





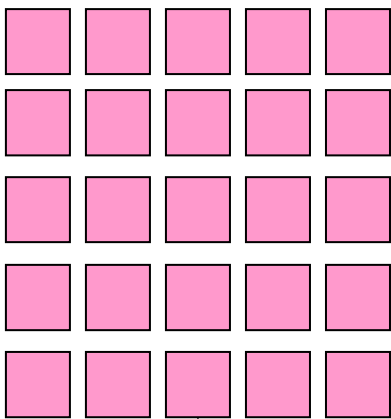
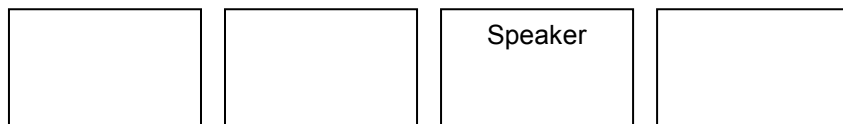
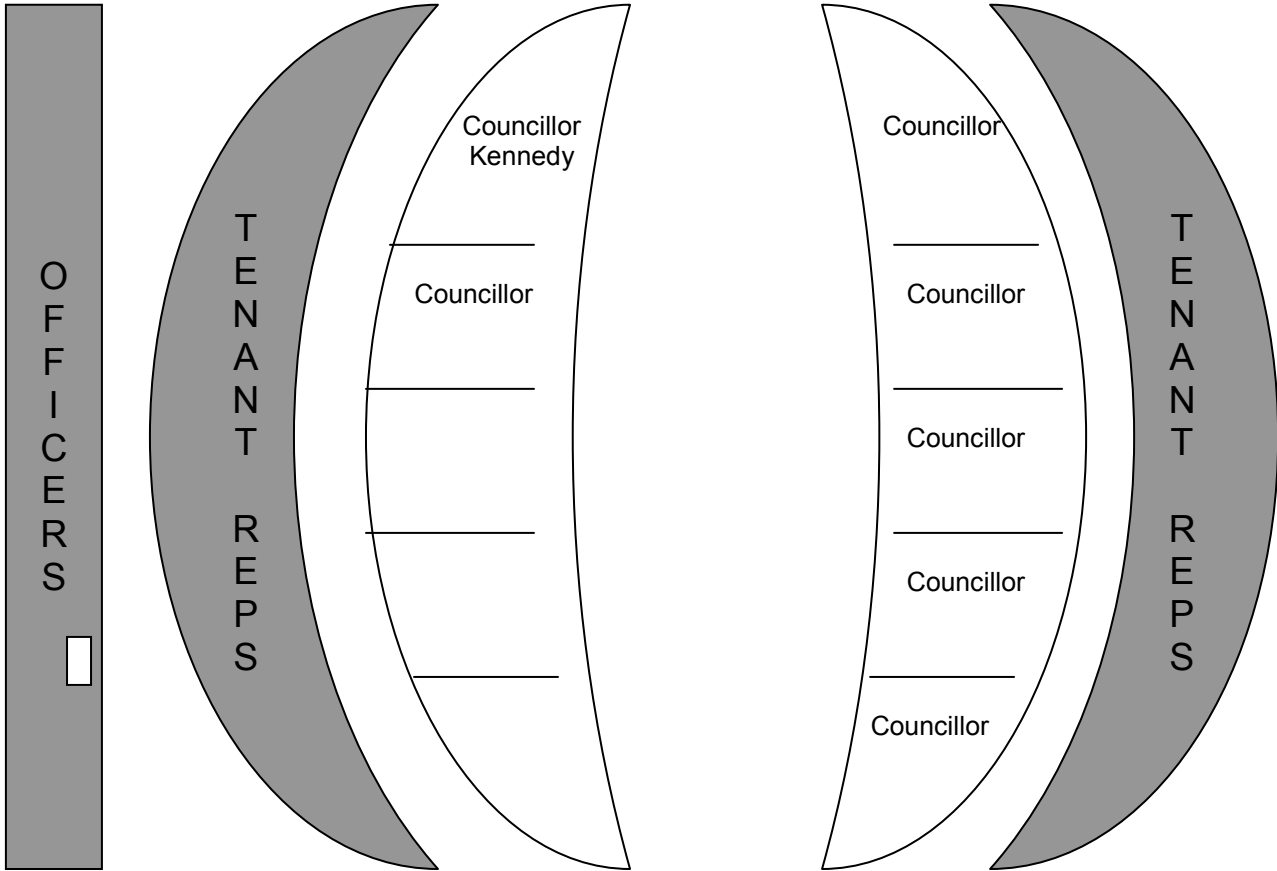
**Brighton & Hove  
City Council**

# Housing Management Consultative Committee

Title:	<b>Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee</b>
Date:	<b>28 May 2013</b>
Time:	<b>3.00pm</b>
Venue:	<b>Council Chamber, Hove Town Hall</b>
Members:	<b>Councillors:</b> Randall (Chair), Kennedy Other Members to be confirmed.
Contact:	<b>Lisa Johnson</b> Senior Democratic Services Officer 01273 291228 lisa.johnson@brighton-hove.gov.uk

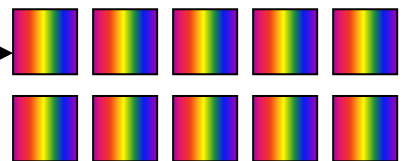
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# Democratic Services: Meeting Layout



Public Seating

Members in Attendance



Press



**Tenant Representatives:**

Lynn Bennett, Brighton East Area Housing Management Panel

David Murtagh, Brighton East Area Housing Management Panel

Trish Barnard, Central Area Housing Management Panel

Jean Davis, Central Area Housing Management Panel

Tina Urquhart, West Area Housing Management Panel

Roy Crowhurst, West Hove & Portslade Area Housing Management Panel

Keith Cohen, Hi Rise Action Group

Tony Worsfold, Leaseholder Action Group

Barry Kent, Tenant Disability Network

Charles Penrose, Sheltered Housing Action Group

Rita King, North & East Area Housing Management Panel

Robert Spacie, North & East Area Housing Management Panel

David Avery, Ingram Crescent RA

# AGENDA

## 1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

**(a) Declaration of Substitutes:** Where Councillors are unable to attend a meeting, a substitute Member from the same Political Group may attend, speak and vote in their place for that meeting.

**(b) Declarations of Interest:**

- (a) Disclosable pecuniary interests not registered on the register of interests;
- (b) Any other interests required to be registered under the local code;
- (c) Any other general interest as a result of which a decision on the matter might reasonably be regarded as affecting you or a partner more than a majority of other people or businesses in the ward/s affected by the decision.

In each case, you need to declare

- (i) the item on the agenda the interest relates to;
- (ii) the nature of the interest; and
- (iii) whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest or some other interest.

If unsure, Members should seek advice from the committee lawyer or administrator preferably before the meeting.

**(c) Exclusion of Press and Public:** To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

**NOTE:** *Any item appearing in Part Two of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is exempt from disclosure and therefore not available to the public.*

*A list and description of the exempt categories is available for public inspection at Brighton and Hove Town Halls.*

## 2. MINUTES

1 - 8

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2013 (copy attached).

## 3. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

## 4. CALL-OVER

- (a) The following items will be read out at the meeting and Members invited to reserve the items for consideration.
- (b) To receive or approve the reports and agree with their recommendations, with the exception of those which have been reserved for discussion.

## 5. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

To consider the following matters raised by members of the public:

- (a) **Petitions** – to receive any petitions presented to the full council or at the meeting itself;
- (b) **Written Questions** – to receive any questions submitted by the due date of 12 noon on the 20 May 2013;
- (d) **Deputations** – to receive any deputations submitted by the due date of 12 noon on the 20 May 2013.

## 6. ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

To consider the following matters raised by councillors and members of the Sub-Committee:

- (a) **Petitions** – to receive any petitions submitted to the full Council or at the meeting itself;
- (b) **Written Questions** – to consider any written questions from Members, the closing date for which is 10.00am on 15 May 2013.
- (c) **Letters** – to consider any letters from Members, the closing date for which is 10.00am on 15 May 2013.

## 7. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 4 AND END OF YEAR 2012/13 9 - 30

Report of Executive Director – Environment, Development & Housing (copy attached).

*Contact Officer:* Ododo Dafe *Tel:* 29-3201  
*Ward Affected:* All Wards

## 8. ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS 2013 31 - 44

Report of Executive Director – Environment, Development & Housing (copy attached).

