



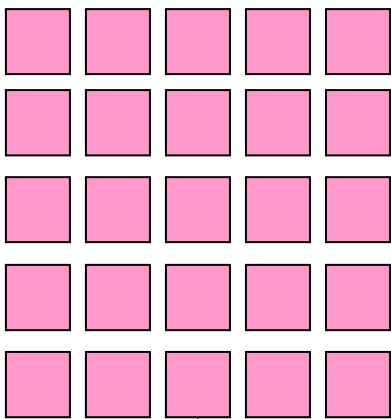
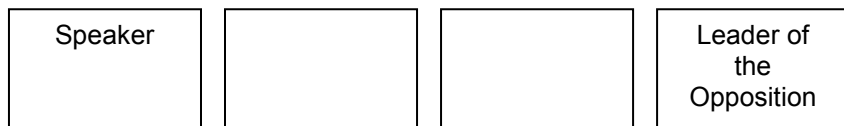
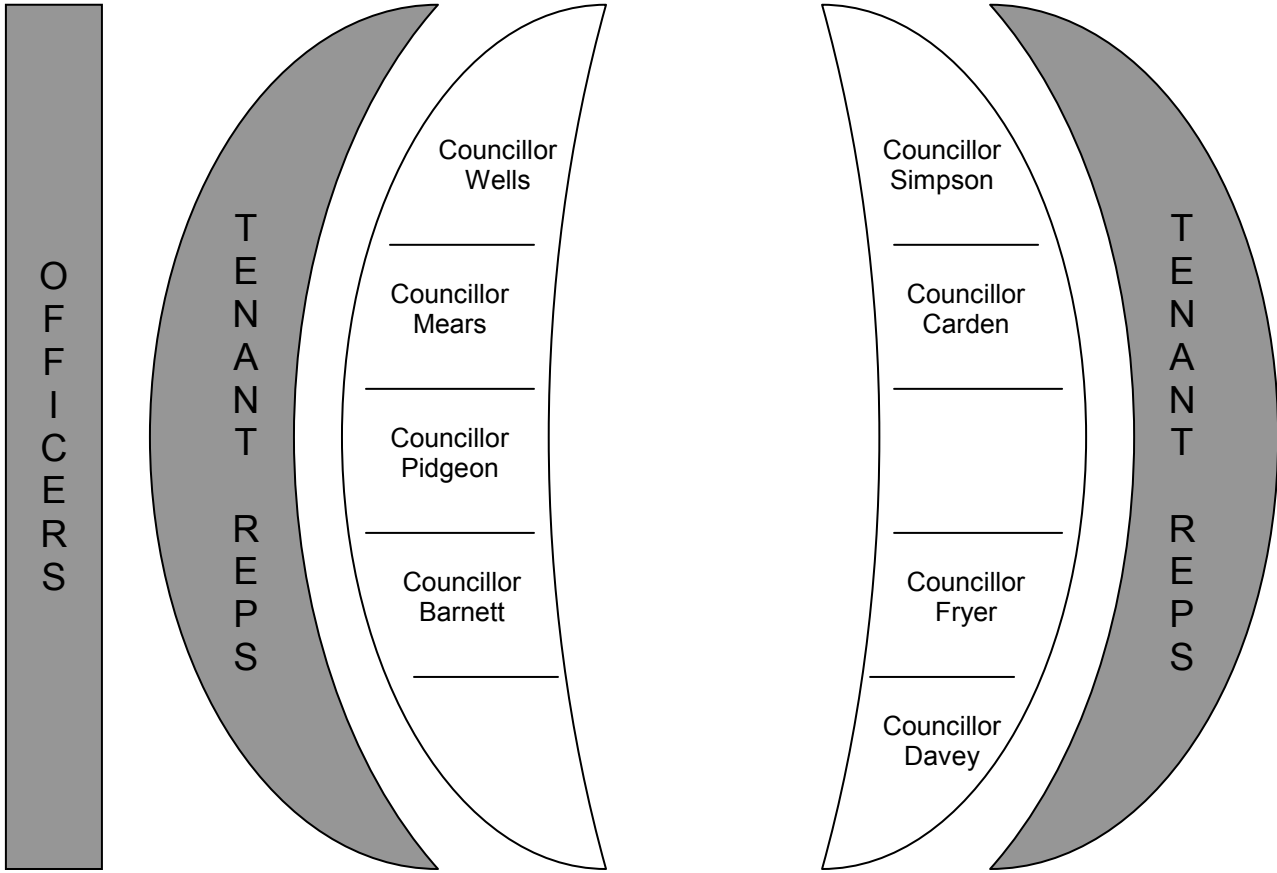
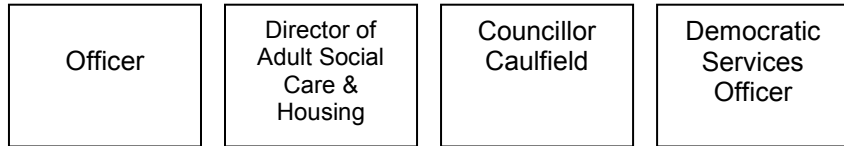
**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

Housing Management Consultative Committee

Title:	Housing Management Consultative Committee
Date:	7 December 2009
Time:	3.00pm
Venue:	Council Chamber, Hove Town Hall
Members:	Councillors: Caulfield (Chairman), Barnett, Carden, Davey, Fryer, Mears, Pidgeon, Simpson (Opposition Spokesperson) and Wells
Contact:	Caroline De Marco Democratic Services Officer 01273 291063 caroline.demarco@brighton-hove.gov.uk

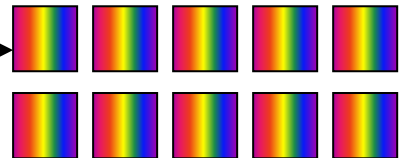
	The Town Hall has facilities for wheelchair users, including lifts and toilets
	An Induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter and infra red hearing aids are available for use during the meeting. If you require any further information or assistance, please contact the receptionist on arrival.
	FIRE / EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE If the fire alarm sounds continuously, or if you are instructed to do so, you must leave the building by the nearest available exit. You will be directed to the nearest exit by council staff. It is vital that you follow their instructions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You should proceed calmly; do not run and do not use the lifts;• Do not stop to collect personal belongings;• Once you are outside, please do not wait immediately next to the building, but move some distance away and await further instructions; and• Do not re-enter the building until told that it is safe to do so.

Democratic Services: Meeting Layout



Public Seating

Members in Attendance



Press



Tenant Representatives:

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

Pat Miles, West Hove & Portslade Area Housing Management Panel

David Murtagh, Brighton East Area Housing Management Panel

Beryl Snelling, Central Area Housing Management Panel

Beverley Weaver, West Hove & Portslade Area Housing Management Panel

Muriel Briault, Leaseholder Action Group

Tom Whiting, Sheltered Housing Action Group

Colin Carden, Older People's Council

John Melson, Hi Rise Action Group

Barry Kent, Tenant Disability Network

AGENDA

35. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

- (a) Declaration of Substitutes - Where Councillors are unable to attend a meeting, a substitute Member from the same Political Group may attend, speak and vote in their place for that meeting.
- (b) Declarations of Interest by all Members present of any personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Members regard the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.
- (c) Exclusion of Press and Public - To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

NOTE: Any item appearing in Part 2 of the Agenda states in its heading either that it is confidential or the category under which the information disclosed in the report is exempt from disclosure and therefore not available to the public.

A list and description of the categories of exempt information is available for public inspection at Brighton and Hove Town Halls.

36. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1 - 18

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2009 (copy attached).

37. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

38. CALLOVER

39. PETITIONS

No petitions have been received by the date of publication.

40. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

(The closing date for receipt of public questions is 12 noon on 30 November 2009)

No public questions have been received by the date of publication.

41. DEPUTATIONS

(The closing date for receipt of deputations is 12 noon on 30 November

2009)

No deputations have been received by the date of publication.

42. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

No letters have been received.

43. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

No written questions have been received.

44. LOCAL DELIVERY VEHICLE - PRESENTATION

45. OUT OF HOURS SERVICE IN SHELTERED HOUSING

19 - 34

Report of Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: Peter Huntbach Tel: 01273 293255
Ward Affected: All Wards;

46. TENANCY AGREEMENT REVIEW

35 - 68

Report of Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: Diane Freeland Tel: (01273) 293841
Ward Affected: All Wards;

47. HOUSING MANAGEMENT SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

69 - 80

Report of Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: Diane Freeland Tel: (01273) 293841
Ward Affected: All Wards;

48. IMPROVING ACCESS TO HOUSING ADAPTATIONS

81 - 94

Report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: Martin Reid Tel: 29-3321
Ward Affected: All Wards;

49. WHEN A SOLE COUNCIL TENANT REQUESTS A JOINT TENANCY

95 - 100

Report of Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: Helen Clarkmead Tel: 293350
Ward Affected: All Wards;

50. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN - BLOCKS FOR PEOPLE AGED 50 OR OLDER

101 - 104

Report of Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: Helen Clarkmead Tel: 293350
Ward Affected: All Wards;

51. LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN - BUNGALOWS IN LOCKWOOD AND KIPLING AVENUE, WOODINGDEAN 105 - 108

Report of Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: Helen Clarkmead Tel: 293350
Ward Affected: Woodingdean;

52. WHEN A TENANT DIES - CUSTOMER CARE, SUCCESSION AND PEOPLE LEFT IN OCCUPATION 109 - 112

Report of Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: Helen Clarkmead Tel: 293350
Ward Affected: All Wards;

53. NEW REPAIRS PARTNERSHIP PROGRESS REPORT - PRESENTATION

54. THREE YEAR CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Presentation by Head of Financial Services and Head of Repairs and Maintenance.

55. TENANT SERVICES AUTHORITY CONSULTATION ON NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR REGULATING THE COUNCIL'S LANDLORD SERVICES 113 - 122

Report of Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: Carol Jenkins Tel: 29-3832
Ward Affected: All Wards;

56. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT (QUARTER 2) 123 - 136

Report of Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: John Austin-Locke Tel: 29-1008
Ward Affected: All Wards;

57. ENERGY EFFICIENCY WORKING GROUP 137 - 142

Report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: Ododo Dafe Tel: 29-3201
Ward Affected: All Wards;

The City Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public. Provision is also made on the agendas for public questions to committees and details of how questions can be raised can be found on the website and/or on agendas for the meetings.

The closing date for receipt of public questions and deputations for the next meeting is 12 noon on the fifth working day before the meeting.

Agendas and minutes are published on the council's website www.brighton-hove.gov.uk. Agendas are available to view five working days prior to the meeting date.

Meeting papers can be provided, on request, in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or on disc, or translated into any other language as requested.

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Caroline De Marco, (01273 291063, email caroline.demarco@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Date of Publication - Friday, 27 November 2009

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 36

Brighton & Hove City Council

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

3.00pm 12 OCTOBER 2009

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Caulfield (Chairman); Carden, Davey, Oxley, Randall, Simpson (Opposition Spokesperson), Simson and Wells

Tenant Representatives: 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), Pat Miles (West Hove & Portslade Area Housing Management Panel), David Murtagh (Brighton East Area Housing Management Panel), Beryl Snelling (Central Area Housing Management Panel), Beverley Weaver (West Hove & Portslade Area Housing Management Panel), Muriel Briault (Leaseholder Action Group), Tom Whiting (Sheltered Housing Action Group), John Melson (Hi Rise Action Group) and Barry Kent (Tenant Disability Network)

In attendance: Faith Matyszak and Linda King.

PART ONE

16. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

16A Declarations of Substitute Members

- 16.1 Councillor Simson substituted for Councillor Mary Mears. Councillor Brian Oxley substituted for Councillor Pidgeon. Councillor Randall substituted for Councillor Fryer.
- 16.2 Jean Davis informed the Committee that she was in attendance to support Beryl Snelling.

16B Declarations of Interests

- 16.3 Councillors Randall, Simpson and Wells, Ted Harman and Heather Hayes declared a personal interest in agenda item 25 as they are Board Members of Brighton and Hove Seaside Community Homes (the Local Delivery Vehicle).

16C Exclusion of the Press and Public

- 16.4 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.
- 16.5 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

17. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 17.1 John Melson referred to paragraph 10.4. His main point had been that the scaffolders on site were using racist and homophobic language and that the council had taken strong affirmative action which had led to the dismissal of a worker.
- 17.2 The Interim Head of Repairs reported that he had met with the Managing Director of the scaffolding firm who had dismissed a member of staff as a result of the incident. He had been assured that there would be no re-occurrence of this behaviour.
- 17.3 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2009 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

18. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 18.1 The Chairman reported that it had been confirmed at full Council that there was £14 million in the budget for repairs. Next year there would be a full budget for kitchens and bathrooms. It was not true that the council had run out of money for repairs.

19. CALLOVER

- 19.1 The Chairman asked the Committee to consider which items listed on the agenda it wished to debate and determine in full.
- 19.2 **RESOLVED** - That item numbers 25, 28, 31, 32 and 34 be reserved for debate and determination.

20. PETITIONS

- 20.1 The Chairman noted that no petitions had been submitted for the meeting.

21. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 21.1 John Melson had submitted the following question.

Surrender of Secure Tenancies as a condition of Addiction Rehabilitation

“A concern is raised by the above policy.

Once the Rehabilitation and Aftercare course is completed successfully why aren't the clients passported seamlessly to a new Secure Tenancy at the end of the process without the need to go through Homemove?

The security engendered by a Secure Tenancy may be a major factor in a client's ability to undertake the rehabilitation process successfully and to undermine that by putting them back into Temporary accommodation may be a contributory cause of relapse into the former, or alternative, addiction.

It appears to be a negative approach to pursue such a policy, with a potential for wastage of the time and funding already invested in the client and a potential for future loss of the client, the funding and the time involved.

Can this matter be brought as an Agenda item for discussion to HMCC please?"

21.2 The Cabinet Member gave the following response:

Policy where a secure council tenant relinquishes their tenancy to enter residential rehabilitation.

"Clarification has been requested in respect of the council's policy where a secure tenant surrenders their tenancy in order to enter residential rehabilitation treatment.

An enquiry has been received suggesting that, once the Rehabilitation and Aftercare course is completed successfully, former secure tenants be allocated a secure tenancy without the need to go through the Allocations Policy.

It has been suggested that, in requiring the recovered addict to use the choice based lettings scheme, and possibly move to temporary accommodation whilst waiting for a bid to be successful, may deter tenants from seeking residential rehabilitation treatment. It is further suggested that treatment may be undermined by an unsettled period in temporary accommodation that may be a contributory cause of relapse into the former, or alternative, addiction.

The enquirer suggested that they feel the council's current policy is negative, with a potential risk to the time and funding already invested in the former tenant.

Legal Position

Under Section 167 (8) of the Housing Act 1996, the Council is prohibited from allocating accommodation unless it is in accordance with its allocation policy. All accommodation therefore has to be allocated as per policy and we are not legally able to take properties out of Choice Based Lettings and allocate them outside of policy.

The council's allocation policy does address the issue of tenants surrendering their tenancy to undergo rehabilitation with the expectation of rehousing on completion of the programme:

Such former tenants attract priority band B;

- *Ex-tenants returning from institutions e.g.: rehabilitation - where a prior commitment has been made in order to secure the relinquishment of a council or HA tenancy on entering the institution.*

Background

The current position in relation to issue of tenants requiring rehabilitation and after care for Substance Misuse issues is a complex one for the individual, the Council and often local residents. As the Council is unable to fetter its discretion (i.e. have a blanket policy) this issue is normally dealt with on a case by case basis to suit the individual needs of those involved. Rehabilitation is not exclusively addiction related – a tenant may need residential rehabilitation after, for example, a stroke or back injury.

Rehabilitation and after care services are provided in the City by a number of agencies in both the voluntary and statutory sectors. Rehabilitation or 'Detox' as it is often informally referred to can be provided in either a community, residential or hospital setting and this is determined by professionals based upon their assessment of individual need.

Each of the routes to these settings is different and are governed by the assessment process of the provider and none of these referral routes insist on the surrender of a tenancy for treatment to be provided.

A consideration on the surrender of a tenancy may occur in a number of circumstances and normally fall into the following categories.

- Housing Benefit payment
- Anti Social Behaviour either by the tenant influenced by their addiction, and the need for the tenant to have a 'fresh start'
- The need to move away from former associates
- After care issues if the property does not meet the tenant's housing needs.
- Making best use of the council's stock; in an area of high unmet housing need, it is not desirable for flats to remain empty for long periods whilst the tenant is away for rehabilitation.

Housing Benefit entitlement is often an issue for people entering into rehabilitation services. In general there are rules that allow a person to claim housing benefit if they are away from their home in specific reasons. Someone entering rehabilitation in a hospital setting, and where there is no charge to pay for the rehabilitation, would normally be entitled to payment for a period of 52 weeks.

For those individuals that are entering into a residential setting that is not as a hospital inpatient, provided by a voluntary sector organisation such as Brighton Housing Trust (BHT) or the Crime Reduction Initiative (CRI) or someone placed in an after care setting there is a requirement of the person to pay rent for their stay in this accommodation and as such different rules apply. If a person holds a tenancy they can only claim under the "Two homes rule" and this rule unfortunately does not cover periods that a person needs to be in rehabilitation setting for the purpose of detoxification. Even if a person were to be covered under this rule there are time limits that would not cover the sometimes

extended periods that a person needs to be in the residential or aftercare setting. In these circumstances, it is often beneficial for the tenant to surrender the tenancy to ensure that rent arrears do not build up on the tenancy and thus leading to action by the Council to end the tenancy and making it difficult for the person to become a tenant in the future.

It is however often the case, but not always, that the lifestyle of the individual is chaotic and can involve other tenancy related issues such as rent arrears or anti social behaviour towards other residents in the locality. A person with substance misuse is often known to the Council because of anti social behaviour from their tenancy and in these cases the professionals involved will seek resolution to the issues and will seek a solution that will benefit the tenant and other residents. This solution can often be in the agreed surrender of the person's tenancy so that they are able to move into rehabilitation and aftercare services and this can often lead to a person accessing supported accommodation.

It is not always suitable, or desirable for a person to return to their former home. This may be because of previous anti social behaviour or that they need additional support. The environment may have contributed to developing substance misuse in the first instance, locality, isolation or harassment being a few possible factors. In these circumstances, it is either necessary or advisable for the tenant to surrender their tenancy.

It should be stressed that a tenant is always advised to seek an independent legal advice before this step is taken."

21.3 Mr Melson commented that he was happy with the above reply.

21.4 Tom Whiting had had submitted the following question.

This is a question to the Housing Management Consultative Committee concerning a further provision to Agenda item 13 of 22nd June 2009, *Local Lettings Plan for Sheltered Housing*, at clause 3.5 "*Prevention of Anti-Social Behaviour, Risk management and Meeting Support Needs in Sheltered Housing*".

The kind of difficulties that have been identified regarding existing Sheltered tenants or tenants newly arrived are not addressed by the regulation referred to above. This will continue to cause grave problems unless addressed at a policy level. In the absence of such prescribed procedures, expediency can lead to inappropriate decisions that cause problems to the sheltered scheme community as a whole while also failing to address the core of the issue for individuals who have developing or recurrent difficulties.

"We are now asking if additional wording can be included in the regulation to read:

Where the inability to meet support needs of any kind poses a risk to the health, safety, security and welfare of other residents, positive action should be taken to re-house individuals concerned more appropriately?"

21.5 The Cabinet Member gave the following response:

Sheltered tenants with high support needs

“The new pre assessment process will help ensure people moving to sheltered housing for the first time do not have support needs that cannot be met within a sheltered housing setting.

However, people’s support needs do change over time. There are some existing tenants with high support needs whose behaviour sometimes disturbs other residents.

Where this behaviour may be viewed as eccentric but does not pose a risk to residents, the Scheme Manager will work with the tenant in order to help give them insight into how they are perceived by others, and with their neighbours to offer reassurance.

Within a sheltered housing environment, it is inevitable that some residents will develop dementia. Some people experience mental health problems which may cause behaviour that worries neighbours and can create safety risks within a scheme.

Sheltered housing is funded as supported housing, and as such we expect to provide a certain degree of support for residents. Some people require very little support, whilst other people have very complex needs. An individual’s support needs change over time, and in most instances we are able to arrange care packages to accommodate this within the scheme.

The Assistant Director of Adult Social Care, Karin Divall, is very positive about improving links with sheltered housing and states:

"In Adult Social Care, our experience is that relatively few people living in sheltered housing have care provided through our services, and we would like to see more people supported effectively by social care so that they can remain living in their own home rather than have to move on to residential care. This fits well with Personalisation and the changes we are making within Adult Social Care.

In particular it would be good to see staff in housing services referring people via our Access Point into our reablement services which work intensively with people for up to six weeks in order to improve their independence. This can include people whose needs have increased, who have had a crisis, a spell in hospital or suffered bereavement.

Extra Care Housing also provides an increased level of care and support which provides a level of independence to people who would otherwise need to go into residential care. We are currently working with colleagues in housing to include Extra Care Housing within the Choice Based Lettings framework."

An important part of scheme manager role is to assess a resident’s support needs and to ensure that they have a personalised support plan that sets out how these needs will be addressed. This is reviewed at least annually and sooner if an older person’s needs change, for example, if they suffer a major life change such as a family bereavement or serious illness.

Where appropriate, the scheme manager’s assessment and support planning process is undertaken in co-operation with other key agencies such as adult social care and health. This ensures a more joined-up and holistic approach to a resident’s support, especially important where they have (or develop) higher or more complex support needs. As well

as a personalised support plan, each sheltered resident should have a 'personal record' in which these important records from different care and support agencies can be saved. The support planning process enables older people in sheltered housing to live independently.

Of course, for some residents, their needs will be such that sheltered housing can no longer meet all their needs and our scheme managers work closely with other agencies to ensure that they do move-on to appropriate accommodation. In 2008/9 102 residents left the council's sheltered housing schemes – 8 of those moved to a different supported housing service, 16 moved to a nursing/care home and 2 left for long term hospital/hospice care.”

21.6 Ted Harman asked the following question.

“At Robert Lodge, residents who are already in situ are already over 50 + and mostly are considerate of not creating noise nuisance, and would like to know what the council is prepared to do to ensure that they are not disturbed by noise from younger tenants. Is there likely to be insulation against noise done to prevent this? Is the tenancy agreement going to be strongly upheld by Housing Officers?”

21.7 The Cabinet Member informed Mr Harman that this matter could be discussed under item 32, in the meantime she asked the Interim Head of Repairs to comment.

21.8 The Interim Head of Repairs reported that there were several things that could be done. The property could be surveyed to see where noise was coming from. A decision could then be taken about what action to take. There was a five year rolling programme, and noise insulation could be included in the programme.

21.9 The Assistant Director, Housing Management reported that in terms of tenancy agreements, part of the Turning the Tide pilot was about enforcement and support. He suggested that Robert Lodge be used as a case study in relation to noise nuisance.

21.10 Councillor Simpson mentioned that she had raised the problem of noise in flats due to a lack of sound insulation at the last Housing Cabinet Member Meeting. She suggested that the Committee received a report on this issue at a future meeting.

21.11 The Chairman confirmed that a report would be submitted to the next meeting.

21.12 Stewart Gover asked if the Chairman had received his letter regarding Ainsworth House. The Chairman replied that she had not received it but would ensure Mr Gover received a written response. The Assistant Director Housing Management explained that four residents were left in Ainsworth House. Some were waiting to go to new properties and others were waiting to bid.

21.13 The Chairman asked new members to write to her or the Democratic Services Officer if they had questions to ask at future meetings.

22. DEPUTATIONS

22.1 The Chairman noted that no deputations had been submitted for the meeting.

23. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

23.1 The Chairman noted that no letters from councillors had been submitted for the meeting.

24. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

24.1 The Chairman noted that no written questions from councillors had been submitted for the meeting.

25. USE OF GENERAL CONSENTS TO LEASE PROPERTIES TO BRIGHTON & HOVE SEASIDE COMMUNITIES HOMES

25.1 The Committee considered an extract of the proceedings of the Cabinet held on 17 September 2009 and a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (for copy see minute book). Cabinet had agreed to consultation with the Housing Management Consultative Committee and the Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes on exploring the potential use of an alternative means of achieving consent to lease up to 499 empty Housing Revenue Account properties from Brighton & Hove City Council to Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes.

25.2 The Committee received a presentation with slides from the Head of Housing Strategy and Development and Private Sector Housing.

25.3 John Melson queried why leaseback was being considered. The Head of Housing Strategy and Development and Private Sector Housing explained that it was a way of maximising income, by using different housing benefit mechanisms. It did not affect nominees.

25.4 Councillor Davey asked if all 499 properties would be allocated to people with special needs. He was informed that the properties would be allocated to temporary accommodation tenants. The term special needs was broad and covered people the council needed to house. Many had special medical needs or drug or alcohol problems.

25.5 Stewart Gover informed the Committee that he was totally in favour of the project. The housing being renovated by the LDV was in a dilapidated state and would be worth more when the work was finished. He asked if leaseback took account of the additional value. The Chairman replied that some empty voids were marked for the housing company and this issue would be carefully considered. The LDV was a way of maximising property.

25.6 Councillor Oxley referred to the letter sent to the Department for Communities & Local Government dated 25 June 2009. He asked if the measures set out in the paragraph on Tackling Worklessness would still be in place. The Director of Adult Social Care & Housing confirmed that these measures were still in place.

25.7 John Melson asked if 25% was too high a figure for getting people back to work. This would have a knock on effect. The Assistant Director Housing Management replied that reforms to Local Letting Plans were agreed at the last Housing Management

Consultative Committee. A small number of households had come forward. 25% was not too high. The Chairman reported that an advert was placed in HomeLink magazine last week. The results would be brought back to HMCC.

- 25.8 Beryl Snelling asked if it was known who would loan money for projects. The Chairman replied that a major high street bank was interested and the council was waiting for consent.
- 25.9 The Chairman explained that the reason that the report was before the Committee was to obtain a general feeling from tenants that they were happy to proceed as suggested. If plan A was unable to proceed, would tenants be happy too proceed with Plan B?
- 25.10 The Committee took an indicative vote on the recommendations and there was unanimous support for the proposals outlined in the report.
- 25.11 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the Committee unanimously support the use of general consent A54.1 of the General Housing Consents 2005 to lease to Brighton and Hove Seaside Community Homes the 106 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings approved for leasing by Full Council on 9 October 2008 and such other Housing Revenue Account dwellings (up to a maximum of 499 in total, including the 106 properties) within a five year period that satisfy the criteria previously agreed by Cabinet and Council.
- (2) That the delegation of power by Cabinet and Council (24 September 2008 & 9 October 2008 respectively) to make decisions on the inclusion of individual properties to the Director of Adult Social Care and Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, be noted.
- (3) That it is noted that Cabinet agreed that the powers already delegated are confirmed and, for the avoidance of doubt, the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, have been authorised to take all steps necessary, incidental or conducive, to the achievement and implementation of the proposals in resolution (1) above.
- (4) That it is noted that Cabinet agreed that the issue regarding funding options and any decision associated with that remain delegated to the Cabinet Committee consisting of the Leader, the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Cabinet Member for Finance.

26. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2008/09 FINAL OUTTURN AND FORECAST OUTTURN FOR 2008/09 AS AT MONTH 4

- 26.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing which informed the meeting of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 2008/09 final outturn and the forecast outturn for 2009/10 as at month 4 (copy attached).
- 26.2 **RESOLVED** – (1) That it be noted that the final outturn for the HRA for 2008/09 was an underspending of £0.445 million compared to the budgeted deficit of £0.250 million. This represents a variance of 0.95% of the gross revenue budget of £47 million.

General HRA revenue reserves have reduced by £1.747 million to £3.902 million as at 31 March 2009.

- (2) That it is noted that the forecast position for 2009/10 as at Month 4, is an overspend of £0.089 million.

27. HOUSING STRATEGY 2009-2014: HEALTHY HOMES, HEALTHY LIVES, HEALTHY CITY

27.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing which summarised the development of the city's LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans) communities and sought the endorsement of the strategies (for copy see minute book).

27.2 **RESOLVED** – That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Housing Management Consultative Committee recommend to Cabinet that:

- (1) That the Housing Strategy 2009-2014; healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city and related sub-strategies, the Older People's Housing Strategy 2009-2014 and the LGBT People's Housing Strategy 2009-2014 be endorsed.
- (2) That the extensive good practice and stakeholder engagement demonstrated during the development of these strategies be recognised.
- (3) That it be recognised that minor changes may be made to these strategies during their approval process to ensure they reflect the latest national and local strategic context. Significant changes would require Director approval.

28. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE REVIEW

28.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing which proposed a review of the current grounds maintenance arrangements with the aim of creating quality spaces in which people want to live and could be proud, and which others would respect (for copy see minute book). It was proposed to work with the Estate Service Monitoring Group to bring recommendations on future delivery of the grounds maintenance service on housing management land.

28.2 The Housing Manager informed the Committee that the council was looking for increased value for money and was keen to establish a working group within the next few months. The Chairman explained that as the review was progressing, suggestions would be welcome.

28.3 John Melson suggested that the working group could tour sites and carry out an audit of what was required by each block. This audit would be carried out in conjunction with the Estate Service Monitoring Group. The Housing Manager agreed that this suggestion would be essential. This would make the review very local and enable residents to have their say on the maintenance of gardens.

28.4 Councillor Davey liked the idea of growing fruit and having allotments. He stressed the need for dedicated tenant engagement.

- 28.5 Chris Kift informed the Committee that many tenants wanted to tend their patches of ground. It was important that these areas of land remained. The Chairman suggested that a map was needed which showed who tended which particular areas of land. If a tenant group wanted to take over an area of land they could be rewarded in some way.
- 28.6 Councillor Simpson welcomed the review, especially looking at areas not covered by the current contract. She referred to the scheme termed as “conservation”. She was concerned that “conservation” areas were often left to become areas of long grass and undergrowth. They became depositors of rubbish, with fly tipping dumped. This aspect needed investigation.
- 28.7 Councillor Simson made the point that some houses had been sold under the right to buy. There was a need to include the areas around those houses. The Chairman reported that if tenants took over some areas of land then the areas around the houses bought under right to buy could be included as well.
- 28.8 The Housing Manager reported that it was proposed to widen the review to include tenants associations.
- 28.9 Ted Harman asked if tree maintenance would be included in the review. The Housing Manager referred to paragraph 5.1 of the report. There was a separate budget for tree maintenance. This work could be investigated and prioritised.
- 28.10 John Melson made the point that there was a need to investigate which parks were on housing owned land and which parks were the responsibility of City Parks. The Chairman concurred.
- 28.11 Chris Kift stressed the importance of every tree in Central Area. They needed to be protected and maintained.
- 28.12 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the proposal to carry out a review of the current grounds maintenance arrangements be endorsed.
- (2) That the proposal for the Estate Service Monitoring Group to undertake this work with officers be endorsed.

29. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT (QUARTER 1)

- 29.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing which presented the quarter one report for Housing Management Performance for the year 2009-2010 (for copy see minute book). The report continued the new style of presentation and comparative benchmarking outlined in the end of year report presented previously to Housing Management Consultative Committee.
- 29.2 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

30. HOUSING MANAGEMENT CUSTOMER ACCESS REVIEW

- 30.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing concerning the review of customer access arrangements for the Housing Management Service (for copy see minute book). The Housing Management division provided a range of services to the residents of council managed properties in Brighton & Hove. Customers currently accessed services through a number of different channels and through a range of teams. Reviewing customer access and developing a strategy for the future was a key project in the Housing Management Improvement Programme 2009-2012.
- 30.2 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the customer access review work to date be noted and the next steps be agreed.
- (2) That the resident involvement in the Customer Access Review be approved as detailed in paragraph 4.1 and 4.2 of the report.

31. PROCUREMENT OF CONTRACT FOR THE MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE OF LAUNDRY FACILITIES FOR COUNCIL MANAGED HOMES

- 31.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing which explained that a procurement process had been entered into whereby tenders were sought from service providers in relation to a contract for the management & maintenance of laundries facilities in both sheltered and non-sheltered housing (for copy see minute book). Following an evaluation of the tenders received, it was proposed that a contract be entered into with the preferred supplier, PHS Laundryserv, for a period of five years, starting 31 December 2009, with a possible extension of two years.
- 31.2 The Chairman thanked Faith Matyszak and Linda King for their hard work in their involvement with the Laundry Group. They were invited to give a presentation to the Committee.
- 31.3 John Melson asked if there would be an automatic locking system at night. Linda King explained that there could be automatic locking and unlocking with a SmartCard.
- 31.4 Chris Kift agreed that SmartCards worked well and were secure. There were some laundries where the entrance was outside the block and SmartCards worked well there. However, there would be an issue where the entrance was inside the block. Meanwhile, the new machines would cost £3.50 to use. Mr Kift stressed that people often only washed small loads.
- 31.5 Faith Matyszak explained that the cost of using the new machines would be £2.50 for a wash and £1 for use of the dryer. Costs had been kept down as much as possible.
- 31.6 The Assistant Director, Housing Management agreed that SmartCards were an option that would be investigated in consultation with tenants in local areas. There would be flexibility in areas such as St James's House. Sheltered housing tenants would pay through a service charge. This cost would be covered by housing benefit in the majority of cases.

- 31.7 Beryl Snelling said she was disappointed that sheltered housing tenants would not be paying for the service on a pay as you go basis. She stressed that there was a lot of misuse of launderettes in sheltered housing. Some people allowed their relatives to use the machines.
- 31.8 The Assistant Director, Housing Management replied that the misuse of launderettes would be investigated.
- 31.9 Tom Whiting stressed that the misuse of launderettes was only 2% maximum, and the scheme manager was usually made aware of the problem. He suggested that a range of sizes of machines should be considered.
- 31.10 Steward Gover raised the issue of security. People who lived in the blocks had access. There was need to consider outside access. He suggested that payment for the laundry could be by pay point. Linda King replied that pay point could be used for payment .
- 31.11 Councillor Davey asked how water and electricity were paid for in non sheltered housing. He asked if the council paid for these charges. The Head of Financial Services replied that all water and electricity charges were paid by the Housing Revenue Account budget.
- 31.12 The Chairman reported that with regard to water meters in blocks, Councillor Mary Mears had held a meeting with Southern Water last week and raised tenant's concerns. As a result, 2 people from Southern Water would attend the next Energy Efficiency Working Group.
- 31.13 **RESOLVED** – That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Housing Management Consultative Committee recommend to the Cabinet Member for Housing that:
- (1) That the tender submitted by PHS Laundryserv for the management & maintenance of laundry facilities for sheltered and non-sheltered housing be accepted.
 - (2) That the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing be authorised to amend the service charges for sheltered housing to reflect the new laundry service from 31 December 2009.

32. LOCAL LETTINGS PLANS - LETTINGS RESTRICTED TO PERSONS OVER 50 YEARS OF AGE & BUNGALOWS

- 32.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing which explained that the council had to regularly review, and formally adopt Local Lettings Plans in order to be legally compliant and ensure that the plans met the council's stated objectives. All Local Lettings arrangements currently practiced by Brighton & Hove city Council in respect of its permanent council housing stock were reviewed to assure legal compliance and alignment with current policy objectives. Current arrangements were reviewed, and new proposals considered. There had been extensive stakeholder consultation, the outcome of which was included in the report. The council currently operated a practice of letting flats in some blocks only to people aged fifty or older. The council's current practice was not conversant with the legislative

requirements in terms of justifying the need or review. Some practices were not compliant with current equalities requirements (for copy see minutes book).

- 32.2 Councillor Dee Simson welcomed the report but asked if consideration could be given to an amendment in relation to 6 bungalows in Woodingdean, near Irelands Lodge. These bungalows had always catered for retired people. They would not be protected by this policy. She suggested the amendment as follows: 'That six bungalows near Irelands Lodge in Woodingdean be let to people over 60 years of age which will release family accommodation'. Councillor Simson considered the bungalows to be a valuable resource and this amendment would preserve a community of vulnerable people. Councillor Wells concurred with this proposal.
- 32.3 Councillor Simpson asked if the change in designation for bungalows included bungalows termed as sheltered accommodation in Ditchling Gardens.
- 32.4 The Head of Housing Management (North & East) explained that Ditchling Gardens was a designated sheltered scheme and was exempt from any of the proposals in the report. The bungalows in Woodingdean were not attached to Irelands Lodge, but there was historically a close connection. A clause could be added that covered the 6 bungalows. However, it could be open to challenge if someone had needs and was excluded purely because they were under 60.
- 32.5 The Director of Adult Social Care & Housing suggested that officers worked on an equalities impact assessment on the proposed amendment.
- 32.6 John Melson disagreed with the amendment and stressed that people needed a home whatever age they were. He suggested that introductory tenancies were given for longer periods. He was against local letting plans. The Chairman replied that the report had been produced as tenants had requested over 50's blocks. Other tenants did not want to move to sheltered blocks. The proposals would make family housing available and would be reviewed in December.
- 32.7 Chris Kift made the point that 'Right to Buy' would have a negative effect on Local Lettings Plans for the over 50's. In one block 30 flats had been bought. He could not see the point of over 50's blocks. Beryl Snelling concurred these comments.
- 32.8 Councillor Oxley supported the recommendations and made the point that when Right to Buy was introduced, not many flats were sold. He stressed that the request for some blocks to be included in the proposals had come from the tenants. He asked when consultation would commence and who would be consulted. The Head of Housing Management (North & East) explained that the consultation would be with tenants, homeseekers, councillors, community interest groups and user groups. Consultation would be commenced quickly and the results would be reported to the December HMCC.
- 32.9 Beverley Weaver informed the Committee that she had moved into a bungalow 9 years ago. Neighbours had submitted a petition of objection as she was under 50. She stressed that people had to live somewhere. Meanwhile, when allocating properties there should be consideration as to whether people were well enough to cope.

32.10 The Chairman summed up by stating that in addition to the recommendations officers would investigate whether the six bungalows near Irelands Lodge in Woodingdean could be let to people over 60 years of age which will release family accommodation.

32.11 **RESOLVED** – That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Housing Management Consultative Committee recommend to the Cabinet Member for Housing that:

- (1) That the restrictions limiting letting flats in Livingstone House, Philip Court, Ardingly Court, Nettleton Court, Dudeney Lodge and Hampshire Court to people aged over 50 years is confirmed as council policy and adopted as a Local Lettings Plan. That this excludes adapted and mobility standard property which, in the interest of disability equality, is available to people of any age with that specific need. That this is reviewed in 2012.
- (2) That flats in Robert Lodge are offered with priority to people over 50, but in the event of there being no eligible bidders of that age, may be let to younger tenants.
- (3) That bungalows meeting the council's housing mobility standards will be available to people of any age with that specific mobility need.
- (4) That bungalows that do not meet the needs of people in mobility groups 1, 2 or 3 are let with priority to households releasing 3 and 2 bedroom houses and 3 bedroom flats.
- (5) That a feasibility study, focused around community consultation, takes place in order to assess the viability of expanding the 50 plus local lettings plan to include Kingsway, Clarke Court, Malthouse Court and other suitable blocks. This would report to Housing Management Consultative Committee in December 2009. HMCC are invited to propose blocks for inclusion in this study.

33. DISCUSSION PAPER ON PROPOSED FINANCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

33.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing concerning the development of a Financial Inclusion Strategy for residents of Council Housing, that would contribute to the aims and objectives contained within the Housing Revenue Account Service Improvement Plan 2009-2012 (for copy see minute book). Specifically, the strategy would address the interrelated issues experienced by financially excluded residents in Brighton & Hove.

33.2 **RESOLVED** – That the involvement of the Income Management Monitoring Group in the development of the strategy be noted.

34. TURNING THE TIDE

34.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing which set out the draft Social Exclusion Strategy – “Turning the Tide” (for copy see minute book). The strategy outlined the aims and objectives to address anti-social behaviour, intergenerational social exclusion and quality of life experience for residents in social housing living in areas of multiple deprivation in Brighton and Hove. To do this the strategy adopted a robust parallel approach of support and enforcement in order

to “turn the tide” by addressing behaviours that impacted negatively on individuals, families and the community. The strategy was a work in progress, currently at the second draft stage. Comments/feedback from key stakeholders, partners and council tenants would be sought before presenting a final draft to Cabinet for approval/agreement later this financial year.

- 34.2 Chris Kift made reference to the Eastern Road Partnership, which had a three year plan and had to finish after only one year, due to funding being re-assigned. Some excellent work had been carried out by the Partnership. He liked the report but made the point that the strategy should not stop until it had been completed.
- 34.3 The Chairman replied that the Eastern Road Partnership was about cross tenure and was reliant on funding. The Turning the Tide Strategy was a housing initiative and would be using existing resources in a different way. She agreed that the Eastern Road Partnership had carried out some excellent work.
- 34.4 Councillor Simson asked if the strategy would be working with partners and running parallel to other projects.
- 34.5 The Social Inclusion Manager informed the Committee that she had spent a great deal of time mapping and investigating what had already been achieved and has made strong links with the key partners/services and agencies across the city. The strategy was about using existing resources more efficiently in order to ensure sustainability of services that compliment not duplicate each other.
- 34.6 Councillor Oxley considered the report to be one of the more important documents published by the administration. He considered it a travesty that some people were trapped by inter-generational dependency and that others were suffering from anti-social behaviour. He considered the multi-agency approach essential. He agreed that peoples’ aspirations needed to improve and that consultation was important. Councillor Oxley asked about the financial implications and queried whether tenant centred strategies should be funded from the Housing Revenue Account.
- 34.7 The Director of Adult Social Care & Housing replied that the Head of Financial Services had advised that a certain amount of Turning the Tide funding could come from the Housing Revenue Account. There would be a mixture of funding streams. Meanwhile, she would ask the Head of Financial Services to contact Councillor Oxley about this issue.
- 34.8 John Melson commented that it was a very helpful and comprehensive report and officers should be congratulated. He stressed the need to ensure that the pilot was working and to extend the strategy to other areas. There was also a need to see what was not working.
- 34.9 Stewart Gover agreed it was a good report. He asked why the pilot focused on Mousecoomb and Whitehawk. Why not Portslade and Hangleton for example.
- 34.10 The Chairman replied that the pilot would cover the area served by the Selsfield Drive Housing Office which includes Coldean and Bates Estate as well as Moulescoomb and Bevendean. It had been necessary to pick an area for the pilot and the areas chosen

were among the most deprived in the city. The Social Inclusion Manager stressed that the decision had been taken on levels of need in the area both at community and household level.

- 34.11 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the launch for the Turning the Tide Pilot in Moulsecomb and Bevendean to be led by Housing Strategy with the relevant staffing resources be agreed.
- (2) That a series of tenant/resident focus groups run in the pilot area to look at the key themes and identify priorities for the local community
- (3) That the financial implications be noted

The meeting concluded at 5.51pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 45

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Out Of Hours Service in Sheltered Housing
Date of Meeting: 7 December 2009
Report of: Director of Housing & Adult Social Care
Contact Officer: Name: Peter Huntbach Tel: 29-3255
E-mail: Peter.huntbach@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 This report is an update on the work of the officer and resident project group set up to review the out of hour's service provision in sheltered housing.

1.2 A report on the work the project group has carried out to date is attached as Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 (1) That the Housing Management Consultative Committee notes the contents of this report.

2.2 (2) That a further report is presented to the Housing Management Consultative Committee when a specification has been drawn up for the out of hours service and a process is in place to determine how this service will be provided.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

3.1 A report on the model of support for sheltered housing residents was presented to the February Housing Cabinet Member Meeting. It was agreed at this meeting that the model of support would be based on, on-site, non-residential, Scheme Managers, and that savings could be made within the sheltered housing service by changing the out of hour's service provision.

3.2 After the model of support was agreed, officers worked with the Sheltered Housing Action Group to draw up an improvement plan for the sheltered housing service. The plan identified the out of hour's service as an area for immediate attention.

3.3 The sheltered service provides a scheme manager service, Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm, (ending 4.30pm on Friday). Any service provided at other times is described as the out of hour's service. The out of hour's service is currently provided by Carelink Plus and mobile sheltered officers.

3.4 A project group was formed made up of officers and resident representatives from the sheltered housing action group, including a former Scheme Manager. This group met between July and October and undertook a range of tasks, including research on how out of hours services are provided in other organisations, contacting other service providers and visiting non council sheltered housing schemes.

3.5 In the short term, the group recommended re-negotiating the existing arrangements with Carelink Plus to reduce current cost (in line with the fixed price sum for alarm services in the supported housing sector, that the Commission Team will introduce from April 2010), and that consideration should be given to the competitive tendering process, to secure long term savings.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 The report of the project group was presented to the Sheltered Housing Action Group on 11 November 2009.

4.2 The Sheltered Housing Action Group supported the recommendations of the project group and is keen that a competitive process is considered to procure a 'high quality, good value, out of hour's service'.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 Failure to renegotiate the cost of the Carelink Plus service relating to the Out of Hours service will result in increasing service pressures to the Housing Revenue Account in future years due to the reduction in Supporting People funding.

Finance Officer Consulted: Gary Driver

Date: 11 November 2009

Legal Implications:

5.2 The council is empowered to provide sheltered housing, and to impose a reasonable charge on tenants for that service.

5.3 Any tendering of the alarm service currently provided by Carelink Plus would be conducted within the framework of the Corporate Procurement Strategy 2008-2011.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 11 November 2009

Equalities Implications:

5.4 Any proposed changes to the out of hours service will require an Equality Impact Assessment to identify what effect or likely effect they will have on different groups within our communities .

Sustainability Implications:

5.5 There are no direct sustainability implications.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.6 There are no direct crime and disorder implications.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

5.7 There are no direct risk and opportunity implications.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.8 Achieving savings, and better value for money, meets the council's priority of making better use of public money.

5.9 Changes to the out of hour's service in sheltered housing will affect the current arrangements the service has with Carelink Plus. Officers from the sheltered service regularly meet with managers from Carelink Plus to advise them of the changes being considered and to enable them to forward plan to meet potential changes to their service.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Report to the Sheltered Housing Action Group by the Out of Hours Project Group, 11/11/09.

Background Documents

1. Delivery of support services for council sheltered housing residents – a report to the Housing Cabinet Member Meeting on 11 February 2009.
2. Sheltered Housing Service Improvement Plan, 2009-10.

APPENDIX 1

Report to Sheltered Housing Action Group

Subject: Sheltered Out of Hours Provision.

Date: November 2009

Report of: Council/SHAG Working Group

1. Background

1.1 There are a number of key issues to the background of this project:

- Consultation in 2008 showed that sheltered residents had mixed views about the service out of hours. Some wanted a basic emergency response service only, while others valued the reassurance of the home visit element. There were also mixed view about CareLink Plus.
- The existing weekend service has been difficult to deliver because the structure requires staff to work weekends and Bank Holiday. As a result, a limited service has been delivered, sometimes using sheltered staff being paid for additional weekend working.
- There was a discrepancy in the services being offered by the council and those being offered by other sheltered providers. Some providers do not provide a weekend service while others provide a remote call service only to vulnerable residents.
- The out of hour's service is a confusing mixture of CareLink Plus and mobile officers employed by sheltered services.
- The reduction in Supporting People funding of 11.5% over three years required all providers of sheltered services to look at where savings could be made with their support costs. Following consultation with sheltered providers, the Commissioning Team have indicated alarm costs as the main area where savings can be achieved locally. The sheltered service has looked at its alarm costs and agrees that savings can be made by a re-provision of service.
- When reviewing its service delivery model, the increase from 19 to 21 scheme managers was agreed on the assumption that savings would be made on alarm costs and overheads. These savings have yet to be realised. An annual alarm cost of £45k was used within financial modelling in preparation for the review of service delivery.

2. The Working Group

2.1 The working group consisted of two members of staff (Peter Huntbach, Older Persons Housing Manager and Ginny Buckland, Sheltered Development Officer) and two residents (Brian Balchin, Jasmine Court SHAG representative, and Kath Davis, Chair of the Broadfields Tenant Association). Kath is an ex-scheme manager, previously working for Brighton & Hove City Council at Leach Court. The working group each visited or contacted a number of sheltered providers to hear about the type of service that was provided out of hours. Brian also spoke to the city council scheme managers to gauge their views on the out of hour's service. Providers contacted or visited included:

- Anchor
- Downland Housing Association.
- Eastbourne Homes
- Lewes
- Peverill
- Raglan Housing Association
- Southern Housing Group

2.2 In preparation for the review, sheltered staff had visited two alarm providers, Cirrus Communications and Wealden & Eastbourne Lifeline.

3. The Out of Hours Service

3.1 The sheltered service provides a scheme manager service, Monday to Friday, 8.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. (ending 4.30 p.m. on Friday). Any service provided at other times is described as the 'out of hours' service.

3.2 There are two aspects to the out of hour's service:

- Emergency response
- Weekend call service

4. The Sheltered Emergency Response

4.1 All sheltered schemes have a built in community alarm system, with alarm points in each household and in the common ways. When these are activated, (by pulling a cord or pressing a pendant button), voice contact is made either with the scheme manager or, when the scheme manager is off site, with an alarm provider. The council's alarm provider is CareLink Plus.

4.2 The primary function of the alarm is to allow the user to summon help in the event of an emergency, such as a fall, sudden illness or worsening of a medical condition.

- 4.3 The alarm provider, CareLink Plus, also monitors and responds to other alarm systems at a scheme including to lift alarms, door entry systems, intruder alarms, smoke detectors and main fire panels.
- 4.4 As lone workers, the alarm provider, CareLink Plus, also monitors scheme managers logging on and off site. If staff fail to log on or off, CareLink Plus alert the sheltered management team, who have an escalation procedure for managing 'missing' staff.
- 4.5 In major emergencies, the alarm provider, CareLink Plus, has telephone numbers of the sheltered management team and housing management managers, who can be contacted out of hours.

5. CareLink Plus

- 5.1 The council's alarm provider is CareLink Plus based at Patching Lodge. CareLink Plus is owned and managed by Brighton & Hove City Council and is part of the Adult Social Care & Housing directorate. The council's sheltered service has always used CareLink Plus as its alarm provider since it was formed in 1987.
- 5.2 CareLink Plus has 22 members headed by a management team of 4. The service operates over 24 hours every day. During normal office hours, there are a minimum of two people answering calls, though this increases during peak periods. Out of hours, there is usually one person answering calls, though this can be increased if required. There is a manager on call and a community responder on call from home who can be contacted to attend emergency call outs.
- 5.3 CareLink Plus provides an alarm service not only to the council's sheltered schemes, but also several housing associations in the city. CareLink Plus also provides a 'dispersed' alarm service to approximately 3000 living in the community.
- 5.4 The sheltered services pay CareLink Plus £130k per year for their service (or approximately £2.90 per week for each sheltered property – the 'unit cost'). The service is determined by historical arrangement and CareLink Plus is keen to re-negotiate service agreements with providers, including the sheltered service.
- 5.5 CareLink Plus also provides an out of hour emergency repair service for the council's housing service, including sheltered housing. Outside of normal office hours, CareLink Plus receive and screen repair calls before passing on to contractors.

6. Use of the CareLink Plus Alarm Service

- 6.1 In 2008/9 a total of 49, 605 alarm calls from the council's sheltered services were received by CareLink Plus - or 58 calls for each household. This compares to a total of 14, 505 from the housing

association sector – or 23 calls for each household. Although these figures include staff monitoring calls.

7. Home Visits Out of Hours

- 7.1 CareLink Plus has staff who can attend to site in a 'people' issue emergency e.g. to give access to the emergency services. Between Oct 07 and Oct 08, CareLink Plus staff attended to the council's sites 157 times (approximately 3 times per week).
- 7.2 The alarm providers contacted did not provide a home visit service, although this was an option they would be willing to consider if requested. One alarm provider said that they could offer this on a 'cost per visit' basis (of £25 per visit) rather than as a flat across the board charge.
- 7.3 Those sheltered providers contacted all had an escalation procedure for major emergencies and would use their own staff rather than alarm staff (e.g. Southern Housing Group, Anchor, Raglan, Lewes, Downland).
- 7.4 To respond to 'building' related issues, the sheltered service employs a mobile sheltered officer on a rota basis. The mobile officer is paid a standby payment of £25 per night and will attend to a scheme when called by CareLink Plus. In 2007/8 the mobile officers attended to the schemes 105 times.
- 7.5 The working group considered that better use could be made of existing resources to reduce the number of out of hour's home visits by an alarm provider. The group felt that sheltered residents should be asked for named key holders who could be contacted in an emergency (this could be a local relative, neighbour or buddy). The group felt that volunteer residents could be used to respond to calls, particularly no-voice response calls in the common ways. The group felt that other existing resources, such as the Neighbourhood Response Service, could also be used, particularly where there was a building related issue. Where the alarm provider was sending staff out to give access to emergency services, the group felt that better provision of key safes was the best option (it was noted that at Courtney King House, managed by Southern Housing Group, there was a built in key safe in the entrance lobby).

8. The Weekend Service

- 8.1 All sheltered housing residents receive a daily call if they choose.
- 8.2 At the weekend, the council operates a weekend call service operated by the sheltered mobile officers. Although there is provision in the structure for five mobile officers, difficulties in recruiting staff to work only at the weekend and Bank Holidays, has meant that only two are in

employment. As a result, there is a limited weekend call service, with residents being called either on Saturday or Sunday (although for the most vulnerable, calls are still made on both days).

