

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

4.00pm 30 APRIL 2014

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Randall (Chair) Councillor Peltzer Dunn (Opposition Spokesperson), Councillor Wilson (Opposition Spokesperson), Councillors Barnett, Duncan, Farrow, Fitch, Mears, Rufus and Shanks

PART ONE

64 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

64(a) Declarations of Substitute Members

64.1 Councillor Shanks declared she was substituting for Councillor Kennedy.

64(b) Declarations of Interests

64.2 There were none

64(c) 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.

65 MINUTES

65.1 Councillor Farrow stated that it was doubtful if the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee would meet again and he felt it would have been appropriate for the minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2014 to have been included in the Housing Committee agenda. There had been an indicative vote from tenants at the meeting which had resulted in a unanimous vote in favour of retaining the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee.

65.2 **RESOLVED** – That the Minutes be agreed and signed as a correct record.

66 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 66.1 The Chair reported that he had met with David Standing of Sussex Central YMCA to discuss hostel projects for homeless young people.
- 66.2 The Chair reported that he had spoken about Community Land Trusts at a fringe meeting of the Chartered Institute of Housing Annual Conference.
- 66.3 The Chair reported that he had attended an ideas party on Warwick Mount. There were issues with the block that needed to be resolved.
- 66.4 The Chair reported that he had met with the Green ECO Action Team with regard to advice to landlords on eco improvements for rented property.
- 66.5 The Chair reported that he had attended the private viewing of the plans for new flats at Manor Place. There had been a good turn out.
- 66.6 The Chair reported that he had attended a High Rise Action Group meeting relating to security in tower blocks. There had been a separate meeting with Albion Hill residents. Action had been taken to improve security in the blocks.
- 66.7 Councillor Farrow mentioned that the City Assembly was taking place on Saturday 10 May at the Housing Centre. He had been invited as a Chair of his tenants' association but not as a councillor. He asked that all councillors be invited to the City Assembly. Other councillors on the Committee appeared to have received an invitation, however, officers were asked to double check that an invitation had been sent to all councillors. The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement informed the Committee that she thought all councillors had been invited but she would check to make sure that an invitation had been sent out.

67 CALL OVER

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

68 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

68.1 There were no Petitions

68.2 There were no Written Questions

68.3 Peter Clarke and Helen Russell presented the following deputation:

“The Community Land Trust Steering Group seeks the formation and recognition of a Community Land Trust for Brighton and Hove. Community Land Trusts hold land in perpetuity for community benefit. They are a Trust managed by stakeholders (including the land-owner); By submitting assets to a CLT the loss of community value to prevailing market forces is prevented. We are proposing that a city-wide (and beyond) CLT be established that can steward land for local projects, beginning with small projects to gain experience and gradually

expanding. Presently we are seeing a groundswell in popular interest in CLT's across the country. With Council and NGO support a CLT in Brighton & Hove would have the strategic advantage of being the most effective vehicle for enabling cross-sector buy in.

The Community Land Trust could unite multiple agencies and organisations that already serve the housing and communities sector. The aim would be to alleviate housing shortage and complexity through the development of economically, demographically and socially diverse housing options. The Trust would promote productive and sustainable living using new and existing systems and technologies. It would help communities engage with issues such as energy consumption, resource management, cost of living and employment. It could support people with specific needs - such as older people, those with physical, social and educational needs - through community representation, collaboration, skills training and other means - to benefit both specific communities and the City as a whole.

What are the benefits to BHCC? A CLT will engage motivated people developing good housing and good communities in a non-profit system. There is the potential for harnessing cross-subsidy between residents, self-help housing management, mutual support and reducing the need for social services. There is also a strong correlation between community-led housing and all forms of sustainability. This would enable more housing developments to conform to One Planet Living guidelines. Working through a CLT can also enable more innovative approaches to solving housing problems with the benefits spreading to the wider community more easily. Such projects will undoubtedly act as a beacon to other councils, establishing exemplar models of building healthy communities.

