

**HOUSING CABINET MEMBER MEETING**

**Agenda Item 59**

Brighton & Hove City Council

**Subject:** Opportunity for Manor Place Housing Office to move to the Whitehawk Hub

**Date of meeting:** 1 December 2011

**Report of:** Head of Service, Housing & Social Inclusion

**Contact Officer:** Name: Ododo Dafé Tel: 29-3201  
E-mail: ododo.dafe@brighton-hove.gov.uk

**Wards Affected:** East Brighton

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 The Manor Place Housing Office is situated very close to the blocks of flats that form Robert Lodge, near The Broadway in Whitehawk. Since the transfer of some staff from that office to the Housing Centre, it has a 55% staff occupancy rate. An opportunity arose a few months ago for the remaining 17 staff (in 13 posts) to move to vacant office space in the Whitehawk co-location hub.
- 1.2 The services currently located at the Whitehawk Hub are the primary school, library and IT learning suite, GP surgery, health centre, pharmacy, children's centre, and children's and families services.
- 1.3 If the move were to go ahead, it would necessitate the Council not having a cash payment facility in Whitehawk, as there is no provision for rent payments to be made at the Hub. However cash payments will still be able to be made at four other non-council outlets in Whitehawk.
- 1.3 The objective of this proposal is to achieve a new long term base for the Whitehawk tenancy management service that fits within the service transformation framework of 'a council the city deserves' - improving customer service, working in more efficient office accommodation, working in more efficient and effective ways, and achieving value for money.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Housing agrees for the tenancy management housing service to move from the Manor Place Housing Office to the Whitehawk Hub.

### 3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 This report is preceded by the Customer Access Phase 3 report presented to Cabinet Members Meeting on 19 October 2011 in which one of the approved recommendations was to “Consider the opportunities for further office moves and best future use of some housing offices – notably Manor Place Housing Office and Victoria Road Housing Office.” The Customer Access Strategy that was introduced by that report highlighted council-wide work to make best and most cost-effective use of council office accommodation, and one of the actions in the strategy was to consult on proposals to move staff from Manor Place Housing Office to the Whitehawk Hub.
- 3.2 The relocation of the Manor Place Housing Office links to the Council’s Corporate Plan (2011–2015) priority and the Housing & Social Inclusion business plan objective to tackle inequalities. The local tenancy management services contribute to tackling inequalities in that the team works with some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable people in the city, often in conjunction with other service providers. Moving the team to the Whitehawk Hub would allow the links that are already in place with other services to develop towards the vision set out in the corporate plan of the council ‘work(ing) in a more joined up and creative way, so that our resources have the greatest impact possible and give the best value for money’. The Corporate Plan ‘Tackling Inequalities’ outcomes that the proposed relocation would particularly contribute to are:
- 3.2.1 *Children & young people have the best start in life*  
The housing team at Manor Place has many years experience of working with other services that work locally with vulnerable families – children & families, the children’s centre and the youth service. Co-location with these agencies will offer an opportunity to further develop links, share knowledge and develop joint working initiatives to support families and improve the life chances of children living in families with multiple needs that need an inter-agency approach for support.
- 3.2.2 *Vulnerable adults supported to live healthy, independent lives*  
Local housing staff, and in particular those who visit residents in their homes can signpost residents to services that may be of use to them at the hub, eg the wide range of services and support in the library which include free access to computers, an IT learning suite, health checks and sessions with the Citizens Advice Bureau. The improved working with council colleagues has the potential also to develop more co-ordinated and preventative approaches to protecting vulnerable adults.
- 3.2.3 *Reduce health inequalities and long standing public health issues*  
Again, local housing staff will be able to develop their knowledge of local services and agencies that work to promote improved public health and

signpost residents as appropriate for support. Housing staff have always had this knowledge, however, co-location will facilitate better information sharing on local services and improved client referrals.

#### 3.2.4 *Cohesive and safe communities*

Housing & Social Inclusion contributes in many ways to this corporate priority. A key benefit of moving the Whitehawk housing service to the hub would be that it has the potential of bringing staff into contact with a different demographic through the wider demographic of the hub's users. This may lead to increased resident participation not only in housing services but in other community initiatives. In addition, the closer working with other council colleagues is likely to lead to improved early intervention and action around issues of anti social behaviour and support for our most vulnerable households.

