

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

NORTH AREA HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL

7.00pm 2 FEBRUARY 2015

HOUSING CENTRE, EASTERGATE ROAD, BRIGHTON, BN2 4QL

MINUTES

Representatives: Heather Hayes (Coldean), John Marchant (East Central Moulsecoomb), Kath Davis (Broadfields), Bob Spacie (Laburnum Grove), Barbara Castleton (North Moulsecoomb), Ray Goble (Elwyn Jones Court)

Non-Voting Delegates: Paul Wright (Coldean), Jenny Simmonds (Coldean), Ray Metcalfe (East Central Moulsecoomb), Peter Hartley (East Central Moulsecoomb), Walter Sargisson (Broadfields), Gloria Woolvern (North Moulsecoomb)

Officers: Becky Purnell (Resident Involvement Manager), Laura Turner (Performance & Improvement Officer), Peter Huntbach (Senior Housing Manager), Rachelle Metcalf (Senior Tenancy Enforcement Team), Sam Smith (Housing Programme Manager), Jo Thompson (Project Manager), Janine Healey (Performance Manager), Ododo Dafe (Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement), John Peel (Democratic Services Officer), Hannah Barker (Resident Involvement Officer)

Guests:

36 APOLOGIES

36.1 Apologies were received from Tracy Cox and Councillor Marsh.

37 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

37.1 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 December be approved and signed as the correct record.

37.2 Bob Spacie asked for any further update on the qualifying age for the Discretionary Decorating and Gardening Scheme.

37.3 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement clarified that Housing Committee had agreed to set the qualifying age at 70 rather than the proposed 75. She added that the savings identified would be used to support residents now on the threshold on qualifying age.

37.4 Bob Spacie stated that he was still awaiting an update on water fountains in sheltered schemes.

37.5 The Head of Tenancy Services apologised for the delay in sending feedback to Bob and would ensure he would receive an update.

38 PERFORMANCE REPORT Q3

- 38.1 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement presented a report that covered Housing Management Performance during Quarter 3 of the 2014/15 financial year. The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement stated that unfortunately it had not been possible to provide the full report, only the briefing sheet although the latter still provided information on key indicators. The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement asked tenant representatives for their permission that representatives were satisfied for the full report to still be submitted to Housing Committee once ready and for any comments to inform the fuller report.
- 38.2 Tenant representatives confirmed their support for the full report to be submitted to Housing Committee.
- 38.3 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

39 UPDATE ON NEW HOMES FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS PROGRAMME

- 39.1 The Panel considered a report that provided a progress update on the New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme including an update on progress at Selsfield Drive specifically.
- 39.2 The Chair noted that work would not commence at Selsfield Drive for some time and asked if there was any way to speed up the process.
- 39.3 The Project Manager stated that it would be difficult to reduce that timescale as there were large works required such installing a sewer system and ground works. Furthermore, it was very important to gather residents views regarding the development.
- 39.4 Ray Marchant noted that there had been a request to incorporate a small housing office at the Selsfield Drive site and asked if it was feasible to do so.
- 39.5 The Project Manager stated that this request had not yet been passed to him but he would discuss the option with colleagues.
- 39.6 Peter Hartley asked if the building would be a green development.
- 39.7 The Project Manager confirmed that there would be green spaces, food growing areas and would adhere to sustainability code level 4 which was very high.
- 39.8 Heather Hayes noted that residents had concerns regarding the buildings size and were worried light to their properties would be restricted.
- 39.9 The Project Manager clarified that whilst the building would be five storey in height, it would be designed as such that it would be of similar size as a three storey building. The proposed development had also passed a 'rights of light' test.
- 39.10 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

40 LEVEL ACCESS SHOWERS

- 40.1 The Panel considered a report that provided an update on the 6-12 month pilot to install level access showers in ground floor properties that became empty and requires a bathroom replacement.
- 40.2 Peter Hartley asked if these conversions would be wet rooms.
- 40.3 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement clarified that the conversions would not be wet rooms but would be fully accessible for wheelchair users and those with mobility difficulties.
- 40.4 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

41 HIGH RISE SECURITY OPTIONS

- 41.1 The Panel considered a report that provided information on the steps taken to manage and reduce unwanted visitors accessing low and high rise blocks, provided recommendations on a sustainable approach to manage the issue ongoing and expanded upon options raised such as CCTV systems and concierge service.
- 41.2 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

42 IMPLICATIONS OF ASB AND POLICING ACT 2014

- 42.1 The Panel considered a report that provided an update on the new provisions for tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) contained within the Anti-Social bad Policing Act 2014.
- 42.2 The Chair asked if the changes allowed for tenancy action if a resident was found to be dealing prescription drugs.
- 42.3 The Senior Tenancy Enforcement Officer clarified that the new powers would not allow for such action and was not set out in the Misuse of Drugs Act but the associated ASB from any conviction could be determined as a breach of tenancy.
- 42.4 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

43 SHELTERED HOUSING

- 43.1 The Panel considered a report that set out recommendations to better define the aims and purposes of the sheltered housing service following a review conducted in collaboration with the Chartered Institute of Housing in 2013. The recommendations also proposed a name change to 'Seniors Housing- Independent and Community Living'.
- 43.2 Bob Spacie stated that he had found the report to be high quality and he hoped that everything detailed could be achieved. However, he was concerned that the sense of community had been destabilised beyond repair by procedure and health and safety legislation.
- 43.3 Peter Hartley asked what the minimum age for people entering senior housing was.

- 43.4 The Older Persons Housing Manager clarified that the current limit was 50 years old and one of his first projects should the report be agreed, would be to work with Homemove and the Lettings Team to look at this issue.
- 43.5 Heather Hayes stated that she was concerned that young people with often quite complex needs were being housed in accommodation designed for older people and did not meet their requirements.
- 43.6 The Older Persons Housing Manager replied that this was covered in the report which outlined that senior housing should become more similar to retirement housing.
- 43.7 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

44 ESTATES DEVELOPMENT BUDGET DECISION

- 44.1 The Panel considered a report that requested a decision on whether to use a bus tour or a multimedia presentation to gather information on the Estate Development Budget (EDB) bids submitted in the area ahead of the main meeting.
- 44.2 Representatives conducted a vote on the two options and agreed to view a multimedia presentation.

45 ITEMS FROM TENANT ONLY MEETING

- 45.1 (Item 2- City Assembly) John Marchant stated that it was much preferred that this meeting be held in the Housing Centre.
- 45.2 Heather Hayes stated that she aware that wheelchair users had found it difficult to manoeuvre at Clarendon & Ellen.
- 45.3 Ray Marchant stated that use of the Housing Centre was free and should be used.
- 45.4 Peter Hartley stated that he had also heard of difficulties for wheelchair users and he had also noted that some of the fire exits had been blocked.
- 45.5 The Resident Involvement Manager stated that the comments of the Panel would be relayed to the Involvement & Empowerment Group regarding future meetings.
- 45.6 (Item 6- Closure of Housing Offices) John Marchant asked why temporary facilities could not have been set up after the emergency closure of Oxford Street Housing Office.
- 45.7 The Chair noted that Councillor Randall had asked for the feasibility of libraries being used.
- 45.8 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement clarified that the option of using a library had been investigated but had not been found to be feasible. Temporary measures had been established at Bartholomew House that could be used until the future of Oxford Street was determined.

45.9 The Chair stated that he hoped it could be communicated that Post Office branches would accept payments.

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

46 CITY WIDE REPORTS

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

The meeting concluded at 8.40pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of