What are the benefits to residents? Greater community cohesion and reduction in isolation; mutual support amongst neighbours; increasing sustainability, reducing running costs and energy use. The opportunity for residents to engage in the process and thereby learn, increasing their responsibility within their own and towards neighbouring communities so they can ultimately help to support various forms of community led projects. Engaging communities in their own development also enables greater social, environmental, economic responsibility. Such projects are frequently aspirational, and serve mixed and multiple demographics, family types and sizes of tenures, rather than focusing on one type of housing need, rejuvenating the village spirit for modern times.

Community Land Trusts are able to access a range of financial products including; institutional investors, ethical lenders, residents' cross-subsidy, self build equity, etc which when combined can go towards producing rents in reach of those on low incomes. Such systems have a proven track record in their ability to enable a sustainable financial model to be built for each project that the CLT delivers.

The Council can, under their well being powers and through the spatial planning system, help by: joining the Trust and identifying land for Community Led Development, and b) offering pointers to potential grants and assisting the navigation of planning and building regs. Ultimately the starting point has to be the provision of low-cost land - either donated to the CLT, leased at peppercorn rent, or sold at reduced price."

68.4 The Chair gave the following response:

“Community Led Housing, including the establishment of Community Land Trusts (CLTs), is a key theme that has emerged from the scoping phase of our current City-wide Housing Strategy review.

We have met with the Community Land Trust Steering Group as part of this scoping stage. Feedback from these meetings will inform our ongoing consultation and development of the new City-wide Housing Strategy.

We support the Community Land Trust principle and have previously identified CLTs as providing an opportunity to meet locally identified needs, offering a range of beneficial features including:

- Community ownership and control;
- Open democratic structure;
- Permanently affordable housing or other assets;
- Not for profit with any surplus used to further the community’s interest;
- Long term stewardship of homes and / or other assets.

We previously reviewed the potential for a Community Land Trust solution as part of our options appraisal informing the creation of our Local Delivery Vehicle, Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes.

Further CLT proposals are encouraged for consideration as one of a range of potential options available to support the delivery of new affordable housing for local people in the City, where consistent with our overall strategic objectives and housing investment priorities.

Following the completion of the new Housing Strategy we will have a clear and measurable action plan that will show how we will deliver agreed priorities. This will be aligned to our overall Local Housing Investment Plan.

Should CLTs continue to be supported through the Strategy consultation phase and remain a key priority, we will work with the CLT Steering Group in order to review the proposals set out in the deputation in detail.

In addition we will continue to work with local housing co-operatives in support of community led housing in the following ways:

Supporting Housing co-operatives through our existing Housing Strategy: working with existing housing co-ops to maintain/ improve their housing situation, in particular supporting review of short life leases; working proactively with housing co-ops to support bids for funding, including Empty Homes Community Funding programme (two properties purchased and two others in the funding pipeline); highlighting housing co-operatives to property owners as an option for bringing long term empty homes back into use.

The New Homes For Neighbourhoods - Small Sites Strategy sets out ongoing work with CHIBAH (Co-operative Housing in Brighton and Hove) to develop a pilot project of co-operative housing that would be managed by CHIBAH. This was approved as a pilot by Housing Committee on 5th March 2014.

68.5 **RESOLVED** - That the deputation be noted.

69 ISSUES RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

69.1 There were no Petitions, Written Questions, Letters or Notices of Motion from Councillors.

70 RESPONSE TO TENANT & RESIDENT SCRUTINY PANEL REPORT ON THE HOUSING CUSTOMER SERVICE TEAM

- 70.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Environment, Development and Housing which set out the Housing response to the recommendations of the Tenant and Resident Scrutiny Panel in their report on the Housing Customer Service Team (HCST).
- 70.2 Panel members Dave Murtagh (Chair), Chief Blackbear and Philip Bradick attended the meeting to present the Panel's findings and answer questions.
- 70.3 Dave Murtagh made the following statement:

"This has been a very positive scrutiny experience for myself and my panel members and we have learned a lot about the Housing Customer Service Team.