- 8.3 The cost of the two mobile officers is approximately £25k per year (over and above the £130k paid for the CareLink Plus service).
- 8.4 The working group found that sheltered providers didn't offer a weekend call to all and only the council and Anchor Housing Association offered this (Anchor provided a similar service to the council with seven day calls). Some providers (e.g. Downland Housing Association) do not offer any weekend service. Some providers offered a weekend service to vulnerable residents only, and this was provided remotely by the alarm provider (e.g. Southern Housing Group).
- 8.5 The working group felt that it was not the most effective service to send someone to site at a weekend to carry out a small number of calls. The working group therefore suggested that consideration be given to these calls being undertaken remotely – and to those who were vulnerable and didn't already have a weekend service e.g. home carers. However, it was accepted that as this change would affect the weekend staff group, further consultation would be required.

9. Cost

- 9.1 The cost of CareLink Plus to Sheltered Services is £130k per annum (or approximately £2.90 per week for each sheltered property – the 'unit cost').
- 9.2 The cost of providing an alarm call system with a home visit option is inevitably higher than those that provide a voice only response service (because of staff working out of normal hours). A basic voice only alarm service can cost as little as £0.40 pence per week per unit.
- 9.3 In the council's service, CareLink Plus do not provide a home visit for building related issues (although this service is provided to some housing associations). The provision of mobile officers employed by sheltered services is therefore an additional cost over and above the CareLink Plus cost.
- 9.4 The provision of a weekend service is also a 'hidden' out of hours cost (see 8.3 above) as some providers do not offer a weekend call service or have this service undertaken remotely by their alarm provider.
- 9.5 The working group felt that the cost was high and should be lower. The working group felt that if a basic call service could be obtained for as little as £0.40, then the amount being paid over and above this for a home call service was not value for money (given the relatively low number of actual home calls). One of the group had rarely used the

alarm service and felt that they should be charged a lower rate for low usage.

- 9.6 CareLink Plus has asked for their current service agreement with sheltered services to be re-negotiated. This gives sheltered services the opportunity of discussing what savings can be made by the re-provision of the current service offered by CareLink Plus.

10. The Commissioning Team (Supporting People)

- 10.1 Due to cuts in their funding, the Commissioning Team have been working with all the local sheltered providers to see where savings could be made. The consensual view is that the bulk of the £120k savings required in the sector will be found from reducing payments for alarm costs.
- 10.2 The rationale behind this approach is that the unit cost of alarm service varies from £0.50 to over £5.00 per week. And although some of this cost is due to different types of service, some costs for the same type of service show variance. The Commissioning Team have proposed that from April 2010, they would pay providers alarm costs of around £0.50 per unit for a basic service to around £1.50-£1.75 for a more enhanced service.
- 10.3 The Commissioning Team have also proposed that although some providers may be able to achieve these savings through re-negotiated contracts with their alarm provider, it could also be achieved by the competitive tendering process. The Commissioning Team are therefore asking providers to consider a consortium to put together a new service specification for a joint contract for alarm services, to be tendered out.
- 10.4 If the sheltered services alarm provision cost £1.50 per week, the annual charge would be approximately £67k, a saving of £63k.

11. Other Alarm Providers

- 11.1 Although CareLink Plus is the only alarm provider in the city, and is used by the council and some local housing association providers, they are not the only alarm provider. Some providers, such as Anchor or Downland, have their own 'in-house' alarm service. Some providers use a national alarm provider, such as Cirrus Careline. Some providers use other local alarm providers, such as Wealden & Eastbourne Lifelines.
- 11.2 There was a concern about the small number of staff working in CareLink Plus, particularly the number of staff expected to attend out of hour's emergencies. There was a view that the additional cost for an out of hour visits was not value for money where perhaps only one or two people were on standby.

- 11.3 The working group felt that the sheltered service should continue to seek savings from CareLink Plus, but felt that the competitive tendering process should actively be considered to ensure that the service was market tested. Any tendering process would need to be undertaken within the council's procurement policy; given the time needed to prepare the specification and tender, it would not be possible to have another alarm provider in place by April 2010.
- 11.4 Although other alarm providers have offered rough indications of costs, these have only been given in the context of informal discussions about the services they provide (or could provide). The actual cost of services provided is likely to differ as a result of the procurement process (and may therefore be higher or lower than indicated).

12. Recommendations

- 12.1 The sheltered service should re-establish and promote the alarm system as an emergency response service only.
- 12.2 The response of the alarm service would be to summon help in an emergency. If the emergency services were not called, the alarm provider would contact a local next-of-kin, key holder or buddy as the first point of call. The sheltered service should ensure that all residents have a named local contact who can be contacted in an emergency. It is accepted that further work may be required to determine the percentage of residents with local contact.
- 12.3 The provision of a home call by CareLink Plus would be regarded as a last resort option. Housing management should consider its escalation procedures across the city with regard to major emergencies such as fire so that sheltered housing benefits from arrangement in place for all council housing.
- 12.4 The provision of a home call service must be for both building and people issues. However, better co-ordinated working with the health and social care, contractors, maintenance team, and Neighbourhood Response Service should be considered first in terms of responding to issues out of hours. There should also be a restructure or re-provision of the current sheltered mobile service.
- 12.5 Any home calls undertaken by the alarm provider should ideally be at cost per visit. This would lead to better scrutiny of why the home call visits were being made.
- 12.6 There should be greater use of volunteer residents, an underused resource in the schemes. Named residents could help with a local response on site, particularly if an alarm was alerted in the common ways. The council should provide training and support using a 'co-production' model to make this happen.

- 12.7 The sheltered services should install key safes (with a key code or remote automated access) in all schemes to enable the emergency services to access schemes without having to call someone out from the alarm provider.
- 12.8 The weekend call service should only be for those who are vulnerable. The council should explore the possibility of this being provided remotely by the alarm provider within costs. However, the group accepts that further consultation would be required as this suggestion affects staff within the sheltered structure.
- 12.9 Sheltered services should consider a menu of alarm charges so that those who do not use the alarm service are charged less.
- 12.10 Although sheltered services should re-negotiate their contract with CareLink Plus to reduce current cost, consideration should be given to the competitive tendering process. The working group accepts that this process must take place within the council's procurement policies.
- 12.11 Any re-provision of service would require consultation with residents, including Sheltered Housing Action Group. The residents on the working group were keen to be involved with any scheme based consultation. The working group accepts that there may be a need for tailored consultation with vulnerable groups to ensure that the voice of everyone is heard.
- 12.12 Any re-provision of service would require an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure that any adverse affects of any change are mitigated by positive action.
- 12.13 Any re-provision of service should be tested against the Dignity in Care challenge and any revised aims and objectives of the sheltered service.
- 12.14 Any re-provision or re-structuring of the service currently provided by the mobile staff being considered in this document would require staff and union consultation. Any changes affecting staff must be undertaken within the council's change management policies.

Appendix

Details are given of services provided by other sheltered providers. This information was gathered by members of the working group, including visits by Brian Balchin and Kath Davis. Brian also visited the scheme managers working in the council's service and Mears. This report acknowledges and thanks residents for their involvement and participation.

Southern Housing Group

At Courtney King House:

- Chichester CareLine provide the emergency alarm service.
- Weekend calls are undertaken by Chichester CareLine.
- Chichester CareLine do not have visiting staff.
- There is a residential scheme manager, but Chichester CareLine would call another scheme manager on their mobile phone (but this doesn't happen often). There are three schemes in the local area.
- Absence cover is provided by another scheme manager and Chichester CareLine respond when scheme manager is not on site.
- There is a key box outside each site enabling emergency services access to get inside – to an internal key box.
- There is a signing in book for visitors.
- Support charge £4.42 per week.
- Resident association happy with service.

Anchor Housing Association

At Jacqueline-Du-Pre House:

- Use their own call centre "never any trouble" with service (Anchor Call).
- Uses 'fire buddy' system – where other residents have keys to other flats in an emergency (residents "very self sufficient").
- People get a daily call, including weekend. This is provided on site by floating (two) causal relief managers who are on site 2 hours per day (they also undertake health and safety testing). This is optional to each scheme and decided at a local level.
- The reliefs can also cover during the week e.g. sickness absence.
- Scheme manager always in office between 9-11.
- Scheme manager reboots system though contractors are called if there is a system failure.
- Service charge varies to residents per scheme. Rent plus service charge at Jacqueline-Du-Pre is £435 per month inc utilities inc. all weekend calls (could split out costs for alarm/weekend service).

Raglan Housing Association

At Alfred Davey Court:

- Use Chichester CareLine as alarm provider.

- No weekend call – but scheme manager can request that vulnerable residents (e.g. those discharged from hospital) to be called and this is arranged through Chichester CareLine.
- Residential scheme managers – who can be called, but not at weekends. However:
- In an emergency Chichester CareLine calls the next-of-kin – if no NOK, they would call the emergency services.
- Emergency services have code to main doors and code to key box in lobby area.
- Cost of service not known.

Downland Housing Association

- Have their own emergency alarm provider (First Point)
- First Point does not provide any home visiting service.
- There is no weekend service, nor the provision to provide one.
- In a serious emergency e.g. fire, Downland would call the scheme manager and if not available, look at other local scheme managers.
- If access is required in an emergency, First Point would provide access to the building, though emergency services would have to gain their own access to individual flats.
- The cost of the service varies depending on the size of the local service – for a service of 1000 units, a weekly cost of £0.44 pence would be charged.
- First Point considering developing a personal response service.

Eastbourne Homes (Arms Length Management Organisation)

- Provides a floating support service.
- Uses Wealden & Eastbourne Lifeline as an alarm provider.
- The Lifeline alarm provider deals with any out of hours calls and would provide staff to attend if necessary (called a Community Visiting Officer CVO)
- A weekend service is provided for those who are vulnerable e.g. residents who are leaving hospital can ring Wealden & Eastbourne Lifeline and receive a weekend call. No response is dealt with by a call from a CVO.
- Cost is approximately £32 per unit per annum

Lewes District Council

- Has their own alarm provider (Lewes Lifeline Alarm Service)
- The alarm provider manager all out of hours calls
- The alarm provider would contact the key holder or NOK in an emergency, or the emergency services if no response or if appropriate.
- There is no weekend call, though there is the provision got Lewes LifeLine to undertake a call for those who are most vulnerable.
- In a serious emergency such as a major fire, there is scope for the sheltered management team to be called to site out of hours.

- Were not able to separate out of hours cost.

Peverel (Private)

- Peverel Industries own Cirrus Communications Systems (which has its own alarm provider, Careline).
- Daily calls provided by CareLine, and weekends if requested.
- No response from calls would result in contact with emergency services immediately.
- Emergency services have code to the master safe, which holds all the relevant keys for access to all parts of the building.
- Any equipment failures would be passed to Cirrus engineers.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 46

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Tenancy Agreement Review		
Date of Meeting:	7 December 2009		
Report of:	Director of Adult Social Care & Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Diane Freeland	Tel: 29-3841
	E-mail:	Diane.Freeland@Brighton-Hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 To present the results of the statutory consultation carried out with all tenants on the adoption of a revised tenancy agreement for tenants living in council housing.
- 1.2 To present an amended draft of the revised tenancy agreement as a result of comments received during the consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) That the Housing Management Consultative Committee notes the results of the consultation exercise and the themes arising as detailed in appendix 1.
- (2) That the Housing Management Consultative Committee endorses the new version of the tenancy agreement, attached at appendix 2 and forward to the housing cabinet member for approval.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS

- 3.1 During July and August 2009 a preliminary notice of variation was issued to all council tenants. This notice was the first stage of our consultation with all tenants about making changes to the tenancy agreement and gave tenants the opportunity to make comments. Tenants were invited to give their comments in a variety of ways. These were:

- by returning a feedback form
- by contacting their local housing office either on the telephone or in person
- by email
- by attending a drop in surgery (sheltered housing tenants)

Tenants who had indicated they had literacy issues or who were working with the tenancy sustainment team were also contacted by the housing teams to discuss the agreement and the proposed changes.

Copies were made available in large print, audio tape and Braille. Interpreters were arranged on request and contact was made with the council's Community Support Team who support residents with learning disabilities. An easy read document to accompany the tenancy agreement is currently in development and the Community Support Team were provided with a draft copy to assist with explaining the agreement to their clients.

3.2 The feedback form was split into five sections to reflect the sections in the new tenancy agreement:

- Your rent and other charges
- Repairs and improvements
- Living in your home
- Being a good neighbour
- Ending your tenancy

Tenants were able to say overall how much they agreed or disagreed with each section of the revised agreement and to say if there was anything else they thought should be included or anything that should be removed. Tenants were also able to provide any other additional comments they had on the agreement. The consultation period ended on the 18 September 2009.

3.3 We received 2327 feedback forms and an additional 57 responses to the consultation. This represented a 16.9% response rate. For those returning feedback forms there was a high level of agreement for the changes in each of the sections of the agreement. Over 90% agreed with most or all changes within each section. A full breakdown is enclosed in the following table.

Overall do you agree or disagree with the changes under....	Agree with all	Agree with most	Agree with a few	Do not agree with any of them
Your rent & other charges	62.1%	30.6%	6.5%	0.7%
Repairs & Improvements	54.5%	35.9%	8.2%	1.4%
Living in your home	62.6%	30.3%	6.1%	1.0%
Being a good neighbour	71.8%	22.6%	4.9%	0.8%
Ending your tenancy	66.4%	27.5%	5.1%	1.0%

3.4 A third (34%) of tenants who responded included additional comments about what more should be included and or what should be removed. A total of 1615 comments were received on the revised tenancy agreement. Comments related both directly to the contents of the new agreement, the service we currently deliver and the service tenants would like to receive from their landlord. The comments on service delivery have been passed to heads of service to help inform improvements. Feedback on how we have used this information and the results of the consultation will be reported back to all residents in the spring edition of homing in.

4.0 **CONSULTATION FEEDBACK**

4.1 On the 23 October 2009, the Chairman's resident focus group met with officers to review the comments and decide on changes needed to the agreement. Attached at appendix 1 is an overview of the comments received on the draft tenancy agreement grouped into subject areas and our responses.

4.2 The comments outlined in appendix 1 have been used to make changes to the draft tenancy agreement. The feedback has been invaluable and has enabled officers and the resident focus group to ensure that the agreement is fair and easy to understand. A revised draft is attached at appendix 2, which we propose to be the final version. Changes to the agreement have been highlighted in red.

4.3 The draft agreement will now be forwarded to housing cabinet for approval. If approved the next stage is to implement the revised agreement. We will write to all tenants issuing them with Notice of Variation, which will vary the conditions of tenancy. This document will summarise the main changes and will give a date when the revised tenancy agreement will come into effect, which will be at least 28 days from the date of the notice. We anticipate the agreement coming into effect in March/April 2010.

5. **FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Financial Implications:

5.1 The direct expenditure relating to this review is estimated to be 38,000 and will be resourced from within the HRA revenue budget for 2009/10. This expenditure will be reported as part of the monthly TBM (Targeted budget Management) process for 2009/10

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks, Principal Accountant Date: 04/11/09

Legal Implications:

5.2 Section 103 of the Housing Act 1985 prescribes the procedure to be adopted when varying the terms of secure and introductory tenancies. Tenancies are varied by serving a Notice of Variation, prior to which there must be a period of consultation with tenants in which they can comment on the proposed changes. The landlord must consider those comments. This report demonstrates that the Council has complied with the statutory requirements to date. The Council must take the Human

Rights Act into account in respect of its actions but it is not considered that any individual's Human Rights Act rights would be adversely affected by the recommendations in this report.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 04/11/09

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The development of the revised tenancy agreement has been taken with due regards to equalities and diversity issues and will be available in a range of formats to meet to meet tenants needs. Feedback from the consultation has been used to finalise the Equality Impact Assessment on the revised tenancy agreement.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 An effective tenancy agreement will contribute to the development of sustainable communities.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 The revised tenancy agreement will positively contribute to preventing crime and the fear of crime by stating the types of anti social behaviour and harassment that is prohibited and the enforcement action that the council can take should such behaviour occur.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

None

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The introduction of a revised tenancy agreement will have citywide implications for council tenants.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 Continue with the existing tenancy agreement. However this is not recommended, as it does not allow the council to take advantage of developments in best practice and does not reflect the wishes of tenants. During the consultation exercise those who responded expressed a high level of support for the changes the council were proposing to make. We need to ensure we have a comprehensive agreement, which covers all the areas of tenancy management and reflects the priorities that are important to the council and tenants.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To provide the Housing Management Consultative with the results of the tenancy agreement consultation and for the Housing Management Consultative Committee to endorse the new version of the tenancy agreement and forward to the housing cabinet member for approval.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Tenancy Agreement Consultation Comments

Appendix 2: Draft Tenancy Agreement

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None

Your rent & Other Charges	
Comments	Response
Flexibility on the day that payments can be made.	We are unable to change the 'due date' that payments need to be received by. This is because payments do need to be made on or before the due date to avoid any arrears accruing. We offer a range of payment options to assist with this.
Lack of clarity about the meaning of support charges and other charges.	We have clarified that support charges refer to sheltered housing tenants. We have divided the section into 'our' and 'your' responsibilities and provided clarity on the types of charges that are included in other charges.
Requests for longer notice period for rent increases.	By law we are required to provide at least four weeks notice before increasing or reducing the rent. We are unable to guarantee that we will provide additional notice due to when we receive notifications of changes. However these changes usually take place in April each year. We have added this information and hope this will assist tenants with planning for changes in their rent and other charges.
Concerns that rents will be increased more than once a year.	We have clarified that rent increases usually take place in April each year in line with government guidelines.
Clarity wanted on how to resolve issues with joint tenancies.	We have invited tenants to contact their housing office to discuss any issues relating to joint tenancies.
Requests for information on non payment and payment types.	We have advised tenants to refer to their tenant handbook for details of payment methods and the consequences of non payment.
Comments on new service charges and what these may be.	We have included a responsibility for us to consult with tenants before new services and charges are introduced.

Repairs and Improvements	
Comments	Response
<p>Increase the landlord’s responsibilities and give more examples of what should be included.</p>	<p>The council has responsibility for repairs under S11 Landlord & Tenant Act 1985 and any further amendment. We have outlined our statutory responsibilities and provided further examples to help clarify our responsibilities. We are unable to include all of the examples under the clause but encourage tenants to check the guide for repairs or contact the repairs helpdesk if they are unsure of who is responsible for a repair.</p> <p>Some examples of responsibilities that tenants would like to be included are current tenant responsibilities for example fencing and internal doors. These will remain the responsibility of tenants unless there is a change in policy which is beyond the scope of the tenancy agreement review.</p> <p>We have also outlined the key repairs rights as a tenant – the right to repair, the right to carry out improvements with permission (secure tenants) and the right to compensation for improvements.</p>
<p>Clarity on the wording used – what does when necessary, reasonable mean?</p>	<p>We have clarified that ‘reasonable notice’ will depend on the urgency of the situation.</p> <p>In clause 2.2 we have indicated that we will decorate the outside of your home and shared parts when necessary. There were comments stating this was vague and that a timescale should be provided. On balance we have decided to keep the wording as each property is different and therefore the timescales for decoration may need to vary. This wording allows us to respond on an individual basis.</p>

Comments	Response
References needed for help with repairs for sheltered housing tenants, older tenants and tenants with disabilities.	We have included a reference to encourage any sheltered housing tenants, older tenants and tenants with disabilities to contact us about the help they may be able to receive with minor repairs and decoration.
Why is the council giving itself more powers of entry to properties?	Within the revised tenancy agreement the council has not created additional powers of entry to the property and will always give reasonable notice where possible. In an emergency we may need immediate access and we have included some examples of circumstances when this may be necessary.
References needed to the 'guide to repairs'.	We have included references to the 'guide to repairs' where applicable as further explanations can be found in this document.
Clarity is required on what is a minor repair.	We have not provided further clarification on what constitutes a minor repair in the agreement. This information is available in the guide to repairs and tenants are encouraged to refer to this.
<p>Queries concerning laminate and hard flooring clauses. A variety of views were expressed :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support for clause and enforcement - concerns regarding existing flooring - concerns regarding the costs attached to alternative flooring - whether permission should be required - whether permission should be required for houses 	<p>There were a number of conflicting comments on the requirement to seek permission for laminate or hard flooring. Some comments were supportive of the introduction of this clause due to problems of noise nuisance, with others expressing concerns.</p> <p>On balance we have decided not to amend the conditions attached to this clause due to the problems that have been experienced through the installation of laminate and hard flooring, but we have made some changes to the wording and condensed this into one clause. We also do not propose to only ask permission from tenants living in flats or maisonettes as all secure tenants need to seek permission to make improvements. We have however outlined in the clause when we will be likely to give permission.</p>

Appendix 1

Comments	Response
Information should be included on home improvement grants and access to different agencies.	We have not included information on home improvement grants and access to agencies. This information is not within the scope of the tenancy agreement.
Penalties should be included for late repairs i.e. lifts.	We have not included information on penalties within the agreement. This information is available in the guide to repairs.
Information should be included on giving feedback on the quality of repairs.	We have not included information on how to provide feedback within the agreement. This information is available in the guide to repairs.
We should include timescales for repairs.	We have not included information on timescales within the agreement. This information is available in the guide to repairs.
A clause should be inserted regarding checking the electrics every year.	We have not added a new clause about inspecting the electrics in properties annually as current legislation does not require us to do this annually. We are required to inspect the electrics within properties every 10 years and we carry out electrical safety inspections when properties become vacant.
Information should be included on adaptations and the timescales for completing these.	We have not included information on adaptations and timescales as adaptations are extremely varied in nature, cost and timescale it is not practical to do this. Information readily available elsewhere can be updated frequently and will therefore be more accurate than if included in the tenancy agreement.
Clause 2.4 (notifying us of repairs) and 2.6 (carrying out minor repairs) should be one clause.	We have kept the clauses separate as they deal with two different issues (now clauses 2.7 & 2.9)
Some types of improvements (CCTV & Satellite Dishes) should not need permission.	We have not excluded certain types of improvements from the clause as any alterations and additions do require our permission.

Living in your Home	
Comments	Response
Clarity is needed on the council's responsibilities.	We have clarified our responsibilities by providing some examples of support services.
We shouldn't allow lodgers or sub tenants.	In the Housing Act 1985 secure tenants have the right to take in lodgers or sublet part of the home (with our written permission). These are statutory rights which can not be removed. We have moved these clauses into a section on 'your rights' to make this clear and have highlighted in bold 'as long as this does not cause overcrowding' (lodgers) and 'written permission is required' (sub tenants).
The assignment & right to exchange clause isn't clear.	We have amended the wording of the right to exchange clause to refer to 'mutual exchanges', which is a frequently used term.
Tenants should not need to notify the landlord if they are away from the property for over 28 days.	We have listened to the concerns that tenants have expressed about notifying us if they are away from the property for over 28 days. Although we propose to keep the clause we have removed the requirement to notify us in writing to make the process less onerous and have provided some further explanation as to why we require this information.
Loft space in flats should be able to be used.	We have not removed the clause restricting tenants in flats using loft space. This is because the loft space in flats is not part of the demised premises and is either not self contained (shared with other flats) or used for communal facilities.
Do all types of business being run from home require permission?	We have not excluded certain types of businesses from being run from home without permission but have included a reference to when we may give permission. This is dependant on the nature of the business and its impact on neighbours. We appreciate that many businesses may be run from home without causing a nuisance or annoyance. We want our tenancy agreement to support small home businesses, but we still need to have the right to take action if the business causes problems.

Comments	Response
<p>The term 'overcrowding' needs to be defined.</p>	<p>We have advised tenants to contact their housing office for clarification on how many people can live in the property before causing overcrowding.</p> <p>For new tenants we have specified the maximum number of people that can live in the property in the 'your tenancy details' section.</p>
<p>Insert a clause on allowing the fire service access to fit smoke alarms.</p>	<p>We have not included a clause requiring tenants to provide access to the fire service to install a smoke alarm. This is a voluntary agreement and can not be enforced by the tenancy agreement. We will however continue to promote the importance of fire safety and encourage residents to take up assistance from the fire service.</p>
<p>Include a section on the right to buy scheme.</p>	<p>We have included a section on the right to buy and advised tenants where they can access further information.</p> <p>We have also provided further information on tenant's rights in this section – the right to live in the property and the right to manage.</p>
<p>Tenants should downsize if they no longer need a larger property.</p>	<p>We are unable to add a clause requiring tenants to downsize if they no longer require a family sized property as the law does not allow us to do so. Due to the shortage of social housing it is important that we make best use of our limited stock and we will continue to promote incentives and the help available for tenants wishing to downsize.</p>

Being a Good Neighbour	
Comments	Response
The clause on feeding birds and animals prevents tenants feeding all wildlife.	We have amended the wording on feeding birds and animals to reflect the type of issues that can cause a nuisance.
A variety of views were expressed about the pets clause - support for the clause and tougher enforcement - concerns that the clause is too strict and should be in line with the current tenancy agreement - views that permission shouldn't be sought.	We have not amended the conditions attached to the pet clause. We will not unreasonably withhold permission, but asking people to seek this ensures we can remind people of the need to be considerate, responsible, pet owners.
More flexible wording is needed regarding the storage of oxygen cylinders.	We have made some minor amendments to the wording of this clause but we have not removed the requirement to seek permission. This is because we do need to know whether these items are being stored in our properties for fire safety reasons.
Further examples of anti social behaviour were provided e.g. bonfires, barbeques.	We have not added further examples of ASB. The tenancy agreement needs to be of reasonable length and it is not possible, or desirable to be prescriptive about each potential source of anti social behaviour.
Times should be specified for when loud music or DIY is prohibited.	We have not added specific timings. This is because we encourage local neighbourhood agreements and know most tenants will behave responsibly.
Include a reference to the transfer process for harassment cases.	We have not included information on transfer options for harassment cases. This information is contained in the tenant handbook.

Appendix 1

Comments	Response
Remove clause 4.10 (not causing damage) as it is repeated in the repairs section.	We have deleted this clause.
There was general agreement to keeping shared areas clear but mobility scooters should be allowed if they are needed.	We have made some minor amendments to the wording on the clause requiring shared areas to be kept clear. We have kept the requirement to seek permission if you wish to store a mobility scooter in shared areas. The safety of all residents in the event of a fire is essential and therefore we do need to ensure shared areas are managed appropriately.
Help to maintain gardens is needed for older tenants and disabled tenants.	We have encouraged tenants to seek advice if they are experiencing difficulties maintaining their garden.
Clause 4.7 - include paedophilia as an example as drugs is used twice and remove the word 'immoral' as it is subjective.	We have included paedophilia as an example in clause 4.7 and removed the word immoral. As we have removed the word immoral we have also removed the example of prostitution as this is not a criminal or illegal activity.
Add 'housing' to local roadways (now clause 4.12).	We have clarified that we are referring to housing roadways.
Add a clause on tenants forming own groups to enhance security.	We have not inserted a new clause regarding residents setting up new groups to enhance security. Instead we will promote alternative actions such as the neighbourhood watch scheme in the tenant handbook.
Use the word 'respect'.	The tenancy agreement sets out the council's expectation that residents will behave respectfully.
Insert a clause about not producing offensive smells from properties.	We have not included a clause on 'not producing offensive smells from properties'. If a nuisance occurs this can be dealt with under our nuisance clause.

