





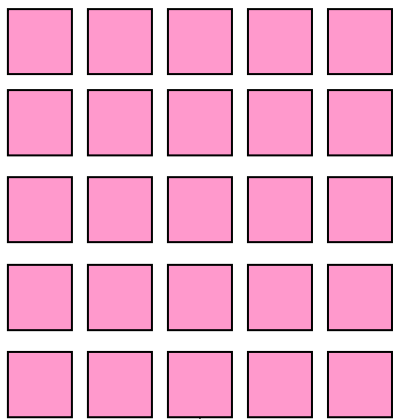
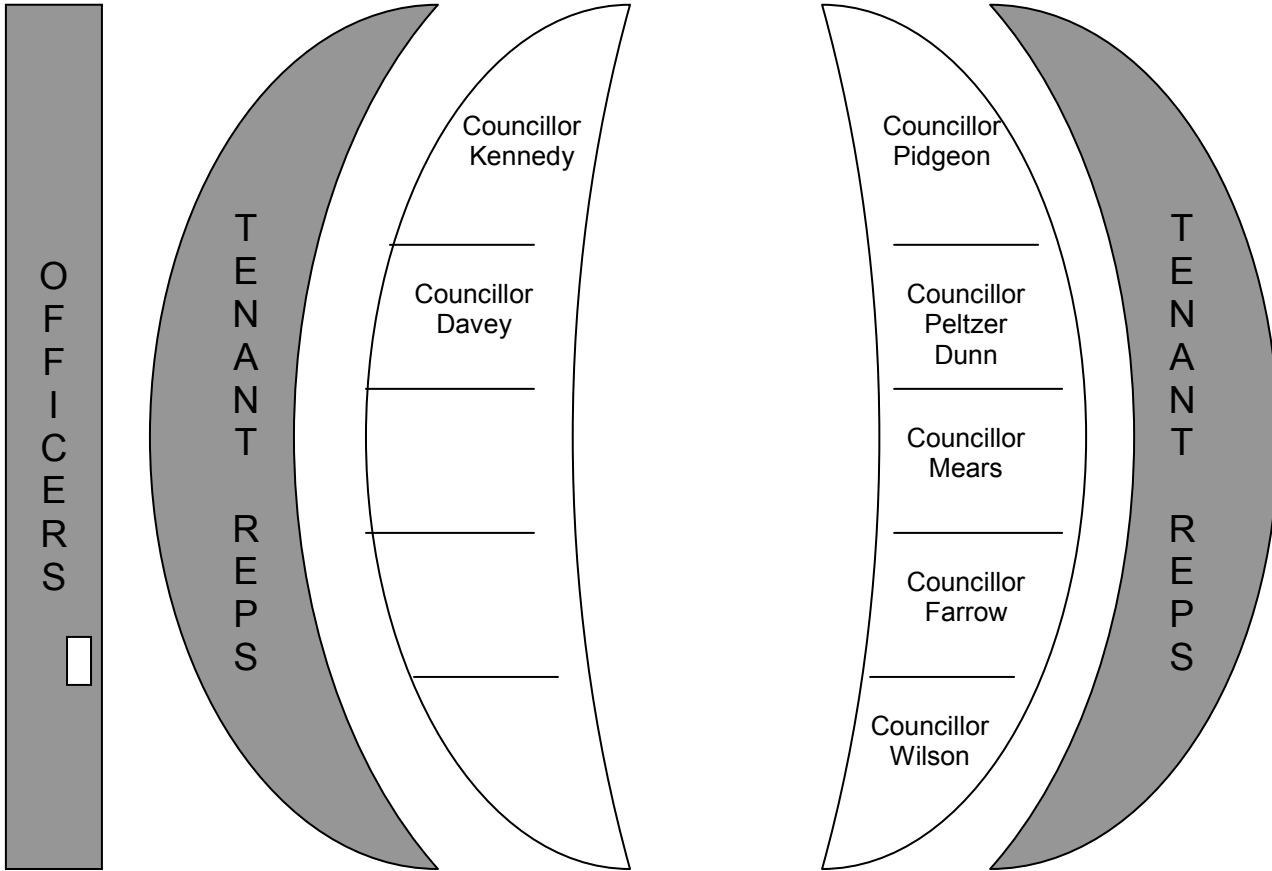
**Brighton & Hove  
City Council**