I would like to express my gratitude to my panel members Chief John Blackbear, Philip Bradick and Lesley Cope.

On an equal note, thank you to all the Officers involved in this scrutiny review from Geoff Raw, Hilary, Ododo, Janet and the Housing Service Advisors who welcomed this scrutiny opportunity.

The panel were keen to request as much information as possible for this review from the team such as a team business plan, job descriptions, and performance information to see whether the new 303030 telephone number was meeting the needs of its residents.

The panel wanted to hear from the team to learn about their issues and ideas to improve systems to get better results for tenants. All the documentation was provided by Janet in a very professional format with clear explanations.

Right from the beginning after hearing from the Executive Director right through to the Housing Service Advisors that ICT was the team's biggest issue. The current system is not fit for purpose and lacks performance reporting information. The panel felt it was a priority to upgrade the ICT system and see a business plan for this.

Also it was very positive to hear that the team have already co-located to the Housing Centre to work along their colleagues and solve residents' issues quicker.

The panel's only disappointments were the lack of resident's feedback and not having the opportunity to carry out telephone surveys with tenants who had used the service. The Tenant & Resident Scrutiny Panel will work hard to improve these in the future. Thank you".

- 70.4 Councillor Mears thanked the tenants for their work on the Scrutiny Review. It was helpful for tenants to have the budget figures especially around the HRA and ICT. Councillor Mears reminded the Committee that the Health and Wellbeing Board would need a whole ICT structure to enable the council to work with the Clinical Commissioning Group. Councillor Mears stressed that Housing Services was paying for ICT through two budgets. She stressed that tenants would not receive the service they needed until improvements were made to ICT.
- 70.5 Councillor Peltzer Dunn stated that the Scrutiny Panel's report was excellent. He considered it was disturbing that the report found deficiencies in the service. Only half of the respondents were aware of a single telephone number. Councillor Peltzer Dunn was worried at the response set out in the covering report at paragraph 4.15 which referred to old technology. This was more evidence that the Council had not got to grips with the problem.
- 70.6 The Chair stated that there had been a lack of investment in ICT.
- 70.7 Dave Murtagh explained that the Tenant & Resident Scrutiny Panel members were informed that the reason why they were not able to listen to phone conversations was due to data protection. This had prevented the Panel from doing its job properly and Mr Murtagh considered that there were ways round this problem. The Panel had expected they could use laptops and tablets but were told they could not use Wi Fi due to data protection.
- 70.8 The Housing Services Operations Manager explained that it had not been possible to listen to live telephone calls. Officers were looking to make it possible in future. There was no Wi Fi in the Housing Offices. The Chair stated that these issues needed to be investigated. There was an issue about making tenants alert to the fact that some live calls might be monitored. The Chair suggested that Dave revisited this issue in the future.
- 70.9 The Chair thanked the Tenant and Resident Scrutiny Panel members for their work on the Scrutiny Review
- 70.10 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the evidence, findings and recommendations of the Tenant and Resident Scrutiny Panel relating to the HCST be noted.
- (2) That the actions proposed in the report in response to the Tenant and Resident Scrutiny Panel's recommendations, be agreed.

71 HOUSING UPDATE CARELEAVERS - RPS

- 71.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Environment, Development & Housing and the Director of Children's Services which provided information on those care leavers who were housed in accommodation with Registered Providers under Band A Priority as set out in appendices 1 & 2. The report was

presented by the Head of Housing Support and the Service Manager, Young People's Services.

