

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: WEST HOVE & PORTSLADE AREA

Tuesday 17 August 2021 at 2.00 pm

VIRTUAL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Allcock

Representatives: Muriel Briault, Alison Gray, Graham Dawes, Roy Crowhurst, Ann Tizzard, Ann Packham, Claire Johnson, Patricia Weller, Ted Chapman

Guests: Sharon Richards, Frank Le Duc (Press)

Officers: Rob Walker, Ododo Dafe, Glyn Huelin, Justine Harris, Thomas Bald, Lesley Campbell, Janet Dowdell

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 Apologies were received from Chris Reedo and Rob Walker.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 25th May 2021 were agreed as an accurate record. Correction noted that Graham Dawes should have been noted as an apology.

3. Positive Community News

3.1 The Chair asked Tenants Representatives for an update on positive community news.

3.2 Joanna M provided the panel with an update on community events that residence may want to get involved with. It was noted that all tenant's membership is free of charge. Fun day activities are being held at Noel park, one hour Information Technology via zoom and face to face training is also available for residence. In addition, In September the council will be working with local GP surgeries on specific one to one session to ensure residence can access their GPs in a timely manner, also outdoor events will comply with social distancing measures.

3.3 Tenant Representative highlighted that no response to item 5.7 page 14 on minutes was recorded and queried whether item was added to this month meeting agenda. It was explained, that the logistics of plant watering for gardens in the first year of planting had not been fully considered. Although, some good work around community gardening is underway. Research has

been carried out pertaining to the installation and access to taps or whether water buds would be a solution. It was noted, problems may arise around legionella's disease with tap installations. However, some estates have water butts installed, and a surveyor will be visiting to establish where more butts can be placed on estates. The Tenant Representative explained that butts would not be suitable on estate, since no guttering or down pipes are in place to support this. It was noted that taps could provide a solution with adequate safety measures put in place. Alternatively, the water board to install a new supply of water costing between £400.00 and £600.00. It was noted that a quick solution to estates watering systems will be found. It was agreed that Robert Keelan and Justine Harris to update Tenants representatives by 27th August, in providing a solution to water taps for plant watering. However, on clarendon estate this will need to be carried out in a couple of phases. Although, by the end of September a functioning plant watering system should be ready for spring 2022.

- 3.4 Libraries have started to reopen, and residence are getting their Covid -19 vaccinations.

4. **Responses to residence questions**

- 4.1 Concerns were raised around the new (EDP) tenants expressed system was imposed by council, and no consultation with Tenant Representatives were undertaken.
- 4.2 Tenant Representatives did not agree with response. It was noted that, there was no consultation with residence as council officers-imposed their solutions. The (EDB) auditors had no understanding this was a residence lead process and made recommendations independently. Representatives require evidence that audit scoring system was unfairly undertaken and want an opportunity to work in collaboration with auditors. Moreover, it was noted, the audit was considered without full information, therefore should be considered invalid.
- 4.3 It was noted (EDB) funds were allocated without the council's knowledge, and (5) forms sampled raised concerns. Additionally, no minutes have been circulated noting that residence agreed to scoring system. Tenant Representative explained, responses to questions raised at previous meeting were not addressed.
- 4.4 The panel discussed whether (EDB) was residence lead, and timescales for accepted bids. Tenant Representatives agreed (EDB) is not residence lead, rather residence felt council imposed audit process.
- 4.5 It was noted, there is no longer a Residents Association, and it's difficult to get residents involved.
- 4.6 Tenant Representatives discussed Quick Bids (EBD). It was noted, Quick Bids process are unsatisfactory, as one bid took three months.

- 4.7 The Chairs summary
The council have not worked effectively in consultation and collaboratively
Tenants Representatives.
- 4.8 Tenant Representative proposals. It was noted, the Council are not seeking to
change principle of (EBD) panel.
- 4.9 Emma returns in September and will provide solution to (EBD), Task and
Finish Group, with a view to build trust and confidence with Tenant
Representatives, as panel are not satisfied with response.
- 4.10 All solutions must be negotiated with Tenants and Lease holders in the future.
- 4.11 Developing a new Task and Finish Group without original members. Whereas
new members lack experience and were not elected. It was noted diverse
members should be elected and be aware of (EBD) process.
- 4.12 It was noted, Emma and Sam are not present at meetings to answer
questions. Tenant Representatives explained this is unsatisfactory. Going
forward (TR) asked that a representative should be present at meetings.