Comments	Response
Bring clauses 4.11, 4.12 & 4.20 together into one clause (fire safety equipment, emergency alarm equipment and security equipment in shared areas)	We have brought clauses 4.11, 4.12 & 4.20 into one clause – now clause 4.10.
No tolerance of racist or homophobic behaviour – ensure our actions are clear.	We have clarified the legal action we can take if there is nuisance or harassment on any ground.
Should domestic violence just be a police matter?	Domestic Violence is both a civil and criminal matter and as a landlord we wish to ensure that our position on domestic violence is clear and the consequences are outlined. We therefore propose to keep this clause within the agreement.
Balconies should be kept clear.	Our garden clause (4.18) specifies that balconies need to be kept tidy. We do not propose amending this clause to state they must be kept clear.
Should say 'will' take action and not 'may' take action.	We have inserted 'will take action' where appropriate.
Add information on neighbourhood agreements.	We have not included information on neighbourhood agreements. This information will be contained in the tenant handbook.
Clarify what 'in the area of your home' means.	We have clarified that the locality and in the local area refers to the neighbourhood and ensured that this wording is used throughout the agreement.

Ending Your Tenancy	
Comments	Response
There should be the option to leave floor coverings and/or furniture when a tenant leaves the property if they in a good condition.	We have provided additional information that tenants should contact their housing office if they are unsure about what to leave in the property. In addition to condition of the items, there are also issues of personal taste. Incoming tenants may well either have their own carpets and furniture, or prefer to purchase items to their own taste; in which case this would not be fair to the incoming tenant who would need to pay to remove the items left behind.
There was disagreement with the rules of succession.	The Housing Act 1985 outlines the rules of succession and we are unable to change the legal position. However we have included additional information about contacting us to discuss rehousing options should a succession have already taken place. Our allocations policy allows us in certain circumstances to make further offers but each case will need to be reviewed on an individual basis.
There should be information on different housing options and support.	We do not propose to include information on housing options. This information is contained in the tenant handbook and in literature held at the housing offices.
There should be further information on how to resolve a joint tenancy if one party leaves.	We have encouraged tenants to contact their housing office if they should have any queries regarding joint tenancies.
We should include the 'return of alarm equipment' at the end of a tenancy alongside the return of keys.	We refer to pendant alarms being returned at the end of the tenancy and do not propose making further references to alarm equipment.
We should reword the Notice to Quit as it is insensitive.	We have amended the wording of the 'Notice to Quit' to 'Notice'.
More information should be included on abandonment.	There is already a clause on what action we will take in the event of the property being abandoned (clause 3.9). We therefore do not propose to add additional information.

Comments	Response
There should be some flexibility in the notice periods.	We do not intend to change the notice periods. At present tenants are required to provide four weeks notice (or two weeks if transferring to another Brighton & Hove City Council tenancy). However we can agree a shorter notice period or waiver the rent liability but we will only agree this in special circumstances. For example if the tenant has died and the executor is able to clear the property within the first two weeks of the notice period we will not charge rent for the final two weeks of the notice period, or if you are transferring to another Brighton & Hove Council tenancy you only need to provide two weeks notice. If you are moving to a Housing Association property you will need to provide four weeks notice.
Information on where tenants can seek independent legal advice should be included.	We have included information on where tenants can seek legal advice if they have any queries regarding their tenancy or their rights. This is included on the front page of the agreement.

General Comments

Comments	Response
Support for the agreement and the new clauses. Tenants commented that it needs to be properly enforced.	Comments noted.
A Data Protection Statement is required.	A Data Protection Statement has been added.
We need to make reference to where you can get a handbook and guide to repairs.	We have included information on where tenants can obtain a tenant handbook and guide to repairs.

Appendix 1

Comments	Response
<p>Legal references should be marked with an asterisk to enable tenants to refer to them.</p>	<p>We have decided not to asterisk legal wording in the document. The Tenancy Agreement is a legal document. Asterisks could cause confusion for some tenants and could give the impression that some sections are more important than others.</p>
<p>A variety of views were expressed on photographs: - the introduction of photographs is an infringement on human rights. - support for the introduction of photographs for security purposes.</p>	<p>We have kept the section under 'your tenancy details' for photographs but have renamed this 'photographs of tenants' as there was a lack of clarity regarding whose photographs would be required. At the present time we do not request photographs of tenants as part of our lettings process. Should we wish to introduce this a report would be presented to Housing Management Consultative Committee and Housing Cabinet for a decision. We want to keep this section in the agreement to give us the flexibility in case we wish to introduce it in the future.</p>
<p>The agreement needs to be made available in alternative formats and needs to be accessible i.e. colours, underlining.</p>	<p>We will ensure that the document is available in alternative formats and that we advise tenants how they can obtain these. We have also ensured that the document meet accessibility guidelines regarding the use of colour, layout etc.</p>
<p>The agreement lacks a commitment to housing standards in Europe.</p>	<p>We have noted the comments about Housing Standards in Europe, but this tenancy agreement is specific and local to Brighton & Hove City Council tenants.</p>
<p>Introductory and secure tenants should have separate agreements.</p>	<p>At present we have separate tenancy agreements for introductory and secure tenants. We wanted to combine these to have one agreement to avoid any confusion for tenants.</p>

Appendix 1

Comments	Response
Include arrangements for emergency out of hours situations.	We do not intend to include information on out of hour's emergency situations. This information is contained in the tenant handbook.
How have you ensured confidentiality when postcodes are disclosed?	The council's Research and Consultation team were responsible for compiling responses and used postcode information to determine the level of responses from each area of the city (neighbourhood offices). The Research and Consultation team do not have access to personal tenant data and have only provided an analysis to housing management on the level of responses via neighbourhood office and not via individual postcodes.
How do we impose the conditions if a tenant disagrees?	The Notice of Variation will vary the conditions of tenancy and will provide a date when the changes will come into effect.
Restrictions on lettings to certain types of properties should be included i.e. no under 10's in certain properties.	We do not intend to include information on allocation policies as this is beyond the scope of the tenancy agreement. This information can be accessed through the allocations policy and Local Lettings Plans.
There is an in balance between landlord and tenant responsibilities in favour of the landlord.	We have listened to the comments about the balance of landlord and tenant responsibilities and have inserted further information on tenants rights and have included these in the relevant sections.
The agreement needs a plain language check – not always clear or understandable.	The council's communications team have completed a further plain language review on the document.
The agreement should be printed on recycled paper.	The agreement will be printed on recycled paper.

Welcome to your new home

Brighton & Hove City Council would like to welcome you to your new home and neighbourhood. We hope that you will be very happy as a council tenant.

This tenancy agreement sets out both your responsibilities and rights as a tenant and those of the council as your landlord.

It is important that you understand this tenancy agreement as it sets out the conditions of a tenancy with Brighton & Hove City Council. You have the right to get independent legal advice from a solicitor, Citizens Advice Bureau or a law centre if you are unsure about signing this agreement or would like advice about your rights and responsibilities.

This is an important legal document. Please keep it safe.

Type of tenancy

If you are not currently a 'secure' or 'assured' tenant, you will be an 'introductory tenant' for the first year of your tenancy with the council.

If you transfer from another of our properties, you will continue to be a secure tenant unless you are still in the first year of your introductory tenancy. In this case, your introductory tenancy continues at the new property until the end of the first year.

Your type of tenancy is indicated below. You will find more details about introductory and secure tenancies in the tenant handbook.

You have an Introductory Tenancy with us, which we have given you under the Housing Act 1996. It will last one year until ____ / ____ / _____. After this date, it will automatically become a secure tenancy unless we have applied to court to gain possession of your property or it has been extended for a further six months.

You have a Secure Tenancy with us, which we have given you under the Housing Act 1985.

Joint tenancies

If you are signing this agreement with someone else - such as your husband, wife, civil partner or partner - you will be a joint tenant. In joint tenancies, each tenant is jointly and individually responsible for all of the conditions of this agreement. This means that if one tenant leaves the home, both tenants remain responsible for the conditions of the tenancy until the tenancy is ended.

Please ask at your housing office if you have any questions about the type of tenancy you have.

As a council tenant you have a number of legal rights. We have summarised these throughout the agreement and indicated where these only apply to secure tenants. You can get further information about these rights from the tenant handbook or your housing office.

The right to see your housing records

As a landlord, we hold information about you and your family in connection with your tenancy and your housing application. The Data Protection Act 1998 gives you, as a council tenant, certain rights to see your personal housing file so that you can check the details to make sure they are correct. If you would like to know more about this please contact the Data Protection Officer, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Hove, BN3 4AH.

The right to be consulted

We believe that it is important that you are involved in housing management decisions that affect you. We will consult with you about any changes to our policy or practice that may substantially change the housing service we provide to you, your home and your neighbourhood.

Except for changes to rent or any other charges, the terms of this agreement can only be changed if we give you written notice that we intend to alter the agreement. We will write to you and tell you about the changes we are going to make and give you the opportunity to comment. We will take your views into consideration before agreeing any changes and give you at least four weeks' notice before the change takes place. This tenancy may also be changed where you and we agree in writing.

Tenancy conditions

Your tenancy conditions are the rights and responsibilities you have as a tenant and those we have as a landlord. This agreement does not remove any rights you or we have which are set out in the Housing Acts or other law.

In these tenancy conditions, 'we', 'us', or 'our' refers to Brighton & Hove City Council. 'You' refers to you the tenant or, in the case of joint tenancies, you and the person you have signed this agreement with. You are responsible for the behaviour of all members of your household, including your children and any lodgers, subtenants or visitors ('they').

In the tenancy conditions, when we refer to 'your home' or 'the property', we mean the premises you live in including any garden, balcony, parking area or storage area that is used by you.

It is very important that you read these conditions carefully as you may lose your home if you do not keep to them.

Most of the tenancy conditions are the same for introductory and secure tenancies, but some conditions only apply to one or the other. We have indicated where this is the case in this agreement.

Throughout this agreement, we refer to the tenant handbook and guide to repairs. Copies of these booklets are available from your housing office.

Contents

- 1. Your rent and other charges**
- 2. Repairs and improvements**
- 3. Living in your home**
- 4. Being a good neighbour**
- 5. Ending your tenancy**

1. Your rent and other charges

Our responsibilities:

1. We will provide you with details of your weekly rent and other charges you need to pay. We will tell you in writing when your weekly rent and charges change.
2. We may increase or reduce your rent and other charges. If this is going to happen we will give you at least four weeks notice in writing. This usually takes place in April each year in line with government guidelines.
3. We will consult with tenants before new services and charges are introduced.

Your responsibilities:

4. You must pay your rent and other charges on or before the date it is due. The rent and other charges are due on Monday every week. If you choose to pay fortnightly or monthly you must pay in advance. We offer a number of methods of payment and these are set out in the tenant handbook. Examples of other charges include, but are not limited to, sheltered housing support charges, cleaning charges and heating charges.
5. If you have a joint tenancy, each joint tenant is responsible for paying the rent, other charges and any outstanding arrears. Even if one joint tenant leaves, both tenants will still be responsible for the full weekly charges for the property and any outstanding arrears until the tenancy is ended. For further information on joint tenancies, please contact your housing office.
6. You must pay any rent arrears due in accordance with any agreement entered into with us. This also applies to any arrears accrued from a previous tenancy you have held with us. The consequences of non-payment are included in the tenant handbook.

2. Repairs and improvements

Our responsibilities:

1. We are responsible for keeping the following items in good repair and working order:
 - the structure and outside of **your home including but not limited to** drains, gutters and pipes
 - all fittings, pipes and connections for supplying water, gas and electricity
 - all equipment for sanitation including basins, sinks, baths and toilets
 - **all kitchen units and worktops provided by the council**
 - all equipment that provides heating and hot water

If you live in a flat, we will keep the shared parts and services clean and in a good state of repair. This includes but is not limited to entrances, door entry systems, halls, stairways, lifts, passages, refuse chutes and lighting.

2. We will decorate the outside of your home and the shared parts when necessary.
3. We will keep communal grounds and landscaped areas that are our responsibility clear and tidy.

Your rights:

4. The right to repair

The right to repair makes sure that certain small, urgent repairs - known as 'qualifying' repairs are completed within a specified time. These are normally repairs that are likely to affect your health, safety or security. In certain circumstances you may get compensation if we fail to meet the requirements of the regulation. Further information on the scheme is included in the guide to repairs.

5. The right to make improvements (secure tenants only)

You have the right to improve your home as long as you get our written permission first. An improvement means an alteration or addition to your home. This includes, but is not limited to:

- the fixing of satellite dishes and aerials
- the installation of CCTV cameras
- the installation of hard flooring such as laminate flooring
- building and electrical works

You must apply for our permission and give full details of the work you want to carry out. You may also need planning or building regulation consent. The tenant handbook gives more details about this. **If you have an introductory tenancy we will not give you permission to carry out improvements or alterations to your home. You will need to seek permission once your tenancy becomes secure.**

6. The right to compensation for improvements

This scheme gives tenants the right to claim compensation for some authorised improvements that they have made to their home when they move out. Please contact your housing office for further information on qualifying criteria.

Your responsibilities:

7. You must let us know when a repair that is our responsibility needs to be done. You will find details of how to **contact** the repairs service in the guide to repairs.
8. You must keep your home, including fixtures and fittings, clean and in good condition and make sure that other members of your household and people visiting you do the same.
9. You are responsible for minor repairs and you should decorate all internal parts of your home as often as is necessary to keep them in good decorative order. You will find more details on this in the **guide to repairs**. **Exceptions are made in some cases for people over 70 years of age, people with a disability and sheltered housing tenants. Please contact the repairs helpdesk for further advice on your individual circumstances.**
10. You must allow our officers and people we authorise into your home at reasonable hours to:
 - inspect the condition of your home
 - carry out any work that may be necessary to your home or adjoining properties
 - inspect and maintain any gas and electrical installations
 - carry out annual servicing of the council's gas appliances to meet health & safety standards

We will give you reasonable notice of when access is needed, **this will vary according to the urgency of the situation**. Our contractors and employees may enter your home without giving notice if we believe that entry is necessary due to an emergency which could cause injury, or damage to your home or to a neighbouring property.

11. In an emergency you must give our officers and people we authorise immediate access to your home. **Emergencies may include situations which place you and / or your neighbours in danger or their properties at risk. For example, if the property is in a dangerous structural condition or burst pipes or overflowing water which can damage your home or neighbouring properties.**
12. You must get our written permission if you want to install a hard floor finish such as laminate flooring, hardwood overlay or ceramic tiles, or if you want to have bare floorboards in any room in your home. We will not refuse permission unreasonably but we will probably only grant permission if you live in a house or ground floor flat. You must use an underlay and ensure it is properly installed to minimise noise nuisance.

As the use of hard floor finishes can cause nuisance to your neighbours due to noise transmission, the following condition applies if we are aware of noise nuisance coming from your home:

- You must keep all floors, including hallways and stairs, covered with carpet and an underlay, or with a similar floor covering that has similar noise-reducing qualities. This does not apply to kitchens and bathrooms where floor coverings have been supplied by the council.

If you carry out any of the above alterations without our written permission and fail to put down an appropriate floor covering, we will be entitled to remove it. If we do so we are entitled to recover reasonable costs from you for carrying out this work. The tenant handbook gives more details about this. **If you have an introductory tenancy we will not give you permission to carry out improvements or alterations to your home. You will need to seek permission once your tenancy becomes secure.**

13. If you or any member of your household or visitors cause any damage to the property or any shared areas, you will have to make good the damage or pay repair costs. If the damage was not caused by accident, the council will normally support any police prosecution that may follow. The tenant handbook gives more details of what is covered under this condition.

3. Living in your home

Our responsibilities:

1. We may provide, or help to arrange, support services to help you to maintain your tenancy and maintain the security and safety of the home, as agreed with you. These support services may be provided by us or by an agency on our behalf. **Support services include sheltered housing scheme managers, support from the tenancy sustainment team and referrals to specialist money advice agencies.**

Your rights:

Your right to live in the property

2. This agreement gives you the right, as a tenant, to live in the property unless there is a legal reason for us to take action against you to recover possession of the property. For example, this might happen if:
 - you break any of the conditions of this agreement. If you do we may take legal action to force you to meet the conditions, or ask the court for permission to evict you
 - you stop using the property as your only or main home
 - you have given false or fraudulent information to get the tenancy
 - we need to carry out redevelopment or major repairs to the property, which we cannot do unless you move out
 - there is a legal ground for possession under the Housing Act 1985, the Housing Act 1996 or any other law

Your right to take in lodgers (secure tenants only)

3. You may take in lodgers or have members of your family living with you, **as long as this does not cause overcrowding**. Your housing officer can advise you of the number of people that can live in your home. If you take in a lodger, you are responsible for them and their visitors' behaviour, including any noise nuisance or damage they may cause. Any anti-social behaviour by your lodger(s) may lead to us taking action against your tenancy.

Your right to sublet part of your home (secure tenants only)

4. You may sublet part of your home, **as long as you get our written agreement first**. You are not allowed to sublet the whole of your home. If you do sublet part of your home, you are responsible for the behaviour of your sub-tenant and their visitors, including any noise nuisance or damage they may cause. Any anti-social behaviour by your sub-tenants may lead to us taking action against your tenancy.

The right of assignment / the right to exchange

5. Your tenancy may only be transferred to someone else (known as assignment) in the following circumstances:

If you are an introductory tenant

- By a Court Order under the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973, the Matrimonial & Family Proceedings Act 1984, The Children Act 1989 or the Family Law Act 1996.
- To a 'potential successor', meaning someone who would be qualified to take over your tenancy in the event of your death.

The tenant handbook gives more information on this.

If you are a secure tenant

- Under the Right to Exchange, with our written permission, **often referred to as a mutual exchange**.
- By a Court Order under the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973, the Matrimonial & Family Proceedings Act 1984, The Children Act 1989 or the Family Law Act 1996.
- To a 'potential successor', meaning someone who would be qualified to take over your tenancy in the event of your death.

The tenant handbook gives more information on this.

The right to buy (secure tenants only)

6. Secure tenants have the right to buy their homes subject to certain criteria. The right to buy does not apply to sheltered or specially adapted properties. Please contact your housing office for further information on qualifying criteria.

The right to manage

7. You have the right to take over the management of your own home. This right can be taken by tenants forming a tenant management organisation in a particular block or estate. Please contact your housing office for further information on qualifying criteria.

Your responsibilities:

8. You or any member of your household may not run a business from your home without our written permission. Such permission will depend on the nature of the business and its impact on your neighbours. You may ask for permission from your housing office. You may also need planning permission. We have included details of how to apply for planning permission in the tenant handbook.
9. You must live in your property as your main or only home. If you do not do this, if you abandon the property or return the keys without giving proper notice as described in clause 5.1 of this agreement for example, we will take action to end the tenancy by serving you with a Notice to Quit. We will serve this notice by sending it to or leaving it at the property which is the subject of this agreement **if we do not know where you live**. This notice will give you at least four weeks written notice ending on a Monday. If you have left someone else in the property, we will start court proceedings to regain possession of the property when the notice ends.
10. You must inform us if you are, or expect to be, absent from your home for 28 days or more. **This is to ensure that if there are any issues with the property while you are away, we can contact you or a nominated representative.**
11. In houses and bungalows, you may use the loft space for storage at your own risk. We will hold you responsible for any damage this causes to the property and we will not be liable for any damage caused to your possessions. You will need our written permission if you wish to use the loft space as living area. **The loft space must not be used in flats for storage or living space.**

4. Being a good neighbour

Brighton & Hove is a unique place in which to live, work, and visit. All residents, visitors, and businesses have the right to enjoy the city, live peacefully in their homes and neighbourhoods, feel safe, and enjoy the resources and culture that the city has to offer, free of concerns for their well-being. Brighton & Hove City Council, together with its partners, is committed to tackling nuisance and anti-social behaviour in the city.

Our responsibilities:

1. We will not interfere with how you use your home as long as you keep to the terms of this agreement or unless there is any other reason under the Housing Acts of 1985 and 1996 or any other law where we may need to.
2. We will investigate any complaints of nuisance or harassment and **will** take appropriate action. **We may take legal action to evict you if you or they cause a nuisance or harass or threaten any person because of race, colour, gender, nationality, religion, age, mental illness, disability, sexuality or for any other reason**, or if you or they commit a crime or are convicted of an indictable offence at the property or in the **neighbourhood**. We may also take legal action to get an injunction against you or any person you allow to act anti-socially and to recover the costs of this action from you. We may make a referral for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order and, if problems are caused by a child under your control, you may be required to undertake parenting work or we may apply to the court for a Parenting Order. We are unlikely to offer you another tenancy if you have been evicted because of anti-social behaviour.

Your responsibilities:

3. You are responsible for the behaviour of all members of your household, including your children and any lodgers, sub-tenants or visitors ('they'). This applies in your home and in the shared parts of your block, **estate and neighbourhood**.
4. You **or** they must not do or threaten to do anything which causes, or is likely to cause, a nuisance or annoy someone else. Examples of anti-social activities, which cause nuisance and annoyance include, but are not limited to:
 - loud music from televisions, radios, music systems and musical instruments
 - noisy parties
 - too much noise from DIY activities
 - shouting and swearing
 - banging and slamming doors
 - dogs barking and fouling
 - dumping rubbish
 - vandalism and graffiti
5. You **or** they must not harass or threaten any other person because of race, colour, gender, nationality, religion, age, mental illness, disability, sexuality or for any other reason. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:
 - violence, threats of violence or violent gestures
 - using abusive or insulting words or behaviour
 - writing threatening, abusive or insulting graffiti
 - damage or threats to damage property
 - intimidating anyone in any way
6. You **or** they must not use or threaten to use violence, abuse or use threatening behaviour to anyone in the area of your home or the area of our offices, including other residents, our

employees, agents working on our behalf or other people visiting or carrying out lawful activities in the area of your home or our offices.

7. You or they must not use your home or shared area for any criminal or illegal activity such as paedophilia or drug dealing.
8. You must not do the following or allow another person to do the following in or around your home:
 - use without prescription, grow or produce any drugs or substances covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (or any other relevant act or regulations)
 - supply or offer to supply any of these drugs to another person
 - possess any of these drugs with the intention of supplying them to another person
9. You must not use or threaten to use violence by using physical, mental, emotional or sexual abuse against any other person living with you, anyone you have invited into your home, or anyone living in or in the locality of our properties. If you do and that person or their children have to leave the property because of violence, or threats of violence or abuse against them, we may take steps to evict you from your home.
10. You or they must not interfere with emergency alarm equipment, such as community alarm equipment, fire safety equipment or security equipment in shared areas, such as door entry systems and closed circuit television equipment. **You must keep security and communal doors shut at all times.**
11. You or they must co-operate with us and your neighbours to keep any shared areas clean and tidy. All shared areas and emergency exits must be kept clear of items. You will need our written permission to store a mobility scooter in shared areas. If we need to clear any items belonging to you from shared areas, you may be required to pay our costs.
12. You or they must not block local housing roadways and other vehicle access, and must keep them and car parking spaces clear of unroadworthy vehicles and other obstructions.
13. You or they must not carry out non-routine car repairs, like paint spraying, or dump unroadworthy vehicles in shared areas.
14. You or they must not park a vehicle, caravan, boat or trailer on any paths, gardens, yard, car park, service road, grassland or other land belonging to us without our written consent. You or they must not store vehicles or vehicle parts in your garden.
15. You or they must not keep a dog, cat, bird or other animal in your home without our written permission - the tenant handbook gives details of when we will give permission. Your pet(s) must not annoy or frighten other people, nor must you allow your pet to foul shared areas. If nuisance occurs, we can withdraw our permission. It is a breach of your tenancy agreement if you are convicted of causing cruelty and suffering towards an animal.
16. You or they must not do anything to encourage pests, vermin or animals that may cause a nuisance or damage at your home or in the neighbourhood. Examples of this include but are not limited to feeding wild pigeons and seagulls and not disposing of rubbish properly.
17. You will need written permission to store potentially flammable or explosive substances in your home, for example, gas cannisters including oxygen cylinders. You must also not do or keep anything which might affect the insurance of the property.
18. If you have a garden, patio or balcony, you must keep it tidy. You must not dump rubbish in the garden, including household items or vehicle parts. You must not allow any garden plants, trees or shrubs to grow onto or over neighbouring land. If you fail to keep these areas tidy we may do the work and you will have to pay our costs. If you are experiencing difficulties maintaining your garden, extra help may be available. Please contact your housing office for further advice.
19. You or they must not smoke in any enclosed shared areas.

5. Ending your tenancy

When you decide to end your tenancy:

1. You must give us at least four weeks written notice before you want to end your tenancy (or two weeks if transferring to another Brighton & Hove City Council property), which must end at 12 noon on a Monday.

You must return all your keys and any pendant alarms you may have been issued with to your housing office, or the scheme manager if you live in sheltered housing before this time. If you return your keys later than this, we will charge you the full charges for the property until the end of the week in which you return them.

If the Monday is a Bank Holiday, you must return your keys to your housing office before 12 noon on the Tuesday following the holiday. If you return the keys without giving the required written notice, we might not accept this as an end to the tenancy.

2. You must pay the rent and all charges for the whole period of the notice, even if you have moved out and returned the keys before the Monday on which the notice period ends. If you fail to clear any outstanding rent and charges before you move out, we will take action to recover the debt.
3. You must take all furniture, floor coverings, belongings and rubbish from your home (including but not limited to lofts, sheds and gardens) and leave the property and the fixtures and fittings in a reasonable condition and state of repair. You should seek advice from your housing office if you are unsure of what to remove from the property.
4. If you fail to clear the property and/or leave it in a state of disrepair, we will charge you for the cost of removing the items that you leave behind and for any work that is necessary. We will not be responsible for any items that you leave behind.
5. You must not leave anybody living in your home when you move out, such as a lodger. If you do so, we will take court action to remove them from the property and you and your lodger will have to pay the costs.

When we want to end your tenancy:

6. Introductory tenants only

If you have an introductory tenancy, we can only end your tenancy with a court order. We will only ask the court for a possession order against you if you break the conditions of this tenancy agreement or there is any other reason under the Housing Act 1985, the Housing Act 1996 or another law why we need possession of your home.