- 71.2 Members were informed that since the last meeting officers from Children's Services and Housing Services had met to establish a support system for young people when they reach age 21. If there were no tenancy related problems the support would cease.
- 71.3 Councillor Wilson mentioned that some young people were falling into arrears. She asked if it was likely that they would be evicted. Councillor Wilson was informed that there were two current cases. The arrears were mostly cleared in the first case and had resulted from delays in housing benefit payments. The other young person had still not been evicted. Officers were trying to work with the young person concerned.
- 71.4 Councillor Mears referred to page 41 of the agenda and expressed concern about arrears. She asked what care packages were in place for the young people involved. She also asked if any young people were in bed and breakfast accommodation.
- 71.5 The Service Manager, Young People's Services replied that Children's Services shared Councillor Mears' concerns. He promised to provide Councillor Mears with more details about individual cases outside of the meeting. A small number of young people were involved. The majority of young people did not have problems and were doing well. 28 young people were currently being supported aged 18-21. This number would increase during the course of the year. There were no young people in bed & breakfast but there were other forms of temporary accommodation.
- 71.6 Councillor Mears asked for details of the numbers of young people in temporary accommodation and where they were placed. The Chair stated that this information could be provided in any future report on the subject.
- 71.7 Councillor Shanks stated that she was pleased that this matter was being taken seriously. The council's housing stock should be there to help young people.
- 71.8 The Chair considered the report to be very positive. He asked if officers were asking the RSLs for reports. The Head of Housing Support confirmed that there were no RSL reports as there were no problematic issues.
- 71.9 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the report be noted.

72 TENANCY FRAUD

- 72.1 The Corporate Fraud Manager informed Members that there had been a number of successes since he attended the last meetings of Housing Committee and Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee. This included proving that someone with a council property in the City actually lived in the North West of England. Another case involved a housing association property. Both properties would be re-let. Meanwhile, 'The Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act' made a new criminal offence of sub-letting and gave power for the courts to give social landlords any profit the tenant made from sub-letting.

- 72.2 The Corporate Fraud Manager stressed that more fraud awareness training needed to be provided to officers in housing. He planned to devise a training programme and would obtain learning packages. Questions to consider were whether to have a tenants' amnesty and whether to go ahead with a tenancy fraud campaign.
- 72.3 The Chair considered that it would be a very good idea to have a tenancy fraud campaign.
- 72.4 Councillor Farrow requested a brief written update setting out the successes that had been achieved. Councillor Farrow also requested a tenancy fraud briefing to which all councillors be invited, as part of their training. He agreed with the Chair that there should be a tenancy fraud campaign.
- 72.5 Councillor Mears stressed that some councillors found it difficult to get to training events. She suggested that a paper be provided with relevant telephone numbers.
- 72.6 The Chair suggested e-learning as a practical suggestion.
- 72.7 Councillor Peltzer Dunn supported the idea of anti fraud campaign. This would alert law abiding residents to be more aware and would scare off some would be fraudsters.
- 72.8 The Chair stated that there needed to be a regular update report on Tenancy Fraud and asked for a short written paper for the Housing Committee in June. He thanked the Tenancy Fraud Manager for his update.
- 72.9 **RESOLVED** – That the verbal update be noted.

73 MANAGING THE IMPACT OF HOUSING BENEFIT CHANGES ARISING FROM WELFARE REFORMS

- 73.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Environment, Development and Housing which stated that in May 2013 the Housing Committee agreed a time limited and carefully worded 'no eviction' policy for qualifying council tenants adversely affected by welfare reform housing benefit changes related to under occupation. Based on an assessment of the policy to date, the current report made recommendations on extending the policy for a further time limited period. The report was presented by the Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement.
- 73.2 Councillor Wilson referred to paragraph 4.7.4 and expressed concern at the statement that it was possible that misinterpretation of the 'no eviction' policy had in part contributed to the £222k (35%) increase in all current tenants' arrears. Councillor Wilson referred to paragraph 4.7.7 which set out the current policy and suggested an amended commitment. She noted that recommendation 2.1 did not make any reference to the amendment and suggested it would be helpful to include any changes to the policy in the recommendations.
- 73.3 Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 3.5 and stated that it was worrying that 45 people had made no rent payments in the last three months. Councillor Mears asked for reassurance that if the wording in paragraph 4.7.7 was changed, that this would not cause more problems around budgeting constraints.