*Contact Officer:* Ododo Dafe *Tel:* 29-3201  
*Ward Affected:* All Wards

## 9. MOBILITY SCOOTER STORAGE

Presentation from officers.

The City Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public. Provision is also made on the agendas for public questions to committees and details of how questions can be raised can be found on the website and/or on agendas for the meetings.

The closing date for receipt of public questions and deputations for the next meeting is 12 noon on the fifth working day before the meeting.

Agendas and minutes are published on the council's website [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk). Agendas are available to view five working days prior to the meeting date.

Meeting papers can be provided, on request, in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or on disc, or translated into any other language as requested.

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Lisa Johnson, (01273 291228, email [lisa.johnson@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.johnson@brighton-hove.gov.uk)) or email [democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Date of Publication - Friday, 17 May 2013

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE SUB-COMMITTEE**

**3.00pm 26 MARCH 2013**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillor Wakefield (Chair); Councillor Peltzer Dunn (Opposition Spokesperson), Farrow, Jarrett, Pidgeon, Robins, Kennedy and Mears

**Tenant Representatives** David Murtagh (Brighton East Area Housing Management Panel), Trish Barnard (Central Area Housing Management Panel), Jean Davis (Central Area Housing Management Panel), Roy Crowhurst (West Hove & Portslade Area Housing Management Panel), Keith Cohen (Hi Rise Action Group), Tony Worsfold (Leaseholder Action Group), Barry Kent (Tenant Disability Network), Charles Penrose (Sheltered Housing Action Group), Robert Spacie (North & East Area Housing Management Panel) and Rita King (North & East Area Housing Management Panel)

**PART ONE**

**47. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

**47A Declarations of Substitute Members**

47.1 Councillor Mears declared that she was attending as a substitute for Councillor Wells. Mr D Avery declared that he was attending as a substitute for Ms T Urquhart.

**47B Declarations of Interests**

47.2 There were none.

**47C Exclusion of the Press and Public**

47.3 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.

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

**48. MINUTES**

- 48.1 Councillor Peltzer Dunn referred to paragraph 40.9 and asked if Councillor Farrow had received a written response. Councillor Farrow confirmed he had. It was agreed that the response would be circulated to all members of the HMCSC.
- 48.2 Councillor Mears asked for confirmation that the Authority used a single allocation policy and that other departments were not using alternative policies. The Head of Housing confirmed there was only one allocation policy which was used by all departments.
- 48.3 Mr C Penrose said that he had not seen the allocation policy, and was advised that it could be viewed on the Council's webpage.
- 48.4 **RESOLVED** That the Minutes of the Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee held on 12 February 2013 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

**49. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

- 49.1 There was none.

**50. CALL-OVER**

- 50.1 **RESOLVED** - That all items be reserved for discussion.

**51. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

- 51.1 There were no petitions, written questions or deputations.

**52. ISSUES RAISED BY COUNCILLORS**

- 52.1 There were no petitions, written questions, letters or notices of motion.

**53. SHELTERED HOUSING PROVISION**

- 53.1 Mr P Huntbach, Older Persons Housing Manager, and Mr C Penrose (Sheltered Housing Action Group), gave a presentation on the Sheltered Housing Service. The presentation gave an overview of the service.
- 53.2 Mr R Crowhurst noted that the majority of people in sheltered housing who lived in studio flats were male, and asked why that was. Mr Huntbach said that women tended to prefer one bedroom flats and men were happy with studio flats. Mr Crowhurst asked Mr Huntbach why he was called the 'Older Persons' Housing Manager if there were some people in their 40/50s living in sheltered accommodation. Mr Huntbach said that the majority of residents were older, but there were some people who needed to move to sheltered accommodation earlier than others.
- 53.3 Mr Spacie said that tenants in sheltered housing were concerned that anything the tenants wanted to do had to be considered by the Sheltered Housing Management Team (SHMT). In one case tenants had been waiting a number of months for internet connection but the SHMT had still not resolved the matter. Mr Huntbach was aware of



the matter, and said that the Council's ICT team were trying to resolve the issue of security for a computer which would be situated in a public place; the matter was still on going.

- 53.4 Councillor Mears said that the waiting list for sheltered accommodation had been 500 and asked if it was still the same. Mr Huntbach confirmed it was.
- 53.5 Councillor Mears asked what discussions had taken place between Housing and Adult Social Care on the provision of sheltered housing. Ms R Chasseaud (Head of Tenancy Services) said that meetings were being held with partner agencies to look at how to help people to remain in their own homes, rather than them having to move into extra care. This was a new approach, and the proposal was to review the service with the involvement of both residents and members. When the review was completed a report would be provided. Mr Penrose asked if a working group could be formed with tenants, councillors, and officers etc to consider ideas. The Chair agreed in principle, and said that it would be preferable to mainly have those who were currently in sheltered housing, or who were due to move into sheltered housing, to form the working group.
- 53.6 Mr Spacie referred to the gender imbalance in some sheltered accommodation, and suggested that some studio flats could be altered to become one bedroom flats which would attract more women. The Chair asked Mr Spacie how he felt the sexes and different age groups got on together. Mr Spacie said that all older people got on well and socialised together, but the younger ones tended to keep themselves to themselves. Ms J Davis said there were a number of younger people where she lived and everyone got on very well.
- 53.7 Mr Crowhurst asked if there were figures for anti social behaviour in sheltered housing. Mr Huntbach said that there were 14 incidents last year, and the perpetrators' ages ranged from 52 to 90.
- 53.8 Mr Murtagh suggested that if there were any problems with people integrating, that one solution could be to allocate those of different ages to different housing schemes.
- 53.9 Councillor Pidgeon said that he worked with Jasmine Court, and the lift doors had been difficult to open for a number of years and asked why it had not yet been resolved. Mr Huntbach said he wasn't aware of the matter but would look into it.
- 53.10 Mr Crowhurst asked if there could be a Rapid Response Unit for sheltered housing, so if an issue arose such as grab rail being broken it could be fixed as soon as possible. Councillor Jarrett said that ensuring tenants were safe should be a priority and supported the idea. Mr Huntbach said that the authority already had Trusted Assessors within the Estate Service who carried out this type of work.
- 53.11 Ms R King suggested that as there were a number of younger people living in sheltered housing, that Mr Huntbach's title be changed to 'Sheltered Housing Manager'. The Chair said that suggestion would be considered.

**54. NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS BY SOCIAL TENANTS AGAINST THEIR LANDLORDS.**

- 54.1 The Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director Place on the new arrangements for dealing with complaints by social housing tenants against their landlords. The report was presented by Mr B Foley (Standards and Complaints Manager).
- 54.2 Mr Spacie noted that in 2012/13 there were thirteen eligible cases for the Independent Housing Ombudsman (IHO), and said he was surprised it was so low. Mr Foley said that complaints were considered by the Council as a Stage 1 and then, where needed, as a Stage 2 complaint. The vast majority of complaints were currently resolved without the need to go to the Local Government Ombudsman.
- 54.3 Ms Barnard asked about data protection in relation to tenant panels. Mr Foley referred to the report and said that members of a tenant panel should be properly trained to carry out the role, including being properly trained in handling personal data. It may also be appropriate for panel members to have a Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- 54.4 Mr Worsfold asked if this applied to leaseholders or just tenants. Mr Foley said he believed it was just tenants but he would seek clarification. (After the meeting Mr Foley confirmed that the IHO scheme would be available to tenants, but disputes about charges would continue to be dealt with through the Council's Service Charge Dispute Procedure).
- 54.5 Mr Crowhurst was concerned about confidentiality of a tenant panel and said he would prefer Ward Councillors to continue to deal with any complaints. Mr Cohen also had concerns over tenant panels, and suggested that agreement would be needed from everyone as to who sat on a panel.
- 54.6 Ms King said that she and her fellow tenants were currently dealing with a complaint with the Council. The matter had not been resolved internally and so it had been referred to the Local Government Ombudsman.
- 54.7 Councillor Peltzer Dunn noted the report referred to 'a' tenant panel and asked whether that meant that one panel could be set up to cover the whole city. Mr Foley said that a local authority could have as many or as few panels as it wished. One designated panel could cover all the social landlords in the area. Councillor Peltzer Dunn noted the report set out six possible criteria for a tenant panel. Mr Foley said it would be necessary to discuss and consider what criteria should be used.
- 54.8 Councillor Mears asked how many people would sit on each panel, what would happen if tenants didn't want a certain panel, and said that Area Panels should be given an opportunity to fully discuss the matter. Mr Foley confirmed that the new arrangements would be discussed with Area Panels.
- 54.9 Councillor Robins was concerned that an MP not from the city, or someone who was not a ward councillor could consider a complaint about an issue they knew nothing about.