If you break your tenancy conditions, we may serve a 'Notice to Terminate' on you. This notice will say that the court will be asked to make an order for possession and give the reasons why the action is being taken. It will also give you the date after which possession proceedings will start. This will be at least four weeks after the notice is served.

If you do not use the property as your main or only home or move out without giving proper notice, we can end your tenancy by serving a 'Notice to Quit' giving four weeks notice.

We will serve a notice on you by either delivering it to you in person, sending it to you by post at the property, leaving it at the property, or giving it to another adult at the property.

7. Secure tenants only

If you have a secure tenancy, we can only end your tenancy with a court order. We can only ask the court to grant a possession order if one or more of the grounds for possession set out in the Housing Act 1985 exists. If one or more of the grounds exist, we may serve a 'Notice of Seeking Possession' on you.

This notice will say that the court will be asked to make an order for possession and give the reasons why this action is being taken. It will also tell you the earliest date that possession proceedings can be started. This will normally be at least four weeks after the notice is served.

If you do not use the property as your main or only home or move out without giving proper notice, we can end your tenancy by serving a 'Notice to Quit' giving four weeks notice.

We will serve a notice on you by either delivering it to you in person, sending it to you by post at the property, leaving it at the property, or giving it to another adult at the property.

Death of a tenant

The right of succession

8. In the event of your death, the tenancy may pass on to your spouse or civil partner, a joint tenant or a member of your family if certain conditions are met. This is called 'succession' and the conditions are:
- any spouse or civil partner can succeed to the tenancy as long as they are living at the property as their only or main home at the time of your death
 - any other member of your family can succeed to the tenancy if they **were resident** with you for 12 months before your death and used it as their only or main home
 - if you have a joint tenancy, the tenancy will pass to your joint tenant and this will count as a succession

If you have already succeeded to this tenancy, there can be no further succession. **If there has already been a succession to the tenancy, please contact your housing office for further advice on rehousing options.**

A member of your family who is entitled to succeed, may be required to move to smaller accommodation provided by the council if the property is larger than they need.

Full details of the conditions for succession can be found in the tenant handbook.

9. In the event that there is no one qualified to succeed at the time of your death, the tenancy becomes part of your estate. If you have left a will, the tenancy can be brought to an end by a personal representative of your estate. The personal representative must give at least four weeks notice in writing ending on a Monday. Your estate is also responsible for other conditions of this agreement as set out in clauses 5.1 to 5.5 of this agreement.
10. In the event that there is no will, known as 'intestate', legal responsibility for your tenancy passes to the Public Trustee. We will end the tenancy by serving a **notice** on the Public Trustee. A copy of this notice will be given to any next of kin that you may have.

Full details on ending a tenancy in these circumstances are included in the tenant handbook.

Data Protection Act 1998

The information we hold about you, will be used for housing management purposes. We may also use it for other council purposes, where the law permits us. The council is registered under the Data Protection Act 1998 for these purposes.

This authority is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers. We may check information provided by you or a third party with other information we hold. This enables us to check the accuracy of information to prevent or detect crime, and to protect public funds in other ways as permitted by law. We may also share this information with other bodies administering public funds for these purposes. We will not disclose information about you to anyone, unless the law permits us to.

The council is the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998. If you want to know more about the information we have about you, or the way we use your information, please write to the council's Data Protection Officer, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Hove, BN3 4AH.



Your Tenancy Details

- Tenant copy
- Brighton & Hove City Council copy

This tenancy agreement is between:

Name(s) of tenant(s) _____
and Brighton & Hove City Council

The address and postcode of the property rented in this agreement is:

The weekly charges for the property at the start of your tenancy are:

- Rent £ _____
- Heating £ _____
- Support charge £ _____
- Ground maintenance £ _____
- Cleaning services £ _____
- Water rates £ _____
- Other charges (please specify)
_____ £ _____
_____ £ _____
- **Total** £ _____

Housing debt from any previous tenancy:

You also have to pay £ _____ and have agreed to keep to the arrangement you have with us to repay the debt.

The names of the people who will live in the property are as follows:

Full name	Date of birth	Relationship to you
		Tenant

The maximum number of people allowed to live in your home is _____

Photograph of tenants

Permission is given to keep the following pets:

Permission is subject to you keeping to the terms of this agreement.

You have an introductory tenancy

You have a secure tenancy

The tenancy begins on ____/____/____ under the conditions set out in this agreement.

The provisional date your introductory tenancy becomes secure is ____/____/____

If you have read and understood this tenancy agreement, and agree to the conditions set out in it, please sign below.

I/we have received the tenant handbook and guide to repairs

Tenant's signature: _____

Tenant's name: _____

Joint tenant's signature: _____

Joint tenant's name: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Signed for Brighton & Hove City Council by:

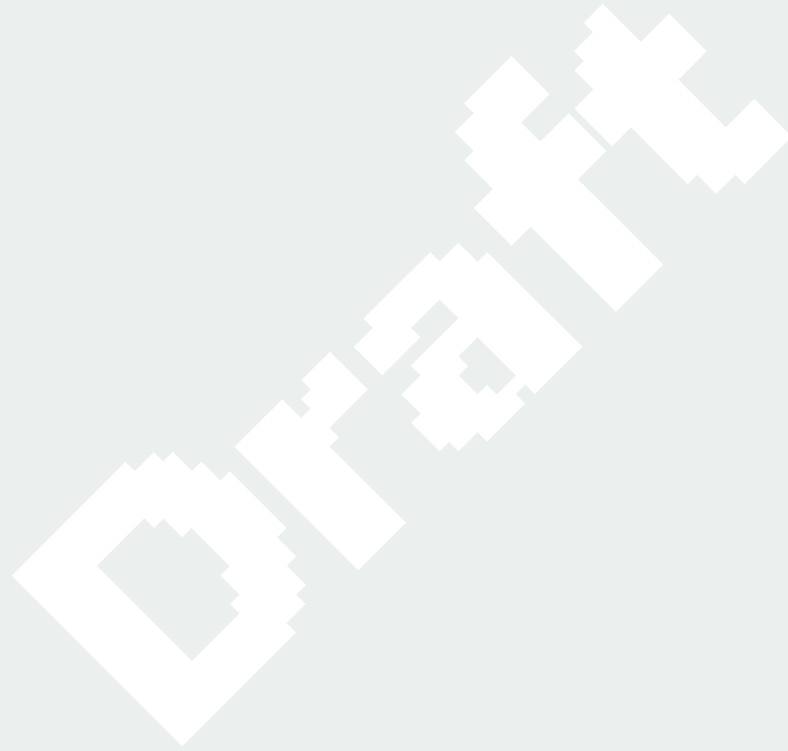
Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Under Section 48 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1987, if you need to give us any notices, please send or deliver them to: Brighton & Hove City Council, King's House, Grand Avenue, Hove, BN3 2LS.



Translation? Tick this box and take to any council office.

ترجمة؟ ضع علامة في المربع وخذها إلى مكتب البلدية. Arabic

অনুবাদ? বক্সে টিক চিহ্ন দিয়ে কাউন্সিল অফিসে নিয়ে যান। Bengali

需要翻譯? 請在這方格內加剔, 並送回任何市議會的辦事處。Cantonese

ترجمه؟ لطفاً این مربع را علامتگذاری نموده و آن را به هر یک از دفاتر شهرداری ارائه نمایید. Farsi

Traduction? Veuillez cocher la case et apporter au council. French

需要翻译? 请在这方格内划勾, 并送回任何市议会的办事处。Mandarin

Tłumaczenie? Zaznacz to okienko i zwróć do któregośkolwiek biura samorządu lokalnego (council office). Polish

Tradução? Coloque um visto na quadrícula e leve a uma qualquer repartição de poder local (council office). Portuguese

Tercümesi için kareyi işaretleyiniz ve bir semt belediye bürosuna veriniz Turkish

other (please state)

This can also be made available in large print, Braille, or on CD or audio tape

An easy read document to accompany this agreement is also available



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 47

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Housing Management Service Improvement Plan update		
Date of Meeting:	7 December 2009		
Report of:	Director of Adult Social Care & Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Diane Freeland	Tel: 29-3841
	E-mail:	Diane.Freeland@Brighton-Hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report informs Housing Management Consultative Committee of the progress made in the delivery of the Housing Management Service Improvement Plan 2009 – 12.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Housing Management Consultative Committee notes the progress to date and the priorities for year two of the service improvement plan.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The Housing Management Service Improvement Plan, which is available in the members' room or available on request presents a programme for managing and maintaining council housing over the next three years. It has been developed with the overall objective of achieving excellent housing management services for council tenants and leaseholders in Brighton and Hove.
- 3.2 The priorities of the plan are:
- Improve services to an excellent standard, with residents at the heart of everything we do.
 - Improve the quality and sustainability of our homes and neighbourhoods.
 - Deliver Value for Money services and maintain a sustainable 30 year business plan.
 - Make best use of our housing stock to address housing need.
 - Ensure that social housing provides a platform for reducing inequality and creating opportunity.

3.3 The three year plan is being delivered through the operational business plan and the Housing Improvement Programme. The Housing Improvement Programme co-ordinates the delivery of all of the large improvement projects contained within the annual business plan and is overseeing the transformation of the housing management division. The delivery of the programme is overseen by the Housing Improvement Programme Board. The Programme is split into four core work streams:

- Housing Investment
- Access & Customer Care
- Diversity, Inequality and Sustainability
- Business Improvement

3.4 During year one of the service improvement plan the following projects are underway:

3.5 Delivering a 3 star service

The Audit Commission carried out an advice and assistance visit in March 2009 on our income management service, our arrangements for resident involvement and the business plan. Since this visit a project group have been reviewing how all of our services are performing. We have been identifying gaps in our service delivery and taking steps to meet these gaps. We will also be completing a self assessment on our service identifying our key strengths and more importantly our areas for improvement. We will seek feedback from residents to see whether they agree or disagree with our findings as it's vital that we know how well residents feel we deliver different services.

3.6 Financial Inclusion Strategy

By working in partnership with residents and local agencies we have been developing a financial inclusion strategy that we hope will have an impact on poverty by making sure residents have access to appropriate financial products and services and the opportunity, ability and confidence to make informed decisions about their financial circumstances. We have already made good progress towards promoting financial inclusion for our residents through a number of services and initiatives including eBenefits, Citizens Advice Bureau Money Advice and Financial Inclusion Health Check. The Income Management Working Group and the Financial Inclusion Project Group will be working with officers to finalise the strategy which is due for completion in December 2009.

3.7 Resident Involvement Strategy

Work is proceeding on the review of the Tenant Compact, the agreement that sets out the way tenants, leaseholders, councillors and officers work together and the resident involvement strategy. Within this will be the establishment of a Tenant Engagement Framework and this work is being carried forward for tenants by the Tenant Compact Monitoring Group.

The review is expected to be completed by spring 2010 with a new compact and strategy in place by summer 2010. The overriding aim of the work will be to ensure that customer priorities are central to the business planning process and that a variety of methods of consultation are in place to monitor achievement against undertaking.

3.8 Repairs and Maintenance Partnership

The Mobilisation of the new Repairs, Refurbishment and Improvement Strategic Partnership is now underway, getting everything in place for the contract start in April 2010. Mears have brought in an experienced team to organise and manage the mobilisation process from their side including experts in project management, procurement, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Human Resources (HR), transport fleet and buildings. These staff along with others from the Brighton & Hove branch will be working closely with council officers in order to plan and undertake the tasks necessary for a successful start to the new partnership.

Two Partnership Workshop events were held in October which involved staff from Mears and the council working with residents to look at how the partnership best meet their needs and aspirations. The workshops resulted in a Partnering Charter which clearly sets out the principles by which the partnership will operate and the partners work together.

3.9 Local Delivery Vehicle

The Local Delivery Vehicle, Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes, has been set up by the council to generate additional funding to invest in improvements to the council's housing stock. The 12 board members – including four council tenants appointed by Area Panels – have met regularly since December. Tenant board members have reported progress to all Area Panel meetings since February and attended to answer questions. A tenant board member is Vice Chair and all sit on three sub-committees recently established to look in detail at finance, legal and property matters.

- 3.9.1 The council has worked with board members and advisers to progress the draft legal documents, funding arrangements, how empty properties would be identified as suitable for leasing to the company up to the agreed maximum of 499 over five years and how they would be let and managed by the council after refurbishment. Board members have visited the 106 properties Full Council agreed should be leased to the company and reviewed planned works to convert them into self contained flats and bring them up to standard. The council has also involved board representatives in favourable discussions with banks interested in funding the project, and a high street bank has issued a letter of support. An update on funding and consents is included elsewhere on the agenda.

3.10 Turning the Tide

The draft social exclusion strategy 'Turning the Tide' outlines the aims and objectives to address anti social behaviour, intergenerational social exclusion and quality of life experiences for residents in social housing living in areas of multiple deprivation in Brighton & Hove. The strategy is a work in progress and comments and feedback from key stakeholders, partners and council tenants will be sought before presenting a final draft to council for approval later in the financial year. A pilot in Moulsecoomb and Bevendean is underway and a series of resident focus groups will be run in the pilot area to look at key themes and identify priorities for the local community. The pilot will last nine months with an evaluation completed by July 2010.

3.11 Value for Money

As part of the council's value for money programme, a housing report was produced in October 2008 with value for money opportunities identified. Our progress against the action plan is attached at Appendix 1.

A cost benchmarking project group has also been formed to analyse and understand the costs involved in delivering our service. This group will be undertaking benchmarking (comparing our costs and performance with similar organisations) to enable us to make value for money assessments on our operations across the broad range of services we provide. We recognise that we need to link performance and cost and by doing so we can make efficiencies and direct money to services that residents want. Current work includes a review of our management costs and a review of estates service costs. We intend to share information in future with residents through our performance reports and working groups.

3.12 Website Review

We are currently looking at improving the accessibility and usability of our housing management website pages, with the aim of improving access to information and making it easier for residents to contact us and request services. This project involves researching examples of best practice, putting together proposals for improvements and reviewing the content to ensure we are providing relevant and clear information. An on line survey will be launched in December seeking feedback from residents on their views of our current pages and what residents would like to see on the pages in future.

3.13 Customer Access Strategy

A report was brought to Housing Management Consultative Committee on 12 October regarding the review of customer access arrangements for the housing management service. The project involves an analysis of previous work undertaken to improve customer access, a review of current arrangements, and the development of a new customer access model and strategy for the service. Residents need to be fully involved in the development of this strategy and issues will be considered at a meeting for Area Panel members. A further report detailing our findings will be brought back to Housing Management Consultative Committee in February 2010.

3.14 Sustainability

The housing energy efficiency working group was formed in March 2009 with the key aim to contribute to the sustainability agenda including reducing fuel poverty, encouraging change in individual behaviours and increase community action on climate change initiatives. Some key initiatives undertaken so far include looking at a reduction in energy consumption in both communal settings and individual properties and water billings. Projects to be taken forward include considering housing management's contribution to the 10:10 campaign (cutting 10% of our carbon emissions in 2010), identifying and training tenant energy champions and harnessing resident interest in growing, buying and preparing local food and supporting sustainable communities by engaging in activities on local land with their neighbours. Updates on the progress of the working group will be reported back to Housing Management Consultative Committee at six to nine monthly intervals.

3.15 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) – Procurement of a new housing management system

A project manager to oversee the purchase and implementation of a new ICT system for housing management is currently being recruited. The new system will enable the service to improve the way it manages properties, rents and related services.

3.16 Year two of the Service Improvement Plan will see us embedding the new repairs contract and making further progress in increasing the number of homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard. We will also deliver phase one of the customer access review, agree local priorities with residents and initiate the ICT project to procure a new housing management software system.

4. **CONSULTATION**

4.1 The Service Improvement Plan aims to meet the council's, strategic housing and resident priorities. The plan was developed with residents through the wide range of working groups to seek views on how we achieve excellence in service delivery. Ideas promoted by residents at citywide groups, monitoring groups, area panels, the city assembly and Housing Management Consultative Committee have also helped inform the priorities within this plan.

4.2 The plan has been informed by the Housing Strategy 2009-14. Extensive consultation was undertaken through a three stage process. Findings from this consultation and the strategy have helped inform our service priorities.

4.3 Residents will continue to be involved in the projects to deliver the plan and a bi-annual progress report will be brought to Housing Management Consultative Committee.

5. **FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Financial Implications:

5.1 This report notes the progress to date and the priorities for year two of the Service Improvement Plan and therefore has no direct financial implications. Any

efficiency savings or service pressures identified as a result of the Service Improvement Plan will be included in the future HRA Budget reports and updated 30 year HRA Business Plans.

Finance Officer Consulted Sue Chapman

Date: 10/11/09

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 There are no direct legal implications arising from the report's recommendation. Any strategies developed as a result of the initiatives outlined will need to be scrutinised to ensure that they are legally sound, and have been formulated with due regard for the Human Rights Act.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 06/11/09

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the Service Improvement Plan. The Service Improvement Plan also directly aims to positively address inequality through priority five 'ensure that social housing provides a platform for reducing inequality and creating opportunity'.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The Housing Energy Efficiency Working Group aims to contribute to the sustainability agenda. Housing is also one of the 12 key objectives of the council's Sustainability Strategy which aims to ensure that everyone has access to decent, affordable housing that meets their needs. The Service Improvement Plan supports this aim.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 Providing good quality housing and support is essential to help reduce anti social behaviour and other crime and support the victims. Specific actions within the Service Improvement Plan aim to provide safer communities through a balance of enforcement and support.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 There are no direct risk or opportunity management implications arising from this report.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 We recognise that the drive to achieve excellence in housing management will not be a success if carried out in isolation. It must recognise and address the needs and aspirations of the city and therefore the plan aims to support the priorities and aims of the Corporate Plan 2008- 11, Housing Strategy 2009-14 and the 2020 Community Strategy.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 To not have a Service Improvement Plan. However this is not recommended as the Service Improvement Plan was developed with the goal of providing excellent housing management services. Had the plan not been developed it would compromise our ability to deliver an excellent service and our core strategic priorities would not reflect the priorities and aspirations of residents.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To provide Housing Management Consultative Committee with an update on our progress towards achieving the actions outlined in the Service Improvement Plan 2009-12.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

- 1. Value for Money Action Plan

Documents In Members' Rooms

- 1. Housing Management Service Improvement Plan 2009-12

Background Documents

None

Appendix 1 - Value for Money Action Plan

Value for Money issue	Objective	Performance Measures	Timescale	Progress
<p>Links between housing management and housing strategy</p> <p>Priority = HIGH</p>	<p>Housing wide review of customer access. Link to customer access vision.</p> <p>Including Business Process Improvement Work.</p>	<p>Increase in customer satisfaction (target increase by %).</p> <p>Increase in number and use of access channels.</p> <p>Reduction in duplication of access channels.</p>	<p>Review completed by end of 2009.</p>	<p>Review of Housing Management Customer Access including links with Housing Strategy currently under way. New strategy for January 2010.</p>
<p>Use of agency staff</p> <p>Priority = HIGH</p>	<p>Evaluate costs and benefits of key areas of agency staff use.</p> <p>Set clear targets for reducing annual spend on agency staff and consultants.</p>	<p>Spend on agency staff (target = reduction by 25%)</p>	<p>Cost benefit analysis by December 2008.</p> <p>Target set for reporting in April 2009.</p>	<p>Aiming to reduce Housing Management agency staff costs in 2009 (mainly through Estates Service and Sheltered Housing reviews and appointment of permanent staff).</p>
<p>Unit costs for housing management service</p> <p>Priority = HIGH</p>	<p>Service redesign to reflect new strategic framework for housing management.</p>	<p>Housing Management Unit Cost (target = reduction by £4).</p>	<p>Housing Management 3 year service improvement plan agreed by November 2008.</p> <p>Service structures reviewed and redesign implemented during 2009.</p>	<p>Group Management Team re-structure underway. Further changes to follow.</p> <p>Retained repairs service currently being re-structured to meet needs of new Strategic Partnership.</p>

Value for Money issue	Objective	Performance Measures	Timescale	Progress
<p>Information Communication Technology (ICT) systems not always fit for purpose.</p> <p>Priority = Medium</p>	<p>Review of ICT needs, costs and options for future.</p>	<p>Cost of ICT as % of overall spend (target = reduction % of overall spend).</p>	<p>Initial review complete by November 2008.</p> <p>Business case for joining corporate electronic document & record management – May 2009.</p> <p>Business case for mobile working development/pilot May 2009.</p>	<p>Project Manager for replacement of current Housing Management ICT system (OHMS) currently being recruited.</p>
<p>Income Collection performance.</p> <p>Priority = Medium</p>	<p>Implement measures to increase rent collection.</p>	<p>% of rent collected (target = increase by 0.5%).</p>	<p>Focused rent arrears marketing strategy agreed.</p> <p>Marketing campaign during 2009/10.</p> <p>Introduce 48 or 50 week rent year from April 2010.</p>	<p>2007/08 result = 97.75% 2008/09 result = 98.16% The percentage increase is 0.42%.</p> <p>New leaflets agreed and in use (including re-charges and e-benefits).</p> <p>Taken forward though Financial Inclusion Project in 2009.</p> <p>Business case for changing rent year needs to be established.</p>

Value for Money issue	Objective	Performance Measures	Timescale	Progress
Level of sickness absence. Priority = High	Participate in sickness absence pilot.	Average days per employee (reduction in average number of days. Target = 9 days).	Evaluation of sickness pilot by March 2009.	Sickness pilot successful with reduction in Housing Management sickness absence rate. The average so far for 2009/10 is 12.9 days as compared to 19.32 in 2008/9 (a decrease of 33%).
Adaptations (cross cutting impact Children's & Young Peoples Trust and Adult Social Care). Priority = High	Identify local costs, impact and potential Value for Money benefits of changing policies and spend on adaptations. And identify spend to save opportunities.	Performance measure should be identified as part of this work.	Develop business case for increasing adaptations funding based on local cost benefit analysis by January 2009.	This action is being taken forward by Housing Strategy who is currently looking at future arrangements.
Separate housing management and corporate procurement strategies and contracts. Priority = Medium	Identify all potential repairs and maintenance areas with potential for single contract and develop forward plan.	Number of joint contracts.	Forward plan produced by December 2008.	Meetings held with Property & Design in 2009. Limited scope for linking up current contracts. Currently reviewing all contracts that are not let on long term or included in the new Partnership.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 48

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Improving Access to Housing Adaptations		
Date of Meeting:	7 December 2009		
Report of:	Joy Hollister, Director of Adult Social Care and Housing		
Contact Officer:	Martin Reid	Tel	293321
	Email	Martin.reid@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Housing adaptations, the removal of the physical barriers that are created within older and disabled people's homes, are key to delivering independent living and enabling people to have choice and control. National research "Better Outcomes, lower costs" (ODI/University of Bristol, 2007) sets out evidence that timely adaptations and appropriate equipment can produce direct savings to the public purse in terms of reducing residential care, hospital admissions and delayed discharges. The Audit Commission found that a one off investment of £20,000 in adaptations of an older person's home can make savings of £6,000 a year in home care costs.¹
- 1.2 The Housing Adaptations Service delivered over 500 adaptations to Council and private sector homes during 2008/09 within Care Quality Commission (CQC) target times. The service has doubled expenditure on Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) over the past three years and has increased investment in adaptations overall through review of the Private Sector Renewal programme and successful bids for additional capital through the BEST partnership. Housing Adaptations Team waiting lists have been cut and better use of existing housing stock and routine consideration of alternative housing options have both become more consistently promoted. In addition, Adult Social Care is meeting performance targets for assessment and delivery of services.
- 1.3 However, there remains concern that while Adult Social Care (ASC) meet their current performance targets and the Housing Adaptations Team meet CQC targets for major adaptations, cases can take too long to get to the Housing Service. Current figures indicate that 43% of Housing Adaptations OT cases have been with the council for over 6 months before they get to the Housing OT team. Accessing services can be a disjointed and fragmented experience for the customer with services being split across different sites and service areas

¹ Audit Commission (2009) 'Building Better Lives – getting the best from strategic housing'

and the number of 'hand off's' within the process prior to delivery of the actual adaptations are too many. There is also a need to continue to ensure that our limited resources are being used effectively in the face of rising demand, increasing complexity of cases and potential reductions in capital funding, so that disabled people get the services they need.

1.4 This paper outlines proposals which aim to:

- Promote a more preventative approach through a single point of access in Housing Strategy to enable customers to maximise their independence and quality of life through a range of housing options that includes, but is not limited to, a request for and provision of adaptations. Early intervention, and a tenure based response, will help prevent cases going into Community Care Assessment where the need for adaptations to the physical environment is the only issue and could be dealt with by re-housing the household for example.
- Promote a preventative approach and early intervention through the development of trained Trusted Assessors within Housing.
- Promote a more proactive approach to procurement by working closely with housing management and Mears to bring more council homes up to Lifetime Homes and wheelchair accessible standard through the best use of mainstream capital budgets.
- Where cases do go through Community Care Assessment and the need for an adaptation is identified, to develop a 'whole systems approach' to delivery of that major adaptation as quickly as possible by fully integrating the assessment, recommendation and delivery of all major adaptations (those over £1,000) within the existing Housing Adaptations Team in Housing Strategy Division to ensure better, clearer and quicker delivery. Adult Social Care and the Integrated Community Equipment Service would continue to deliver minor adaptations in the private sector.

1.5 The proposal is framed by the need to:

- Reduce inequality
- Improve customer satisfaction
- Speed up the delivery of major adaptations and bring forward the consideration of alternative housing options
- Simplify the service provision
- Deliver value for money in the use of staff resources
- Deliver value for money in the use of housing resources and of capital budgets
- Improve customer information and involvement

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Housing Management Consultative Committee recommends to the Cabinet Member for Housing:

- (1) That the Council moves towards a preventative approach to managing major adaptations demand proactively rather than as a response to a request for a Community Care Assessment.

- (2) That the council improves and simplifies the assessment and delivery of major adaptations (over £1,000) by focusing all assessment, recommendation and service delivery of major adaptations within the Housing Adaptations Service.
- (3) That capital and staff resources are realigned to this effect (as outlined in 3.11 below).

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

Drivers for Change

3.1 Customer/population

Brighton and Hove is recognised for having higher levels of physical disability in its general population than the national average. Housing problems are compounded by much of the City being hilly preventing full wheelchair access. Many homes were built in the 19th Century and subsequently converted into flats, often with small rooms and narrow stairways making accessibility and adaptation difficult.

Projections show a rising demand for housing adaptations in the City. Key areas include:

- General growth in the number of households in the City.
- An ageing population, in particular, a projected growth of more vulnerable older households in the City.
- Applicants with disabilities, in particular children, are living longer and displaying more complex needs.
- More people requiring adaptations remaining at home rather than in residential care settings.

