

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

3.00pm 4 NOVEMBER 2008

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

**Present:** Councillors Caulfield (Chairman); Allen, Davey, Fryer, Mears, Pidgeon, Simpson (Opposition Spokesperson), Simson and Wells

**Tenant Representatives:** Chris El-Shabba (Brighton East Area Housing Management Panel), Stewart Gover (North & East Area Housing Management Panel), Ted Harman (Brighton East Area Housing Management Panel), Heather Hayes (North & East Area Housing Management Panel), Chris Kift (Central Area Housing Management Panel), Beryl Snelling (Central Area Housing Management Panel), Tina Urquhart (West Hove & Portslade Area Housing Management Panel), Muriel Briault (Leaseholder Action Group), Tom Whiting (Sheltered Housing Action Group), John Melson (High Rise Action Group), Sue Hansen (Tenant Disability Network) and Beverley Weaver (Foredown Estate Residents' Association)

PART ONE

**33. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

**33a Declarations of Substitutes**

3a.1 There were none.

**33b Declarations of Interest**

33b.1 There were none.

**33c. Exclusion of Press and Public**

33c.1 In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 100I (1) of the said Act.

33.4 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

**34. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

34.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September be approved and signed by the Cabinet Member.

**35. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

35.1 The Chairman welcomed Sue Hansen who had been elected to represent the Tenant Disability Network. The Chairman thanked the previous representative, John Stevens for his work.

35.2 The Chairman welcomed Beverley Weaver who had been elected to represent the West Hove & Portslade Area Panel following the retirement of Joan Westmoreland. The Chairman recognised Kay Densley as the deputy representative for the West Area.

35.3 The Chairman reported that all four Area Panels had elected interim representatives to the Local Delivery Vehicle Board. These positions would be ratified or reconsidered by Area Panels in February 2009.

Brighton East -	Ted Harman & Chris El Shabba
North & East -	Heather Hayes & Ian Tinlin
West -	Tina Urquhart & Roy Crowhurst
Central -	Chris Cook & Chris Hadleigh

35.4 A number of representatives had also asked to be trained on the LDV.

35.5 The Chairman had attended a meeting convened by Tenant Representatives the previous week to listen to concerns about increases in the cost of fuel. Particular concerns had been raised about the cost of communal heating and the Leader had instructed the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing to develop an action plan in response.

35.6 The Director of Adult Social Care & Housing explained the actions to be taken (see Appendix A).

35.7 Tenant Representatives congratulated Nick Tew for convening the meeting and thanked the Leader for her swift response.

**36. CALLOVER**

36.1 **RESOLVED** - All items were reserved.

**37. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

37.1 There were none.

**38. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

38.1 There were none.

**39. DEPUTATIONS**

39.1 There were none.

**40. PETITIONS**

40.1 There were none.

**41. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS**

41.1 There were none.

**42. ESTATE SERVICES REVIEW**

42.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing that set out proposals to make changes to the cleaning service in the communal areas of council flats (excluding sheltered accommodation), following recommendations made by the Estates Service Focus Group to the Housing Management Sub Committee on 15 January 2008. The report also included a review of the service charges that residents who live in flats paid for the service (for copy see minute book).

42.2 Members and Representatives welcomed the report and congratulated officers on the comprehensive and detailed consultation that had been undertaken.

42.3 **RESOLVED** - To recommend that the Housing Cabinet Member meeting:

- (1) Note the proposed changes to the cleaning service outlined in the report.
- (2) Approve the proposed service charges for communal cleaning, as shown in Table 1 in paragraph 5.4.3 with effect from 6 April 2009.
- (3) Approve that the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing implements the new charges, but with the power to make any minor amendments which may appear to be appropriate in particular cases.
- (4) Note the proposal to carry out benchmarking of the cleaning service in 2009/10 so that a value for money assessment can be made of the restructured service.

**43. DELIVERY OF SUPPORT SERVICES FOR COUNCIL SHELTERED HOUSING TENANTS**

- 43.1 The Chairman noted that the report would be deferred in recognition of a request from the Sheltered Housing Action Group to be afforded more time to consider the proposals.
- 43.2 In order that the Committee be able to consider any amendments made to the report before the New Year, the Chairman suggested that an additional meeting might be called.
- 43.3 **RESOLVED** – That the report be deferred.

**44. HOUSING PROCUREMENT PROGRESS REPORT - PRESENTATION**

- 44.1 The Committee were made a presentation by the Interim Head of Repairs and Maintenance regarding the progress of the procurement of new longer-term repairs and maintenance contracts (see appendix B).
- 44.2 Representatives of the Asset Management gave a presentation on their input into the procurement process (see appendix C). They reported that the presentation had been well received by the Area Housing Management Panels.
- 44.3 Opposition Members were keen for further opportunities that might enable them to be more involved. The Chairman explained that information would primarily be provided to Members at the Housing Management Consultative Committee, but specific briefings could be made available. The Leader noted that she hoped to develop an open and broader opportunity for Member involvement as the process developed.
- 44.4 Concerns were raised that a single contractor would be able bid for the entire contract. Officers clarified that the contracts could be bid for in various permutations. The Leader noted that the ambition was to provide a better and most cost effective for service for Tenants and that contracts would be monitored closely.
- 44.5 **RESOLVED** – That the presentation be noted.

**45. LOCAL DELIVERY VEHICLE - PRESENTATION**

- 45.1 The Committee were made a presentation by the Head of Housing Strategy and Development & Private Sector Housing regarding the development of the Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV) and its developing board (see appendix D).
- 45.3 Stewart Gover felt that tenants should be provided with a budget to procure their own independent legal advice. He referred to several cases of law that he had researched. The Chairman offered tenants the opportunity to meet with the councils legal advisors should they have any concerns.

45.4 The Committee debated the timescale afforded the process and noted the tight turnaround in electing Board Members. The rapidity of this part of the process was of concern and the Committee sought reassurance from the Chairman that the process was sound and accountable. The Chairman recognised the pace with which the project was developing and appreciated the need to keep the process open and transparent.

45.5 The issue of charitable status in respect of the LDV was debated; the Chairman noted that there would be an opportunity for the board to consider this.

45.6 The meeting debated the potential of conflicts of interest for Board Members. It was noted that any Tenant Representatives who became Board Members would be able to declare interests at specific meetings and withdraw from that meeting if the conflict was considered too great. There was no overarching conflict of interest in being a Board Member and an active Tenant Representative.

45.7 **RESOLVED** – That the presentation be noted.

#### **46. VALUE FOR MONEY REVIEW OF HOUSING SERVICES**

46.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing that provided an overview of the findings of the Value for Money review of Housing Services (for copy see minute book).

46.2 The Chairman requested that a report updating the situation be provided in six months time.

46.3 **RESOLVED** - That the findings of the Value for Money Review of Housing Services, and the value for money action plan, attached as an appendix to the report (Appendix 1) be noted.

#### **47. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT**

47.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing that provided information on current performance within Housing Management services and general policy initiatives underway to improve performance (for copy see minute book).

47.2 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 6.00pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of