# Housing Management Consultative Committee

Title:	<b>Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee</b>
Date:	<b>11 February 2014</b>
Time:	<b>3.00pm</b>
Venue:	<b>Council Chamber, Hove Town Hall</b>
Members:	<b>Councillors:</b> Randall (Chair), Peltzer Dunn (Opposition Spokesperson), Farrow (Group Spokesperson), Davey, Kennedy, Mears, Pidgeon and Wilson
Contact:	<b>Lisa Johnson</b> Senior Democratic Services Officer 01273 291228 lisa.johnson@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk

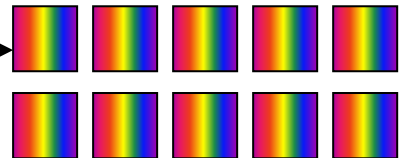
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# Democratic Services: Meeting Layout



Public Seating

Members in Attendance



Press



## **Tenant Representatives:**

### Brighton East Area Housing Management Panel

Chris El-Shabba  
Hedather Hayes

### Central Area Housing Management Panel

Jason Williams  
Alison Gray

### North & East Area Housing Management Panel

Janet Gearing  
Barry Hughes

### West Hove & Portslade Area Housing Management Panel

Roy Crowhurst  
Ron Gurney

### Hi Rise Action Group

John Melson

### Leaseholder Action Group

Tony Worsfold

### Sheltered Housing Action Group

Charles Penrose

### Tenant Disability Network

Ann Packham

# AGENDA

## 33. 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:**

- (a) Disclosable pecuniary interests not registered on the register of interests;
- (b) Any other interests required to be registered under the local code;
- (c) Any other general interest as a result of which a decision on the matter might reasonably be regarded as affecting you or a partner more than a majority of other people or businesses in the ward/s affected by the decision.

In each case, you need to declare

- (i) the item on the agenda the interest relates to;
- (ii) the nature of the interest; and
- (iii) whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest or some other interest.

If unsure, Members should seek advice from the committee lawyer or administrator preferably before the meeting.

**(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 Two of the Agenda states in its heading 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 exempt categories is available for public inspection at Brighton and Hove Town Halls.*

## 34. MINUTES

1 - 10

Minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2013 (copy attached).

## 35. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

## 36. CALL-OVER

### 37. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

To consider the following matters raised by members of the public:

- (a) **Petitions** – to receive any petitions presented to the full council or at the meeting itself;
- (b) **Written Questions** – to receive any questions submitted by the due date of 12 noon on the 4 February 2014;
- (d) **Deputations** – to receive any deputations submitted by the due date of 12 noon on the 4 February 2014.

### 38. ISSUES RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

To consider the following matters raised by councillors:

- (a) **Petitions** – to receive any petitions submitted to the full Council or at the meeting itself;
- (b) **Written Questions** – to consider any written questions;
- (c) **Letters** – to consider any letters;
- (d) **Notices of Motion** – to consider any notices of motion.

### 39. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 2 2013/14 11 - 28

Contact Officer: Tom Matthews Tel: 01273 293234  
Ward Affected: All Wards

### 40. THE BRIGHTON & HOVE PROPERTY STANDARD 29 - 36

Contact Officer: Janine Healey Tel: 29-3314  
Ward Affected: All Wards

### 41. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2014/15 37 - 72

Contact Officer: Monica Brooks/Susie Allen Tel: 01273  
292279/293105

Ward Affected: All Wards

### 42. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 73 - 84

Contact Officer: Benjamin Ben'Okagbue Tel: 01273  
293857

Ward Affected: All Wards

### 43. LETTABLE STANDARD 85 - 116

Contact Officer: Satti Sidhu Tel: 01273 293219  
Ward Affected: All Wards

**44. SHELTERED HOUSING REVIEW UPDATE**

**117 -  
148**

*Contact Officer: Peter Huntbach  
Ward Affected: All Wards*

*Tel: 01273 293248*

**45. HOUSING TENANCY FRAUD**

*Presentation by Corporate Fraud Manager*

**46. BRIGHTON HOVE SEASIDE COMMUNITY HOMES**

**149 -  
152**

*Update on Brighton Hove Seaside Community Homes*

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](http://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 Lisa Johnson, (01273 291228, email [lisa.johnson@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.johnson@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk)) or email [democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Date of Publication - Monday, 3 February 2014