54.10 Councillor Peltzer Dunn suggested that the proposed recommendation 2.2a include the wording 'and Area Panel Members'. The Sub-Committee agreed.

**54.11 RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee note the report.
- (ii) That Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee requests the Standards and Complaints Manager:
  - a. Produces a briefing note for elected members, local MPs and Area Panel members on how the Housing Ombudsman Scheme will operate.
  - b. Arranges a training workshop for elected members to enable them to act as Designated Persons
  - c. Produces material that will publicise the new process to tenants.

**55. UPDATE ON ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS 2012, AND PROPOSALS FOR 2013 REPORT**

55.1 The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director Place, which provided an update on the annual report to council tenants and leaseholders in 2012, and proposals for the 2013 report. The report was presented by Ms Dafe, Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement (Housing).

55.2 Councillor Peltzer Dunn thought that reducing the annual report to just four pages, would make it too small and to ensure all the relevant information was provided the report needed to be eight pages long.

55.3 Councillor Farrow thought it wasn't necessary to be too prescriptive on the number of pages; the important thing was that people read the report and understood the information provided.

55.3.1 Mr Kent said that the previous annual report was brilliant and he saw no reason to change it.

55.4 Mr Murtagh asked if there had been a survey after the last annual report. Ms Dafe confirmed that there had been some feedback and people seemed happy with it.

55.5 Councillor Peltzer Dunn noted that the report recommended reducing the size of the report to four pages and suggested that recommendation 2.2 be amended to read 'That the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee notes the proposed plan and timetable for producing a concise report of eight pages. That was agreed by the Sub-Committee.

**56.7 RESOLVED**

- (i) That the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee notes the progress in implementing improvement plans included in the annual report to council tenants and leaseholders for the financial year ending 2013 highlighted in Appendix 1 to the report.

- (ii) That the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee notes the proposed plan and timetable for producing a concise report of eight pages.

## **56. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3 2012/13**

- 56.1 The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director Place, on Housing Management Performance Report Quarter 3 2012/13. The report was presented by Ms Dafe, the Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement (Housing).
- 56.2 Mr B Kent noted the tables in the report, and asked what 'Y' and 'N' stood for. It was confirmed that it was 'Yes' and 'No'. It was agreed in that future reports the full word would be used rather than an abbreviation.
- 56.3 Councillor Farrow referred to paragraph 4.2 and asked if more information could be provided on the percentage of appointments kept by the contractor. Ms Dafe agreed that a fuller explanation would be provided in future reports. Councillor Farrow noted that only 96% of light bulbs were replaced within one working day, and asked why that was. Ms Dafe said that 5 bulbs were replaced within three days rather than one, but that was over the Christmas period. The Councillor referred to Appendix 1 and asked for more information on the long term empty property in Queens Park and Withdean. It was confirmed that the property in Queens Park could be the new Brooke Mead Development, but that was dependent on funding. The property in Withdean was a property in the garden of a larger building in Preston Road, and again the site could not be developed until funding was secured.
- 56.4 Councillor Robins noted that tenant satisfaction with repairs was 99.03%, and asked how that had been measured. Ms Dafe said that when a job had been completed tenants were given a feedback form for them to complete. There were a number of comments from the Sub-Committee that asking people to provide feedback either straight away, or to give the completed form to the contractor, could lead to the satisfaction level not being truly reflective. The Chair suggested that way tenant satisfaction was obtained could be reviewed.
- 56.5 Councillor Mears noted that the rent collected had gone down. Ms Dafe said that was due to Christmas, and other factors such as children returning to school in September; the current economic situation would be unlikely to improve things. Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 4.5 and noted that only 95% of those in sheltered housing had an up to date support plan. Ms Dafe said that some residents declined a support plan, one resident had been unwell and another was working and they had not been able to meet with them.
- 56.6 Mr Penrose noted that paragraph 4.5 referred to 24 schemes; he was only aware of 23 schemes and asked for a list so he could contact those three schemes which did not provide at least one social activity a week. It was agreed that he would be provided with a list.
- 56.7 Councillor Peltzer Dunn said that it would be useful for the report to provide comparisons with the same quarter from the previous year. Councillor Peltzer Dunn noted that there were a number of empty properties and how the lost rental was calculated. Ms Dafe said that any rental lost was calculated year on year. The amount

lost had improved as there were a number of empty properties which had now been moved to the LDV.

- 56.8 Councillor Peltzer Dunn referred to Appendix 1, and asked whether the number of days given ran from the first day that the property became empty. Ms Dafe confirmed it did.
- 56.9 Mr Kent asked if a map could be provided showing land owned by the Council. Officers said that there was a link on the Council's webpage to a map of land use of council owned land. The Chair asked if that link could be provided in the Minutes. The website address is, [http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/downloads/bhcc/maps/Land Use of Council Owned Land 2011.pdf](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/downloads/bhcc/maps/Land_Use_of_Council_Owned_Land_2011.pdf)
- 56.10 Councillor Jarrett requested that for safety reasons replacement lights in common ways be replaced as a priority.
- 56.11 Mr Worsfold referred to paragraph 4.0 and asked why there was former tenant arrears. Ms Dafe said that whilst some would be recovered it was very difficult to obtain the full amount, particularly when tenants had left.
- 56.12 **RESOLVED** That the Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee noted and commented on the report.

## 57. HOUSING MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURE 2012

- 57.1 The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director Place, on Housing Management Restructure 2012. The report was presented by Ms Chasseaud, the Head of Tenancy Services (Housing).
- 57.2 Councillor Mears thanked officers for the report, but said that she had requested information about who agreed the new post of Head of City Regeneration not about the restructuring. The Strategic Director, Place should provide that information.
- 57.3 Councillor Peltzer Dunn noted that the report stated that the structure and organisation of staff would be kept under review, and whilst he agreed with that, he hoped that a report would come to the sub-committee to advise of any proposed changes.
- 57.4 **RESOLVED** That the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee noted the report.

The meeting concluded at 6.45pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of



# HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE SUB COMMITTEE

## Agenda Item 7

Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Housing Management Performance Report Quarter 4 and end of year 2012/13</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>28 May 2013</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director – Environment, Development &amp; Housing</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Ododo Dafé</b>	<b>Tel: 293201</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>ododo.dafe@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This Housing Management performance report covers Quarter 4 of the financial year 2012/2013 and, as requested, year end performance. It also includes benchmarking figures for the 2011/12 financial year, which are attached as Appendix 2. It incorporates changes suggested at previous meetings, including specifying whether an indicator is a Service Pledge as 'Yes' or 'No' rather than abbreviating, and the inclusion of figures from the same quarter last year.







#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee notes and comments on the report.

#### 3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The report continues the use of the 'RAG' rating system of red, amber and green traffic light symbols to provide an indication of performance, and also trend arrows to provide an indication of movement from the previous reporting period. Where indicators are red or amber explanations have been provided.
- 3.2 The 'Service Pledge' column describes which indicators reflect performance against the housing service pledges, which were developed through working with tenants and leaseholders. Our service pledge summary leaflet was included as an appendix to the Quarter 2 performance report, which was presented to HMCSC on 26 March 2013.
- 3.3 The year end figures for the 2012/13 financial year, along with respective 'RAG' ratings and trend arrows (comparing to the previous financial year) are provided as additional columns at the end of each table, where applicable. Figures from Quarter 4 2011/12 are included immediately before those for Quarter 4 2012/13 to allow for comparison between them.

### 3.4 Key to symbols used in the report:

Status		Trend	
Performance is below target (red)		Poorer than previous reporting period	
Performance is close to achieving target, but in need of improvement (amber)		Same as previous reporting period	
Performance is on or above target (green)		Improvement on previous reporting period	



## 4.0 Rent collection and current arrears

\*Separate figures are not provided for Quarter 4 because these indicators are reported on a year to date basis, and therefore performance is the same at the year end.