The 2005 Housing Needs Survey found that 19.8% of households in the City contain somebody with a long term illness or disability (around 22,362 households).

The largest group affected by a named support need were those with a walking difficulty but who did not use a wheelchair, representing 52.3% of those with a support need. 8.1% of all households reported that they contained a member who was a wheelchair user, suggesting 1,765 households in the City as a whole.

There is a projected 15% increase in the retired population and 60% in the over 80 year old population up to 2026. Over a quarter of all people with a disability are over 75 and over half have a walking difficulty with likely requirements for adaptations.

The Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey (2008) estimated that there is a need for around 916 Major Adaptations each year in the Private Sector. Currently around 124 Adaptations are completed each year.

There is a disproportionate impact on social housing occupiers. The Council rented sector has over double the average of households and people with a disability when compared with other main tenures in the City. 35% of those currently on the Housing Adaptations Occupational Therapy Team (HAOT) waiting list are Council Tenants. A further 14% are Housing Association Tenants.

Social Housing tenants make up a total of 49% of the current HAOT waiting list. Social Housing stock in Brighton & Hove represents only around 15% of the city's housing.

3.2 Financial

Local Authorities have a statutory duty under the Community Care Act to assess and meet people's needs which may include the need for an adaptation or move to suitable housing. Local Authorities have a statutory duty under the 1970 Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act and the 1996 Housing Grants Construction & Regeneration Act to meet the adaptations needs of disabled people. Rising costs and increasing demand and complexity of cases has put pressure on the adaptations service in Brighton & Hove along with other Local Authorities in the country.

Unit costs have risen for adaption in recent years, partly because of the rise in equipment costs, such as tracking hoists, and level access showers. Brighton & Hove also has an older housing stock, much of it is more difficult to adapt than newer homes.

Current budgets for major housing adaptations are £1.1m per year towards Disabled Facilities Grants for private tenants and homeowners and £750,000 for adaptations for Council Tenants. There is clearly pressure on the Council to ensure that the limited resources to deal with Housing Adaptations are focused on meeting need in the most efficient and effective way.

Housing capital budgets, in particular related to adaptations capital supported by private sector renewal funding, are likely to be under significant pressure over coming years in light of the prevailing economic situation.

3.3 Efficiency and Value For Money

To ensure value for money and best use of resources we already seek to make best use of existing resources through:

- Promoting early discussion of both social and private sector housing options in Housing Strategy to encourage consideration of a move to more appropriate housing as an alternative to disruption and cost of major adaptations.
- Making the case for proactively funding adaptations to existing homes through use of mainstream Council procurement programmes and additional / alternative private sector renewal capital in addition to existing funding routes.
- On-going development of our accessible housing register, continuing to fund an Accessible Housing Officer to identify and make best use of existing adapted and accessible Council and Housing Association housing stock in the City targeted at those who need it.

- Commissioning more wheelchair adapted housing from our RSL partners, of 232 affordable homes developed last year 16% were fully wheelchair adapted.
- Best use of new build adapted housing opportunities through proactive involvement in development and implementation of the City Council's Planning Advice Note – Lifetime Homes & Accessible Housing (PAN 03).
- Entering into new build nominations agreements with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to allow for early letting and finalisation of adapted homes to meet individual client needs.
- Revising the Private Sector Renewal Strategy to allow for renewal assistance to private landlords who procure, adapt and lease properties to the Council to help meet the need for adapted homes.
- Exploring options for private owners to be offered loans to assist moves to more suitable accommodation as an alternative to grant aiding adaptations to unsuitable properties.
- Seeking to maximise funding available for adaptations. In particular increased capital funding through the BEST private sector renewal programme that has allowed the Council to double Disabled Facilities Assistance threshold from £25,000 to £50,000 for eligible households.

In a situation of growing demand and growing unit costs, it is essential that we continue to manage resources as wisely as possible, ensuring what is provided represents good value, is needed and used.

While current performance targets are being met in Adult Social care & Housing, the Housing Adaptations service continues to be under pressure to reduce waiting times for assessments and completion, which means processing applications as soon as possible. This can stimulate a growth in demand, which in turn can put more pressure on budgets, and means that protracted waiting times still occur but in a different point in the process.

Better use of resources has impacts on wider health and social care budgets, as well as improving outcomes for individuals. The Audit Commission² in a wide-ranging study found that adaptations can be a necessary part of continuing care and community care and often provides a better solution than other forms of (more costly) care. The Audit Commission found that a one off investment of £20,000 in adaptations of an older person's home can make savings of £6,000 a year in home care costs.

While cases are delayed within the assessment process this takes up both home care resources and staffing resources both in Adult Social Care and Housing to manage the caseload. Improving waiting times for our customers, not only improves quality of life and promotes independence for that service users, but also means that we can realise the benefits of the adaptation sooner.

² Audit Commission (2009) 'Building Better Lives – getting the best from strategic housing'

3.4 Local and neighbourhood priorities

One of the City Council's five corporate priorities is: Reducing Inequality by increasing opportunity. The Corporate Plan lists independent living as a key issue to be addressed under this priority, "Help more vulnerable adults and older people to live in their own homes".

Improving the disabled adaptation services will make a significant and positive contribution to addressing this priority.

Adaptations also deliver on a number of key strategic objectives including the overarching housing strategy objective: "Enabling healthy homes, healthy lives and a healthy City that reduces inequality and offers independence, choice and a high quality of life.

The current service

3.5 Adult Social Care & Adaptations

Everyone approaching ASC will receive advice, information and signposting and in 90% of cases their needs will be met at this stage. The Access Point are starting to be able to identify people who may require a major adaptation or advice on Homemove and Housing Options however there is no clear pathway from Access point to direct people to appropriate advice and support in respect of housing. If people's assessed needs can not be met at Access Point then they would be referred to Community Solutions; a new team that includes Occupational Therapists and Care Managers who would work with people for up to six weeks to maximise their independence. It is often at this stage where daily living equipment can't meet someone's needs and the provision of an adaptation such as a level access shower would provide the most cost effective way of meeting someone's needs. At this point a referral would be made to the Best Practice panel which is attended by staff from ASC and Housing with a recommendation for an adaptation. Occupational Therapists also work in the assessment teams in ASC and may be working with people with complex and deteriorating long term conditions and as part of their work may identify that an Adaptation may be needed- again a referral would be made to the Best Practice Panel.

When this assessment is carried out, and a major adaptation (over £1000) is required, a decision is made as to whether this is 'non-complex' adaptation, for example a straight forward stairlift. If a non-complex case the recommendation will usually be completed by an Adult Social Care OT, with the case then transferred to Housing Adaptations to monitor. If the case is complex, or if 2 or more major adaptations are required, the case is referred to Housing Adaptations.

Some cases are referred directly to Housing Adaptations from the Access Point, for example where a Health OT has completed an initial assessment, and it is clear that there are outstanding major adaptations needed. Cases

may also be referred directly to Housing Adaptations from OTs in the Children and Young Peoples Trust and from the Learning Disabilities Team

3.6 **Adult Social Care adaptations budgets**

£414k from 08/09 is currently used to support major and minor adaptations made up of £150k from Department of Health, £195K revenue contribution to capital from physical disabilities budget and £68k carried forward from last year.

As described in 3.5 above, when a Community Care Assessment has identified the need for an adaptation, there are also Occupational Therapist and Occupations Therapy Assistant resources in ASC which undertake some assessment, recommendation and specification of more standard (rather than complex or multiple) major adaptations. This work is monitored by Housing Adaptations Team who where necessary also provide training, support and joint visits.

3.7 **Adult Social Care interface:**

In November 2009 there were 463 people waiting for an assessment by the Adult Social Care OT Assessment Team. On past experience, at least 30% of these will require major adaptations, and be referred to the Housing OT Team.

The table below shows the time it has taken from first contact with the Council to referral to the Housing Adaptations Team for those on the current HAOT waiting list, a fifth of whom have been waiting between 10 and 24 months. In some cases services such as ASC may work with people for some time before they are referred to Housing, for example, where some-one has a deteriorating condition and equipment or re-abling care is tried out first.

Time from first contact with the Council to referral to Housing	Number on waiting list
1 – 3 months	25
4 – 6 months	22
7 – 9 months	19
10 – 12 months	8
12 - 24 months	9

3.8 **Housing Adaptations Team – Private Sector Housing**

Where a Community Care Act assessment identifies a need, adaptations to Council homes and major adaptations to private and housing association homes are assessed, specified and delivered via the integrated Housing

Adaptations Team based within the Housing Strategy Division at Hove Town Hall.

When referred to the adaptations team the applicant is then placed on another waiting list for assessment before any works can be specified. When the applicant is finally seen by an Occupational Therapist, it can become obvious that it would not be reasonable or practical to adapt the home, or that works are not appropriate.

3.9 Housing Adaptations Team Budget

- Council Housing Adaptation: £750K for 400 Adaptations.
- Disabled Facilities Grant and top up : £1.1m for 120 Adaptations.

3.10 Housing Adaptations Team Performance

In November 2009 there were 83 cases waiting to be allocated a Housing OT. The majority (77%) are waiting for level access showers, and a third are council tenants.

The average length of time applicants spent waiting for major adaptations from assessment to work beginning was 26.9 weeks against a target of 27 weeks in 2008/9 (Care Quality Commission figures).

Recommendations for Change

3.11 A Single Integrated Housing Adaptations Team with one budget.

As outlined in 1.4 above, the key proposals in this paper include:

- Promote a more preventative approach through a single point of access in Housing Strategy facilitating early exploration of a range of housing options;
- Promote a more proactive approach to procurement of HRA capital works;
- Where cases do go through Community Care Assessment and the need for an adaptation is identified, to develop a 'whole systems approach' to delivery of that major adaptation as quickly as possible.

In order to deliver an identified need for a major adaptation as quickly and simply as possible it is proposed that ASC capital and staff resources currently aligned to assessment, recommendation, and delivery of major adaptations are moved into the Housing Adaptations Team in order to:

- Continue the assessment and specification of the non-complex major adaptations within the Housing Adaptations Service;

- Achieve clarity of ownership and responsibility for assessment recommendation and delivery of all major adaptations within one service area;
- Make best use of existing staff and capital resources by avoiding any duplication of tasks and interface issues and maximising opportunities for shared expertise and more OT focus on prevention and procurement. This includes building capacity to work on the specification and commissioning of alternative housing options and more adapted homes.
- Simplify processes and achieve speedier, more cost effective and more straightforward delivery for customers.

Appropriate consultation will take place with affected employees.

It is currently anticipated that at least 5 relevant ASC staff will be consulted on changing their line management to the proposed expanded team in Housing Strategy.

It is proposed to enhance the existing vacant Team Manager Post in the Housing Occupational Therapy Team to oversee the fully integrated Housing Adaptation Team with responsibility for assessment, specification and delivery of all major adaptations (those over £1,000).

It is proposed to pool budgets in Housing, with the capital budgets currently held within Adult Social Care to 'top up' major adaptations (where Housing Capital budgets are insufficient in terms of means testing) moving within the remit of the new fully integrated Housing Adaptations Team.

It is anticipated that £100k is transferred from the recurrent Adult Social Care adaptations capital budget to the Housing Adaptations Team in order to focus best use of all adaptations capital resources within one team.

Moving appropriate Occupational Therapist and Occupational Therapy Assistant resource currently assessing, recommending and specifying the more straightforward major adaptations within ASC into the fully integrated Housing Adaptations Team is in order to avoid current duplication in resources whereby ASC may assess and specify more standard rather than complex major adaptations but this work is then monitored by the Housing Adaptations Service with the Housing service also providing support, training and undertaking joint visits.

This would enable a move to a 'whole systems' approach to delivery of major adaptations described above to reduce customer handoffs and waiting times. It would also enable the Housing Adaptations Team to release more Senior Occupational Therapist time to work on assisting the development of proactive solutions such as

- Working with Planners on lifetime home solutions
- Working with development partners on the delivery of lifetime homes
- Developing more innovative means of meeting needs with RSL and other landlords/owners.

3.12 Reduce Waiting Lists and Simplify Processes

Where cases do go through Community Care Assessment and the need for an adaptation is identified, a review of the interface between Adult Social Care & Housing Adaptations needs to be undertaken to improve pathways of care. Responsibilities for delivery need to be clearer; all major adaptations need to be referred to Housing Adaptations Service as soon as they are identified. Currently nearly half of all service users have been waiting more than 6 months before they are referred and 10% of all users on the waiting list have been waiting between 1-2 years. This is clearly unacceptable.

There needs to be a move from a reactive management of the waiting list to a more proactive system. Under the current Fair Access to Care model we accept Critical and Substantial Cases. The critical cases will always be dealt with first. This system only works where there is no waiting list. We currently have long waiting times for those with substantial or moderate needs. These cases can often become critical or substantially worsen while the customer waits for an assessment. It is therefore important that we adopt a prevention approach with all customers, much as we did for the homelessness service. This can be achieved through best use of our housing stock and existing housing resources, and proactive investment of lifetime homes.

The number of 'handoffs' in the system need to be reduced. Currently in a third of all cases, a service user can be visited several times by Occupational Therapists in Adult Social Care, before it becomes apparent that a major adaptation is required. The applicant is then referred to the Housing Adaptation Team where they will join a waiting list to be visited again by a Housing Occupational Therapist, before adaptations can be prescribed. The current system has caused unnecessary bottlenecks in the system and dramatically increases waiting times for customers. The processes and procedures required to support this number of 'handoffs' are complete and time consuming. Due to workload capacity pressures in each time some cases are passed back and forth in an effort to determine where the required work should sit. It is recommended that all major adaptations are referred without delay by Adult Social Care to Housing.

A fifth of those on the waiting list for an assessment in the Housing Adaptations Service have been waiting for more than 10 months. Waiting times are important because:

- condition can deteriorate while waiting.
- hospital discharge can be delayed.
- Accidents in the home more likely to happen without adequate adaptations (such as grab rails).
- Excessive waiting times are symptoms of inefficiencies in the system and should be addressed as part of good management.
- Service delays impact on the PCT and council budgets elsewhere.

- Large numbers of complaints which can divert management time.

For major housing adaptations our customers need to be referred to housing without delay. The diagram below shows the proposed customer flow compared to the situation now.

Fig 1. Current Customer Flow



Fig 2. Proposed Simplified Customer



Occupational Therapy Assistants are currently based in Adult Social Care, a proportion of this resource could be better co-located with the Housing Adaptations Occupational Therapy Team, as described in 3.11 above, where they could do standard major adaptation assessments, specification and recommendations, leaving Housing Occupational Therapists to undertake more complex work. This would make a significant difference to the way these services are delivered to disabled people:

- Reduce the amount of customer contact time with the service – one assessment only where possible.
- Clear capacity plan is needed for dealing with the waiting list – set agreed efficiency targets.
- Facilitate the ‘fast-tracking’ of minor council adaptations in partnership with Housing Management through the ‘handyperson in a van’ service, which by-passes the need for an Occupational Therapy assessment. This ensures that the Service User is able to access resources quickly, efficiently and in line with best practice requirements.

3.13 Better Use of Limited Resources

The proposals outlined in this reports achieve better use of resources in the following ways:

- Prevention – an early Housing Options intervention based on tenure to avoid cases going into an expensive and lengthy Community Care Assessment where the household solely requires an adaptation that can be dealt with by re-housing or other housing intervention.
- Proactive procurement – Housing Adaptations Team to liaise with Housing Management and Mears through the Decent Homes Partnering contract to bring more existing Council homes up to lifetime homes / wheelchair standard through mainstream capital budgets. This process reduces the costs in adapting properties for our disabled tenants in the future. This is critical to achieving efficiency savings as a third of those waiting for major adaptations are council tenants.

- Efficient procurement - Earlier referral of major adaptations by ASC, and a larger pooled budget would enable certain types of adaptations to be batched and procured more efficiently. For example for level access showers, for which 77% of the current waiting list requires, can be commissioned together enabling more cost effective delivery. It is recommended that these budgets be financially accountable and managed by the Head Housing Strategy and Private Sector Housing with expenditure to each clearly attributable (to meet financial regulatory requirements).
- Assessment & customer service – fewer ‘hand offs’ and more efficient use of staffing resources dedicated to major adaptations with them all in one team subject to the same management and avoidance of the current situation where there are overlaps, lack of customer clarity on process and one (Housing) team monitors standard adaptations cases assessed and specified by ASC OTs.
- Develop work already underway to commission landlords to lease adapted homes to the Council through the revised Private Housing Renewal Policy.
- Continue to develop efficiencies in adaptations procurement in both private and council sector as identified by Chairman’s Working Group on Adaptations.
- Continue to support work of the dedicated Housing Assessment Officer in Homemove in developing the accessible housing register. This process leads to more appropriate use of our housing stock by matching adapted properties to people who have an identified need (and avoids the need to remove an adaptation and install standard facilities before re-letting). It also speeds up void times, reduces refurbishment costs, and negates the need for many future adaptations.
- Enter into a dialogue with housing associations on who funds both major and minor adaptations for their tenants and how these can be delivered without delays.

3.14 Better Customer Information and Involvement

Proposals include

- Set up users group to consult with on any proposed changes to the service.
- Promote better access to the service.
- Inform customers of waiting times between assessment and completion of works.
- Ensure that the service is an inclusive one for all communities - ensure that equalities data is monitored.
- Develop options advice pack for customers.
- Ensure that monitoring arrangements in future reflect whole service provision – for example the total time taken to provide adaptations from service users first point of contact to adaptation being provided.
- Single point of access in Housing Strategy for information on all the options.
- Clear information on eligibility for Adaptations grants,
- Clear information on the tests that Adaptations apply for grant applicants,
- Clear priority system,
- Clear information on timescales,

- Easy access from ASC at all points of the service into Adaptations Team.
- Clarity about what people can expect,

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Chairman's Tenant Working Group consultation has informed these proposals.
4.2 Appropriate consultation will take place with affected employees.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The review of the Housing Adaptations service would need to bring together responsibility for major adaptations budgets (capital and revenue) under the Head of Housing Strategy and Private Sector Housing. No extra costs are anticipated from the review but better use of resources and value for money are anticipated with opportunities outlined in the report. It is anticipated that £100k is transferred from the recurrent adult social care adaptations capital budget.

As set out in section 3.3, studies by the Audit Commission indicate that there should be savings within the adult social care community care budget in providing timely adaptations.

Finance Officer Consulted: Neil Smith Date: 24 November 09

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Local Authorities have a legal responsibility to assist with the provision of adaptations through section 2 of the Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act 1970. This responsibility encompasses assessment of service users, recommendation for major adaptations and financial support for these adaptations. The primary source of funding for such adaptations is the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) which are administered by the Private Sector Housing Team under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. These grants are means tested and are mandatory for adaptations that are assessed as necessary, appropriate, reasonable and practical within the terms of the Act.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 20/11/09

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 As a result of the work outlined above we have sought to raise awareness and address the needs and issues faced by disabled applicants for housing and adaptations assistance from the Council. We have sought to improve the use of resources to better meet the needs of people with physical disabilities.

A full equalities impact assessment will be carried out prior to implementation

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Housing is one of the key objectives in the Council's sustainability strategy which aims 'to ensure that everyone has access to decent affordable housing that meets their needs'.

The developments outlined in this report seek to make the best use of existing housing and budget resources. Further sustainability implications will be kept under review.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 Policy development in this area is undertaken with due regard to appropriate risk assessment requirements.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 One of the City Council's five corporate priorities is: Reducing Inequality by increasing opportunity. The Corporate Plan lists independent living as a key issue to be addressed under this priority, "Help more vulnerable adults and older people to live in their own homes".

Assisting disabled people to remain independent in their own home by improving the disabled adaptation services will make a significant and positive contribution to addressing this priority

These proposals will also assist the City Council to achieve its corporate priority of 'Better Use of Public Money'.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The option to do nothing and keep things as they are has been considered. However this would not achieve reductions in waiting times or efficiencies in the system that are required.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To ensure that we deliver major housing adaptations to our disabled customers in a timely and cost effective way

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices: None

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 49

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: When a sole council tenant requests a joint tenancy
Date of Meeting: 7 December 2009
Report of: Director of Adult Social Care and Housing
Contact Officer: Name: Helen Clarkmead Tel: 293350
E-mail: Helen.clarkmead@btinternet.com
Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE.

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Council Allocations policy does not provide for the lawful creation of joint tenancies to existing sole tenants and a new partner.
- 1.2 Maintaining this position would help the council make best use of existing stock in order to meet housing need, without any significant disadvantage to tenants.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 (1) That the current policy position is confirmed and no provision is made for the creation of joint tenancies where one party is already a sole tenant of the council.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 It is not possible for an existing sole council tenant to be granted a new joint tenancy with a new civil partner, spouse or partner.
- 3.2 Although not able to become a joint tenant, a new civil partner, spouse or partner may live in the property as long as they do not cause nuisance to other people.
- 3.3 If a civil partner or spouse was living with the sole tenant at the time of their death, and as long as the sole tenant is not themselves a successor, they have the right to succeed to the tenancy. This also applies to partners who are not formal civil partners or spouses if they have lived together for 12 months.
- 3.4 A resident partner counts towards occupancy numbers and their needs will be included in any housing need or adaptations assessment. If the sole tenant provides written consent, then they are able to discuss tenancy and rent account

matters with council officers.

- 3.5 The alternative is to amend the Allocations Policy in order to allow the creation of a new joint tenancy for existing sole council tenants and a new civil partner, spouse or partner. A new tenancy would create a further succession chain and delay the property being available to meet general housing need for a generation.

3.6 The Rights of Sole and Joint Tenant couples

Status	Succession [only where there has not already been succession]	Right to Buy Jointly	To be considered as part of household for adaptation requirements	To be considered as part of household for space standard calculation and transfer	To be able to discuss tenancy related issues with the council
Civil partners Sole tenant	√	√	√	√	√ With written consent of sole tenant
Civil partners Joint Tenants	√	√	√	√	√
Married Sole Tenant	√	√	√	√	√ With written consent of sole tenant
Married Joint Tenants	√	√	√	√	√
Cohabitee joint tenants	√	√	√	√	√
Cohabitees of 12+ months sole tenant who have been resident with the tenant for the 12 months before the tenant's death	√ Can be asked to transfer if occupying adapted property or underoccupying	√	√	√	√ With written consent of sole tenant
Cohabitants of fewer than 12 months sole tenant	X	X	X	X	√ With written consent of sole tenant

- 3.6.1 The formality of relationship is, for most purposes, more important than the holding of a joint or sole tenancy. Spouses and civil partners of sole tenants

enjoy the rights set out in the table above.

- 3.6.2 Where a sole tenant dies, their spouse, civil partner of any period, or cohabitant of 12 months or more, who have been resident there with the tenant for the 12 months before the tenant died, may succeed to the tenancy as long as the deceased sole tenant was not themselves a successor. The only disadvantage cohabitants of sole tenants have is that they may be asked to move to a smaller property or to one without adaptations. Spouses and civil partners of sole tenants would not be required to move.
- 3.6.3 Spouses, civil partners of any period and cohabitants who have lived with a sole tenant for a minimum of 12 months are able to be party to a joint right to buy with the sole tenant, so there is no benefit holding a joint tenancy. in respect of right to buy.
- 3.6.4 Spouses, civil partners of any period and cohabitants who have lived with a sole tenant for a minimum of 12 months are acknowledged as part of the household and are considered when calculating space standards, transfer priority or need for adaptation, they do not need to be joint tenants in order to be considered part of the household.
- 3.6.5 The principle variation is in the event of relationship breakdown. Married couples and civil partners, whether sole or joint tenants, who are unable to agree who is to remain in the property, may apply to court for the tenancy to be awarded to either party, not necessarily be the sole tenant. Cohabitants have no such recourse to court, and a sole tenant will almost always automatically retain the tenancy and their former partner have no rights.
- 3.6.6 Either party to a joint tenancy may end that tenancy at any time after giving notice. A sole tenant who becomes a joint tenant lessens their security in the event of relationship breakdown.
- 3.6.7 If the council were to adopt a policy of not granting new joint tenancies to existing sole tenants, then some cohabitants of sole tenants may be disadvantaged in that;
- They may be required to move to a smaller or non adapted property upon Succession
 - Someone cohabiting with a sole tenant will not have any right to the tenancy if the relationship breaks down – although their partner, the existing tenant, enjoys greater security than would be the case if they were joint tenants.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Council tenant representatives were invited to a consultation event. The general view was that the council should not create joint tenancies if this creates a further succession chain.

4.2 The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Housing and Support Working Group discussed these recommendations. Some concerns were raised about the lack of rights for a cohabitant of a sole tenant and how this may encourage them to stay in an abusive relationship. It is hoped that the widespread publicity around Domestic Services will ensure people in this situation know where they can go for help, and to publicise relevant services at local offices and in publications. Multi agency training around LGBT specific Domestic Violence is planned for 2010/11. Concerns were raised about people who are not joint tenants with no succession rights when their partner dies – the council is supportive in these circumstances, and if the surviving partner is unable to remain in the property, advice and assistance is available to help find a new home, and a reasonable period allowed before action is taken to repossess the property. Members of this group agreed that a joint tenancy appears to give greater equality within the relationship, but also that joint tenants have less security in that either party may end the tenancy at any time. The group appreciated the shortage of homes within the city and that it was generally undesirable to offer further succession in creating a new tenancy. Members of this group noted that these proposals have the same impact for LGBT partners as for heterosexual couples. Civil partners and Married couples are treated equally, as are cohabiting couple of any gender and sexual orientation.

4.3 This report is presented to Housing Management Consultative Committee.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations in this report.

Finance Officer Consulted: Susie Allen *Date:* 20 November 2009

Legal Implications:

5.2 “By section 167 Housing Act 1996 a local housing authority must have an allocation scheme. It cannot allocate accommodation except in accordance with that scheme. A local housing authority allocates accommodation when it selects a person to be a secure or introductory tenant for housing accommodation held by it. By granting a new joint tenancy to an existing sole tenant and a new partner, it appears that the Council would be allocating accommodation otherwise than in accordance with its Allocation scheme. (The new partner having been selected to be a secure tenant.) The tenancy would not be an introductory tenancy, unless the existing sole tenant was an introductory tenant. “

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 20 November 2009

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3.1 This proposal does not significantly benefit or disadvantage married couples or civil partners, who would be treated equally.
- 5.3.2 Cohabitants may in some circumstances may be disadvantaged in that they may be required to move to a smaller or non adapted property when the succeed to the tenancy. Cohabitants of sole tenants are unlikely to have rights to the tenancy when the relationship breaks down. However, sole tenants who cohabit enjoy greater security than would be the case if they joint tenants.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 There are none

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are none

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 If this policy is not confirmed and the creation of joint tenancies for existing sole tenants permitted, then a new succession chain would be created and the property would not become available for general letting for a further generation. This may prevent the council making best use of housing stock in order to meet housing need.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 There are none

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

None

Documents In Members' Rooms

None.