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**  
**HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE SUB-COMMITTEE**

**3.00pm 29 OCTOBER 2013**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Present**

**Councillors:**

Councillor Randall (Chair); Peltzer Dunn (Opposition Spokesperson), Farrow (Opposition Spokesperson), Davey, Kennedy, Mears, Pidgeon and Pissaridou

**Tenant Representatives:**

Brighton East Area Housing Management Panel: Ms C El-Shabba and Ms H Hayes

Central Area Housing Management Panel: Ms J Davis and Ms A Gray

North & East Area Housing Management Panel: Ms J Gearing

West Hove & Portslade Area Housing Management Panel: Mr R Crowhurst and Mr R Gurney

Hi Rise Action Group: Mr J Melson

Leaseholder Action Group: Mr T Worsfold

Sheltered Housing Action Group: Mr C Penrose

Tenant Disability Network: Ms A Packham

**PART ONE**

**19. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

**19(a) Declarations of Substitute Members**

19.1 Councillor Pissaridou declared that she was attending as a substitute for Councillor Wilson

**19(b) Declarations of Interests**

19.2 Councillor Randall and Mr R Crowhurst, as board members of Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes, declared a disclosable pecuniary interest and a personal interest in item 32 and said they would leave the Council Chamber during consideration of that item.

19.3 As Councillor Randall was not able to Chair item 32, and as there was no Deputy Chair for the Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee nominations were requested for the position. Councillor Farrow nominated Councillor Kennedy, and Councillor Mears seconded. No other names were put forward and so Councillor Kennedy was appointed Chair for item 32.

**19(c) Exclusion of the Press and Public**

19.4 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.

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

**20. MINUTES**

20.1 The Sub Committee considered the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2013.

**20.2 RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee held on 3 September 2013 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

**21. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

21.1 The Chair informed the Sub Committee that due to personal reasons Jean Davis, representative for the Central Area Housing Panel, had resigned from her position. He thanked her very much for all her work and said she would be missed and wished her all the best for the future. Councillor Peltzer Dunn, Councillor Mears and Mr Melson added their thanks and best wishes. Ms Davis thanked everyone for their kind words, and said that although she would no longer be an elected representative she would continue to support her fellow tenants.

21.2 The Chair was pleased to advise the Sub Committee that Mears Brighton Branch, had been selected by the National Apprentice Service as a finalist for Regional Winner – Employer of the Year (South Central Region). They later won the award at a ceremony at Fareham College. Mears will now be recognised at the National Level Awards Ceremony, which is due to be held at the Skills Show at the NEC Birmingham on 14 November 2013.

**22. CALL-OVER**

22.1 **RESOLVED** – That all items be reserved for discussion

**23. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

- 23.1 (a) There were no petitions  
(b) There were no written questions  
(c) There were no deputations

