

# BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

## HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: NORTH AREA

6.30pm 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

### MINUTES

#### Present:

Councillors: Sheard (Co-Chair), Asaduzzaman, De Oliveira, Evans, Fowler, Hill and West

Representatives: Ian Beck (Hollingdean Residents Association), Heather Hayes (Coldean Independents), Jim Hornsby (Mimosa Court Leaseholders Association), Russell Hughes (Hollingdean Residents Association), Jane Hunter (East Moulsecoomb Tenants and Residents Association), Donna James (Bates Estate Community Association), Desmond Jones (Hollingdean Residents Association), Ian Knowles (Bates Estate Community Association), Theresa Mackey (Highcroft Lodge Residents Association), Barney Miller (Sylvan Hall Residents Association), Mo Rez (Highcroft Lodge Residents Association), Jenny Simmonds (Coldean Independents), Carmel Stevenson (East Moulsecoomb Tenants and Residents Association), Fahi Tabataba (Highcroft Lodge Residents Association), Gordon Taylor (Parkmead Informal Group), Mitch Watkinson (Bates Estate Community Association) and Paul Wright (Coldean Independents)

Officers: Niall Breen (Democratic Services Apprentice), Geof Gage (Head of Housing Investment & Asset Management), Justine Harris (Head of Tenancy Services), Keely McDonald (Senior Community Engagement Officer), Martin Reid (Assistant Director Housing Management), Grant Ritchie (Head of Housing Repairs & Maintenance), Emma Thomson (Democratic Services Officer) and Sam Warren (Community Engagement Manager)

Guests: Sarah Booker-Lewis (Local Democracy Reporter)

#### 1 ELECTION OF COUNCILLOR CHAIR

- 1.1 **RESOLVED:** Cllr Sheard was duly appointed as councillor co-chair of the North Area Panel for the forthcoming municipal year.
- 1.2 A representative from each Tenants' Association was invited to vote for the resident co-chair of the Panel.
- 1.3 **RESOLVED:** Theresa Mackey was duly appointed as resident co-chair of the North Area Panel for the forthcoming municipal year.

#### 2 WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 2.1 There were no apologies.

#### 3 MINUTES AND ACTIONS OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 3.1 Mitch Watkinson highlighted that his name was not included on the minutes from the previous meeting.

- 3.2 **RESOLVED:** Subject to the above amendment, the minutes from the meeting held on 6 June 2023 were agreed as a correct record.
- 3.3 In relation to NA2, Justine Harris advised that the branches had been removed but she would arrange a date with Ian Beck to visit Tavistock Down and deal with the remaining outstanding issues as the job had not yet been actioned.
- 3.4 Regarding NA9, Martin Reid confirmed he would arrange a visit to Southmount before the end of the month to review the refuse collection issues.
- 3.5 In relation to NA5, Geof Gage confirmed he would follow up with Jim Hornsby directly to further discuss the decision that leaseholders/ residents cannot be allowed access to the roof of Mimosa Court.
- 3.6 Regarding NA6, Martin Reid advised himself, Justine Harris and Geof Gage would consider what communications could be put out to acknowledge that the installation of solar panels at Mimosa Court was a resident initiative.
- 3.7 In relation to NA7, Sam Warren confirmed she would liaise with Justine Harris, Rebecca Mann and Martin Reid to look into why no mowing was being done at Mimosa Court and resolve the issue outside of the meeting.
- 3.8 In relation to NA3, Justine Harris confirmed she would advise Barney Miller of City Parks response on general grass cutting as a verbal update could not be given at the Panel.

#### **4 RESPONSES TO RESIDENTS QUESTIONS**

##### *Weeding and maintenance of footpaths and pathways*

- 4.1 Jenny Simmonds, Jane Hunter, Desmond Jones and Ian Beck highlighted that issues related to weeding, footpaths and verges were ongoing throughout the city and despite repeatedly being raised there had been no action taken.
- 4.2 Cllr Fowler advised more staff had been employed for weeding and new machinery had been introduced and outlined the traffic and light system that had been implemented
- 4.3 In response to Mitch Watkinson's query, Cllr Fowler detailed why glycosides had been banned.
- 4.4 In response to Jane Hunter's request about community payback, Sam Warren advised Community Engagement were working with the team but it was not always feasible, though they were doing work on weeding but not public highways.
- 4.5 Cllr West detailed the history of the situation with weeds and raised points about the traffic light system being a coping mechanism and the need for additional funding.

##### *Internal Decorations Eligibility*

- 4.6 Grant Ritchie confirmed he would follow up with Jenny Simmonds with an update on the outstanding works requested in her hallway.
- 4.7 Grant Ritchie provided a verbal update on the decorating scheme.
- 4.8 Theresa Mackey sought clarification on the review of discretionary help and if the criteria was changing.

*Maintenance of Communal Areas*

- 4.9 Barney Miller raised concerns regarding cleaning in The Pines and sought clarification on whether the cleaners were overloaded.

*EDB Bids*

- 4.10 Heather Hayes' highlighted that bids were put in for Coldean last year and the works hadn't been completed, to which Sam Warren outlined the issues that had contributed to the backlog and the work that was being undertaken to improve the process.
- 4.11 In response to Carmel Stevenson's query about the length of the procurement process, Keely McDonald confirmed this was still being finalised and work was being undertaken with contractors.
- 4.12 Jane Hunter raised points about bids submitted several years ago that now could not be completed due to increased costs.
- 4.13 Martin Reid confirmed he follow up with Heather Hayes regarding the EDB bid for outstanding works at the youth club in Coldean.

*Estate Walks*

- 4.14 Justine Harris provided a verbal update on the rollout of weekly estate walks in all areas of the city.

*Adaptations*

- 4.15 In response to Theresa Mackey's query, Martin Reid advised he would confirm the lifespan of level access showers.
- 4.16 Cllr West raised points about the fire service being put under additional pressure due to being called out for avoidable situations.

*Clear-up on estates*

- 4.17 In response to Ian Beck's query about skips, Justine Harris advised City Clean were running initiatives, a wastebin trial had been rolled out in Whitehawk and considerations were being given to how to tackle bulk waste.
- 4.18 In response to Donna James' request, Justine Harris confirmed she would look into providing signage and installing cameras at Bates Estate.
- 4.19 Carmel Stevenson raised points about bulk waste left by students in Moulsecoomb.

4.20 Jane Hunter raised points about disposable vapes.

**5 HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 2023/24**

5.1 The Assistant Director Housing Management, Martin Reid, provided a verbal update on the progress of the Housing Committee Workplan and housing performance for quarter 1 2023/24.

5.2 Carmel Stevenson raised queries about the new housing development in Coldean.

**6 CONSUMER STANDARD CONSULTATION**

6.1 The Head of Tenancy Services, Justine Harris, delivered a presentation on consumer standards.

6.2 There were no questions or comments raised.

**7 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE**

7.1 The Assistant Director Housing Management, Martin Reid, delivered a presentation which provided an update on the health and safety review that was being undertaken.

7.2 Jane Hunter raised points about the East Sussex Fire Brigade home service.

7.3 Barney Miller raised points about discoverable data and data protection.

**8 POSITIVE COMMUNITY NEWS**

8.1 No discussion was held due to the meeting running over.

**9 AOB**

9.1 No discussion was held due to the meeting running over.

The meeting concluded at 9.15pm