Performance Indicator	Service Pledge	Target	Actual (Year End 11/12)*	Actual (Year End 12/13)*	Status (Year End 12/13)*	Trend (Year End 11/12 to 12/13)*
Rent collected as proportion of rent due each year	Yes	98.75% (£47,472,364)	98.75% (£44,865,132)	98.66% (£47,559,925)		
Tenants with more than seven weeks rent arrears	Yes	2.85%	2.85% (323)	2.63% (310)		
Notice of Seeking Possession (NoSP) served for rent arrears	Yes	27.02% (706)	27.02% (706 NoSPs)	25.87% (722 NoSPs)		
Households evicted because of rent arrears	Yes	Less than 0.29% (less than 35)	0.13% (16)	0.08% (10)		
Rent loss due to empty properties	No	1.6% (£718,717)	1.76% (£788,830)	0.76% (£357,781)		
Total former tenant arrears	No	£511,522	£545,064	£531,636		
Former tenant arrears collected	No	18% (£98,116)	25.26% (£137,702)	18.10% (£96,216)		
Rechargeable debt collected	Yes	20% (£66,758)	17.93% (£40,099)	10.80% (£24,561)		
Percentage collection rate of leaseholders' gross arrears	No	89%	88% (£203,979)	83% (£403,151)		
Percentage collection rate of leaseholders' recoverable arrears	No	92%	91% (£142,404)	92% (£189,923)		

### 4.0.1 Percentage of rent collected as proportion of rent due each year

The year end collection rate fell by 0.09% compared to last year. This was largely due to the state of the economy, with increased pressure placed on household incomes. We are taking a proactive approach to supporting our tenants with paying their rent in the light of the introduction of Welfare Reforms from April 2013 onwards. Examples of this include referring tenants to our Financial Inclusion Officers for support and we now have a contract with the Money Advice and Community Support Service (MACS) who work with households facing financial difficulties to manage their money successfully.

#### 4.0.2 **Total former tenant arrears**

Although performance has improved since last year, the target was narrowly missed because there was more new debt than had been estimated. This is a fairly good result considering the reduction in the number of staff working on former tenant debt compared to last year, and the collection rate target of 18% was achieved. We attempt to trace (eg through searching tax and benefits records) all former tenants with debt at least every 6 months and continue to do so indefinitely, unless a specified reason arises to write off this debt. The most common reason for writing off former tenant debt is where the tenant has died and there is no estate. The decision to write off is not taken lightly, as all write-offs have to be approved by the Housing Income Manager and Finance. Debt can be written back on at any point, depending on the reason it was originally written off.

#### 4.0.3 **Percentage of rechargeable debt collected**

The collection rate of rechargeable debt has fallen because of a combination of reduced numbers of staff working on recharges combined with a larger amount of overall rechargeable debt compared to last year. We continue to vigorously pursue these arrears.

#### 4.0.4 **Percentage collection rate of leaseholders' gross arrears**









The gross collection rate has been negatively influenced by a significant increase in major works billing for leaseholders in 2012/13, which increased by 300%. Wherever major works charges are included in arrears figures, the level of billing is a key factor in the ease or otherwise of recovery. Whilst the gross collection rate is lower than last year, the recoverable arrears collection rate – which takes into account charges that are being disputed, cases where we have instructed our solicitors to take action, charging orders that have been placed and agreed payment arrangements – is actually higher than last year. We offer a range of payment options to help leaseholders meet their major works bills.

#### 4.0.5 **Percentage of rent collected as proportion of rent due each year by area**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
North (includes Sheltered housing)	98.95%	99.12% (£13,550,150)
West	98.74%	98.69% (£9,604,919)
Central	98.85%	98.87% (£8,952,438)
East	98.51%	98.13% (£15,449,313)
<b>All areas</b>	<b>98.75%</b>	<b>98.66%</b> <b>(£47,559,925*)</b>

\*Includes collection from small number of HRA properties used as Temporary Accommodation.

#### 4.1 Empty home turnaround time

Performance Indicator	Service Pledge	Target	Actual (Q4 11/12)	Actual (Q4 12/13)	Status (Q4 12/13)	Trend (Q3 to Q4 12/13)	Actual (Year End 12/13)	Status (Year End 12/13)	Trend (Year End 11/12 to 12/13)
Average re-let time in calendar days (BV212)	No	21	17	18			15		
Average re-let time in calendar days – all properties (including those excluded from BV212)	No	32	36	36			32		

##### 4.1.1 Average re-let time in calendar days – all properties

The average re-let time of 36 days was longer than usual due to a number of long-term empty properties – such as those which have undergone major works – being brought back into use. Year end performance has improved significantly, at 32 days for 2012/13 compared to 45 days for 2011/12.

4.1.2 A table presenting a recent snapshot of long term empty properties is attached as Appendix 1.

## 4.2 Property & Investment

Performance Indicator	Service Pledge	Target	Actual (Q4 11/12)	Actual (Q4 12/13)	Status (Q4 12/13)	Trend (Q3 to Q4 12/13)	Actual (Year End 12/13)	Status (Year End 12/13)	Trend (Year End 11/12 to 12/13)
Emergency repairs completed in time	Yes	99%	99.55% (1,545)	99.33% (2,369)			99.57% (8,281)		
Urgent repairs completed in time	Yes	98%	98.98% (877)	99.53% (210)			99.36% (618)		
Routine repairs completed in time	Yes	98%	99.69% (8,591)	99.73% (8,648)			99.78% (33,799)		
Average time to complete routine repairs (calendar days)	Yes	15 days	8 days	9 days			9 days		
Percentage of appointments kept by contractor	No	95%	90.98% (7,196)	95.46% (7,379)			94.56% (27,434)		
Tenant satisfaction with repairs (respondents from period who were satisfied or very satisfied)	No	95%	98.11% (2,017)	97.40% (2,213)			97.03% (7,493)		
Percentage of responsive repairs passing post-inspection	Yes	95%	95.43% (1,339)	96.65% (1,240)			95.44% (4,728)		
Percentage of repairs completed right first time	Yes	97%	98.17%	98.63% (12,622)			98.09% (45,717)		
Cancelled repair jobs	No	Under 10%	14% (1,553)	5.21% (633)			11.04% (4,875)		-
Percentage of homes that are decent	No	95%	88.1%	95.30%			95.30%		
Energy efficiency rating of homes (SAP 2009)	No	61	-	62.5			62.5		
Percentage of planned works passing post-inspection	Yes	97%	98.03% (1,545)	100% (253)			99.14% (1,493)		
Stock with up-to-date gas certificates	Yes	100%	99.87% (10,676)	99.97% (10,387)			99.97% (10,387)		
Percentage of empty properties passing post-inspection	Yes	98%	97.95% (191)	100% (157)			98.99% (591)		

#### 4.2.1 **Percentage of appointments kept by contractor**

Although year end performance around appointments slightly missed the target, we are pleased to report that this has improved considerably since last year - from 90.24% for 2011/12 to 94.56% for 2012/13. Furthermore, as of Quarter 4 we now meet our target of 95%. This reflects a concerted effort throughout the year to improve performance around appointments, including through completing a data quality audit in February. The recommendations followed will minimise IT related issues in order that this indicator focuses on reasons for lateness that reflect the service received by residents – eg delays due to traffic, parking and other jobs taking longer than expected.

#### 4.2.2 **Cancelled repair jobs**

This indicator was introduced part-way through the 2011/12 financial year and – once time had been allowed to monitor trends to identify natural patterns (eg seasonal variations) – a target of 10% was agreed by the Partnership Core Group. Although the year end figure missed the target by 1.04%, performance has improved with each consecutive quarter in 2012/13 and has been on target since Quarter 3. Work has been undertaken throughout the year to reduce the admin related cancellations and to focus on those cancellations that have an impact on residents.

#### 4.2.3 **Stock with up-to-date gas certificates**

The Gas Partnership has achieved its best ever result with just 3 overdue gas safety certificates at the end of Quarter 4 compared to 10 at the end of the previous quarter. This trend has continued and we have since reached 100% as of April 2013. Cases where the tenant repeatedly does not allow access to the property are vigorously pursued by housing staff, who take legal action – if necessary – to ensure access is gained for the safety check. During Quarter 4, 120 such cases were closed, taking an average of 28 calendar days between them.

