

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
HOUSING CABINET MEMBER MEETING
4.00pm 11 MARCH 2009
COMMITTEE ROOM 1, HOVE TOWN HALL
MINUTES

Present: Councillor Caulfield (Cabinet Member)

Also in attendance: Councillor Simpson (Opposition Spokesperson)

PART ONE

100. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

100a Declarations of Interests

100a.1 Councillor Simpson declared a personal interest in Item 112 as she was a member of 'Age Concern'.

100b Exclusion of Press and Public

100b.1 The Committee 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 Schedule 12A, Part 5A, Section 100A(4) or 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

100b.2 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Item 114.

101. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

101.1 Councillor Simpson requested that minute at 98.6 be amended to better reflect her concerns. Accordingly the minute was amended to read '*The Cabinet Member stated that the independence of the day centres would not be affected by the day options service. Services would run in parallel and persons using residential services would be able to use day service options. As the consequences of the new ways of working became apparent, reports would be submitted to the meeting to allow the situation to be monitored.*'

101.2 **RESOLVED** – That, subject to the amendment above the minutes of the meeting held on the 11 February 2009 be approved as a correct record

102. CABINET MEMBER'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 102.1 The Cabinet Member reported that last week the Government had released a press statement announcing new support to help councils cut planned rent increases for tenants in the current economic climate. The Minister has stated that, nationally, the average guideline rent increase for 2009/10 was expected to be halved.
- 102.2 The council were waiting to receive details from the Communities and Local Government Office about how local authorities could access this funding, As yet no information on what conditions or other financial implications were associated with this announcement had been made available. Until detailed guidance had been issued and interpreted it was not possible to respond to the announcement.
- 102.3 A report would be prepared for a future Housing Management Consultative Committee and Cabinet meeting outlining the council's response to the announcement as soon the implications had been considered. In the event that a reduction in rent was approved, tenants would be given at least 4 weeks notice of any changes to their rent.
- 102.4 The Cabinet Member gave an update on the petition that Councillor Hawkes' had presented at the previous meeting. The petition had requested a play area for children living on the Bates Estate. The Cabinet Member reported that staff in the Housing Estate Development Team had been working with colleagues in the Environment directorate on a feasibility study. Staff would be liaising with residents as part of this study to ensure that they had a clear understanding of the kind of play area that residents would like.
- 102.5 The petition would also be borne in mind when considering potential uses for any 'Playbuilder Funding' that the council might secure.

103. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION

- 103.1 All items were reserved.

104. PETITIONS

- 104.1 There were none.

105. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 105.1 There were none.

106. DEPUTATIONS

- 106.1 There were none.

107. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

- 107.1 There were none.

108. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

108.1 There were none.

109. NOTICES OF MOTIONS

109.1 There were none.

110. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

110.1 The Cabinet Member considered the minutes of the Adult Social Care & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee as held on the 8 January 2009 (for copy see minute book).

110.2 Councillor Simpson noted that the situation as regards minute 53.2 (Learning Disability) had changed since the meeting. She requested that the relevant persons were made aware of this fact. The Director offered to impart this information.

110.3 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes be noted.

111. LEARNING DISABILITIES PARTNERSHIP BOARD - ANNUAL REPORT

111.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing that provided information of the work of the Learning Disability Partnership Board (for copy see minute book).

111.2 The Cabinet Member noted that the Joint Commissioning Board had considered and approved the report on the 9 March.

111.3 Councillor Simpson praised the scope and breadth of the work. She commended officers for the clarity of the report.

111.4 The Cabinet Member thanked officers for their hard work in compiling the report and all the effort that it represented. She advocated the accompanying website, noting its usefulness.

111.5 **RESOLVED** - That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendations:

- (1) That the Cabinet Member for Housing note the report and endorse the work of the Learning Disability Partnership Board.
- (2) That the Cabinet Member for Housing agree to receive annual, rather than six-monthly, reports from the Partnership Board

112. ALLOCATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS POLICY REVIEW

- 112.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing that reported on a major review of the Allocations Policy and subsequent amendments to the policy (for copy see minute book).
- 112.2 The Cabinet Member recognised the huge amount of work that had been undertaken in reviewing and revising the policy. She welcomed the tenant involvement and thanked officers for their efforts in consulting with all key stakeholders. She was particularly pleased to welcome the proposals as regards Local Lettings Plans and the review of the Succession policy.
- 112.3 Councillor Simpson suggested that the revised parts of the policy should be highlighted in some way to differentiate them from the standard text.
- 112.4 Councillor Simpson welcomed the review of the Succession policy, but remained concerned about the council's difficulty in dealing with overcrowding.
- 112.5 Councillor Simpson welcomed officer comments on the support offered to individuals who required help in bidding for properties.
- 112.6 **RESOLVED** - That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendation;

(1) That the Housing Cabinet Member approve the report to amend the Allocations and Adaptations Policy.

113. HOMELESSNESS GRANT

- 113.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing that advised on the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) Homelessness Grant Allocation for 2009/10. The report also sought approval for the allocation of the grant amongst external agencies and internal teams to the further to work of the Council's Homelessness Strategy (for copy see minute book).
- 113.2 The Cabinet Member and Councillor Simpson welcomed the report and were impressed by its scope and potential impact.
- 113.3 **RESOLVED** - That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendation;

(1) That the Cabinet Member approve the allocation amongst external agencies and internal teams as set out in appendices to the report.

114. HOMELESSNESS GRANT

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allocation of the grant amongst external agencies and internal teams to the further to work of the Council's Homelessness Strategy (for copy see minute book).

114.2 **RESOLVED** - That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendation;

(1) That the Cabinet Member approve the allocation amongst external agencies and internal teams as set out in appendices to the report.

115. TO CONSIDER WHETHER OR NOT ANY OF THE ABOVE ITEMS AND THE DECISIONS THEREON SHOULD REMAIN EXEMPT FROM DISCLOSURE TO THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

115.1 The Cabinet Member considered whether or not any of the above items should remain exempt from disclosure to the press and public.

115.2 **RESOLVED** – That item 114 contained in Part Two of the agenda and the decisions thereon remain exempt from disclosure to the press and public

The meeting concluded at 4.50pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of