Background Documents

None

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 50

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Proposed amendment to Local Lettings Plan – blocks for people aged 50 years or older.

Date of Meeting: 7 December 2009

Report of: Director of Adult Social Care and Housing

Contact Officer: Name: Helen Clarkmead Tel: 293350
E-mail: Helen.clarkmead@btinternet.com

Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE.

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 In November 2009, The Cabinet Member for Housing agreed a Local Lettings Plan that restricts lettings of flats that do not meet mobility standards in certain blocks to people aged 50 years or older.
- 1.2 The Cabinet Member for Housing asked that consideration be given to extending this Local Lettings Plan to other suitable blocks.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That HMCC recommends to the Cabinet Member for Housing that Clarke Court be designated as an over 50s block. All new lettings, except those of flats meeting the council's mobility standard, would be to people aged 50 years or older.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The Local Lettings Plan was agreed by the Cabinet Member for Housing in July 2009. This was in order to meet resident aspirations, and to make best use of the council's housing stock by encouraging people to down size, releasing family homes.
- 3.2 During the consultation process, some residents of other blocks expressed an in their block becoming designated as an over 50s block.

3.3 Officers undertook a feasibility exercise that considered residents opinion, Equality impact and the likely impact on lettings performance in respect of Malthouse Court, 385 Kingsway and Clarke Court.

3.4 **Malthouse Court**

Although residents expressed an interest in this block becoming designated for people over 50, this is a three storey development without lift. Ground floor flats are of mobility standard, and would therefore be excluded from any age restricted lettings plan. Where similar property has been designated for people over 50, there have been problems letting second floor flats, resulting in poor turnaround performance and increased rent loss. It is likely, if this development were designated for people over 50 that lettings performance would suffer considerably. It is therefore not recommended for this development to be designated for people over 50 years of age.

3.5 **385 Kingsway**

Although residents expressed an interest in this block becoming designated For people over 50, property in this block is often difficult to let at present. This is likely to become a greater problem if the pool of people eligible to bid for property in this block was restricted to people over 50. The council's Accessible Housing Coordinator does not feel this block is suitable for designation as an over 50s block. It is therefore not recommended for this to be designated as a block for people over 50 years of age.

3.6 **Clarke Court**

Residents very strongly support the proposal to designate this as a block for people over 50 years of age. There is a lift to all floors and the flats are generally easy to let. The design of this block results in some noise transmission problems, and is not as such suitable for families. It is therefore recommended that Clarke Court is adopted as a block for people over 50 years of age. This would mean that in future all vacant flats that do not meet the council's mobility standard would be let to people over 50 years of age.

3.7 **Norwich Crescent**

Although there are noise related issues in this area, this is a very young community, and the transition to a predominantly over 50s environment would be lengthy. This area is not generally popular with people over 50s seeking to downsize, who tend to prefer more centrally located property. There is a mix of 1 and 2 bedroom flats, three storeys with no lift. It is therefore likely that designating these flats for over 50s use would have significant detrimental impact in respect of lettings turnaround and rent loss performance. It is therefore not recommended for this development to be designated for people over 50 years of age.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 This report is presented to Housing Management Consultative Committee for consultation, and has been discussed with tenants over a period of months.
- 4.2 Residents have been consulted. Residents of Clarke Court strongly support the proposal to designate the block for people over 50. The Westbourne ward Councillors also support this proposal. Residents of Malthouse court and 385 Kingsway have expressed an interest in their blocks being designated for over 50s.
- 4.3 The council's Accessible Housing Coordinator and Homemove Manager were Consulted, and their views taken into account.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations in this report.

Finance Officer Consulted: Susie Allen Date: 20 November 2009

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 In November 2009, the Cabinet Member for Housing approved a Local Lettings Plan - Lettings restricted to persons over 50 years of age and bungalows. That plan was compatible with the relevant legislation (The Housing Act 1996) and the relevant Government guidance (Allocation of Accommodation Choice Based Lettings - Code of Guidance for local housing authorities). The limited extension to the Plan proposed by this report is also compatible.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley Date: 20 November 2009

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 This proposal will not significantly benefit or disadvantage any specific group, as Clarke Court represents only 0.15% of the council's general housing stock.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 There are none

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are none

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

5.6 There are none

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.7 There are none

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

None

Documents In Members' Rooms

None.

Background Documents

1. Local Lettings Plans – Lettings restricted to persons over 50 years of age and bungalows - Housing Cabinet Member 11 November 2009

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 51

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Local Lettings Plan – Bungalows in Lockwood Crescent and Kipling Avenue, Woodingdean		
Date of Meeting:	7 December 2009		
Report of:	Director of Adult Social Care and Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Helen Clarkmead	Tel: 293350
	E-mail:	Helen.clarkmead@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Housing Management Consultative Committee in October 2009 requested that a feasibility study was carried out to look at the most suitable future lettings arrangements for the 6 bungalows in Kipling Avenue and Lockwood Crescent. It was suggested that these may be excluded from the general bungalow Local Lettings Plan, as this small development is a uniquely settled community of older, some very vulnerable, residents.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Housing Management Consultative Committee recommends to the Cabinet Member for Housing that the 6 bungalows in Kipling Avenue and Lockwood Crescent, Woodingdean, that meet the council's mobility standard, are not excluded from the citywide Local Lettings Plan for bungalows. This will mean they may be let to disabled people of any age with an assessed need for this type of accommodation.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The Cabinet Member for Housing agreed a Local Lettings Plan for the future letting of bungalows in November 2009. However it was agreed to look at the 6 bungalows in Lockwood Crescent and Kipling Avenue separately.
- 3.2 The bungalows have traditionally housed older people, although this has never been formally adopted as council policy.
- 3.3 The bungalows are suitable for people with restricted mobility, generally meeting mobility standard 2, but with some adaptation they could be made fully wheelchair accessible. The site is relatively flat, and although in a hilly location a bus stop is very close. There is a high level of demand from people of all ages for housing that is suitable for wheelchair users or other people who need level access accommodation.

- 3.4 Were the council to restrict letting these bungalows to people over a certain age, there is a strong possibility of successful challenge from disabled people younger than the lower age limit. The council would effectively be discriminating against younger disabled people by restricting the number of the few suitable properties for which they can be considered.
- 3.5 There are 782 households on the joint housing register who have been assessed as needing mobility standard accommodation. 137 are in urgent need of housing in Band A, and 443 with very high priority need to move in Band B. Most do not need sheltered accommodation, and many are under 50 years of age.
- 3.6 187 units of accessible housing were let in the year to November 2009. This supports the view that citywide, there is a lack of suitable accommodation for people who need mobility accessible housing, and the need to utilise all mobility standard property flexibly with no unnecessary age restrictions.
- 3.7 In order to meet the council's objective of making best use of housing stock, these bungalows need to be available to people of any age assessed as having a mobility need for this type of housing.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Residents of these bungalows, and ward councillors feel that these bungalows should be designated for people over normal retirement age or used as sheltered housing. Whilst these views are appreciated, the citywide need for mobility standard housing in the city outweighs the need for further sheltered units or for other retirement housing.
- 4.2 It is understood existing residents are worried that younger people may cause noise and other nuisance. Perpetrators of anti social behaviour are dispersed across the age spectrum, including over retirement age. All new tenants are subject to assessment during the first year of their tenancy, and do not become secure tenants if there is a serious breach the terms of their tenancy agreement.
- 4.3 The new tenancy agreement, clear focus and increased emphasis on enforcement should further alleviate resident's concerns. We will ensure prospective residents are made aware of the peaceful nature of the community, and of what we expect of tenants before they accept the property. All new residents here receive very early tenancy visits, usually within the first week, to ensure they understand what is expected of them.
- 4.4 A floating support service is available to older people in Woodingdean, including residents of these bungalows with an assessed need for that service. Carelink Plus alarms are available to residents.
- 4.5 Most people with high priority for sheltered housing are housed reasonably quickly, and there are existing sheltered housing schemes where demand is relatively low. This supports the view that there is greater need for additional mobility standard than for more sheltered housing.
- 4.6 The council's Accessible Housing coordinator has been consulted and strongly supports the recommendation that these accessible bungalows are let on the basis of assessed mobility need, without age restriction.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 Financial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications to the HRA budget from the recommendations in this report.

Finance Officer Consulted: Susie Allen, Principal Accountant Date: 12/11/2009

5.2 Legal Implications:

The legal basis for Local Lettings Plans is section 167(2E) of the Housing Act 1996 which enables local housing authorities such as the council to allocate particular accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall within the reasonable preference categories. Local lettings plans may be used to achieve a wide variety of housing management and other housing policy objectives, such as a reduction in the proportion of older children/young adults on an estate to reduce the incidences of anti-social behaviour. Government guidance counsels that when operating local lettings plans, housing authorities need to ensure that, overall, reasonable preference for allocations is given to applicants in the reasonable preference categories; and that local lettings plans do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, on racial or other equality grounds. Consequently, it is not usually appropriate to apply local lettings schemes to more than a limited part of a local authority's stock. Section 3 of the report provides justification for including the 6 bungalows in the citywide Local Lettings Plan for bungalows.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley Date: 20/11/2009

5.3 Equalities Implications:

An Equalities Impact Assessment concluded this recommendation does not unjustly disadvantage any group, and that not having an age restriction for future lets removes any disadvantage that would otherwise be suffered by younger disabled people. There are very few council properties that are suitable for people with restricted mobility. Placing age restrictions on the letting of these bungalows would unjustifiably disadvantage disabled people outside the specified age range. These proposals maximise the housing options available to people with restricted mobility.

5.4 Sustainability Implications:

There are none.

5.5 Crime & Disorder Implications:

There are none

5.6 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

There are none

5.7 Corporate / Citywide Implications:

There are none

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 It was considered if these bungalows should be let as sheltered housing, but concluded that the demand for mobility accessible housing outweighs the need for further sheltered units.
- 6.2 It was considered if these bungalows should be subject to an age restriction, but this was discounted as unjustifiably discriminatory against younger disabled people.
- 6.3 It was considered if these bungalows should be let with priority to people releasing family housing, but this, again, was considered to be unjustifiably discriminatory against disabled people not releasing family housing.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To formally agree arrangements for the future letting of bungalows in Kipling Avenue and Lockwood Crescent, Woodingdean.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendix: There are none

Documents In Members' Rooms There are none

Background Documents

- 1. The council's Housing Allocations Policy as adopted by the Council at Cabinet Member for Housing Meeting 11 March 2009.
- 2. Local Lettings Plans – Lettings restricted to persons over 50 years of age and Bungalows. Report to Housing Management Consultative Committee October 12 2009 and to Housing Cabinet Member Meeting November 11 2009.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 52

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: When a tenant dies – customer care, succession and people left in occupation

Date of Meeting: 7 December 2009

Report of: Director of Adult Social Care and Housing

Contact Officer: Name: Helen Clarkmead Tel: 293350
E-mail: Helen.clarkmead@btinternet.com

Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE.

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The council grants introductory and secure tenancies. This policy confirms the council's succession policy when a secure or introductory tenant dies.
- 1.2 The council recognises that this is a sensitive area of tenancy management, and is committed to making consistent, fair decisions and implementing this policy sensitively.
- 1.3 The council is committed to making best use of housing stock within the context of very high demand for family housing. This informs policy around people left in occupation who are not entitled to succeed a tenancy and where people entitled to succeed are in occupation of property larger than they reasonably need.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That HMCC recommends to the Cabinet Member for Housing that this policy is confirmed.
- 2.2 That HMCC notes the customer care work around bereavement undertaken

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

3.1 Succession

- 3.1.1 There can be one succession to a secure tenancy.

- 3.1.2 As long as the deceased tenant was not themselves a successor:
 Their joint tenant succeeds as a sole tenant – if no joint tenant then;
 Their spouse or civil partner succeeds to the tenancy or;
 Their cohabitee of 12 months or longer may succeed if they have been resident at the property as their main home for the 12 months before the deceased tenant died.
 If there is no spouse, civil partner or cohabitee, a family member to whom the property has been their main home, and has been resident there with the tenant for the 12 months preceding then death of the tenant may succeed.
- 3.1.3 The spouse or civil partner may continue to reside in the property even if it is substantially too large for their needs or has specialist adaptations.
- 3.1.4 If a cohabitee or another family member succeeds, then the council can require that they move to a smaller property or one without adaptations if that would meet their needs. This will always be managed sensitively.
 Unless the successor moves on a voluntary basis that the Council would have to seek a possession order from the Court, and the court may grant possession only if it considers it reasonable to do so, and that suitable alternative accommodation is available. The council recognises this is a sensitive area of work, and officers will act considerately, offering appropriate support and a reasonable period before the person is required to move.
- 3.1.5 If the deceased was a successor, then there can be no further succession
- 3.2 People left in occupation with no right to succeed
- 3.2.1 Where someone is left in the property after a tenant dies but has no right to succeed, then the council will consider their needs. As there is exceptional demand for affordable housing in the city, it is not possible house most people who are left in occupation with no right of succession. However, the council is committed to managing this sensitively and in a supportive way.
- 3.2.2 If it is likely the council would have a duty to provide accommodation for the person left in occupation, if they are exceptionally vulnerable or there are other exceptionally compelling circumstances, then they will, if the property is suitable, be offered a new tenancy. To ensure citywide consistency, this decision will be confirmed by the Business Improvement Manager for Tenancy Services.
 If the property is not suitable, then they will be required to bid for a suitable alternative using Homemove. Officers will manage this sensitively and be supportive.
- 3.2.3 Where the person left in occupation is not deemed to be vulnerable, there are no exceptionally compelling circumstances and the Council is unlikely to have a duty to accommodate them, then they will be asked to leave. Their Housing Officer will provide advice and assistance with future housing options and negotiate a reasonable period of time for them to find alternative accommodation.

If the person has not secured accommodation within that period, the council will review the case and either offer an extended period with more intensive support, or start court proceedings to recover the property. To ensure citywide consistency, this decision will be made by the Business Improvement Manager for Tenancy Services.

3.3 Review of customer care around bereavement

- 3.3.1 Following repeated complaints about lack of consistency and sensitivity around bereavement, a group of managers representing different teams within housing Management reviewed process, procedure and guidance for staff
- 3.3.2 The review group evaluated complaints and worked with the council's bereavement service to formulate a more sensitive approach with greater understanding of customer needs at the time of bereavement.
- 3.3.3 Standard letters have been re written to demonstrate greater sensitivity, offer more support and officers issued with guidance about sensitive timing when issuing letters and generally when working with the bereaved. Officers will make every effort to speak to bereaved people before sending letters.
- 3.3.4 Bereavement customer care is now an established feature of induction programmes for front line staff and for ongoing training.
- 3.3.5 Allowing a reasonable interval of some months, officers will seek feedback form bereaved people. Managers will use this to further review and improve services in this area of work.

4. **CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 This report is presented to Housing Management Consultative Committee for consultation, and has been discussed with tenants over a period of months.
- 4.2 There appears to be general concern that the council has not always acted consistently or with sensitivity in the past, and tenants are keen that this is addressed.
- 4.3 Tenants accept there is a shortage of affordable housing in the city and tend to agree that succession should be limited and that multi generational discretionary succession would not be sustainable or equitable.

5. **FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations in this report.

Finance Officer Consulted: Susie Allen *Date:* 19 November 2009

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 "Sections 87 to 90 of the Housing Act 1985 provide a comprehensive code dealing with succession to secure tenancies. Similar provisions can be found in sections 131 to 133 of the Housing Act 1996 for introductory tenancies. By section 167 Housing Act 1996, the Council must have an allocation scheme. It cannot allocate accommodation except in accordance with that scheme. An authority allocates accommodation when it selects a person to be a secure or introductory tenant. Officers need to ensure that any allocation of the sort referred to paragraph 3.2.2 is lawful."

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley Date: 27/08/2009

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 This proposal will not significantly benefit or disadvantage any specific group.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 There are none

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are none

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 There are none

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 There are none

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

None

Documents In Members' Rooms

None.

Background Documents

None

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 55

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Tenant Services Authority consultation on new arrangements for regulating the council's landlord services		
Date of Meeting:	7 December 2009		
Report of:	Director of Adult Social Care & Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Carol Jenkins	Tel: 29-3832
	E-mail:	Carol.jenkins@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) is expected to become the regulator of the council's landlord services from 1 April 2010 when, subject to Parliamentary approval, it becomes responsible for regulating all social housing landlords. The TSA has now published details of its proposed regulatory approach and standards for landlords for formal consultation.
- 1.2 This report outlines the content of the consultation document for noting by the Committee and proposes arrangements for Committee members, tenant representatives, residents, staff in both Housing Strategy and Housing Management divisions and other stakeholders, including the Social Landlords Forum, to be involved in the consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 (1) That the Housing Management Consultative Committee note the contents of this report.
- 2.2 (2) That the Housing Management Consultative Committee endorse the consultation arrangements proposed in section 4 of this report.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The TSA was created under the 2008 Housing and Regeneration Act as an independent regulator of providers of social housing (to be known as 'registered providers'). Its objectives include ensuring:
 - that actual or potential tenants of social housing have an appropriate

degree of (a) choice, and (b) protection;

- that tenants of social housing have the opportunity to be involved in its management; and
- that registered providers of social housing perform their functions efficiently, effectively and economically.

The TSA aims to ensure tenants are able to be involved in decisions that affect them, their homes and neighbourhoods and to protect tenants if their landlord performs poorly. Its model for regulating landlords is one where tenants are at the heart of shaping, influencing and monitoring the services they receive. This 'co-regulation' model sees landlords self-regulating involving their tenants, with the TSA intervening on an exception basis where landlords fail to improve.

- 3.2 The TSA's powers cover tenants of low-cost rented accommodation and low-cost home ownership, though not leaseholders. This reflects government's view that leaseholders have a degree of choice to move out of social housing (unlike most tenants) and are protected by other regulations and legislation. However, the TSA considers the improvements its regulation will have for tenants are likely to have positive 'spill over' effects for leaseholders and it also encourages providers to include leaseholders and other residents in their involvement strategies.
- 3.3 The TSA took over the regulation of housing associations in December 2008. From 1 April 2010, government intends the TSA to become responsible for supervising all social housing landlords, including councils which own housing stock. It proposes to put an order (The Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 (Registration of Local Authorities) Order 2009) before Parliament later this year which would give the TSA the powers to regulate local authority landlords, in line with the recommendations of the independent Cave review of social housing regulation in 2007. The aim is to ensure tenants receive an equally good service, no matter who their landlord happens to be.
- 3.4 During 2009 the TSA has held a 'National Conversation' with tenants and landlords around the country to identify what matters most to social housing tenants and decide how best to use its new powers to make a difference to the four million households who live in social rented homes in England. The responses of 27,000 tenants fed into its initial proposals, which have now been refined in the formal consultation documents.
- 3.5 At the centre of how the TSA will regulate social housing landlords are six national standards which social housing providers must meet. These describe the outcomes the TSA wants to see delivered and the specific requirements it expects all providers to comply with in meeting those outcomes. They are not intended, however, to prescribe detailed processes landlords should follow. The TSA believes the best place for the quality of services to be discussed, agreed and scrutinised is locally - between landlords and their tenants. So the standards require providers to set out what they offer to tenants and agree local standards with their tenants that reflect the priorities of local communities, to complement and strengthen the national standards. A summary of the national standards and the areas expected to be supplemented by local standards is at Appendix 1.

- 3.6 The standards on governance and financial viability will not apply to local authorities as the Audit Commission already has responsibility for overseeing these aspects of councils' performance and different legislation and regulations apply. The TSA has committed to working with the Audit Commission in regulating council landlords and supporting the Local Performance Framework. It intends to minimise the additional burden on council landlords by making best use of information landlords already have available.
- 3.7 It is proposed, however, that landlords with more than 1,000 homes – which would include the council - should, between April and October 2010, publish for the benefit of their tenants a report setting out how they already meet, or their plans for meeting, each of the national standards, noting any gaps and setting out their improvement plans, and how they will assure or measure their compliance against these standards in future. The report should include plans for developing local standards with their tenants to apply by 1 April 2011 at the latest. From 2011, providers will have to publish an annual report by 1 July to their tenants and the TSA on their performance against the national and their local standards, tenant scrutiny of their performance and, where appropriate, use of external validation, peer review and benchmarking. As well as producing the required reports and plans, the council will ensure that the resident involvement strategy which is currently in course of development in connection with the review of the Tenant Compact meets all the TSA's requirements.
- 3.8 Where providers do not either meet national standards or have robust processes to set and account for local standards, the TSA will expect speedy self-improvement. If that is insufficient, the TSA will have a range of enforcement powers to ensure that services to tenants are improved to meet the standards. For councils, those powers would include collecting information; arranging an inspection or survey; directing an inquiry or extraordinary audit; appointing advisors; enforcement notices; directing a tender or transfer of management; directing the Homes and Communities Agency not to invest; and placing restrictions on disposals or transfers of property. For other providers, the TSA will also be able to impose fines and order compensation. The TSA undertakes to take a proportionate and generally graduated approach in exercising its powers, seeking first to agree the way forward with the landlord and consider any voluntary undertakings the provider makes.
- 3.9 As well as becoming the regulator of the council's housing management services and allocations of council homes, the TSA considers its regulation of social housing will help local authorities' strategic place-shaping role. For example, it will be able to collect and share information on social housing landlords operating in the city and all providers will be required to meet the standard on local area co-operation.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The TSA's consultation ends on 5 February 2010 and it welcomes views from everyone with an interest in the future of social housing in England. The full documents, including a summary, are available from the TSA's website at www.tenantservicesauthority.org or from their Customer Service team on 0845 230 7000. The TSA can provide copies in large print, Braille and audio cassette and translated into Arabic, Urdu, Bengali, Somali and Turkish, on request.

- 4.2 The council has sent a copy of the summary formal consultation document to all council tenant and resident associations for information and comment. All associations were also sent an invitation to apply to be on the council of the National Tenant Voice, the new national tenants' organisation to give tenants influence over national policy through engaging with government and the TSA.
- 4.3 All council tenants and leaseholders have been informed of the development of the TSA's proposals through *Homing In* newsletters, including contact details for the TSA for more information and to have their say.
- 4.4 Staff from both Housing Management and Housing Strategy divisions are being informed of the proposals through internal briefings and invited to comment on them.
- 4.5 All council members will be informed of the consultation and invited to comment.
- 4.6 The council will seek the views of housing association representatives on the consultation documents at the Social Landlords Forum meeting in January 2010.
- 4.7 The comments of the Committee will be collated with those received from tenant representatives, members, officers and other stakeholders and summarised in a draft response to the consultation for sign off by the Cabinet Member for Housing. Comments should be sent to Carol Jenkins, Housing Stock Review Manager, Housing Management, Room 235, Kings House, Grand Avenue, Hove BN3 2SR or email Carol.jenkins@brighton-hove.gov.uk by 15 January 2010.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 Any financial implications arising from the outcome of the consultation will be included in the monthly targeted Budget monitoring forecast for 2010/11 and considered in future HRA Budget setting.

Finance Officer Consulted: Sue Chapman

Date: 19/11/09

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 established the Regulator for Social Housing. The Tenant Services Authority is the current regulator. Sections 193 and 194 of the 2008 Act empower the regulator to set standards as to financial management, the nature, extent and quality of accommodation and facilities or services provided in connection with social housing. In due course the Regulator will have powers to take enforcement action where a registered provider has failed to meet a section 193 or 194 standard. (The relevant sections of the Act are not yet in force). The consultation process outlined in the report affords the Council and its tenants the opportunity to influence those standards. It is not considered that any individual's human rights will be adversely affected by the report's recommendations.

Lawyer Consulted:

Liz Woodley

Date: 18/11/09

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The TSA's formal consultation states registered providers must consider equality issues and the diversity of their tenants, including tenants with additional support needs, in relation to all the standards they will be required to meet. The specific requirements for the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment standard include having arrangements for understanding tenants and their needs, incorporating choices designed to meet the diverse needs of their tenants and providing support to build tenants' capacity to be effectively engaged, involved and empowered.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The proposed TSA standards promote the use of engagement and partnership with tenants to support sustainable communities. The Neighbourhood and Community standard includes a requirement for registered providers to co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic well being in the areas where their properties are located.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 The proposed Neighbourhood and Community standard will require registered providers to work in partnership with other public agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they own homes. Registered providers will also have to ensure their tenants have the opportunity to agree a local standard for anti-social behaviour.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 Risks of not meeting the TSA's proposed standards are set out in paragraph 3.8 of this report.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 In regulating the councils' landlord function the TSA has committed to co-ordinate its approach with the Audit Commission and work within the Local Performance Framework.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Outline of proposed Tenant Services Authority standards

Documents In Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

1. *A new regulatory framework for social housing in England* Tenant Services Authority, November 2009

Tenant Services Authority consultation on new arrangements for regulating the council's landlord services

Outline of proposed Tenant Services Authority standards

1. Tenant Involvement and Empowerment standard

• Customer service and choice

Registered providers must design and deliver housing services that tenants can access easily. Tenants must be offered choices over the services they receive, and be treated with fairness and respect. In relation to all the standards, registered providers must consider equality issues and the diversity of their tenants, including tenants with additional support needs. Registered providers must understand their tenants' needs and use this information to:

- design and deliver housing services
- communicate with tenants.

• Involvement and empowerment

Registered providers will offer all tenants opportunities to be involved in the management of their housing. This must include opportunities to:

- influence housing related policies and how housing related services are delivered
- be involved in scrutinising performance in delivering housing-related services.

Registered providers must offer tenants support so they are more able to be effectively engaged, involved and empowered.

• Responding to complaints

Registered providers must have a clear and accessible policy. They must deal with tenants' complaints and any other feedback promptly, politely and fairly. The policy must include how they use complaints and other feedback to:

- change how they do things
- improve services.

2. Home standard

• Quality of accommodation

Registered providers must ensure that all homes are warm, weatherproof and have modern facilities. They must meet the Decent Homes Standard or above by 31 December 2010 and be maintained at that standard. The TSA may agree an extension to this date where it is reasonable and will take account of the extent to which providers require capital funding from government and when it is likely that such funding will be available.

Registered providers must ensure their tenants have the opportunity to agree a local standard which is higher than the Decent Homes Standard.

• **Repairs and maintenance**

Registered providers must provide a cost effective repairs and maintenance service that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants. They must meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of tenants in their homes.

Registered providers must ensure their tenants have the opportunity to agree a local standard for repairs and maintenance.

3. Tenancy standard

• **Allocations**

Registered providers must let their homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way. They must take into account the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants. They should demonstrate how their allocations processes:

- make the best use of available housing
- contribute to local authorities' strategic housing function and sustainable communities.