**24. ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

24.1 There were no petitions, written questions, letters or notices of motion.



**25. SUSTAINABLE TENANCIES STRATEGY (WELFARE REFORM)**

- 25.1 The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment, Development & Housing on Sustainable Tenancies Strategy (Welfare Reform). The report was presented by Ms Dafe, the Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement (Housing). The report provided information on the sustainable tenancies strategy, which outlined the work being undertaken in response to welfare reform.
- 25.2 The Chair thanked officers for the report, and for the work the housing department were doing in response to the substantial changes taking place.
- 25.3 Councillor Farrow referred to Table 2 in the draft strategy and asked for clarification on how the ‘most deprived lower super output areas’ were identified, and why his ward of Moulsecomb and Bevendean was not included in the top five areas. Officers explained that areas of deprivation were identified nationally using a set formula which looked at things such as health, education, income etc. The Department of Communities and Local Government provided a report every four to five years listing deprived areas. The draft strategy listed the most deprived areas in the city and Moulsecomb and Bevendean was not one of those. Officers said they didn’t have the information with them at the meeting, but would let him know after the meeting where his ward was ranked.
- 25.4 Councillor Pissaridou referred to Appendix 1 and asked how many tenants would be affected by the welfare reforms. Officers said that it wasn’t possible to provide the exact number but it was likely that it would have an effect on all tenants of working age. Tenants who were in employment and those over 65 would be least affected.
- 25.5 Councillor Mears referred to Appendix 1 and noted that for the review of the closure of Manor Place 21 residents had been spoken to, and asked if more information on the review could be provided. Officers agreed and said a report would be brought to a future meeting.
- 25.6 Mr Crowhurst said that it was likely that the under occupancy benefit reduction would apply to the over 65s from 2015, and asked if work was being done now to mitigate the impact it may have. Officers said that they were focusing on tenants affected by the changes currently in force, but if further reforms were brought in it would impact on Sheltered Housing and that would need to be looked at. Councillor Farrow said that he was also concerned about the possible impact on the over 65s and requested that officers collect statistics on those who could be affected. The Chair accepted the concerns but said that at the moment officers were too busy to take on further work.
- 25.7 Mr Penrose questioned the current sheltered housing policy and was concerned that someone in full time employment, or under 65, qualified for the housing. Mr Crowhurst said that it might appear that someone didn’t qualify for sheltered housing, but all those allocated the accommodation would have a support need. The policy to allow those over 50 to be considered for sheltered housing had been in place for a number of years. The Chair said the sheltered housing allocation policy may need to be reviewed in the future.
- 25.8 **RESOLVED: That the draft Sustainable Tenancies Strategy be noted.**

**26. INCOME COLLECTION AND ARREARS MANAGEMENT**

- 26.1 Ms Dafe, the Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement (Housing) gave a presentation on Income Collection and Arrears Management. Area Panels had received the same information at their recent meetings.
- 26.2 Councillor Farrow said that he would have preferred to have a written report on this matter and not a presentation. He noted that one of the reasons given for tenants not paying their rent was that they 'wouldn't pay', and asked for evidence that that was true. Officers said at the previous meeting information had been provided on income collection as part of the performance report, and members had asked for a presentation providing further details. A report could be brought to a future meeting if required, and that could include anonymised examples of those in arrears.
- 26.3 Councillor Farrow said that the Housing Committee had previously agreed that those in arrears from the reduction in Housing Benefit due to under occupancy would not be evicted, and was concerned that some tenants were having recovery action started against them. Ms Dafe said that it had been agreed that where arrears were solely due to the under-occupancy penalty, officers would use all means other than evictions and bailiffs to recover rent due and officers were acting in accordance with that. The Chair confirmed there had been no change in policy.
- 26.4 Councillor Pissaridou asked where tenants would go if they were evicted. Ms Dafe said that officers worked tirelessly to assist tenants in arrears and eviction was very much a last option.
- 26.5 Councillor Mears was concerned that a high number of tenants were up to £1000 in arrears. The Chair said that many of those were only a few pence in arrears, and he had now asked for very small amounts to be written off as it wasn't economical to recover. Some of those with higher arrears included those where the Court of Protection was involved and it wasn't possible to pursue the shortfall.
- 26.6 Councillor Peltzer Dunn noted that they had been told that there was arrears of £138k relating to arrears accrued from changes to Housing Benefit, but from the information provided it should only be arrears of £72k.
- 26.7 Mr Penrose suggested that if tenants were paying by Direct Debit the rent may be paid two weeks in advance or in arrears and that could impact on the figure given for the level of arrears.
- 26.8 **RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.**

**27. HOUSING OFFICE ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY**

- 27.1 Ms R Chasseaud, Head of Tenancy Services, gave a presentation on Access to Housing Services, the Housing Office Accommodation Strategy. Ms Chasseaud said that Area Panels had been consulted and a report would be going to the next Housing Committee on this matter.