## 4.3 Estates Service

Performance Indicator	Service Pledge	Target	Actual (Q4 11/12)	Actual (Q4 12/13)	Status (Q4 12/13)	Trend (Q3 to Q4 12/13)	Actual (Year End 12/13)	Status (Year End 12/13)	Trend (Year End 11/12 to 12/13)
Percentage passing quality inspections of our cleaning service	Yes	98%	99% (202)	98% (184)			98% (719)		
Percentage passing quality inspections of our minor repairs service	Yes	98%	100% (70)	99% (145)			99% (657)		
Completion of cleaning tasks	No	98%	97% (13,323)	97% (12,337)			98% (53,424)		
Emergency removal of bulk waste within 24 hours	No	100%	100% (11)	100% (3)			100% (17)		
Routine removal of bulk waste within 7 calendar days	No	97%	100% (806)	97% (829)			98% (3,270)		
Emergency removal of graffiti within 24 hours	No	100%	100% (2)	100% (2)			83% (5)		
Routine removal of graffiti within 7 calendar days	No	100%	92% (12)	90% (9)			95% (20)		
Replacement of lights within 1 working day	No	100%	100% (433)	100% (270)			99% (718)		-
Routine replacement of lights within 7 calendar days	No	97%	96% (622)	74% (200)			94% (1,410)		-
Neighbourhood Response Team jobs completed within target times	No	96%	97% (4,020)	96% (1,986)			97% (8,027)		-

### 4.3.1 Completion of cleaning tasks

Our target was missed in Quarter 4 because of the bad weather at the start of the year. These adverse circumstances meant that, for health and safety reasons, our cleaning staff prioritised gritting and shovelling snow ahead of non-urgent cleaning tasks.

### 4.3.2 Emergency removal of graffiti within 24 hours

Although 100% of emergency graffiti removals were completed in time in Quarter 4, year end performance missed the target due to one job being overdue during the first quarter. This job was overdue because the removal process had to be repeated to ensure it was done to the highest standard. Whilst the graffiti itself is usually removed within target in such cases, these jobs are not counted as complete until all work, such as repainting, has been carried out.

**4.3.3 Routine removal of graffiti within 7 calendar days**

The target was missed in Quarter 4 because one minor job to remove a graffiti tag was late by two days. This, in turn, is the reason why the year end target was missed, as no other routine jobs were late during the year.

**4.3.4 Replacement of lights within 1 working day target**

The year end target was missed by 1% because of five jobs missing the target during Quarter 3, when there were staff shortages over the Christmas period. All five jobs were completed within three days rather than one day. This was discussed at HMCSC in March, with members emphasising the importance of prioritising these jobs. We are pleased to report that 100% of emergency light replacements were completed on time in Quarter 4, in spite of adverse weather conditions early in the year.

**4.3.5 Routine replacement of lights within 7 calendar days**

Performance was unusually low in this period as the team were undertaking a lighting programme across the city to change bathroom and kitchen lights for tenants who can't replace them due to the design of the sealed units. These jobs had to be done urgently, and were therefore prioritised ahead of routine light replacements in external areas. Quarter 4 performance is the key contributor to the year end performance missing the target by 3%, as performance was above target during the other three quarters.





















#### 4.4 Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

4.4.1 The data below is activity based, rather than performance based, hence no targets have been included. Its purpose is to present HMCSC with a picture of ASB work. We encourage residents to report anti-social behaviour in order for us to respond quickly and effectively to the issue.

Performance Indicator	Service Pledge	Actual (Q4 11/12)	Actual (Q4 12/13)	Trend (Q4 12/13)	Actual (Year End 12/13)	Trend (Year End 11/12 to 12/13)
Number of new ASB cases	Yes	9	57	-	165	-
Number of closed ASB cases	Yes	1	82	-	233	-
Number of enforcement and support actions taken by housing	Yes	760	446	-	2,311	-
Customer satisfaction with cases managed by the ASB Team (very or fairly satisfied)	Yes	79%	75% (6 surveys)	↓	82% (23 surveys)	-



## 4.5 Sheltered housing

Performance Indicator	Service Pledge	Target	Actual (Q4 11/12)	Actual (Q4 12/13)	Status (Q4 12/13)	Trend (Q3 to Q4 12/13)	Actual (Year End 12/13)	Status (Year End 12/13)	Trend (Year End 11/12 to 12/13)
People with an up to date support plan	Yes	100% (887)	97% (888)	95% (844)			95% (844)		
People who decline a support plan	No	0%	2% (19)	3% (25)			3% (25)		
New residents with a support plan completed within 21 calendar days	Yes	100% (20)	92% (34)	95% (19)			95% (76)		
Call each resident personally (if requested)	Yes	100%	100%	100%			100%		
Provision of at least one social activity per week (in 21 of our 23 schemes)	Yes	100%	100%	100%			100%		

### 4.5.1 People with an up to date support plan

Of our 887 sheltered residents, 844 have an up to date support plan. Of the 43 residents who do not, 25 have declined one and 18 were absent at the time of review (due to hospitalisation, respite care etc). As this is a snapshot figure, Quarter 4 performance is the same as year end performance.

### 4.5.2 People who decline a support plan

The numbers of sheltered residents who decline a support plan remain steady and represent a small core group who choose not to receive this part of the service. A resident may decline a support plan if they do not need any help to live independently, such as if they are in employment. Our staff nonetheless keep in contact with these residents.

### 4.5.3 New residents with a support plan completed within 21 days

Out of the 20 tenants who moved in during this period wanting a support plan, 19 had their plan completed in 21 days (the average being 12 days). One tenant missed this deadline due to staff sickness. Of the 80 new support plans due during the year 2012/13, 76 were completed within the target time of 21 days.

## **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION:**

- 5.1 The performance measures in this report demonstrate whether we are delivering quality service and achieving the priorities set by our residents.

## **6. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### Financial Implications:

- 6.1 Although there are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report, changes in most performance areas will have a financial implication. The area with the most significant financial impact is the ability to collect rents from tenants. Given the current economic climate and the on-going welfare reform changes, these indicators are being very closely monitored to ensure that any changes in current trends are highlighted early. Any financial implications arising from changes to any of the performance indicators will be included in the Housing Revenue Account Targeted Budget Management (TBM) report, which is reported quarterly to Policy and Resources Committee.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks*

*Date: 14/05/2013*

### Legal Implications:

- 6.2 There are no significant legal or Human Rights Act implications arising directly from this report.

*Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley*

*Date: 15/05/13*

### Equalities Implications:

- 6.3 Where appropriate, equalities implications are included within the body of the report.

### Sustainability Implications:

- 6.4 Where appropriate, sustainability implications are included within the body of the report.

### Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 6.5 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

### Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 6.6 There are no direct risk and opportunity implications arising from this report.

### Public Health Implications:

- 6.7 There are no direct public health implications arising from this report.

### Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 6.8 There are no direct corporate or city wide implications arising from this report.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. Appendix 1. Long term empty properties
2. Appendix 2. Housing Management Benchmarking Report 2011/12

### **Documents in Members' Rooms:**

1. None

### **Background Documents:**

1. None



## **Appendix 2. Housing Management Benchmarking Report 2011/12**

### **1.0 Summary**

This benchmarking report presents how our year end performance for the financial year 2011/12 compares to that of other housing providers. It covers the performance indicators that feature in the performance report for which comparable data are available.

### **1.1 Benchmarking Group**

This report uses the Housemark benchmarking service, which is subscribed to by over 500 social landlords, including 75% of stock retaining councils. The data is collected using a standard methodology and is independently validated, in order to ensure that the information provided is reliable and transparent.

Benchmarking is primarily used as a tool for internal performance management and self assessment, and can be used to understand current levels of performance in comparison to other organisations. This in turn helps us to understand where we need to improve and how we can learn from other organisations about how to improve the quality of the service. In order to ensure that Brighton and Hove are compared to a similar group of providers, analysis was undertaken to find housing providers who use the Housemark benchmarking service and who have two or more of the following attributes:

- Similar stock size
- Similar Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Part of the CIPFA Nearest Neighbour group
- Similar percentage of flats to houses
- Similar percentage of High rise and medium rise flats

As a result of this analysis, 11 Housing providers that use Housemark have been chosen to benchmark against. These are:

1. Bristol City Council
2. Derby Homes (ALMO)
3. Enfield Homes (ALMO)
4. Hounslow Homes (ALMO)
5. London Borough of Croydon
6. London Borough of Wandsworth
7. North Tyneside Council
8. Norwich City Council
9. Plymouth Community Homes
10. Southampton City Council
11. Thurrock Borough Council






Although Enfield, Derby and Hounslow are all ALMOS and Plymouth is a new Housing Association (LSVT) they have many similar attributes to Brighton and Hove so will be included in future benchmarking exercises.