3.3 The proposed relocation also links to the Corporate Plan priority to 'Engage people who live and work in the city'. Housing & Social Inclusion's work on resident involvement and engagement fits within this corporate priority. A move to the Whitehawk Hub offers the opportunity to work with our services to find new ways to engage with residents, particularly those who are younger and are outside the current resident involvement model, and will contribute to the following outcomes:

##### 3.3.1 *A council that is easy to contact and demonstrates that it listens to residents*

Located with a range of other services at the Whitehawk Hub will make it easier for a wider range of residents to contact the tenancy management service.

##### 3.3.2 *Improved collaboration between the council and its communities*

Co-location at the hub will enable the housing service to participate in community development initiatives involving a wider range of partners (eg schools, youth work), and that has the potential to increase participation and positive feeling within Whitehawk.

3.4 The proposal also contributes the council-wide work to make the best use of, and achieve value for money from, our office accommodation. The Manor Place Housing Office now has a 55% occupancy level since some staff moved to the Housing Centre in Moulsecoomb. Work carried out by our Business Improvement Manager, finance colleagues and colleagues in Property & Design show that the annual running cost per desk space at this occupancy level is £3,144. Had it been fully occupied, the figure would reduce to £1,715 per desk space. However the annual rental cost per desk space of moving to the hub is only £607.

3.5 The total annual running cost for Manor Place is estimated at £37,700 and this figure is likely to increase as the prefabricated building continues to deteriorate. Whereas the annual total rental cost of co-locating at the hub is

£7,286 – this represents only 19% of our current annual cost. Represented another way it costs almost five times as much to stay at Manor Place as it would to re-locate.

- 3.6 The Housing Revenue Account cost savings achieved by the proposal would be reinvested in tenants homes and in the provision of services to our most vulnerable tenants.

### **Resident feedback**

- 3.7 A face-to-face resident survey was conducted from the Manor Place Housing Office and in the Whitehawk area during September 2011 to ascertain the impact of the proposal to move the service to the Whitehawk Hub and close the cash desk facility. Of the 203 people who responded, a large majority (71%) visited the office to make a payment, 11% for a housing enquiry and 15% to enquire about another council service.
- 3.8 There were significant proportions already using services provided at the hub, with for example (and in descending order) 52% using the pharmacy, 50% visiting the GP surgery, 30% using the library, 24% using the health centre and 21% using the school. 10% of respondents reported using each of these services - the toy library, children's/youth services, and the community café, and smaller numbers reported using the remaining service.
- 3.9 When discussing the impact that a move of office location and the closure of the cash desk facility would have on them, 50% reported no impact and 24% felt it would have some impact. The remaining were not sure or did not respond. There were two main impacts that people spoke of – how they would make their payments, and access to the Whitehawk Hub. These matters will be referred to further in the section below 'Impact Assessment' (please see paragraphs 3.12 - 3.15).
- 3.10 Other observations from the survey exercise were:
- There was limited awareness of the telephone (28%) and the internet (30%) as alternative payment options; middling awareness of post office (48%) and standing order (43%), and higher awareness of Paypoint (56%) and direct debit (61%).
  - The highest preferred alternative payment method was for Paypoint (33%), followed by post office (25%), telephone (20%), direct debit (17%), and the internet at 10%.
  - Aside from key meters for paying for gas and electricity, other popular methods for paying household bills were direct debit and Paypoint.
  - 84% of respondents had a bank account – although not all were able to use this method to pay rent
  - 55% of respondents reported they have access to the internet
  - 37% have mobility concerns.

- 3.11 In discussions with tenant association representatives, their priority concern for local residents was the issue of access to the Whitehawk Hub. This was mainly because there is no bus provision to the front entrance of the hub on Whitehawk Road, although bus access is afforded from the main road, Whitehawk Way. A further significant concern is that the route from the bus stop to the buildings contains some gradients which, although being successfully used by some mobility scooter users, are not suitable for all people using these vehicles or wheelchairs. Resident representatives however acknowledge that the area is hilly, and that a relocation will be advantageous to some residents and disadvantage others – similar to the current office location. In addition they considered the balance of residents using services at the hub who would benefit from the relocation, and were particularly struck by the potential for cost savings.