- 27.2 Councillor Peltzer Dunn noted that there was an intention to allow tenants to pay their rent by credit card, and was concerned that it was encouraging people to get into debt and that there would be cost implication to the authority. Officers apologised and said that was an error and it was only debit cards that they were considering as a payment option.
- 27.3 Councillor Mears noted that the proposals had been discussed at Area Panels but their comments had not been included in the presentation. Councillor Mears was concerned that the needs of tenants were being overlooked and they needed the housing office at Selsfield Drive to pay their rent and speak to officers when needed.
- 27.4 Councillor Farrow said the office served a number of wards and it was important to have a physical presence in the area. He was concerned that with the forthcoming cuts the future of libraries was not certain, and therefore questioned whether the housing office should move to the library.
- 27.5 Councillor Pissaridou felt that tenants should lead on this, and their comments and feelings should be included in any report on the relocation of the housing office.
- 27.6 Councillor Kennedy said that she had recently chaired an Area Panel and the tenants had been generally happy with the proposals. It had been an omission not to include the feedback from Area Panels, and that would be included in the forthcoming report. Councillor Kennedy reminded the Sub Committee that the housing office at Selsfield Drive only served an average of 16 customers a day and staff would be able to speak to those who used the office on a one to one basis.
- 27.7 Mr Melson was concerned at the proposals and felt that tenants were being isolated and marginalised with a constant diminution of services.
- 27.8 The Chair said that in the current economic situation they had to look at the services provided and make tough decisions. Moving the office to the library would also help to keep the library open. Officers would be available at the library for tenants, and a service would be maintained. He agreed that feedback from the Area Panels should be included in the report to the Housing Committee. If the proposal to close Selsfield Drive office was agreed it would release the site to build additional social housing. The Chair confirmed that a report would go to the Housing Committee and, if the proposals were agreed, to the Policy & Resources Committee.
- 27.9 **RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.**

## **28. ANNUAL REVIEW OF REPAIRS PARTNERSHIP 2012/13**

- 28.1 The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment, Development & Housing on the Annual Review of Repairs Partnership 2012/13. The report was presented by Mr Huelin, Partnering Business Manager (Housing).
- 28.2 Councillor Farrow thanked Mr Huelin for the report, and asked if an interim report could be provided in due course to look at how effective the proposed action plan had been. The Chair agreed.

- 28.3 Mr Crowhurst referred to paragraph 3.2, regarding properties meeting the government's Decent Homes Standard, and asked whether that was achievable when elderly people in sheltered housing were still sharing communal bathrooms. The Chair said there were some properties with shared facilities, but that was acceptable within the Decent Homes Standard.
- 28.4 Mr Melson thanked officers for the report and asked whether Mears would need to employ more people to implement the action plan, and if so what the cost implications would be. Mr Cryer (Mears Ltd) said there shouldn't be an increase in staff costs, and gave an example of changes to the helpdesk. A review had shown that the great majority of calls were received on Mondays and Tuesdays. The company currently had six members of staff dedicated to answering the phone, and those staff members hours were changed to ensure they were working during the busiest times. An additional member of staff would be employed to assist with taking calls, but the changes in working hours would lead to a reduction in overtime payments, and the financial savings would pay for a new member of staff and so there would be no cost implications.
- 28.5 Councillor Peltzer Dunn noted that previously Councillors had questioned the method used to assess customer satisfaction and asked if that had been looked at. Mr Cryer said that it had, and Mears would soon be providing customers with a survey card which they could complete and returned by Freepost, so there would be no cost implications for the customer. Completed surveys would be entered into a prize draw, which they hoped would encourage people to return the survey.
- 28.6 Councillor Peltzer Dunn referred to paragraph 3.10 and was concerned that the target for 'percentage of repairs completed right first time' was 97% and suggested that the target should be 100%. Officers said that there would always be cases where it wasn't possible to fully complete a job in one go. For example, a leaking roof might not be able to be fully repaired at one visit but a temporary repair may be made whilst waiting for material to be available to fully complete the job. Officers said they would ensure that a better explanation would be provided in the next report.
- 28.7 Mr Penrose asked if there was any way that Mears could take control of sub contractors. Mr Cryer said that a percentage of sub contractors work was inspected, and the team which carried out the inspection had recently been strengthened with the employment of a surveyor.
- 28.8 The Chair thanked officers for the report, and suggested that the recommendations be amended to say that there would be an interim review in the new year to check whether the suggested improvements were working.
- 28.9 **RESOLVED –**
- (1) That the Sub Committee note the report
  - (2) That the Action Plan be reviewed in the new year to see how effective the improvements had been