## 1.2 Source of Benchmarking Data




Several Performance Indicators presented in the quarterly Housing Management Performance Report are the same as those used by Housemark, which allows us to compare our performance to other organisations. These indicators relate to rent collection and current arrears, empty home turnaround time and Property & Investment. Unfortunately, it is not currently possible to provide benchmarking data for our ASB, Estates Service and Sheltered performance indicators, because they were developed internally and are not measured by Housemark.

## 1.3 Presentation of Benchmarking Data

Our performance compared to other organisations is presented in terms of both rank (out of how many members provided data) and quartile. Quartiles divide a range of data – in this case performance for each benchmarking group member against a given indicator – into four equal parts. These parts are expressed as the Lower Quartile (within which lies the bottom performing 25% of members), the Middle Lower Quartile (members below the median but above the bottom 25%), the Upper Middle Quartile (data above the median but below the top 25%) and the Upper Quartile (the top performing 25% of members). In some cases, performance may reflect the exact median value and is therefore expressed as such. The key to the symbols used is as follows:


Quartile	
Performance is in the Upper Quartile	
Performance is in the Upper Middle Quartile	
Performance is equivalent to the median	
Performance is in the Middle Lower Quartile	
Performance is in the Lower Quartile	

## 2.0 Rent collection and current arrears

Performance Indicator	Our Performance 2010/11	Our Performance 2011/12	2011/12 Rank	2011/12 Quartile
Rent collected as proportion of rent due each year	98.70%	98.75%	1 of 12	
Households evicted because of rent arrears	0.22%	0.13%	2 of 11	
Former tenant arrears collected	No data	18.1%	1 of 6	









2.0.1 We are pleased to report that we rank in first place within our benchmarking group for both the percentage of rent collected (98.75%, against a median average of 97.2%) and the percentage of former tenant arrears collected. The percentage of our households evicted because of rent arrears (0.13%) is significantly lower than the group median (0.22%) and second only to Norwich City Council (0.11%). The purpose of this indicator is to ensure that eviction action for rent arrears is used as a last resort, when all other options have failed, and therefore a lower percentage represents a better performance.

## 2.1 Empty home turnaround time

Performance Indicator	Our Performance 2010/11	Our Performance 2011/12	2011/12 Rank	2011/12 Quartile
Average re-let time in calendar days (BV212)	18	17	1 of 12	

2.1.1 Our average re-let time of 17 calendar days not only places us as the top performer within our Benchmarking group, we are also significantly above the median average for the group of 28.52 days. The further improvement we have seen in 2012/13 makes it likely that we shall retain this position next time round. The indicator used (BV212, which was set up by central government several years ago) excludes properties whilst they are undergoing major works, as well as mutual exchanges and properties that the council intends to sell or demolish. It will be possible to also provide the re-let time without any exclusions for the 2012/13 benchmarking.

## 2.2 Property & Investment

Performance Indicator	Our Performance 2010/11	Our Performance 2011/12	2011/12 Rank	2011/12 Quartile
Emergency repairs completed in time	98.4%	99.1%	2 of 12	
Urgent repairs completed in time	96.0%	96.7%	3 of 12	
Routine repairs completed in time	98.4%	99.3%	1 of 12	
Percentage of appointments kept by contractor	95.4%	90.2%	7 of 7	
Percentage of repairs completed right first time	97.1%	98.0%	1 of 10	
Percentage of homes that are decent	64%	88.1%	10 of 12	
Energy efficiency rating of homes (SAP 2005)	70.5	71.0	3 of 10	
Stock with up-to-date gas certificates	99.81%	99.87%	7 of 11	

2.2.1 Our performance for timely completion of responsive repairs is in the top quartile for all three priority categories of emergency. Our results are ahead of group median averages by 1.1% for emergency repairs, 2.9% for urgent repairs and 7.7% for routine repairs. Plymouth Community Homes was the top performer for both emergency and urgent repairs. We are top performer for both completion of routine repairs on time, and for the percentage of repairs completed right first time, which is defined by Housemark as repair jobs completed on the first visit.

Our comparatively poor performance against the percentage of appointments kept by the contractor is unfortunate but not unexpected considering that the below-target performance has been regularly highlighted in HMCSC performance reports. Fortunately our target has since been met as of Quarter 4 2012/13, and so hopefully our position will improve relative to the rest of the group.

Our decent homes performance is comparatively poor because 6 of 11 group members reported that they have already reached full decency at the end of 2011/12. However, performance has improved considerably since then (95.3% at the end of March 2012/13) and we are on course to meet full decency by December 2013. Similarly, our stock with up-to-date gas certificates is comparatively low as of 2011/12 but has increased considerably since then, with us achieving 100% in April 2013. Three group members have achieved 100%, placing them in joint first place. Our Energy Efficiency rating of 71 is good, and is only slightly behind that of Enfield Homes (72.25) and North Tyneside (71.40).



## Appendix 1. Long term empty properties

General needs and sheltered long term empty properties (6 weeks or more)		
Calendar days empty as at 25/04/13	Ward	Status
46	East Brighton	Ready to let
46	East Brighton	Let - new tenancy commenced 06/05/13
46	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
53	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
60	East Brighton	Let - new tenancy commenced 06/05/13
74	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
94	East Brighton	Requires extensive major repairs - options being considered
410	Hanover and Elm Grove	Ready to let following major works
585	Hanover and Elm Grove	Ready to let following major works
53	Hollingdean and Stanmer	Let - new tenancy commenced 06/05/13
53	Hollingdean and Stanmer	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
60	Hollingdean and Stanmer	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
46	Moulsecoomb and Bevendean	Let - new tenancy commenced 29/04/13
46	Moulsecoomb and Bevendean	Ready to let
46	Moulsecoomb and Bevendean	Let - new tenancy commenced 29/04/13

<b>General needs and sheltered long term empty properties (6 weeks or more)</b>		
<b>Calendar days empty as at 25/04/13</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Status</b>
53	Moulsecoomb and Bevendean	Ready to let
81	Moulsecoomb and Bevendean	Ready to let
1733	Moulsecoomb and Bevendean	With BHCC undergoing major refurbishment. Awaiting cladding as part of larger project affecting other properties - completion expected summer 2013
46	Patcham	Let - new tenancy commenced 29/04/13
46	Patcham	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
81	Patcham	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
81	Preston Park	Ready to let following major works
46	Queens Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
46	Queens Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
53	Queens Park	Ready to let
60	Queens Park	Let - new tenancy commenced 06/05/13
81	Queens Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
95	Queens Park	Let - new tenancy commenced 06/05/13
123	Queens Park	Ready to let

<b>General needs and sheltered long term empty properties (6 weeks or more)</b>		
<b>Calendar days empty as at 25/04/13</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Status</b>
46	St. Peter's and North Laine	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
242	Westbourne	With BHCC awaiting major refurbishment. Requires planning permission to merge with adjacent property - both properties small studio flats with shared facilities
67	Wish	Ready to let
312	Woodingdean	Ready to let following major works
4267	Woodingdean	Ready to let following extensive major works - applicants being contacted and viewings taking place
<b>Total of 34 properties</b>		

<b>Temporary accommodation long term empty properties (6 weeks or more)</b>		
<b>Calendar days empty as at 25/04/13</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Status</b>
1305 – 1558	Central Hove (1 property containing 2 flats)	With BHCC awaiting major refurbishment. Requires planning permission to merge with adjacent property - both properties small studio flats with shared facilities
623 - 1621	Goldsmid (1 property containing 2 flats)	With BHCC awaiting major refurbishment. Requires planning permission to merge with adjacent property - both properties small studio flats with shared facilities
1305 - 1642	Queens Park (block of 9 flats)	To be redeveloped. Site of proposed Brooke Mead Extra Care Scheme - planning application proceeding
623	Westbourne (2 properties containing 3 flats)	With BHCC awaiting major refurbishment. Requires planning permission to merge with adjacent property - both properties small studio flats with shared facilities
624	Withdean (4 prefab bungalows within above land)	Part of redevelopment site. Approval granted for demolition of these unlettable prefab bungalows once contract to refurbish main buildings completed
<b>Total of 20 dwellings</b>		

# HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE SUB- COMMITTEE

## Agenda Item 8

Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Annual report to council tenants and leaseholders 2013</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>28 May 2013</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director of Environment Development and Housing</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Ododo Dafe</b>	<b>Tel: 29-3201</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	Ododo.Dafe@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The council is required under the current regulatory framework for social housing landlords to publish a 'timely and relevant' annual report for our council tenants.
- 1.2 The annual report for the year ending 31 March 2013 has been produced with the involvement of tenants and leaseholders. This is in line with the plan and timetable agreed with the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee on 23 March 2013.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee comments on the 2013 annual report to council tenants and leaseholders 2013 at Appendix 1 for publication and distribution to all council tenants and leaseholders in the summer edition of *Homing In*.