### **Impact Assessment**

#### Access

- 3.12 Residents concerns relating to access to the hub have been largely (but not wholly) addressed in that the bus stop on Whitehawk Way has been moved to be closer to the location; the path affording access from the bus stop to the hub was previously narrow and on a camber but this has now been widened to allow greater access and has reduced the camber; and enhanced lighting to the path has been installed. A resident representative using a mobility scooter has accessed the site from a variety of routes and reported that the access is now much improved, and that the hub is regularly visited with ease in the mobility scooter. However, another tenant representative, also using a mobility scooter has provided a clear account of the access difficulties experienced, mainly because there are several gradients to negotiate before gaining access to the building. A site map is attached to this report at Appendix 1.
- 3.13 It is fair to say that access to the Whitehawk Hub could present access difficulties for some people because of the presence of slopes, inclines and cambers in some places. While it is not ideal for all, the Hub has had visitors in wheelchairs and mobility scooters who have used one of the various routes. The site is better suited than at Manor Place for those residents or customers who are drivers with a disability, as there are more disabled customer parking bays. Reviewing the various comments and feedback that have been made regarding access to the Hub, the following points appear pertinent:
- The site does present access limitations for a few people, similar to how Manor Place housing office does for some too. The limitations of some of the slopes and inclines can also be balanced against some of the advantages – eg disabled car parking facilities within approximately 400 yards of the entrance by the rear of the school, many services on one site, good drop-off access for taxis or other drivers, and a fully accessible building.
  - It is very difficult in an area such as Brighton and Hove to make every location or facility fully accessible for everyone – for example some residents in other areas of Whitehawk experience difficulties

in accessing Manor Place because of the hilly nature of the roads they live on. However as service providers we do not want to disadvantage residents and will continue to offer alternative means by which customers can access our services through eg home visits, the telephone or the internet.

- There are many parents with buggies using the Hub, and some have commented that housing relocation would be more accessible for them as they do not have free bus passes and cannot afford the bus fair to go down to the Broadway.
- It does appear incongruous that with so many community services located at the Hub (and with such a range of people with and without mobility issues using it), housing services is currently missing even though the site is located within the middle section of the Whitehawk estate and is surrounded by council housing.

3.14 Concern was raised about the access path not being on a major gritting route and therefore potentially dangerous for elderly residents or those with mobility difficulties. We would not like to see our tenants struggling to come to the service in treacherous weather, and our current service model of home visit provision will not change if the service were to move to the hub. The service is also accessible by phone or via the internet - for those who have access. While the path is not on the highway and therefore not a consideration for the highways gritting route, it will be a priority for services located at the hub. In addition, a grit bit has now been installed on the site, located near the path from the bus stop, behind Kirdford Lodge, close to the disabled parking area.

#### Payments

3.15 Residents responding to the survey were primarily concerned about where they would make their payments if the office were to move – because there would be no cash receipting facility at the Hub. On discussing a range of alternative options with them, many residents were happy to change to Paypoint and some requested a Paypoint card be ordered for them at that time. Four of over 70 Paypoint outlets in the city are located in Whitehawk. Smaller proportions of respondents were interested in direct debit payments, payments over the phone, and payments via the internet. In order to ensure that every resident currently paying at the housing office has the most appropriate alternative payment method for them, staff from various housing teams will be able to provide one-to-one financial inclusion advice and support.

## **4. CONSULTATION**

4.1 A face-to-face impact survey of 203 residents took place in September 2011.

4.2 Individual conversations and meetings have taken place with tenant association representatives in the Whitehawk area, and two meetings have been attended with groups of the tenant representatives in order to hear their feedback and that of their members. At this latter meeting, resident

representatives were informed of our intentions to feed back their main concern about access in a presentation on the proposal to Housing Management Consultative Committee on 7 November 2011. In addition they were informed that the proposal would then go to Cabinet Members' Meeting with the recommendation to approve the proposed move. The subject had not gone to the Area Panel, essentially because the next Panel meeting is not until January 2012, hence the reason for meeting with Whitehawk representatives. They were satisfied with this, feeling that the matter was of pertinence to Whitehawk residents.

- 4.3 Staff feedback has informed the recommendation as they are keen to relocate with other service colleagues, and staff, and their trade unions, will be formally consulted on the proposed move if the recommendation is approved.
- 4.4 Ward councillors have been consulted throughout the process and have themselves worked to achieve the improvements to customers' physical access to the Whitehawk Hub. While being supportive of the benefits of the proposed move, they would also like to see any further steps taken that can improve access to the site – eg through the provision of a bus route to the spur road leading to the front entrance of the school. However they have made several approaches in this regard, and the road does not afford appropriate turnaround facility for the local bus company vehicles.
- 4.5 There has also been dialogue and meetings with providers of services currently located at the Whitehawk Hub, notably the library service, youth service, and children's' and families' service.

