

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: WEST HOVE & PORTSLADE AREA

2.00pm 28 AUGUST 2018

ST RICHARD'S CHURCH - ST RICHARD'S CHURCH

MINUTES

Present: Roy Crowhurst (Chair)

Representatives: Ann Tizzard (Knoll), Tricia Weller (Knoll Residents Association), Ann Packham (Ingram Association), Graham Dawes (Phillip Court RA), Joe McRae, Vic Dodd, Muriel Briault (NPRA), Alison Grey (Clarendon & Ellen Road)

Officers: Martin Reid (Head of Housing Strategy Property & Investment), Mel Fraser (Performance & Improvement Officer), Pat Liddell (Resident Involvement Officer), Emma Gilbert (Tenancy Services Operations Manager), Eddie Wilson (General Manager Mears), Grant Ritchie (Lead Consultant – Health and Safety), Anoushka Clayton-Walshe (Democratic Services Apprentice), Ododo Dafe (Head of Income Involvement and Improvement), Gregory Weaver (Democratic Services Officer)

Guests:

15 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

16 APOLOGIES

16.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Moonan.

17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

18 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

19 FIRE SAFETY UPDATE

19.1 An officer gave a brief update on the current status regarding fire safety. He stated that the investigation uncovered an issue regarding some doors not meeting the required locking time. It was noted that the brand of door used previously was insufficiently secure, that under advice from Central Government a schedule to provide door replacements was utilised. It was further noted that changes to 32 blocks were to take place; that other doors had been tested including UPVC and composite doors which also failed fire tests. Finally the officer concluded by stated that consultation with London Boroughs had produced the need to update risk assessments and further conversations with Fire Safety and Rescue.

19.2 A resident enquired as to who would be paying for this.

19.3 The chair enquired as to the reason for two fire door companies involved in the review.

19.3 An officer responded by stating that this would Masterdoor Fire Doors would have to pay the bill, he further clarified the reason for the involvement of two companies.

19.4 The chair emphasised the necessity for more facts from the Government and questions from residents should be collated on the Council's website for more information in a comprehensive format.

19.4 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the update.

20 PRESENTATION FROM THE HOUSING INCOME MANAGEMENT TEAM ON UNIVERSAL CREDIT AND METHODS OF PAYMENT

20.1 The panel considered a presentation from the Housing Income Management Team on Universal Credit and methods of payment, it was clarified that BHCC was not involved in the administration of Universal Credit in any way and that this was conducted via the system in place at Central Government. It was further noted that there was tailored support for residents.

20.2 A resident enquired what provisions were in place for people that were unable to access the internet and pensioners with no knowledge of the process.

20.3 An officer responded to the resident with the following:

- Officers would be willing to visit residents and help with the application process
- 700 households were currently enrolled in universal credit
- Processes existed with weekly reports to focus on rent accounts that entered arrears
- Wide spectrums of data were being considered in the effort to address any rent issues in future
- It was clarified that BHCC would not be looking to stop people from moving whilst in arrears

20.4 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to not the report.

21 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS REVIEW

21.1 An officer gave a brief overview of the Housing Allocations Review, it was noted that various changes followed the review in 2016 were presented such as the move to a system to 4 separate queues. It was further noted that work to house homeless people was on target and that efforts to be more proactive to ascertain what people needed within specific queues was underway.

21.2 A resident enquired as to what terms people would be able to transfer under the new policy.

21.3 An officer stated that in order to be homes, a person would have to fall in to Band A priority.

21.4 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.

22 OPTIONS FOR FUTURE DELIVERY OF HOUSING REPAIRS, PLANNED MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL WORKS

- 22.1 An officer presented the options for future delivery of housing repairs, planned maintenance and capital works. Various details were highlighted such as recent engagement works including attendance at area panels, service improvement groups, workshops, over 1000 door to door surveys and online and postal surveys were conducted.
- 22.2 A resident suggested that future reports should include details notifying the public what had been done as well as what would be stopped and noted that apprenticeships were of high priority among the resident's responses.
- 22.3 An officer stated that apprenticeships would be offered as much as possible
- 22.4 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.

23 HOME PURCHASE POLICY UPDATE

- 23.1 An officer gave a brief overview of the Home Purchase Policy Update, it was stated that the update followed the review at Housing and New Homes Committee last September. The officer noted that following a year-long pilot, BHCC had purchased some properties and were proceeding with efforts to carry on this enterprise. The officer concluded by stating that more resources had been secured with an initial 2 million pounds having been provisionally agreed and an anticipated budget of 7 Million pounds.
- 23.2 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.

24 IMPROVE YOUR ESTATES PROGRAMME

- 24.1 The panel considered a presentation on the Improve Your Estates Program, it was stated that currently a wide range of projects were being undertaken. Key projects were detailed such as Housing Officers being employed to address untidy gardens around the city and a discretionary gardening and decorating scheme for people aged over 70 not in receipt of benefits.
- 24.2 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.

25 HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

- 25.1 An officer gave a brief overview of the Housing Management Performance Report Quarter 1, various points of information were presented including that BHCC now had access to the system and were able to see when people's rent payments were in arrears and that a special focus on rent collection was under way.
- 25.2 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.

26 RESIDENTS' QUESTION TIME

- 26.1 (Item 1 – Consultation Involving Resident's Association Representatives.)

- 26.2 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.
- 26.3 (Item 2 – Recycling Problems)
- 26.4 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.
- 26.5 (Item 3 – Visitor’s Car Parking)
- 26.6 A resident noted that there was an increase in the number of disabled people having to pay for parking.
- 26.7 An officer clarified that exemptions for people with disabilities would be made by way of providing blue badges. It was further stated that blue badge holders also received largely reduced rates for parking.
- 26.8 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.
- 26.9 (Item 4 – Drug use in St James’ Street Area)
- 26.10 A resident enquired of the cost of using private security company and who paid for it.
- 26.11 An officer stated that money from the HRA was used to pay for this service.
- 26.12 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.
- 26.13 (East Ward 3 Star - Item 1 – Laundry Tokens)
- 26.14 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.
- 26.15 (East Ward 3 Star – Item 2 – Anti-social Behaviour in Craven Vale)
- 26.16 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.
- 26.17 (North Ward 3 Star – Item 1 – Service Provided by the Resident Involvement Team)
- 26.18 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.
- 26.19 (North Ward 3 Star – Item 2 – K&T Heating)
- 26.20 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the report.

27 CITY WIDE REPORTS

- 27.1 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note all the reports.

28 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 28.1 The Chair, Roy Crowhurst, announced he was standing down from Seaside Homes having fulfilled 3 terms and requested applicants for the position contact him.

28.2 A resident noted the lack of negative comments in Homing In magazine and requested that resident's points of views be implemented in future editions as current editions were not a fair representation.

28.3 An officer stated that the performance report includes negative information as well as positive.

29 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

29.1 The next meeting is on 16 October 2018.

The meeting concluded at 16:00.

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of