- 73.4 Councillor Peltzer Dunn noted that the amended policy should refer to 2015 not 2014.
- 73.5 Councillor Wilson referred to paragraph 4.7.8 and asked if any other support was available to tenants apart from mutual exchanges.
- 73.6 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement explained that the support was aimed at mutual exchange. The Council was trying to support the circulation of stock and to support tenants who were under occupying.
- 73.7 Councillor Barnett asked if smaller meetings could be set up for people who wanted to exchange within areas such as Hangleton and Whitehawk.
- 73.8 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement replied that that mutual exchange moves were pinpointed down to postcodes. Officers were planning to hold more mutual exchange events. With regard to the other points made, it could not be proved that misinterpretation of the 'no eviction' policy had in part contributed to a 35% increase in all tenant arrears. The message officers were trying to send was that tenants who were experiencing difficulty in paying rent should engage with the council. It was not possible to provide support if there was no engagement.
- 73.9 Councillor Mears stressed that 45 people were paying nothing and expressed concern that this number might increase. She asked what steps were being taken by officers to deal with this problem. The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement explained that if people were not paying rent they would be served with a notice. Some cases would be carried through to the courts. However, if the debt was not at a high level officers might not want to pursue the case through the courts. Councillor Mears replied that this was the period when intense action should be taken, otherwise the debt would grow. Action needed to be taken to get people onto a payment plan.
- 73.10 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement explained that as well as mutual exchange, there was also a new service based on encouraging people to move. If people were in debt they would be asked to considered moving as an option.
- 73.11 Members discussed the wording of the current 'no eviction' policy with the suggested amendment in paragraph 4.7.7. The Senior Lawyer confirmed that the wording of the suggested amendment should be altered to read May 2015 not May 2014.
- 73.12 Councillor Duncan considered that there was a significant difference between the existing policy and the suggested amendment. He considered that the original wording was better and should be extended for another year.
- 73.13 Councillor Peltzer Dunn could not see a problem with the suggested amendment as the last line still read that officers would use all means other than evictions and bailiffs to recover rent due.
- 73.14 The Chair stated that his concern was that tenants who were unwilling to move would not comply with the new policy. They might have very good reasons why they did not want to move. His preference was for the original policy.

- 73.15 Councillor Peltzer Dunn referred to the first line of paragraph 4.7.7 which concerned the council's duty with regard to financial matters. He asked for legal advice about this issue.
- 73.16 The Senior Lawyer explained that the risk was low as the extension was limited for a year. This would not be considered a breach of care to other tenants.
- 73.17 **RESOLVED** - (1) That it be agreed to extend the 'no eviction' policy for a further 12 months until the end of May 2015 and that it be further agreed that the wording of the policy commitment remains unchanged. (The suggested amendment set out in paragraph 4.7.7 is not agreed).
- (2) That it is re-affirmed that officers deal fairly and firmly with tenants who seek to avoid paying their rent and accrue debt on the basis of 'won't pay' rather than 'can't pay'.
- (3) That it is re-affirmed that officers continue to manage council lettings so as to provide under-occupying tenants struggling to meet their financial commitments with more affordable accommodation choices.
- (4) That it is agreed that officers continue to provide all council tenants with clear advice and assistance that supports them in meeting their rent payment and service charge obligations
- (5) That officers continue to monitor the impact of the policy and provide a report back to Housing Committee in Autumn 2014
- (6) That it is agreed that consent be sought from the Government to continue to use HRA funding to support additional Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) for council tenants, supplementing the council's overall DHP fund.

