

# BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

## HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: NORTH AREA

7.00pm 15 SEPTEMBER 2016

ST GEORGE'S HALL, NEWICK ROAD, BRIGHTON, BN1 9JG

### MINUTES

**Present:** Councillors Hill (Chair) , Yates

**Representatives:** Heather Hayes (Coldean), John Marchant (East Central Moulsecoomb), Barbara Castleton (North Moulsecoomb), David Eve (Nettleton and Dudeney),

**Non-Voting Delegates:** Ray Metcalf (East Central Moulsecoomb), Walter Sargisson (Broadfields), Carol Hayes (East Central Moulsecoomb), Peter O'Connor (Bates Estate), Mary Marchant (North Moulsecoomb), Sue Bryant (Coldean), Derek Bryant (Coldean), Clifford Willeh (Bates), Jane McCloughan (North Area Tenants Group), John Dean (TRA Chair), Ray Goble (Elwyn Jones Court)

**Officers:** Hillary Edgar (Housing Services Operations Manager), Martin Reid (Head of Housing Strategy, Property and Investment), Becky Purnell (Resident Involvement Manager), Jeff Tourmentin (General Manager Mears), Glyn Huelin (Business and Performance Manager)

#### 9 APOLOGIES

9.1 Apologies were given by Councillors Mo Marsh, Anne Meadows, Cath Davis, Jennifer Symons and Paul Wright.

#### 10 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

#### 11 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

#### 12 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME

12.1 (Item 1– Communication and responses to blue pages items.)

12.2 The Panel agreed that the new blue pages are positive.

12.3 (Item 2 – Wheelie bins and rubbish)

12.4 The Chair and a Councillor stated that residents should contact the customer feedback team and that there was a possibility of inviting members of City Clean to the next meeting.

12.5 (Item 3 – Front door at Dudeney Lodge)

12.6 **SATISFACTORY** – that the report be noted.

- 12.7 (Item 4 – Communication between departments)
- 12.8 A resident stated the new customer housing team is working quite well.
- 12.9 **SATISFACTORY** – that the report be noted.
- 12.10 (Item 5 – Code of Conduct)
- 12.11 A resident enquired why minutes are not taken at meetings held to discuss issues pertaining to a person being sanctioned.
- 12.12 Officers explained the process where notes are written but are not formal minutes.
- 12.13 (Item 6 – Hedges)
- 12.14 A resident expressed a concern regarding overgrown hedges in student houses and other properties.
- 12.15 The Chair and other officers responded by noting that:
- This is an issue for private sector and no officers present could really answer this
  - BHCC License 3000 homes and that resident's present can contact the Head of Housing Strategy, Property and Investment to pursue any major issues by way of contacting landlords.
- 12.16 (Item 7 – gardening assistance for elderly and disabled people)
- 12.17 Residents agreed as long as there is some support for people who cannot access via internet then the issue is reasonable.
- 12.18 (Item 8 – Homeowner applications)
- 12.19 **RESOLVED** – That the response was satisfactory.
- 12.20 (West Ward - 3 Star Item 1 – Estate Development Budget)
- 12.21 **RESOLVED** – That the response was satisfactory.
- 12.22 (3 Star Item 2 – Boiler replacement at Woods House)
- 12.23 **RESOLVED** – That the response was satisfactory.
- 12.24 (3 Star Item 3 – Scaffolding and home contents)
- 12.25 A resident expressed the following issues:
- They were unaware that the presence of scaffolding meant residents would have to contact their home insurance companies
  - The 3 star system has proved as a good exchange of information between wards as it has brought this issue to light.

- 12.26 (3 Star item 4 – Philip Court Entry Phone)
- 12.27 **RESOLVED** – That the response was satisfactory.
- 12.28 (3 Star Item 5 – Maintenance and repairs schedule)
- 12.29 The General Manager for Mears allayed resident's concerns regarding the rendering of specific properties by stating that Mears do not have carte blanche to carry out any works wherever they see fit and noted that there is a specific process in place to ascertain which works take priority.
- 12.30 (3 Star Item 6 – Inspection of work)
- 12.31 **RESOLVED** – That the response was satisfactory.
- 12.32 (3 Star Item 7 – Contractors)
- 12.33 The Head of Housing Strategy, Property and Investment stated specifics on work to be done will be attained as soon as possible. He furthered that BHCC has its own quality and quantity surveyors to check prices and set everything out.
- 12.34 (Central Ward – 3 Star Item 1 – Central Ward Unresolved Warwick Mount)
- 12.35 **AGREED** – That the response was noted.
- 12.36 (3 Star Item 2 – Highden, Westmount and Crown Hill)
- 12.37 The Business and Performance Manager responded to a Councillor's concern by stating that any situation in which water could cause serious damage or injury to people would be counted as an emergency. By way of example postulated a scenario in which water has begun to pour through the roof.
- 12.38 (3 Star Item 3 – Information on major works)
- 12.39 A Councillor confirmed that lifts would be included under the heading of major works.
- 12.40 (3 Star Item 4 – Cost of Estate Development Budget Work)
- 12.41 **RESOLVED** – That the response was satisfactory.

### **13 REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENT UPDATE**

- 13.1 The Business and Performance Manager, presented the update highlighting the overcharging of repairs contracts in the past. He noted that initially a report went to committee in January, Councillors asked for an update every 6 months through area panels. He also stated that the report highlighted the next steps, progress within partnerships and residents involved with the management group.
- 13.2 A Councillor and members of the panel made the following enquiries and expressed these concerns:

- If this was reduced to smaller number of types of sub-contractors including amount expenditure, will there be a chance of further reductions
- If anyone was to be charged for the whole issue
- If the Clerk of works inspects properties that sub-contractors currently work on

13.3 Officers answered the aforementioned concerns with the following:

- Any work that has been completed within 4 months will also undergo a performance review, there are also internal mechanisms in place to root out who else is employed as an extra measure
- Confirmed an incident was identified and that BHCC has had some discussions with police however as yet no one has been charged
- The overcharging was picked up by the Housing Team and will check with audit to recoup any losses
- The inspection is more robust than before. He also noted that if the job is complex then a Clerk of works will be assigned to it from the start.

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

#### **14 SOMERSET POINT SPRINKLER PROJECT**

14.1 The panel considered a report that outlined a program to install a new sprinkler system at one of Brighton's high-rise block of flats.

14.2 Residents had the following enquiries:

- If the systems were flat specific
- If there is any scope to bring this system to all blocks

14.3 Officers responded with the following:

- The system only targets individual flats specifically and that each flat is covered independently
- Higher risk blocks will take priority first. He noted that this is only an addition and that all other residents in other blocks are safe.

14.4 **RESOLVED** – That the panel agreed to note the report.

#### **15 NEW HOMES FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS UPDATE**

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

#### **16 CITY WIDE REPORTS**

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

**17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

17.1 Heather Hayes enquired when Anglia windows will return to finish work in Coldean, she noted tenant's concern.

17.2 Jeff Tourmentin stated that there is a program to deliver the windows for the remainder of the year; he agreed to find notify the Chair and the Ms Hayes once all information has been attained.

17.3 Heather Hayes enquired if tenant reps can be notified in advance when major works are going to take place.

17.4 Martin Reid stated that notifications are given in the blue papers; he noted that further information is provided on the BHCC website.

The meeting concluded at 20:45

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