## **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### **5.1 Financial Implications:**

The relocation of staff from Manor Place to Whitehawk Hub will result in savings in office accommodation costs, staffing costs in relation to office management and cashiers, and a reduction in transaction costs through the use of alternative payment methods to the cashiers office. These savings are currently estimated at £48,000 per annum and will be included in the 2012/13 Budget.

Finance Officer: Sue Chapman

Date: 15 November 2011

### **Legal Implications:**

- 5.2 The Cabinet Member for Housing has delegated power to discharge the council's functions as a local housing authority. Any decision to relocate the tenancy management housing service from Manor Place to the Whitehawk Hub and/or to close the cash desk facility is clearly within that authority. In making those decisions the Cabinet Member must have regard to relevant considerations, such as the impact on tenants, access etc. These are adequately addressed within the report. It is not considered that any

individual's human rights will be adversely affected by the report's recommendations.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 18 November 2011

#### Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 Equalities implications, particularly for older residents and those who have mobility difficulties have been considered in coming to the recommendation to move the tenancy management services to the Whitehawk Hub. The additional provisions that have been made to the physical access to the building means that by bus, the distance to the hub is very similar to that of the distance from the bus stop near Manor Place Housing Office to that office. There is a variety of people currently using the Whitehawk Hub, many of whom are elderly and some of whom have disabilities. Provision will be made to offer all residents who need it one-to-one support for transferring to a different and convenient payment method.

A summary of the draft Equalities Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix 2.

#### Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 It is a corporate priority to create a more sustainable city by protecting and enhancing the environment, meeting social needs and promoting economic success. Co-location of housing services within the Whitehawk Hub has the potential to contribute to this priority and achieve the following outcomes:

##### *A strong and low carbon economy*

At the moment more than half of the Manor Place housing office is empty. The running costs for the building remain the same. Relocating the staff to another building will, in time, reduce running costs and contribute to the council's drive to reduce CO2 emissions.

##### *A healthier and higher quality built environment*

With the current staff relocated to the Whitehawk Hub, there is the potential to use the vacant Manor Place site for future housing development. It affords relatively level access, and proximity to shops and transport links. It's proximity to the over 50s blocks at Robert Lodge would make it particularly suitable for accessible housing.

A decision to move to the Whitehawk Hub will also lead to a reduced use of paper in our operations, as there will be the need to meet with the council's 'Smartspace' working principles which include electronic storage of documents which greatly contribute to a paperless office.



#### Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 Closer physical access of our tenancy management team with other public service providers in Whitehawk has the enormous potential to further improve our co-ordinated responses to some of our most vulnerable tenants which may reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the perception of crime.

#### Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 There is the risk that the closure of the cash office will unsettle people's rent payment habits, and lead to an increase in rent arrears. This risk will be managed by our mobilisation of a range of staff to our financial inclusion work in providing one-to-one sessions with residents currently paying at the Manor Place office to set up alternative payment options to suit. We know who these customers are, and some are already switching to Paypoint, direct debit and internet payment options with new information and staff support.

#### Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 Changes and improvements to customer service and customer access arrangements have been considered in a corporate context. Council wide work on eg co-locating services, Smartspace, work styles, sustainability, best use of council office accommodation have been considered in coming to the recommendation of this report.

### **6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

- 6.1 The alternative is for no action, and for staff to remain at the Manor Place Housing Office. The empty office space could be offered to other services that might be able to contribute to the running costs of the building or to voluntary sector organisations so that the space is used. However this option would not realise the benefits outlined in paragraph 7.1 below.