There should be clear decision making and appeals processes.

• **Rents**

The rent standard is based on the government's direction to the TSA which only applies to providers that are not councils. The government has indicated that it intends to direct the TSA in relation to a rent standard that applies to local authority providers at a later date.

• **Tenure**

Registered providers must offer and issue the most secure form of tenure compatible with:

- the purpose of the housing
- the sustainability of the community.

They must meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements.

4. Neighbourhood and Community standard

• **Neighbourhood management**

Registered providers will keep the common areas associated with the homes that they own clean and safe. To achieve this, they will work in partnership with:

- their tenants
- other providers and public bodies, where this is the most effective way of achieving this standard.

Registered providers must ensure their tenants have the opportunity to agree a local standard for neighbourhood management.

- **Local area co-operation**

Registered providers will co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic well being in the areas where their properties are.

- **Anti-social behaviour**

Registered providers must work in partnership with other public agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.

Registered providers must ensure their tenants have the opportunity to agree a local standard for anti-social behaviour.

5. Value for Money standard

- **Value for money**

In meeting all national standards and their local standards, registered providers have a comprehensive approach to managing their resources to provide cost effective, efficient, quality services and homes to meet tenants' and potential tenants' needs.

Registered providers must ensure their tenants have the opportunity to agree a local standard for tenants to influence the services delivered and the cost of those services that result in service charges to tenants.

6. Governance and Financial Viability standard

This standard requiring registered providers to have effective governance arrangements and to manage their resources effectively to ensure their viability is maintained does not apply to local authority landlords as there are different arrangements for regulation of these areas.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 56

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Housing Management Performance Report (Quarter 2)		
Date of Meeting:	7 December 2009		
Report of:	Director of Adult Social Care & Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	John Austin Locke	Tel: 29-1008
	E-mail:	John.austin-locke@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This is the Quarter two report for Housing Management Performance for the year 2009-2010.
- 1.2 This report continues the new style of presentation and comparative benchmarking outlined in the end of year and quarter one reports presented previously to Housing management Consultative Committee

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Housing Management Consultative Committee comment on the contents of this report.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1.0 Rent Collection and Current Arrears

Indicator	End of Year Performance 08/09	First Quarter 09/10	Second Quarter 09/10	Top 25% of Performing Authorities Figures 2 nd Quarter	Future Targets	
					09/10	10/11
BV66a Rent Collection	98.16%	98.16%	98.27%	Definition under review with Housemark	98.50%	98.68%
BV66a Rent Collection (Central housing area)	98.35%	98.43%	98.42%	n.a.	98.79%	99.03%
BV66a Rent Collection (East housing area)	97.73%	97.78%	97.97%	n.a.	97.99%	98.13%
BV66a Rent Collection (North housing area)	98.35%	98.30%	98.35%	n.a.	98.66%	98.82%
BV66a Rent Collection (west housing area)	98.43%	98.36%	98.52%	n.a.	98.88%	99.12%
BV66a Rent Collection (Temporary Acc.)	97.07%	97.10%	97.61%	n.a.	96.95%	96.95%
BV66b Those with arrears of more than 7 weeks	6.40%	5.64%	5.51%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 4.34%	4.96%	4.13%
BV66c The NOSP figure	30.35%	5.82%	12.31%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 10.60%	26.46%	23.80%
BV66d The Eviction Figure (% tenants evicted for rent arrears)	0.16%	0.02%	0.06%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 0.06%	< than 35 evictions per annum: 0.29%	

Indicator	End of Year Performance 08/09	First Quarter 09/10	Second Quarter 09/10	Top 25% of Performing Authorities Figures 2 nd Quarter	Future Targets	
					09/10	10/11
BV69 % rent lost due to vacant dwellings	1.33%	1.10%	1.93%	1.49%	To be set	
Total former tenant arrears (Inclusive of Temporary Accommodation)	£784,753 (£972,732k)	£812,001 (£1,002,339)	£819,524 £1,011,396	n.a.	To be set	
% Collection rate for former tenant arrears	28.70	4.57	10.24%	RIEN	To be set	
% of Write Offs for former tenant arrears	18.66%	0.04%	1.56%	n.a.	To be set	
Total recharge debt	£95,884	£97,345	£125,752	n.a.	£125,484	
% collection rate for recharges	31.26%	6.68%	9.32%	n.a.	35%	
% Leaseholder recovery rate	80%	63%	67%	n.a.	82%	To be set
% Leaseholder Recovery Rate on Recoverable arrears	90%	Not collected quarterly yet	n.a.	n.a.	90%	To be set

3.1.1 The collection rate forecast at the end of the September 09 was 98.27%. Performance has continued to improve despite the economic climate. This is primarily due to the effectiveness of the financial inclusion initiatives and the consistent approach to income collection and arrears adopted by the Housing Income Management Team. While continuous improvement will undoubtedly become increasingly difficult in the coming months we are confident that we will achieve a top quartile result.

3.1.2 The percentage of debtors with more than seven weeks rent arrears at the end of September 09 was 5.51%. This represents a reduction of 223 in the number of debtors since the end of the 2nd Quarter 08/09.

3.1.3 Between April and September 09 the number of tenants served with a Notice of Seeking Possession (Nosp) was 354 compared to 482 during the same period in 08/09.

- 3.1.4 The number of households evicted for rent arrears at the end of the 2nd Quarter 09/10 was 7. The same number of evictions were carried out between April and September 08.
- 3.1.5 The increase of £35k increase in former arrears since the end of March 09 is due primarily to former tenants with debt who have been rehoused by the council. However, a collection rate of 10.24% at the end of the 2nd Quarter 09/10 is encouraging.
- 3.2.0 Recharges
- 3.2.1 Following the recharge relaunch at the Housing Management staff conferences in July 09 both the quantity and quality of recharge referrals has improved, resulting in an increase in the total recharge debt.
- 3.3.0 Leaseholders' service charges - % collection rate on gross debt
- 3.3.1 The collection rate based on gross debt includes all historic debt and all charges raised in the current year. The gross debt can include amounts billed but not yet due, and debts where formal payment arrangements have been agreed. Analysis of the Q2 figures shows a sizeable reduction in the gross arrears figure against the same point last year, and year on year improvement in the collection rate for the same point. The collection rate for Q2 in 2007 was 52%, 2008 was 58% and this year is 67%.
- 3.3.2 For analysis of leaseholders' service charge arrears it is important to note that invoices are raised for actual expenditure at the end of Q2 (on 30 September) each year, and include the raising of invoices for major works at that point.
- 3.4.0 Leaseholders' service charges - % collection rate on recoverable arrears
- 3.4.1 Basing a collection rate on 'recoverable arrears' seeks to omit debts where payment arrangements or charging orders have been made, along with those that are formally in dispute, or where legal recovery action is being taken. This is currently only reported annually, although we are working on a method to try to enable reporting quarterly.

3.5.0 Empty Property Turnaround Time

Indicator	End of Year Performance 08/09	First Quarter 09/10	Second Quarter 09/10	Top 25% of Performing Authorities Figures 2 nd Quarter	Future Targets	
					09/10	10/11
BV212 average re-let times in days (all properties)	28	29	26	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 29.02 Stock Retained Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 25.25	26	24
General needs	25	26	22	n.a.	26	24
Sheltered	38	42	54	n.a.	26	24

3.5.1 The Lettings Team have a challenging target to achieve an average turnaround time of 26 days. Midway through the year the cumulative performance has not yet met the target, standing at 27.7 days from April to September, however we are pleased to report that stand alone figures for general needs properties for this quarter show an improvement over the previous quarter performance and hit the target.

3.5.2 The Lettings Team is continuously looking at ways in which customer service, as well as performance, can be improved - and will be spending some time in the coming months talking with recent customers to learn from their experience of the service. There will also be closer working with colleagues in sheltered housing to look at how we can reduce the numbers of people turning down sheltered properties when they attend viewings.

3.5.3 While our current performance brings us within the top quartile of major city authorities, we continue to seek service improvements through benchmarking with, and learning from, other social landlords.

3.5.4 We are concerned with our performance on letting sheltered properties and have looked into the factors underlying this.

3.5.5 Certain schemes remain harder to let and attract few bids, examples are:

- Schemes with shared bathroom facilities for example; Evelyn Court in Portslade. A vacancy in Hazelholt, also in Portslade, only attracted five bids, and had to be re-advertised before it was finally let.

- Schemes on the outskirts of the city, for example; during the first two quarters of this year Jubilee Court in Moulsecoomb, which only has 4 out of 28 flats with shared bathroom facilities, had an average turnaround time of 99 days. In the same period Walter May House in Whitehawk, which is fully self-contained, had an average turnaround time of 50 days. In comparison Leach Court, which is centrally located, had an average turnaround time of 32 days.
- Jasmine Court has seven stairs to the main entrance and has no lift took 63 days to let. A further example is Woods House that has approximately 30 stairs to some flats.

3.5.6 While some schemes might be popular for particular reasons, such as a central location for example; Somerset Point, some people have turned down offers there because it is a high rise block, or the flat being viewed was too small. There are also some popular schemes in which offers of studio flats such as Muriel House where a studio flat was turned down seven times before being let.

3.5.7 There has been an increase in instances where bids are made on behalf of applicants for schemes in which they prefer not to live. For example; two flats in Jubilee Court were refused 17 and 23 times respectively, and had to be advertised five times before they were accepted. Most of the applicants had not placed the bids themselves, some stated that they were not ready to move, and many had no desire to attend the viewing.

3.5.8 Some additional general factors for the delay in letting some sheltered properties are the concern for potential residents about managing the moving process. Especially where they have no immediate source of support, and in some instances the absence of carpets at the property create a further disincentive.

3.5.9 Vacancies can be repeatedly turned down by short-listed bidders, as most applicants are not penalised for refusing properties. This results in some degree of 'window shopping' and a willingness to wait until the perfect property becomes available. This even occurs in traditionally popular schemes such as Elwyn Jones Court.

3.5.10 To overcome some of the issues mentioned above, we are currently carrying out a programme to remodel some schemes with shared facilities to incorporate shower rooms within the flat. We decorate properties which are in need of a fresh coat of paint, and the Lettings Officers suggest sources of support for people who might need assistance with their house move. During next Spring we will contact applicants and invite them to 'open house' sessions at some of the schemes in order that they can have more knowledge about what the various schemes have to offer.

3.6.0 Stock investment and asset management – Performance Quarter One

Indicator	End of Year Performance 08/09	First Quarter 09/10	Second Quarter 09/10	Top 25% of Performing Authorities Figures 2 nd Quarter	Future Targets	
					09/10	10/11
Emergency Repairs Completed in time	96.8 % 98.48 % (Mears) 94.49 % (Kier)	99.15% 99.79 % (Mears) 98.22 % (Kier)	97.86% 99.09% (Mears) 96.24 % (Kier)	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 99.00	99 %	
No of Emergency Repairs completed	7,755 4,414 (Mears) 3,341 (Kier)	1645 969 (Mears) 676 (Kier)	1733 989 (Mears) 744 (Kier)	n.a	n.a.	
Urgent Repairs Completed in time	92.53 % 95.35 % (Mears) 89.18 % (Kier)	97.43% 100% (Mears) 94.31 % (Kier)	97.26 % 99.26% (Mears) 94.43 % (Kier)	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 97.86	98 %	
No of Urgent Repairs completed	4,391 2,388 (Mears) 2,005 (Kier)	740 406 (Mears) 334 (Kier)	914 537 (Mears) 377 (Kier)	n.a.	n.a.	**
Routine Repairs Completed within target time	96.01 % 97.86 % (Mears) 93.53 % (Kier)	99.08% 99.78 % (Mears) 97.97 % (Kier)	98.76% 99.51% (Mears) 97.57 % (Kier)	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 99.04	98 %	**
No of Routine Repairs completed	19,697 11,305 (Mears) 8,419 (Kier)	5107 3133 (Mears) 1974 (Kier)	4687 2873 (Mears) 1814 (Kier)	n.a.	n.a.	**
BV72 Right to Repair orders completed within target time	96.87 %	98.99 %	97.94%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 98.47% Stock Retained Benchmarking: Upper	97 %	**

Indicator	End of Year Performance 08/09	First Quarter 09/10	Second Quarter 09/10	Top 25% of Performing Authorities Figures 2 nd Quarter	Future Targets	
					09/10	10/11
				Quartile 98.86%		
BV73 Ave time to complete routine repairs	15 days	13 days	12 days	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 12.29 Stock Retained Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 11.32	14 days	**
NI158 % of council homes that are non- decent	48.89%	42.84%	40.91%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 15.73 Stock Retained Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 6.9	36%	**
BV63 - Energy Efficiency (SAP Rating)	75.9	76	76.1	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 73.50 target Stock Retained Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 72.9 target	76.5*	**
LPI G3 Citywide % of stock with up to date gas safety certificates	99.61%	99.79%	99.77%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile target 100%	100 %	**
Mears Area	99.49 %	99.79%	99.84%	n.a.	100 %	**
PH Jones Area	99.78 %	99.8%	99.69%	n.a.	100 %	**

*Using 2001 SAP formula. This remains the formula in current use.

Indicator	End of Year Performance 08/09	First Quarter 09/10	Second Quarter 09/10	Top 25% of Performing Authorities Figures 2 nd Quarter	Future Targets	
					09/10	10/11
**Targets will be set in conjunction with the new repairs and maintenance contract.						

3.6.1 Responsive Repairs

3.6.2 Performance on completing routine repairs within target (20 days from issue of order) remains above target by approximately 1% and is just behind top quartile performance. Mears performance is also above target for emergency and urgent repairs and sits within the high performing authorities. Kier performance has dropped slightly over the last quarter, a number of administration issues which have been addressed.

3.6.3 This action has had an immediate impact with October's performance information indicating that Kier's performance is now in line with their performance earlier in the year. For October Kier completed 97% of emergency orders in time, 96% of urgent orders in time, and over 98% of routine repairs in time. In total in October 24 orders were completed late by Kier out of the 999 orders which were completed.

3.6.4 Decent Homes and SAP

3.6.5 The capital programme for 2009/2010 continues to deliver improvements in the standards of resident's homes notably with the boiler installation, door replacement, kitchen and bathroom programmes. These programmes have delivered a 2% improvement in Brighton & Hove City Council's performance against the decent homes standard over the last quarter. Energy efficiency (as measured by the SAP rating) remains an area of strong performance with a small improvement over the last quarter, Brighton & Hove City Council are approximately 3 points higher than other high performing authorities on this measure.

3.6.6 Gas Servicing

3.6.7 The percentage of homes with a current gas safety certificate remains high with excellent performance being delivered in partnership by Brighton & Hove City Council, Mears Group and PH Jones. Performance has been stable over the first two quarters of this year and the current figure of 99.77% shows a small improvement on the 2008/2009 end of year figure. Currently just 24 properties have an overdue service and none of these are a year or more overdue

3.7.0 Estates Service

Indicator	End of Year Performance 08/09	First Quarter 09/10	Second Quarter 09/10	Top 25% of Performing Authorities Figures 2 nd Quarter	Future Targets	
					09/10	10/11
Completion of cleaning tasks	96%	92%	95.6%	n.a.*	98%	98.5%
Bulk refuse removal Targets met within timescale	Emergency 77% Routine 84%	Emergency n.a Routine 95%	E 95.83% R 98.23%	n.a.*	E 100% R 95%	E 100% R 96%
Graffiti removal Targets met within timescale	Emergency 100% Routine 88%	61%	E 83.33% R 63.88%	n.a.*	E 100% R 95%	E 100% R 96%
* Work will take place with HouseMark in the coming year to develop comparative figures						

3.7.1 There has been an improvement in cleaning performance this quarter. This has coincided with the last of the site-based cleaners being set up and the introduction of two Cleaning Team Leaders. In addition to cleaning, these members of staff work closely with other cleaners to ensure they are cleaning to right standard and using the most effective and efficient methods. This almost completes the implementation of the recommendations made by the Chairman's Working Group on the Estates Service last year.

3.7.2 Work is currently in progress on improving performance reporting on this service, to ensure that the quality of cleaning is assessed as well as quantity.

3.7.3 A new inspection regime is being tested on the Bristol Estate, which includes residents rating the standard of cleaning. If this method proves to be robust and satisfactory to customers it will be implemented throughout the city for the start of the new financial year.

3.7.4 Whilst performance for bulk refuse removal remains at a high level this quarter, Performance in graffiti removal has improved. This is due to the fact that Neighbourhood Response team (formerly known as Mobile Estate Wardens) received training in October on graffiti removal and are therefore able to cover this work, should one or both of the two operatives who work on graffiti removal, be absent from work. It is intended that this will improve the number of graffiti removal jobs completed within target.

3.8.0 Anti-social Behaviour

Indicator	End of Year Performance 08/09	First Quarter 09/10	Second Quarter 09/10	Top 25% of Performing Authorities Figures 2 nd Quarter	Future Targets	
					09/10	10/11
% of Introductory Tenants reported to be involved in anti-social behaviour	15.51% 548 lets during the year 85 Cases	0.81% 222 lets 18 cases	0.86% 219 19 cases	Figure not recorded by other authorities in this way	12%	
Number of ASB complaints closed due to no further action required and/or the case being resolved	826	Ongoing IT project		n.a.*	n.a.*	
Number of evictions	7			n.a.*	n.a.*	
*Area currently under development with HouseMark						

3.8.1 Through the introduction of the 'Turning the Tide' initiative, the Housing Management team continue to enhance our information system whilst developing new performance indicators for benchmarking. Once this has been established data will be presented retrospectively.

3.8.2 The 'Turning the Tide' initiative intends to pilot new and innovative approaches to deal robustly with antisocial behaviour and social exclusion. The initiative intends to build upon existing success and good practice in order to deliver services which are focussed and more effective at addressing both early and later stages of ASB and which offer greater support and involvement to our communities. Turning the Tide intends to develop further and embed joint working with partner agencies through the creation of a Casework forum and a Housing and Estates forum.

3.8.3 We know that in order to address systemic change and multiple or complex needs we need to design services to be accessible and responsive to those in multiple needs. We intend to develop services to ensure simplicity of access, individual support; and for services to be available at the earliest opportunity when we have any indication that individuals, households or communities are experiencing or be at risk of deprivation or antisocial behaviour. We know that early intervention is very effective and that a dual approach of support and

enforcement has been successful with the most 'hard to reach' socially excluded groups in the city and in resolving situations of ASB.

- 3.8.4 The 'Turning the Tide' initiative will offer three levels of intervention: Universal, Enhanced and Intensive. Each level of intervention is responsive to the particular requirements of individuals and households who are causing ASB, They offer progressively more concentrated levels of personalised enforcement and support interventions intended to stop the offending behaviour and help to change behaviour and reintegrate individuals into the community
- 3.8.5 Housing Management and Housing Need & Social Inclusion are well placed to deliver co-ordinated services to perpetrators of ASB, with the lever of continued housing as a considerable motivating force or "carrot" for behaviour change. We know that everyone has the right not to experience anti-social behaviour within their community and the initiative intends to develop services to deal with this problem as it arises.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Following the presentation to Housing Management Consultative Committee, this report will be presented at the next available round of Area Panels. In addition it will be provided, as appropriate, to the customer lead working groups involved with reviewing performance, policy and future prospects across the service.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 Most performance measures discussed in this report have financial implications which will be included in the Targeted Budget Management (TBM) forecast. For example, any improvement in turnaround times or reductions in empty property numbers increases the amount of rent collected. Similarly an increase in energy efficiency will result in a reduction in outgoings. Improvements in performance will, in general, lead to more resources being available for tenants' services in the future.

Finance Officer Consulted: Susie Allen

Date: 25/11/09

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 There are none

Lawyer consulted: Liz Woodley Date: 25/11/09

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 Equalities implications are included within the body of the report.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Sustainability implications are included within the body of the report.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.5 There are no direct risk and opportunity management implications arising from this report

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.6 There are no direct Corporate or Citywide implications arising from this report.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 Not applicable to this report.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 These are contained within the body of the report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

None

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 57

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Update on the Cabinet Members Energy Efficiency Working Group		
Date of Meeting:	7 December 2009		
Report of:	Director of Adult Social Care and Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Ododo Dafe	Tel: 293201
	E-mail:	Ododo.dafe@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The Cabinet Member for Housing's Energy Efficiency Working Group has been set up for several months. Its aim is to mobilise, over time, the actions of many people to contribute to our society's wide and important sustainability agenda. As time progresses, we will be seeking increasing support for our work to reduce fuel poverty, encourage change in individual behaviours, and increase community action on climate change initiatives.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) That HMCC note the contents of this report as an update on the work of the Cabinet Member for Housings Energy Efficiency Working Group.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The Cabinet Member's Energy Efficiency Working Group consists of residents, councillors and officers. It held its first meeting in March 2009 following concerns and meetings about increased fuel bills – particularly for tenants living in high-rise blocks of flats.
- 3.2 The initial emphasis was on reducing energy consumed in communal settings eg high-rise flats, where residents pay a proportion of collective bills. However the objective of the group is now broader - looking at the potential for reducing energy use from council owned homes in order to reduce all residents' fuel bills, and in so doing lower the level of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from the council's stock.

3.3 Actions within the groups terms of reference include:-

1. Consider methods for assessing levels of fuel poverty amongst tenants, and proposing actions to minimise this.
2. Work to maximise levels of benefit take-up among tenants.
3. Look into the feasibility of training tenants to become tenant energy advisors, promoting behaviour changes around energy consumption.
4. Consider scope for seeking external funding for energy saving projects or items.
5. Assess information and communication needs of tenants and leaseholders in respect of energy consumption, particularly in order for residents to feel informed and in control of the contributions they can make.
6. Review the availability of social tariffs from energy suppliers.
7. Look at energy efficiency expectations of the new Repairs and Maintenance contract.
8. Consider producing a Winter Warmth/energy efficiency leaflet for tenants, or a dedicated Homing In edition/insert, and/or having regular energy efficiency articles in each edition.
9. Look into feasibility of generating some of our own energy which could be used for eg public way lighting or water heating to ambient temperatures.

3.4 The group has met on five occasions. It formulated and agreed its terms of reference early, and it soon became clear that water related issues needed to be included within the term 'energy'. Water issues have dominated the last three meetings of the group, and Southern Water representatives have attended the latter two.

3.5 Specific areas on which the group has made some progress are:-

- Received feedback on surveys undertaken to all high rise blocks regarding heating systems and fuel bills.
- Ascertained that our Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP or energy performance) ratings for our housing stock compares favourably with others. We have an average rating score of 76, where the average score for stock retaining councils is 64 (source: Housemark Benchmarking data).
- Updated the group on the government's Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP), and the work we hope to be doing locally.
- Reached a better common understanding of tenant concerns around Southern Water billing, and agreed some actions with Southern Water on, for example, the removal of surface water charges, and a feasibility study into alternative water charging options for blocks of flats.
- Agreed for training to be provided by the Energy Saving Trust for tenant 'energy champions' on giving energy advice on simple actions around the home that everyone can make to reduce fuel bills.

- Carried out some research into actions other organisations or community groups are taking to raise awareness of energy efficiency issues and encourage behaviour change.
 - Prepared some energy advice and money saving copy for the next edition of Homing In and invited a colleague from Corporate Communications to advise us on our overall strategy for resident communication.
- 3.6 The group will be focussing on identifying ‘energy champions’, building community capacity, and tenant training at it’s next meeting. Further on, the group will be looking at the work we can do to harness resident interest in growing, buying and preparing local food, and supporting sustainable communities by engaging in activities on local housing land with their neighbours. It will also work with colleagues looking at the potential for ‘retro-fitting’ our homes, eg through the CESP programme, to make them more energy efficient and therefore cheaper to run and keep warm.
- 3.7 From January, a further area the group will be looking at is the council’s 10:10 Campaign to reduce carbon emissions by 10% in 2010/11. The campaign will be useful for the group in galvanising individual residents, and hopefully groups, to take actions that will contribute to this challenging CO2 reductions target.
- 3.8 The nature of the groups work means that it will have a longer lifespan than our usual focus groups, and will provide updates to Housing Management Consultative Committee at six to nine monthly intervals.
- 3.9 The members of the group are:-
- Beverly Weaver
 - Brian Balchin
 - Chris El Shabba
 - John Stevens
 - Councillor Christine Simpson
 - Councillor Maria Caulfield
 - Councillor Paul Steadman
 - David Gray
 - Graham Osbourne
 - Ododo Dafé
 - Steve Cooper

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultation has been ongoing with councillors and residents on the group. Some officers have been involved in the group in a consultative capacity to advise on specific issues, and external organisations such as the Energy Saving Trust have been consulted. It is likely that consultation will soon extend to local residents when the group will be seeking ‘energy champions’ who will be interested in attending training to give energy advice and develop community capacity for energy projects.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, should any reductions in energy/utility costs arise as a result of the work of the group, this will benefit the Housing Revenue Account and tenants. Full financial implications will be reported if and when they arise.

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks

Date: 24/11/09

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The Council's wide powers of management of its housing stock in section 21 of the Housing Act, and its duty to have in place arrangements to consult on matters of housing management provide sufficient authority for the establishment of the Cabinet Member's Energy Efficiency Working Group. As the report is for noting only, there are no specific legal implications to draw to the Committee's attention. Further no individual's human rights are adversely affected by the report's recommendation.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 24/11/09

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 It is anticipated that outcomes from the work this group will initiate is the reduction of current levels of fuel poverty.
The actions the group have identified in relation to peer group advice around energy saving measures around the home will be, if it goes ahead, delivered in a way that is accessible to all groups of residents. One of the key benefits of in-home advice is that it can be tailored to meet the needs of the individual resident.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 There is the potential for using energy in more sustainable ways, sourcing more sustainable forms of energy for some Housing Management fuel needs (eg communal lighting), and contributing to more sustainable communities by bringing people together around mutually beneficial schemes.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no crime and disorder implications.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The work the Cabinet Members Energy Efficiency Working Group hopes to achieve, coupled with energy efficiency work to our properties, will reduce the risk of an increasing number of households falling into fuel poverty.

Working with households as proposed by the group increases the opportunity for residents reduce their energy consumption and make a positive contribution to the council's carbon reduction targets.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 As the work of the group progresses, it will feed more into citywide projects for energy saving, eg the 10:10 Campaign, CESP, and local food growth.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The alternative option would have been to do nothing to capture resident interest around energy saving measures. However given the growing climate change agenda it is important for us to fully engage residents in working with us to ensure that our homes, and the way our homes are used, are able to make a contribution to our corporate agendas of protecting our environment and reducing inequality.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To bring members of HMCC up to date with the work of the Cabinet Members' Energy Efficiency Working Group.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. None

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. Cabinet Member's Energy Efficiency Working Group Terms of Reference