#### 3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The council first produced an annual report to council tenants and leaseholders in 2010 and then again in 2011. The 2012 report was produced under the new regulatory framework of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) which replaced the Tenant Services Authority (TSA). This report also follows the guidelines set out by the HCA.
- 3.2 The HCA's requirements are that the annual report should:
  - Contain timely and relevant information
  - Contain information on the repairs and maintenance budget
  - Provide support to tenants to build capacity to be more effectively involved.

- 3.3 For the 2012 annual report we consulted with residents through a focus group about what they would like to see in an annual report. Following this consultation it was decided that the key features of the report should be as follows:
- The report should be shorter to make it more accessible to residents
  - Text should be presented in a bullet point format as large amounts of text may be problematical for those who have difficulty reading.
  - Graphics should be used to compliment and emphasize the text.
  - Residents should feature in pictures and their own words, demonstrating their key role in co-regulating our housing management services.

We also encouraged residents to write articles for the report and involved the editorial board of *Homing In* by reviewing the report.

- 3.4 In March 2013 Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee noted the progress already made in implementing the council's improvement plans included in the 2012 annual report to council tenants and leaseholders. The committee also noted the proposed plan and timetable for producing a concise report of eight pages for 2013.
- 3.5 This year's report again involved the editorial board of *Homing In* to advise on content before publication. For residents wanting more information supplementary articles on our services will also be included on the council website.
- 3.6 If approved by Housing Committee at its meeting on 19 June 2013, the annual report will be sent to all tenants with the summer edition of *Homing In* magazine. It will also be publicly available on our website and made available in alternative formats where needed.

#### **4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 Council tenants and leaseholders have been involved in producing the annual report. This has been through the resident *Homing In* editorial board and through residents writing articles and providing quotes for the report.

#### **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

##### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The budget for producing the annual report to tenants is included within the 2013/14 publicity budget for the Housing Revenue Account. Last year the shorter 8 page document cost £2,920 in print and design, a saving of approximately £3,000 on the year before.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks*

*Date: 14/05/2013*

##### Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 set out the legal framework for the annual report to tenants and leaseholders. The draft annual report attached to this report

satisfies those requirements. No individual's Human Rights Act rights are adversely affected by the report.

*Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley*

*Date: 16/05/2013*

#### Equalities Implications:

5.3 The HCA lays out no specific requirement for equalities reporting in the annual report. However, guidance on this issue is contained in the *Regulatory Framework* which states that registered providers shall:

- treat all tenants with fairness and respect
- demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs.

The annual report illustrates how the council meets that standard and its progress in continuously improving its performance in this area. It is hoped that based on the feedback from residents in 2012 the format of the annual report will continue to be accessible. Alternative formats of the report will also be available on request or where a need is known.

#### Sustainability Implications:

5.4 The annual report outlines how the council as landlord addresses sustainability issues and its progress in meeting its objectives. The commitments in the annual report include actions to reduce residents' energy bills and building new council homes.

#### Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.5 The annual report outlines how the council as landlord addresses anti-social behaviour and its progress in meeting its objectives and commitments to continue to work with residents to improve our services.

#### Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

5.6 The HCA says that providers are expected to 'achieve the expectations of the regulator'. These are laid out in paragraph 3.2 of this report. The annual report seeks to meet these requirements. The report informs residents about opportunities for a greater number of tenants to be involved in resident involvement – one of the key requirements of the HCA.

#### Public Health Implications:

5.7 There are strong links between improving housing and reducing health inequalities. The annual report details the council's investment in improvements to its housing stock to bring all tenants' homes up to Decent Homes Standard. It also reflects our progress and commitments to reducing inequality, such as continuing to extend financial inclusion, to help residents manage their finances and to increase our understanding of tenants' needs and tailor our services to meet them.

### Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 Publication of this honest and robust assessment of our performance to council tenants and leaseholders meets the council's commitment to resident involvement and transparency. The commitments to further improve our landlord services and housing stock support the council's priorities to involve residents in everything we do, tackle inequalities and create sustainable communities throughout the city. The annual report illustrates how the council as landlord works in partnership with residents and other agencies to improve the neighbourhoods that council tenants and leaseholders live in and provide opportunities for local residents.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. Annual report to council tenants and leaseholders 2013 text version (final draft)

### **Documents in Members' Rooms**

None

### **Background Documents**

1. *The regulatory framework for social housing in England from April 2012*, HCA <http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/ourwork/regulatory-framework>
2. Annual report to council tenants and leaseholders 2012 [http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/downloads/bhcc/housing/council\\_housing/4358\\_Housing\\_AR\\_2012\\_-\\_web.pdf](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/downloads/bhcc/housing/council_housing/4358_Housing_AR_2012_-_web.pdf)



## **Appendix 1: Annual Report to council tenants and leaseholders 2013**

**Please note: this is a text version of the annual report only. A version with design graphics will be sent to members of Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee before the meeting.**

### **Cover text**

## **Annual Report to council tenants & leaseholders 2013**

### **Welcome to the 2013 annual report to all council tenants and leaseholders.**

We've worked closely with residents to make sure we're giving you the information you want in your annual report.

Inside you'll find updates on how we're performing, how we use the money we get from rents and service charges, what we're doing well and where we need to improve.

You'll also find details of how we've met our commitments to you and the improvements we're making this year.

### **Page 2**

#### **Performance highlights:**

- Balchin Court is the first new council homes built for over 20 years in Brighton & Hove. It is named after Bryan Balchin, a much respected tenant representative who passed away in December 2011. It's made up of three four-bed family homes and 12 flats, including two wheelchair adapted homes. It opened on 13 May. 12 of the 15 homes were allocated to council tenants.
- Over half a million pounds of Estate Development Budget (EDB) funds have been spent on community projects and improvements. This is one of the biggest budgets in the country decided on by residents.
- A restructured service designed to increase the support for tenants. Changes include the creation of the Housing Inclusion Team and an increase in the number of officers to support tenants in managing their tenancy.
- 293030 number and graphic to stay – as per 2012

## **Resident involvement and empowerment**

We continue to provide a wide range of opportunities for you to be involved in what we do and how we do it – which includes setting our standards and making sure we meet them. If you'd like more information, please contact the Resident Involvement Team on 01273 292112, or email [RIT@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:RIT@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

### What we have done

- Established the new Tenant Scrutiny Panel to ensure the highest standards of practice and accountability.
- Extended the EDB to all residents to widen the involvement of residents without an association.
- Launched a 'quick bid' scheme which allows residents' associations to make bids for funding of up to £500 for local neighbourhoods.
- Increased support for the 65 residents associations and areas without associations.
- Introduced the use of electronic voting for decision making at Area Panels and at City Assembly.

### What we are doing

- Beginning to implement the actions from the 'Everyone Counts' report and increase resident involvement.
- Improving the resident involvement web page to promote residents' associations and report on decisions at housing meetings.
- Gathering more positive information about what has improved as a result of residents being involved.

## **Page 3**

### **Customer service, choice and complaints**

We will be easy to reach, treat you with respect, listen and get things done.

### What we have done

- Improved answering phone calls across all departments, with 79% of calls answered within five rings at the end of March compared to 76% in June. We accept performance can be improved further in this area.
- Appointed a designated mutual exchange officer to help tenants move to more suitably sized homes in this way.
- Seen a fall in formal complaints from 563 to 439. This was in large part due to fewer complaints about repair issues.
- Increased complaints responded to within 10 days from 66% to 73%.
- Achieved our best ever performance on gas safety where 99.97% of tenants had a current gas safety certificate at the end of financial year.
- Increased our use of social media to reply allowing us to respond quickly (we have 750 followers on Facebook).

### What we are doing

- Continuing to train our newly dedicated Housing Customer Service Team to resolve 80% of the calls at the first point of contact.
- Reducing missed appointments by introducing a 'text ahead' service to keep tenants fully updated on their repair appointments.

### **Supporting diversity**

We will ensure we communicate and deliver our services in a way which meets the diverse needs of our community.