### **7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

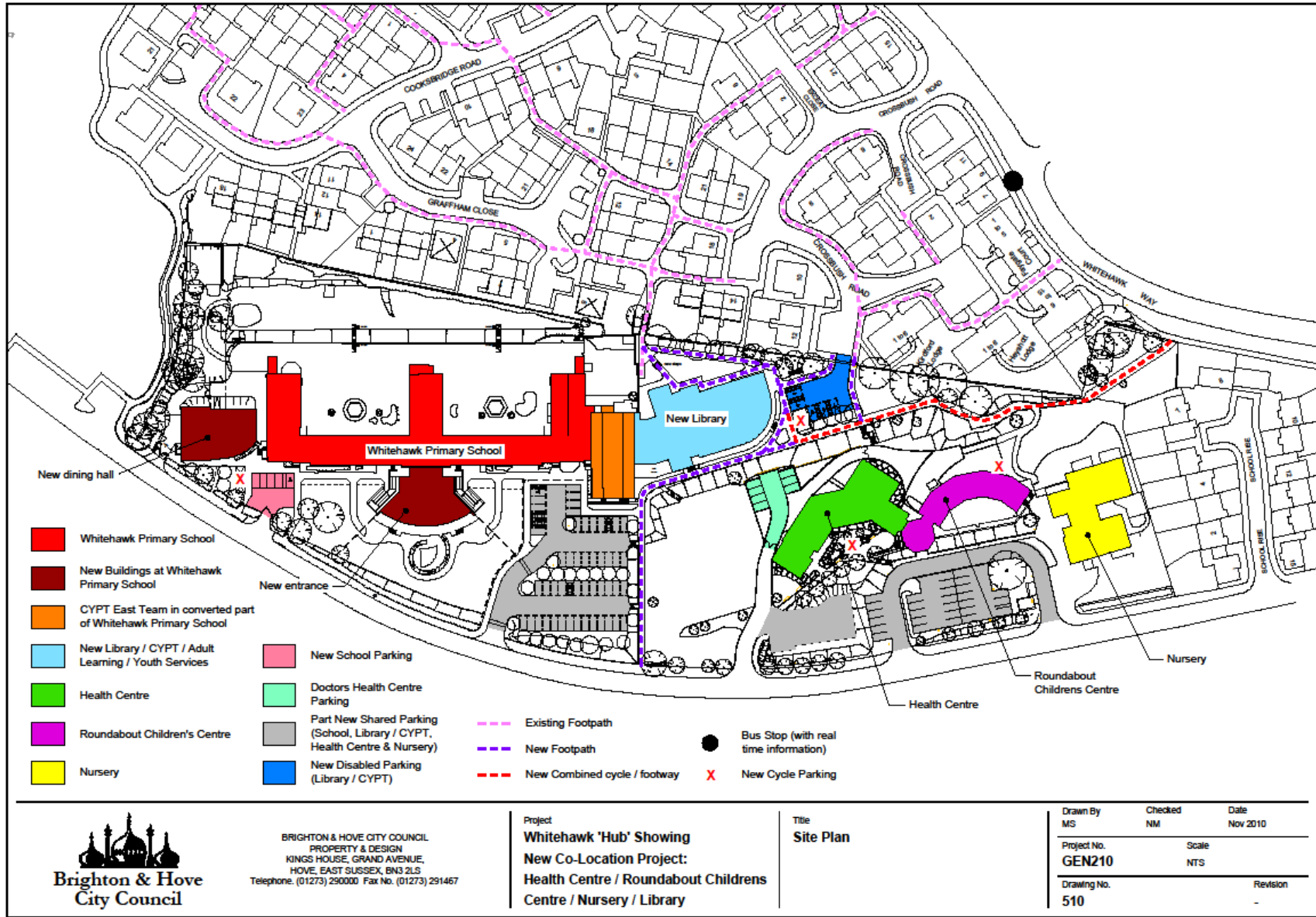
- 7.1 To enable the tenancy management service provided from the Manor Place Housing Office to relocated to Whitehawk Hub, and for the cash desk facility to be closed, leading to a range of benefits which include the following:
- Co-location of staff with key public services in the area – improving access for customers using the various services
  - Provide opportunities for improved joint working
  - Modernise our rent payment options in line with major housing providers, and reduce transactional costs
  - Minimise the financial and sustainability costs of office accommodation that does not provide value for money.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

#### **Appendices:**

1. Map showing the Whitehawk Hub
2. Draft equalities impact assessment

Site plan of the Whitehawk Hub



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**Draft Equalities Impact Assessment: Moving Manor Place Housing Office to the Whitehawk Hub**

**Aim of Policy / Scope of Service:**

Manor Place Housing Office provides a base for tenancy management staff working in the Whitehawk area. It has a public reception and cash office for payments of rent, council tax, insurance and other housing related payments. There is a proposal to close the Manor Place Office and relocate staff in the Whitehawk Hub, a base for a number of council services, including the local library. The Hub is adjacent to two GP surgeries, a dentist, children’s centre, nursery and pharmacy. If the move goes ahead, the cash office will close, and not move to the Hub. This Equalities Impact Assessment considers the impact of such a move and the closure of the cash office on residents and staff.