74 HOUSING STRATEGY UPDATE

- 74.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Environment Development and Housing which provided an update on progress on development of the new City-Wide Housing Strategy as requested by members following a presentation to Housing Committee on 5 March 2014. The current Housing Strategy expired this year and the report provided an update on issues, priorities, key themes and preferred means of consultation arising from the initial scoping exercise with key council stakeholders and communities of interest. The findings from the scoping phase including key themes and issues, would inform consultation, development and delivery of the final Housing Strategy to the end of 2014. The report was presented by the Housing Strategy Manager.
- 74.2 Councillor Wilson referred to the section on Affordable Housing Need and stated that the figure relating to 11,500 homes should be 11,300. The Housing Strategy Manager undertook to change the figure.
- 74.3 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the themes and priorities arising from the initial scoping stage of the development of the Housing Strategy be noted.
- (2) That the ongoing methodology and planned events for consultation on the Housing Strategy be approved.

75 HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMO) LICENSING UPDATE

- 75.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment, Development & Housing which further updated Members on progress with the implementation of the additional licensing scheme in the five Lewes Road wards since the commencement of designation. This progress report included applications received; draft and full licences issued; licence conditions applied; current mapping of licensed HMOs in the five wards. As part of the context for the current review of the City-Wide Housing Strategy the report also updated on growth in the private rented sector across the city, requests for assistance received by the Private Sector Housing Team and spread of Mandatory licensed HMOs across all wards. The report was presented by the Head of Housing Strategy & Development.
- 75.2 Councillor Mears thanked the Head of Housing Strategy & Development for the update. She stressed that she would like to understand the financing of this work and how it would be taken forward over the five year scheme. She asked if there would be a surplus as a result of this work and if so, how it would be spent. The Head of Housing Strategy & Development explained that the scheme could not make a surplus. In September 2012, it had been agreed to place resources into the scheme.
- 75.3 The Chair asked the Head of Housing & Development to produce some figures which would be useful for Members. He commented that the scheme was a good piece of work carried out in a short timescale. The figures in paragraph 3.6 demonstrated the growth of the private sector. The maps showed how the five wards were affected. He thanked the Head of Housing Strategy & Development and his colleagues.
- 75.4 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the progress with implementation of the Additional Licensing scheme in the five Lewes Road wards since the commencement of designation on 5 November 2012, be noted.

76 IMPROVING HOUSING SUPPLY - HOME & COMMUNITIES AGENCIES FUNDING UPDATE

- 76.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Environment, Development & Housing which updated members upon:
- Progress on delivery of the current Affordable Housing Programme in partnership with the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) & Registered Providers
 - Progress on bringing empty private sector homes back into use
 - HCA Empty funding allocation
 - HCA Affordable Homes Programme 15-18 Prospectus
 - Additional funding options available to ensure best use of existing housing resources and to improve housing supply
- 76.2 The report was presented by the Head of Housing Strategy and Development.

- 76.3 The Chair asked for clarification of paragraph 3.16. The Head of Housing Strategy confirmed that no funds had been received from the HCA. Other methods had been used to bring homes back into use.
- 76.4 Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 3.36 and stated that she did not agree that the city needed more 1 bedroom accommodation. Councillor Mears referred to the section on the Affordable Housing Investment Programme. She expressed concern that there had been far more shared ownership than affordable rents coming forward. Shared ownership was out of the reach of tenants. The Chair stated that the lack of affordable housing was due to the subsidy system.
- 76.5 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the progress on improving the housing supply in Brighton & Hove (as set out in paragraphs 3.18 to 3.27) be noted.
- (2) That the update on the Homes & Communities Agency Prospectus and other available funding options (as set out in paragraphs 3.28 to 3.40) be noted.
- (3) That the return of the HCA Empty Homes Funding allocation reported to Housing Committee on 6 March 2013 and 19 June 2013 (as more fully described at paragraphs 3.5 to 3.17) be noted.
- 77 NEW HOMES FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS – DEVELOPMENT OF NEW HOMES ON HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) LAND**
- 77.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment, Development & Housing which reported that the Estate Regeneration Team had continued to commission initial feasibility and design studies for developing new homes on a number of sites on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land in accordance with Housing Committee's agreement in September 2012. This report included the findings of four of these business case studies of potential infill sites for the New Homes for Neighbourhoods Estate Regeneration Programme and sought authority to develop these sites through the council's Sustainable Futures corporate strategic construction partnership. The report was presented by the Housing Stock Review Manager.
- 77.2 Members were informed that a final report would be presented to the Committee in the autumn. In the meanwhile an update would be provided to the Cross Party Regeneration Board. Committee members and ward councillors would be kept updated.
- 77.3 The Chair asked about the progress of other schemes. The Housing Stock Review Manager reported that detailed designs for Manor Place were being prepared. Tenants had been able to view the plans yesterday. 300 flyers had been delivered to neighbours. A consultation event had been publicised and there had been a five hour drop in session with the architects and housing officers in attendance. 70 pick ups had resulted from the consultation and 35 forms returned. The Task and Finish Group would consider the response on 1 May.
- 77.4 Councillor Mears stated that she had been promised details of the cost of the programme and could not see details of borrowing costs in the report. Councillor Mears stressed that it was difficult to work out the overall costs of the scheme and hoped that the next report would provide this information.

