

BRIGHTON AND HOVE CITY COUNCIL
EAST AREA PANEL 08.06.2023
MINUTES

Attendees:

Residents: Chris El Shabba (Chair), Janet Gearing, Dee Simson, Rosemary Johnson, Evie Martin, Anne Glow, Angela (surname not provided)

Councillors: Cllr McGregor, Cllr Williams

Officers: Grant Ritchie, Martin Reid, Jan Dowdell, Gab Tiranti, Sam Warren, Francis Mitchell, Justine Harris

Press: Sarah Booker-Lewis

1 – WELCOME, APOLOGIES & INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 There were apologies from Cllr Jacob Allen.

2 – RATIFICATION OF COUNCILLOR CO-CHAIR

2.1 This item was not heard.

3 – PREVIOUS MINUTES AND ACTIONS

3.1 Rosemary Johnson requested that actions & minutes are labelled in a continuous fashion, rather than numerically resetting every meeting. The chair stated that while they had no issues with the numbering of actions, this could be investigated in future.

3.2 Martin Reid agreed to meet Rosemary regarding item 3.6 of the previous minutes.

- a. **ACTION** – Martin Reid to meet with Rosemary Johnson outside the meeting to address her concerns regarding leaseholders.

3.3 Martin Reid agreed to follow up on item 4.8 of the previous meeting.

- a. **ACTION** – Martin Reid to follow up with Ben D’Montigny regarding what information would be most useful to have from residents to ensure that repairs are completed correctly the first time.

3.4 Justine Harris agreed to follow up on repairs noted during a visit to Sandhurst Avenue with Dee Simson.

- a. **ACTION** – Justine Harris to follow up on repairs noted during visit to Sandhurst Avenue

3.5 The minutes were agreed subject to minor amendment.

4 – RESIDENTS QUESTIONS

-Responses to Emails

- 4.1 Cllr Williams and Cllr McGregor stated that they are receiving emails from residents that have not received responses from officers.
- 4.2 Rosemary Johnson was informed that there was a system used to track queries and responses inside the council and raised concerns regarding emails and other channels of communication yielding no response from officers.

-Cladding

- 4.3 Rosemary Johnson stated she was glad that inspections were being carried out.
- 4.4 Martin Reid stated that the external wall insulation surveys would be carried out before the end of September and clarified that the cladding used was not the same as those used on Grenfell Tower.

-Unspent EDB Funds

- 4.5 Sam Warren confirmed that the EDB budget is being used first, rather than reserves.
- 4.6 Keeley McDonald stated that a spend breakdown could be provided.
 - a. **ACTION** – Community Engagement to provide spend breakdowns to future area panels.
- 4.7 Keeley McDonald stated that budgets differ in the four areas of the city due to the redrawn area boundaries and confirmed that the divisions are based on the number of dwellings in each area.
- 4.8 Keeley McDonald stated the east area had £55,058.48, which represented 21.5% of the budget.
- 4.9 Martin Reid confirmed that Craven Vale was now part of the central area panel.

5 – SOCIAL HOUSING BILL PRESENTATION

- 5.1 Martin Reid delivered a presentation on this item, providing an update on the status of the Social Housing Bill.
- 5.2 Martin Reid stated that plans need to be made to ensure that planned preventative maintenance is carried out effectively.
- 5.3 Grant Ritchie stated that while gutter cleaning is classified as a repair, it is not considered an urgent repair.
- 5.4 Evie Martin expressed concerns with repairs workers raising jobs that are then not followed up on, leaving residents chasing for a follow-up.
- 5.5 Cllr McGregor was informed that the KPI for non-urgent repairs was 28 days and the last measured time was 46 days. Martin Reid stated that targets were almost being met for emergency repairs, but that work needed to be done regarding routine repairs.

6 – WARD BOUNDARY CHANGES AND THE IMPACT ON AREA PANEL MEMBERSHIP

- 6.1 Justine Harris delivered a verbal update on this item, referring to information on page 47 of the agenda.
- 6.2 Dee Simson was informed that there were only 11 council tenants in Rottingdean & West Saltdean.

7 – HOUSING COMMITTEE WORKPLAN PROGRESS UPDATE AND HOUSING PERFORMANCE Q4 2022/23

- 7.1 Martin Reid delivered the report on this item.
- 7.2 Janet Gearing raised concerns regarding under-occupation of Council houses. Janet Dowdell provided an explanation on succession rights.
- 7.3 Dee Simson stated that it can often be cheaper to replace than to repair and questioned whether this had been considered in relation to the decent homes standard. Grant Ritchie stated that contractor capacity was a factor in why replacements were limited. Martin Reid stated that committee approval had been granted to appoint new contractors.
- 7.4 Janet Gearing was informed that houses were not being sold to Seaside Homes.
- 7.5 Dee Simson and Janet Gearing requested a simpler process on mutual exchanges. Martin Reid stated that mutual exchanges are not always within the control of the council.
- 7.6 The Chair iterated concerns regarding a family living in a flat too small for their requirements.

7.7 Martin Reid informed the panel what actions were being taken to ensure tenants were housed appropriately.

8 – POSITIVE COMMUNITY NEWS

8.1 Cllr Williams shared that works on Swallow Court should be completed by the end of summer.

8.2 The Chair shared that Robert Lodge is coming along nicely, and that she hoped to see some furniture arriving there soon.

8.3 Dee Simson shared that Woodingdean would be celebrating 20 years of the Community Café on the coming weekend and invited attendees to join.

8.4 Rosemary Johnson shared that action was being taken to arrange leaseholders meetings and invited leaseholders in Woodingdean, Whitehawk, The Marina and Rottingdean & West Saltdean to come to area panels. Rosemary Johnson also shared that the Craven Vale coronation party was a success.

8.5 Rosemary Johnson also shared that the Rottingdean Pantomime would be showing performances of Alan Ayckbourn's 'Confusions' at 19:45pm on the 12th – 15th of July, with a Saturday matinee at 14:00pm.

9 – AOB

9.1 **ACTION** - Justine Harris to follow up with Evie Martin on her queries regarding EIB.

9.2 Angela raised concerns regarding maintenance of buildings and associated tagging.