Different groups included in scope	Potential impact on this group/s – positive and negative	Existing data/information including relevant legislation	Potential actions to minimise negative impact and maximise positive impacts	Data or information required
<p><b>All (impacts that apply to all groups)</b></p>	<p><u>Residents</u></p> <p>The lack of cash office facilities at Whitehawk Hub may impact on people who are used to paying their housing charges via this method.</p>	<p>There are 1,758 tenancies in the Whitehawk area:</p> <p>533 - North W’hawk 631 - Central W’hawk 594 - South W’hawk</p>	<p>There will be a range of communications to residents, should the office relocate. This will include tailored information to those residents who use the cash office, setting out alternative methods of payment (direct debit, pay point, on line, standing order, telephone, alternative cash offices) and the one-to-one support that housing staff will give to residents to make these changes.</p>	<p>We hold details of all residents who use the cash office.</p>

Different groups included in scope	Potential impact on this group/s – positive and negative	Existing data/information including relevant legislation	Potential actions to minimise negative impact and maximise positive impacts	Data or information required
	<p><u>Residents</u></p> <p>Residents who live close to the Manor Place office will have to travel further to their local housing office.</p>	<p>There are 72 flats in Robert Lodge, the block adjacent to the Manor Place Housing Office</p>	<p>Use the relocation of the Manor Place office to further promote current alternative ways for residents to access housing services and information – eg home visits, the customer on line service and attendance of local tenancy management staff at residents meetings and community events, including the Robert Lodge lunch club.</p>	
	<p><u>Residents</u></p> <p>Some residents have raised concerns over access to Whitehawk Hub regarding the distance from Manor Place, the approach and icy weather.</p>	<p>The Hub is located between Whitehawk Road and Whitehawk Way, with access on foot from both roads; from Whitehawk Rd for general parking and from Whitehawk Way for disabled parking.</p> <p>The co-ordinates of the building are:</p> <p>50.825424,-0.107174</p>	<p>Since the Hub first opened, the path leading to the Hub has been widened to increase access for mobility scooter or wheelchair users or those pushing double buggies (the widening has also helped reduce the camber of the path), the bus stop on Whitehawk Way moved further up the hill so that it is directly opposite the path, and additional lighting has been fitted along the path.</p>	<p>Officers will work with residents to review this issue and identify further improvements, if needed.</p>

Different groups included in scope	Potential impact on this group/s – positive and negative	Existing data/information including relevant legislation	Potential actions to minimise negative impact and maximise positive impacts	Data or information required
	<p><u>Residents</u> Access - some residents have commented on the positive impact of the housing service locating to the hub in that it increases access for the many residents in North and Central Whitehawk who do not have free bus passes, and walk with their children to the Manor Place office because of prohibitive transport costs.</p>	<p>The following bus services are available from Whitehawk Way:</p> <p>1, 1A, 21, 37, 71, 72, 73, 84</p>	<p>All residents will be offered a range of ways to access housing services at the Hub, including home visits and information via the internet.</p> <p>Gritting the access to the Hub will be a priority in winter, however residents will not be encouraged to leave their homes in these conditions – home visits will be offered, or telephone advice/support.</p> <p>A grit bin has been located on the site.</p>	

Different groups included in scope	Potential impact on this group/s – positive and negative	Existing data/information including relevant legislation	Potential actions to minimise negative impact and maximise positive impacts	Data or information required
	<p><u>Residents</u> Co-location of the Manor Place office at the Hub will enable residents to access a wide range of services in one location with scope for multi-agency appointments.</p> <p>Co-location with the library offers residents the opportunity to make use of its wide range of services including the toy library, free internet and computer access, DVDs and many more services</p>	<p>Link to 'reasons to use Whitehawk library' web page <a href="http://www.brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk/Libraries/sites/Whitehawk/Pages/ReasonstovisitWhitehawkLibrary.aspx">http://www.brighton-hove-rpml.org.uk/Libraries/sites/Whitehawk/Pages/ReasonstovisitWhitehawkLibrary.aspx</a></p>	<p>The benefits of co-location will be promoted in advance of the office move, to ensure residents are aware of the range of facilities at the Hub and adjacent site.</p>	
	<p><u>Residents</u></p> <p>Robert Lodge residents will no longer be able to add credit to their laundry charge cards if the cash office closes</p>	<p>There are 72 flats at Robert Lodge</p>	<p>Two options are currently being considered as alternative ways for residents to be able to use the laundrette, without having to charge their cards. These are a drop safe in the laundrette (where money is placed in a safe, which then 'allows' the resident to use a machine) or through the introduction of a service charge for this facility as is the practice at sheltered housing schemes.</p>	<p>Selection of a preferred method and inform residents</p>