- 77.5 Councillor Shanks asked if a decision had been made on rents. The Chair replied in the negative. The view was that there would be a need for a mixture of housing with some shared ownership. He would like to see some self build included.
- 77.6 **RESOLVED** - (1) That it be agreed that the Estate Regeneration team in conjunction with the council's Sustainable Futures strategic construction partnership undertake final feasibility studies, design and development of new council housing on the sites of:
- (i) the larger car parking site at Ardingly Street, Kemp Town, Brighton
 - (ii) the northernmost garage site (Site A) at Patchdean, Patcham, Brighton
 - (iii) the southernmost garage site (Site B) at Patchdean, Patcham, Brighton and
 - (iv) the garage site in Buckley Close, Hangleton, Hove
- under the second phase of the New Homes for Neighbourhoods Programme.

78 BRIGHTON & HOVE PROPERTY STANDARD: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 78.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Environment, Development & Housing which concerned the policy areas and specification of work that is carried out to council owned and managed homes as part of the planned programme of improvement work. The report provided some requested additional information around cost implications for hearing loop and external lighting. The report was presented by the Performance Manager.
- 78.2 Councillor Farrow thanked officers for the report and for the recommendation. This would help the security of tenants and improve council buildings.
- 78.3 Councillor Mears asked if there would be an additional service charge. The Chair and Performance Manager confirmed that there would not be an additional service charge.
- 78.4 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the following recommendations be incorporated into the Brighton & Hove Property Standard, from April 2014:
- a) External security lights be fitted to all properties with a street entrance receiving an electrical rewire or upgrade as part of the planned programme and empty property works.
 - b) A programme of hearing loop installations, where required, to communal lounges in sheltered housing schemes and community meeting rooms within HRA properties.

79 PARK ROYAL – LEASEHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT

- 79.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Environment, Development and Housing which informed Members of the legal enfranchisement process which leaseholders had invoked. The report explained the council's new role of 'tenant' resulting from enfranchisement. From Thursday 20 March 2014 the Council ceased to be the freehold owner of these two blocks of flats. 24 Tenanted flats were leased back to the Council. The report was presented by the Leasehold Manager.
- 79.2 The Chair reported that he had received a supportive letter from the Residents' Association.

- 79.3 Councillor Farrow thanked officers for the report and stated that he would like to see it established as a principle that when a legal enfranchisement process led to the loss of the freehold, the Council should maintain the tenanted flats.
- 79.4 Councillor Peltzer Dunn asked about the length of the leasehold and the ground rent for the new leases. The Leasehold Manager explained that the lease was for 999 years at a peppercorn rent. The Council had taken the lease back above the roof and kept all garages. The car parking spaces were now owned by the new freeholders.
- 79.5 **RESOLVED** - That the completion of sale of the freehold and the change of freeholder and management of the two Park Royal buildings be noted.

80 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

- 80.1 No items were referred to the next Council meeting.

The meeting concluded at 6.18pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of