### What we have done

- Increased the number of tenants receiving support from the Tenancy Sustainment Team at any one time from 80 in 2012 to 143 in 2013.
- Extended 11 properties to help those most in need of a larger property.
- Engaged in partnership working with MOSIAC and other organisations to support Black and Minority Ethnic tenants.

### What we are doing

- Increasing transgender and traveller awareness training for staff.
- Producing a video version of the annual report.

### **Page 4:**

#### **Your home**

We will advise you of major home improvements and work to agreed timescales. We will make sure all empty homes meet the locally agreed standard before we let them.

- The repairs and maintenance budget is £10.2 million in total. Money is invested into three main areas:
  - Responsive repairs - £6.1 million
  - Empty Properties - £1.4 million
  - Servicing and other repairs - £2.7 million

### What we have done

- 42,812 responsive repairs were completed this financial year, that's an average of 117 repairs every calendar day.
- At the end of March 2013, 95% of homes met the government Decent Homes Standard.
- Installed 617 new kitchens and new 295 new bathrooms during the year.

### What we are doing

- Reviewing the Brighton & Hove Standard to make sure it reflects tenants' wishes.
- In 2013/14 we are focused on improving the customer service delivered by the repairs partnership with Mears.
- Carrying out an Annual Review of the partnership with residents from the Core Group which oversees the repairs contract.
- Planning a citywide implementation of the resident led satisfaction surveys that are currently carried out in Whitehawk.
- Continuing our major works programme to refurbish blocks and replace lifts across the city.

## **Your tenancy**

We will provide the advice and information to maintain your tenancy. We will carry out tenancy visits at least once every three years.

### What we have done

- The Re-housing Team continue to perform at the highest levels when compared with other authorities. The average re-let time for a property is 15 calendar days (it was 17 calendar days last year).
- Created a new tenancy casework team, which handled over 900 cases from July to March 2013 in such areas as anti social behaviour, succession and ending a tenancy.
- Carried out 2,235 tenancy welfare visits as part of our rolling programme of visits to every home.

### What we are doing

- Working very closely with tenants to help those who are affected by recent welfare benefit changes.
- Holding a mutual exchange event to further promote this method of moving for those who are under-occupying or overcrowded in their home
- Developing a new pet policy in line with RSPCA advice on promoting responsible pet ownership in council properties.
- Working with the Estate Regeneration Team to identify areas for building new homes.

## **Page 5: Sheltered housing**

We will provide every tenant with a support plan to aid their wellbeing. We will prioritise support for the most vulnerable tenants.

### What we have done

- Introduced fire boxes at all our schemes ensuring that better information is available to the emergency services in the event of a fire or other major emergency.
- Broadfields won 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in City in Bloom.

- Set up a low cost complementary therapy service at Elwyn Jones Court involving Active Lightworks, who work with organisations such as Rise and Mind.
- Implemented a new welcome leaflet for new tenants at all schemes.
- Restored a full weekend call service for the most vulnerable of all our residents.

### What we are doing

- Working with East Sussex Fire & Rescue's Care Provider scheme and ensuring that we get better fire safety advice
- Working with the NHS to inform older people about cancer and encourage screenings to prevent it.

### **Getting involved makes stronger communities**

Having lived in Whitehawk for 34 years it is important to me that it maintains close neighbourhood links and excellent facilities for the community.

One of the key ways in which the residents' associations in Whitehawk help maintain strong links is by organising a community event every summer.

During the event 30 local groups come together. These groups represent pastimes as diverse as the study of history, tending allotments and belly dancing (yes, we have a belly dancing group in Whitehawk and it has men as well as women).

They all meet up with representatives from key community groups such as the Whitehawk Inn, the police and fire service.

I passionately believe getting involved in a resident's association can be a great way of keeping your community vibrant and strong. It also brings positive change. We have managed to get a ban on the sale of be-be guns at local markets and worked closely with the police to prevent drug-dealing – helping the community to feel safer.

I would encourage anyone who wants to help make their community stronger and safer to join a resident's association – I think you'll be surprised at the amount of change you can bring about.

Lyn Bennett, South Whitehawk.

## Inclusion

The Housing Inclusion Team was set up in 2012 for residents who needed help managing their finances or with reading, writing, maths or computer skills. It also provides advice in finding a training course, volunteering, or getting back into work. If you would like help with any of these, please contact the team by emailing [HousingInclusionTeam@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:HousingInclusionTeam@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or calling:

- Learning Participation on 01273 293178
- Financial Inclusion: 01273 293317 or 293173

### What we have done

- 71 people have been referred to the Learning and Participation Team. Of these:
  - three have been helped back into work
  - three have undertaken work-based training
  - 32 have been helped into further education or training
  - nine have undertaken work on volunteering schemes
- 242 people have been referred on to MACS for further help with their finances, resulting in over £220,000 of financial benefit to these tenants.
- We have introduced resident assessors who are assessing the 'lettable standard'.

### What we are doing

- We will be delivering more resident training in energy efficiency, money mentoring, combating loan sharking and being a learning champion.

## Helping residents with money advice

Since October 2012 the Housing Inclusion Team has been jointly working with Money Advice and Community Support (MACS) to help residents manage their finances. Here are some quotes from those who have used the service.

"Some of my bills were becoming unmanageable. I contacted Housing Inclusion. They worked together with MACS and I can now pay my bills with the money I am getting. They were very, very helpful."

FK

"I had been having problems with my water bill. Housing Inclusion and MACS did a tremendous amount of work to negotiate payments that I could afford. That's been a great help."

KW

“I needed help with money in a number of areas. The help that I got was great and I feel some much better for having sorted things out.”

JB

## Page 7

### **Anti social behaviour (ASB)**

We will not tolerate anti-social behaviour (ASB). We will take action, keeping you informed and offer support to all those who are victims of anti-social behaviour.

#### What we have done

- Obtained closure orders on two properties where drug-dealing was taking place.
- Ended the tenancies of nine people who caused serious ASB.

#### What we are doing

- Improving support for victims of ASB so that each victim has a designated person to keep them informed on the progress of their case.
- Working with the police and social services to give greater protection to children at risk.

### **Your neighbourhood and community**

We will make sure common areas and estates are clean; carry out estates inspections and provide a budget for residents to decide on improvements.

#### What we have done

- Continued with our safe and clear stance on fire safety for common ways.
- Using in-depth surveys, initially at Kingswood and Milner Flats, to gain knowledge of residents' priorities and act accordingly.
- Encouraging residents to be involved in their neighbourhood using the 'Text a photo' campaign to speed up improvements to your estate. You can also send photos of issues on housing land and e-mail it to [Neighbourhoods.Team@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:Neighbourhoods.Team@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

#### What we are doing

- Reviewing how we do Estate Inspections to ensure that they offer value for money and produce results.



- Working with residents to assess satisfaction on the grounds maintenance service and find out how residents want their service charge spent.
- Encouraging more people to get involved in growing projects such as using containers to grow food and flowers on their balconies.

### **Value for money**

To assess annually the Housing Revenue Account and seek to produce high class services at the lowest cost.

#### What we have done

- Raised a total of £11.8 million in receipts from Seaside Homes to be reinvested in council homes.
- Reduced the amount of rent lost due to empty properties to 0.8% (down from 1.8% last year).
- Lowered the cost per property for tenancy services down from £161.74 per property (or £3.11 per property per week) in 2010/11 to £156.40 per property (or £3.01 per property per week). However, this still remains higher than other similar authorities.
- The number of evictions due to rent arrears continues to fall – 10 in this financial year down from 16 the previous year.

#### What we are doing

- The council housing budget no longer has to make payments to the government every year, so we can use savings we make in running council housing more efficiently. As a result extra resources are now available for projects such as major repairs work and building new homes.

### **Page 8 - Income & Expenditure**

To be produced as a pie chart as last year.

Total income: £53, 435, 000

Total Expenditure: £51, 073, 000

The difference in income of £2,362,000 is kept in reserve and used for major projects.

Per £10 spent:

Repairs and improvements:	£5.95 – 59.51%
Running housing services	£3.01 – 30.06%
Repaying loans:	£1.04 – 10.43%

You can find more information on our performance at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/hsg-performance](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/hsg-performance)

If you have any comments on this annual report or if there's anything you'd like to see in a future issue, please let us know. Contact James Pemberton, Performance & Improvement Officer on 01273 290562 or e-mail [housing.performance@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:housing.performance@brighton-hove.gov.uk) with your suggestions.

DRAFT