents to do likewise.
- 27.10 Alan Hale stated that he had phoned on a number occasions regarding residents occupying designated visitor parking bays and no action had been taken.
- 27.11 The Housing Customer Service Team Leader explained that in such occurrences, the Housing Team would write a warning letter to the resident occupying the visitor bay. If such action continued, the team would ask Ethical Parking Management to focus their work in that specific area. If that did not dissuade such behaviour, as a last resort the Housing Team would revoke the residents permit. Furthermore, the issue of visitor permits on HRA land was under review.
- 27.12 Alan Hale stated that he found it unfair that residents had to pay for a few abusing the current system.
- 27.13 Ann Ewings stated that she agreed and hoped there would be no changes to the current system.
- 27.14 The Housing Customer Service Team Leader stated that she understood such concerns and there would be a comprehensive discussion of the issue some time in the future.
- 27.15 Charles Penrose stated that residents at Leach Court had experienced continuing problems with Patching Lodge workers occupying resident permit spaces.
- 27.16 The Housing Customer Service Team Leader requested that residents call in such circumstances and Ethical Parking Services could be requested to attend.
- 27.17 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

28 SHELTERED HOUSING STOCK REVIEW

- 28.1 The Panel considered a report that outlined the result of the Sheltered Housing Stock Review and requested comment on various recommendations.
- 28.2 Charles Penrose noted that two sheltered schemes had closed within the past two years and there was an urgent need for new accommodation as the population was getting older. Charles also noted problems experienced with some local associations not accredited by Brighton & Hove City Council.
- 28.3 The Chair stated that he would follow up the latter issue with the Chair of the Housing Committee.
- 28.4 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

29 EDB REVIEW

- 29.1 The Panel considered a report that consulted on proposals to improve the delivery of the Estate Development Budget (EDB) projects and to inform representatives of changes to EDB processes.
- 29.2 Charles Penrose stated that he welcomed the report and update.
- 29.3 Barry Hughes echoed Charles' comment adding that there was a store at Holbank that could be used for area equipment storage.
- 29.4 Alan Hale asked why the cap on EDB 'quick bids' had been raised to £750 from £500.
- 29.5 The EDB Project Manager stated that the level had been raised to provide more flexibility.
- 29.6 Tomm Nyhuus stated that he believed it was essential to raise the cap as it was not difficult to spend £500 on a project and the figure had remained unchanged for many years.
- 29.7 Carl Boardman stated that he was part of the EDB Panel that looked at this issue and it was their view that raising the cap would account for inflation and flexibility for further years.
- 29.8 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

30 EDB OUTSTANDING WORK

- 30.1 The Panel considered a report that provided an update on the EDB programme provided by the Mears EDB Project Team.
- 30.2 Charles Penrose stated that problems had arisen with contractors being awarded work and then passing that work onto a sub-contractor.
- 30.3 The Mears Project Manager stated that Mears operated stringent Pre-Qualifying Questionnaire process in which it was made clear that should not happen. The Mears

Project Manager provided assurance that his team were trying to eliminate such practice.

30.4 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

31 ITEMS FROM TENANT ONLY MEETING

31.1 (Item 2- Estate Inspections) Alan Hale stated that four different Neighbourhood Officers had been responsible for the central area over the past 10 months and the most recent officer had displayed a very dismissive attitude towards him.

31.2 The Head of Tenancy Services apologised for the service Alan and Essex Place had received and such action was unacceptable. The Head of Tenancy Services stated that the service had undergone a lot of change including a restructure and staff turnover and should start to settle from this point on.

31.3 **RESOLVED-** That the responses provided to the issues raised at the Tenant Only meeting be noted.

32 CITY WIDE REPORTS

32.1 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes and reports of the various Citywide groups be noted.

The meeting concluded at 4.15pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of