Different groups included in scope	Potential impact on this group/s – positive and negative	Existing data/information including relevant legislation	Potential actions to minimise negative impact and maximise positive impacts	Data or information required
	<p><u>Staff</u></p> <p>Details of how staff with individual needs may be affected are set out below. In general, this experience is likely to be positive for staff due to the flexibility it gives and the opportunities to develop joint working initiatives with other services based in the Hub.</p> <p>Working at the Hub would enable the team to provide a continuous service to residents – the low number of staff currently working in Manor Place can lead to cancellation of home visits and other appointments as a minimum number of people need to be in the building to allow it to open to the public.</p>	<p>There are currently 17 staff (mixture of full and part time) working at the Manor Place Housing Office</p>	<p>Staff will be provided with information in advance of a move to the Hub about co-location, smart space and the other teams based in the building, and input to design and guidelines on ‘Smartspacing’ working as practiced at eg Bartholomew House, Hove Town Hall, Kings House and Lavender St Housing Office.</p>	
<p><b>Ethnicity inc. asylum seekers, refugees, gypsies and travellers</b></p>	<p><u>Residents &amp; staff</u></p> <p>No specific impact identified, although there may be some service access benefits from a variety of services being located on one site.</p>			

Different groups included in scope	Potential impact on this group/s – positive and negative	Existing data/information including relevant legislation	Potential actions to minimise negative impact and maximise positive impacts	Data or information required
Gender (men, women, trans people)	<p><u>Residents &amp; staff</u></p> <p>No impact identified</p>			
Disability - Physical/ sensory impairment	<p><u>Residents</u></p> <p>Some residents with mobility problems have raised access to the Hub as an issue. See section on impact on 'all' above for potential action to minimise this impact.</p> <p>The public facing areas, reception and interview rooms are accessible in accordance with DDA requirements.</p>	<p>Equalities legislation requires that all reasonable adjustments should be made to ensure services are accessible. Given the topography of Brighton and Hove there is difficulty in ensuring that each resident can navigate the roads and pathways of the city to access services.</p> <p>Disabilities, their impact on individuals, the use of mobility aids and their effectiveness for each individual person are so diverse – as for example where two different tenant reps have a completely diverse experience of accessing the site using their mobility scooters.</p> <p>The service needs to be confident that there are alternative methods for customers to access the services they need eg by home visit, telephone or the internet.</p>	<p>See actions above in 'all section' on how residents will be encouraged to access services in different ways and on work to identify scope for improving access to the Hub</p> <p>Managers to ensure an induction loop is available in reception and interview rooms</p>	<p>Identify residents who use Manor Place Housing Office with a physical or sensory impairment and offer individual advice and support to adapt to the change in location</p>



Different groups included in scope	Potential impact on this group/s – positive and negative	Existing data/information including relevant legislation	Potential actions to minimise negative impact and maximise positive impacts	Data or information required
	<p><u>Staff</u></p> <p>Staff may have individual requirements for their workstations and in terms of getting around the building</p>		<p>Individual workstation can be adapted for staff who need DDA adjustments; managers to ensure all staff requirements are known before the move and adjustments made.</p> <p>There is a lift in the building which can be used by staff to move between the ground and first floor</p>	<p>Identify staff who need adaptations to their workstations</p>
<p><b>Disability - Learning/ Mental Health</b></p>	<p><u>Residents</u></p> <p>Residents with learning disabilities/mental ill health may take longer to adapt to the changes</p>		<p>Tailored support for residents who will find it difficult to adapt to changes</p>	<p>Identify residents who will have particular difficulty in making changes to either paying rent differently or coming to a different location and who will need home visits to ensure they know the cash office is closing and how they can pay their rent and other charges in the future</p>

