

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: EAST AREA

7.00pm 25 JANUARY 2016

BRISTOL ESTATE COMMUNITY HALL

MINUTES

Representatives: Chris El-Shabba (Chair and Robert Lodge Rep), Alan Cooke (Craven Vale), Iain Range (Bristol Estate), Pat McKenna (Manor Farm)

Officers: Becky Purnell (Resident Involvement Manager), John Currell (Property & Investment Team), Therese Youngman (Contract Compliance Manager), Cliff Youngman (Head of Procurement), Ododo Dafe (Head of Income, Involvement and Improvement), Sharon Terry (Resident Involvement Officer), Delia Hills (Mears)

29 APOLOGIES

29.1 Apologies were received from Councillors Mary Mears, Gill Mitchell, Warren Morgan, Maggie Barradell and Mo Marsh, also by Irene Boyce and Doreen Shepherd.

30 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

30.1 Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

31 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

31.1 John Currell requested that a message be passed on to Woodingdean that he is happy to pass on contact details for anyone in need of a survey.

32 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME

32.1 (Item 1 – Major Improvement Works)

32.2 A written response was provided in the blue pages.

32.3 (Item 2 - Reduced Grass Cutting)

32.4 Alan Cooke stated he was pleased with the response and noted the statistic that 6 out of 10 areas had been cut.

32.5 Chris El-Shabba stated that some residents were willing to pay for their own bollard and enquired as the legal position on this.

- 32.6 Becky Purnell confirmed that if it was on Highways and not on Housing then the cost would be £100; applications for bollards through the estate development budget would be viable if it fell within Housing.
- 32.7 Alan Cooke stated that bollards would be of little use and that a more solid surface such as concrete or grasscrete is required. He further noted that Gill Mitchel has taken it up with Highways, however as it does not fall under Housing there is little that can be done.
- 32.8 Ododo Dafe stated the problem is wide spread and not just with Council land. City parks don't want to tarmac everything in order to keep green parts of land for drainage.
- 32.9 Chris El-Shabba suggested talking to Gill Mitchell to follow up.
- 32.10 (Item 3 – Gardening and decoration for over 70's)
- 32.11 Alan Cooke stated Mary Whitner was unaware about decoration service provided to over 70's.
- 32.12 Chris El-Shabba stated she applied in October and praised the response time of the scheme.
- 32.13 Delia Hills outlined the terms of Mears' gardening service, she noted that due to budgetary constraints there may be an issue with the decorating contract.
- 32.14 Chris El-Shabba agreed to pass on the details of the scheme to residents.
- 32.15 (Item 4 – Park Rangers)
- 32.16 Alan Cooke disagreed with the proposals referencing a large petition signed at a meeting previously at Portslade Town Hall. He noted that Gill Mitchell will review the case.
- 32.17 Grant Scott stated concern for the biosphere if Park Ranger numbers were cut.
- 32.18 Janet Gearing expressed concerns over road works taking place by the seafront and the state of the arches.
- 32.19 Chris El-Shabba noted a situation at Robert Lodge where the removal of scaffolding took over a month, all while causing entrance and evacuation issues.
- 32.20 Therese Youngman clarified that legislation around heights can cause issues; she noted that positive work with Mears to streamline processes has helped resolve some issues. Further to this she stated that fines are part of a new system should it take too long for scaffolding to be removed.

33 DRAFT ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 33.1 John Currell, Property & Investment Team, presented the report which covered 115000 dwellings and other asset land held within the HRA. He noted ageing stock at around 2500 built before 1945 presented issues with management and repair. He

clarified the risks that the Housing Revenue Budget is facing such as reform. He also noted that a number of resident consultation meetings have taken place; a prominent view from residents was the request to see investment in existing homes including new stock.

- 33.2 Alan Cooke enquired if the Council is only looking to make 500 over the next 30 years.
- 33.3 John Currell confirmed that this is correct; he noted that it is set at corporate level.
- 33.4 Alan Cooke referred to page 22 and enquired if the Property and Investment Team were considering rebuilding estate during this final period.
- 33.5 John Currell stated that BHCC are looking at an income and expenditure business plan, this allows the viewing of parts of stock or estate and to determine what is negative. He noted by way of example that once a financial loss was identified then consultation with that area on a future vision would be possible, however as such no areas are currently earmarked for anything at the moment.
- 33.6 Alan Cooke requested further clarification on leasehold buy backs.
- 33.7 John Currell stated at the moment there is an opportunity to buy back leasehold housing during lease however they do not exercise that right, because of this another review is being requested to determine if policy should be changed or not.
- 33.8 Grant Scott enquired if Central Government has a large pot of money to renovate areas of deprivation.
- 33.9 John Currell stated that there is a fund of £250 million for further studies in those areas however has no further news on that currently.
- 33.10 Janet Gearing enquired if leaseholders have to pay maintenance and contribute towards the work.
- 33.11 John Currell clarified that the legal process dictates that residents will receive notice of the cost and that they will also pay service charges.
- 33.12 Janet Gearing enquired if leaseholders will have to pay towards works done via EDB money.
- 33.13 Ododo stated that caveats exist as this will be something they don't have to contribute to. She noted that it may be possible that leaseholders may not necessarily be charged on it and that there are exceptions.
- 33.14 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

34 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 34.1 Ododo Dafe; Head of Income, Involvement and Improvement, presented the Q3 report. She stated that due to the timing of Housing Management Area Panels a full report is not yet been available. Once a draft report has been produced it will be forwarded on. She noted that the full report will go to the New Housing and New

Homes Committee. Rent arrears performance has seen improvement on last year and issues surrounding re-routing phone calls will remain until next February.

- 34.2 Chris El-Shabba stated the fraud tenancy team were to be commended on the amount of work they have accomplished.
- 34.3 Iain Ramage stated that the fraud department doesn't work.
- 34.4 Ododo Dafe disagreed stating that evidence shows 7 properties have been brought back.
- 34.5 Janet Gearing enquired to different aspects of the tenancy fraud i.e drug dealing, imprisoned people and whether they will keep their property once having broken the tenancy agreement.
- 34.6 Ododo Dafe stated that each case will be dealt with individually.

35 REVIEW REPORT

- 35.1 Becky Purnell gave a brief overview and presented the report noting that it informs area panels that a review of area enforcement will take place. She stated that it was taken in 2012 and is reviewed every 3 years and due to the current climate of budgets it is timely. She noted that its remit is to enable residents to influence housing, to hold the Council accountable and to promote a better environment. She pointed out that everything in resident involvement will be looked at including everything that sits within the resident involvement budget.
- 35.2 Becky Purnell stated that 1650 people constituted of 1400 people and 250 tenants will form part of the consultation.
- 35.3 Ododo Dafe stated that BHCC want as many people as possible to make it easy for involvement.
- 35.4 Becky Purnell stated that there will be a final report going to the December round of area panels in time for the Housing Committee in January and noted that a wider consultation on the budget in September next year was mentioned at the recent New Homes Committee.
- 35.5 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted

36 CITY WIDE REPORTS

- 36.1 **AGREED** – to note the report.

37 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 37.1 Janet Gearing enquired if there was any way for people to receive new locks due to a violent crime that took place the previous week.
- 37.2 John Currell stated that he could raise a query with the team that oversees the door handle program and provide a response to the next meeting.

37.3 Becky Purnell stated that there are 5 Housing and New Homes Committee meetings this year and that the feedback from the resident's resources centre is that BHCC should look at the timing of area panels; she proposed moving the January panel to March for the 2017-2018 cycle.

37.4 Members agreed.

The meeting concluded at 20:30pm

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Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