Noted Council staff to keep video camera on during meeting.

- 4.13 Proposal - The Quick Bid process is not quick, communicate this to
community and Engagement team. To involve a board diverse and new
people in (EDB) review.
- 4.14 Community Engagement Team to provide Rosemary with support to carryout
tenant's Representative work.
- 4.15 City Cleaning Grounds Maintenance – Tenants not satisfied with response an
overall review is required.
- 4.16 Response from Keely: 5th August 2021, unclear if taken place Justine Harris
to follow up with Keely.

Tenant Representative explained Cllr Chris Henry has failed to respond to her
inquiries. It was suggested that Cllr Allcock contact Cllr Chris Henry on
Rosemary's behalf.

It was suggested that councillors to attend some Housing Management Panel
meetings.

The Chair explained answers to questions in packs were not correctly
formatted. It was agreed Thomas Bald to send correct responses to
Representatives after meeting.

Robert Walker the Head of City Parks response was read by the Chair

- 4.17 **Agreed** – that the respond was not satisfactory: Tenants Representative were not satisfied with response. Gardens are not being fully maintained example estates are starting to look dirty and scruffy. It was noted, (EDB) have a small discretionary budget for some maintenance work outside of budgets.

It was explained any Health and safety concerns to be raised immediately with the housing or City Parks team.

- 4.18 **Agreed** – Unsatisfied response furthermore, the previous Task and Finish Group Rob Walker did not attend meeting. Tenant Representatives asked for his attendance rather than apologies. It was noted, a representative from City Parks will attend meetings when Rob is unable attend.

- 4.19 *The Chair read the (AGM) requirements. Paper noted residents must have a generic mobile phone and email address.*

- 4.20 **Agreed** – Tenant Representatives were not satisfied with Community Engagement response.

Emma back beginning of September: By 2nd week in September Emma to provide response to questions raised. Hard copy to be sent to Rosemary

Lease Holder update

Glyn Huelin explained the report will be going to the Housing Committee meeting in September.

Highlighted key areas of report.

- Changes to Leaseholder payment Options- (Extension of payment options) for non-residence leaseholders
- Leaseholder satisfaction survey
- Communication with residence on major works
- Leaseholder process for lease extensions
- The Council's hire purchase policy
- Leaseholders selling properties to the council

It was explained leaseholders would not be financially responsible for external repairs. However, they would be liable for contributions within their actual block. It was noted, if residence have Health & Safety concerns around blocks, this must be reported immediately to the housing team. It was noted the council carry out statutory consultation with leaseholders, a two-day process taking thirty days.

5. Housing Committee workplan progress update & Housing Performance Report Quarter 2021/2022

- 5.1 The report presented gave a full picture of Councils housing performance. It was explained, set targets related to pre pandemic targets. Consequently, several areas of work have been affected by backlogs, which will require more

time to hit projected targets. Notably, repairs and rent payment areas increased, but slowly reducing.

Highlighted points:

- Lift repairs on target if administrative error removed from report Council to speed turnaround of void properties, Council hiring more contractors
- Council undertaking recruitment drive to support repairs team in repairing properties and support back log
- Council to prioritise most urgent repairs

5.2 It was noted, the repairs help desk are back to office working, and no concerns have been raised pertaining to residence unable to contact help desk. However, when staff worked from home, they were unable to return promised calls to residence due to technical difficulties This has now been resolved. This led to good feedback from some residence into the council's responsiveness to inquiries.

5.3 It was noted the Council will continue to prioritise most urgent outstanding repairs and will keep tenants updated with their repairs.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Tenant representatives raised concerns that charges of (EDB) are net value and not gross since the council pay (VAT).

Noted

That the following are in the repairs system.

- 1) Clarke Ct, Walsingham Road – Loose Coping Stones
- 2) Stonery Close, Mile Oak – Holes in Guttering

The meeting concluded at 4.07 pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