Different groups included in scope	Potential impact on this group/s – positive and negative	Existing data/information including relevant legislation	Potential actions to minimise negative impact and maximise positive impacts	Data or information required
	<p><u>Staff</u></p> <p>Staff may find it difficult to adjust to the loss of personal space through the desk sharing arrangements within Smart Space</p>		<p>Information on Smart Space will be provided to all staff, with the opportunity to see the new office, prior to move. Opportunity for staff to discuss individual concerns and to input to the guidelines on how desks should be used and work carried out in the new set up.</p>	<p>Identify staff who may find the change process difficult and offer support through the process</p>
<p><b>Age - younger people</b></p>	<p><u>Residents</u></p> <p>Co-location with Youth Services and Children and Families will provide better opportunities for younger people to access housing services</p> <p>Young people may be attracted to the Hub through the range of services for younger people at the library</p>		<p>Joint working with other services at the Hub could lead to an increase in the number of younger people at resident association meetings</p>	

Different groups included in scope	Potential impact on this group/s – positive and negative	Existing data/information including relevant legislation	Potential actions to minimise negative impact and maximise positive impacts	Data or information required
<b>Age - older people</b>	<p><u>Residents</u></p> <p>Older residents may find it more difficult to access the Hub compared to Manor Place.</p> <p>Older people coming to the housing office at the Hub may be encouraged to use the wide range of services and activities on offer at the library</p>		<p>See section on impact on 'all' above for potential action to minimise this impact.</p> <p>Promote the facilities available at the library in communications to residents over the relocation of the Manor Place office</p>	
<b>Religion/Belief inc. faith communities and no belief</b>	<p><u>Residents &amp; staff</u></p> <p>No impact identified</p>			
<b>Sexual Orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual and unsure people)</b>	<p><u>Residents &amp; staff</u></p> <p>No impact identified</p>			

Different groups included in scope	Potential impact on this group/s – positive and negative	Existing data/information including relevant legislation	Potential actions to minimise negative impact and maximise positive impacts	Data or information required
<p><b>Other groups i.e. carers, homeless, (see Social inclusion groups on page 14 of toolkit)</b></p>	<p><u>Residents</u></p> <p>Residents who are carers with children at Whitehawk Primary school may find it easier to access the housing office as the Hub is adjacent to the school</p>		<p>Promote information on local services adjacent to the school/hub in communications to residents over the relocation of the Manor Place office.</p>	

<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Methods used</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
<p>All local resident associations and ward councillors have been advised of the proposal to relocate the Manor Place office to the Whitehawk Hub</p> <p>Consultation with 203 tenants over the proposal</p> <p>Housing Management Consultative Committee</p>	<p>Two meetings in October</p> <p>Sept 2011</p> <p>7 November 2011</p>	<p>Meetings with the Head of Customer Access &amp; Business Improvement</p> <p>Questionnaire carried out in Manor Place reception, local shopping area, the Hub, library and school waiting area</p> <p>Presentation</p>	<p>Concern by some residents over access to the Hub and cash office closure</p> <p>71% of tenants surveyed used the housing office to make payments. 11% had housing enquiries and 15% had other enquiries. A number of residents already used the Whitehawk Hub to visit the Chemist, GP, Library and School.</p> <p>The consultation found 84% of tenants surveyed had a bank account, 55% had access to the internet and 37% had mobility concerns over access to the Hub</p> <p>Resident reps raised issues over cash office closure and access to the building. See draft minutes of the discussion on the presentation</p> <p><a href="http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=3300&amp;T=1">http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=3300&amp;T=1</a></p>

Prioritised and agreed actions	Timescale	Lead Officer	Review date
Details of all residents who use the cash office.	By 31/12/11	Graham Davies	
Review access to the Hub and identify further improvements, if needed.	By 30/11/11	Hilary Edgar	
Select alternative method for laundry payments	By 31/12/11	Martin Booty	
Identify residents who use Manor Place Housing Office with a physical/sensory impairment and offer individual advice and support to adapt to the change in location	By 31/12/11	Graham Davies	
Identify staff who need adaptations to their workstations	By 30/11/11	Graham Davies	
Identify residents who will have particular difficulty in making changes to either paying rent differently or coming to a different location	By 31/12/11	Graham Davies	
Identify staff who may find the change process difficult	By 30/11/11	Graham Davies	

Lead Equality Impact Assessment Officer: Hilary Edgar

Date: November 2011

Departmental Management Team

Date:

Assistant Director:

Date:

Corporate Equalities and Inclusion Team

Date:

(NB: Actions must now be transferred to service or business plans)