**29. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PETS POLICY**

- 29.1 The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment, Development & Housing on Housing Management Pet Policy. The report was presented by Ms Hitchens, Senior Neighbourhood Officer. The report provided information on the proposed new pet policy.
- 29.2 Councillor Farrow thanked officers for the excellent report. He referred to paragraph 9 of the policy relating to keeping reptiles, amphibians and spiders and asked whether the authority should consider not allowing reptiles to be kept as pets. Councillor Peltzer Dunn referred to paragraph 4.8 and noted there was some confusion over neutering of pets. Officers agreed that the wording was confusing and that it would be amended. With regard to reptiles, the policy did recommend that tenants did not keep them and if they did, would need to prove they would be kept appropriately. The RSPCA would be involved in any assessment.
- 29.3 Ms Hayes asked what would happen to tenants who currently kept reptiles. The Chair confirmed that the policy was not retrospective.
- 29.4 Councillors Davey and Peltzer Dunn both felt that it would be inappropriate to ban the keeping of reptiles, and whilst they may not agree with it, it was for individual to decide if they wanted to keep them as pets.
- 29.5 **RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the comments of the Sub Committee be noted
  - (2) That the Sub Committee recommends to the Housing Committee that the Pet Policy be adopted.

**30. FIRE SAFETY IN TOWER BLOCK**

- 30.1 Mr Ben'Okagbue, Head of Property and Investment (Housing), and Mr Richard Fowler, Fire Officer, gave a presentation on Fire Safety in Tower Blocks.
- 30.2 Councillor Peltzer Dunn thanked officers for the presentation. He asked what action was being taken on providing suitable storage of mobility scooters. Mr Ben'Okagbue said the programme was in its early stages, and he didn't have all the information with him but he could confirm that four locations had so far been completed. Officers were looking at other sites such as storage units which were not being used, empty garage sites etc. Ms Gray was aware that one unit had been finished, but was not available for use and asked why. Mr Ben'Okagbue said he wasn't able to confirm why it couldn't be used now, but would find out. The Chair asked that a written answer be provided for members of the Sub Committee.
- 30.3 Ms Gray said that in the reception area where she lived all the chairs had been removed on the understanding that they would be replaced with pull down seats, but to date no new ones had not been installed. Ms Davis said that in Leach Court all the seats had also been taken out, and they were supposed to be replaced with fire-proof ones. They had now been told that there was no money to replace and the cost of replacing them

would have to come from the EDB budget. Ms Gray said that a bid had been submitted to EDB for 18 new seats, but was told there would only be sufficient funds to pay for 3 seats. The Chair said that matter would be looked into.

- 30.4 Mr Fowler said that Brighton & Hove City Council and the Fire Authority were working in partnership to look at the installation of sprinklers in high rise flats. Sprinklers were an effective way to tackle the early stages of a fire and would improve safety for both residents and fire fighters. There was a cost implication of installing the sprinklers, but if there was fire damage to a property the cost of repairs could be below the threshold and therefore would need to be borne out of the Housing Revenue Account. The cost of installation could therefore be offset by any potential fire repairs. It was hoped that there would be some match funding from the Fire Authority to finance the installation. A pilot project was being looked at.
- 30.5 The Chair asked Mr Fowler how disruptive installation could be for tenants. He was advised that a recent project in Sheffield for a building with 47 flats over 13 floors, had taken one month to complete.
- 30.6 Mr Melson asked what would activate the sprinklers and whether they would be interconnected. Mr Fowler said they would be connected, but to set one off there would need to be a fire directly underneath with a heat source which had reached 70°; smoke alone would not activate the sprinkler.
- 30.7 The Chair referred to the match funding and asked if the Fire Authority were also working with other authorities. Mr Fowler said the funding would be allocated where the greatest risk was, and that was currently with high rise buildings.
- 30.8 **RESOLVED** That the presentation be noted.

### **31. HOUSING AND SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16-25 JOINT COMMISSIONING STRATEGY**

- 31.1 The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment, Development & Housing on Housing and Support for Young People Aged 16-25 Joint Commissioning Strategy. The report was presented by Ms Sundar, Head of Housing Support. The report had already been considered by the Housing Committee and the Children and Young People Committee, and was coming to this meeting for information.
- 31.2 Members thanked her for the report.
- 31.3 **RESOLVED: That the Sub Committee note the report.**

### **32. UPDATE ON BRIGHTON & HOVE SEASIDE COMMUNITY HOMES BATCHING AND REFURBISHMENTS**

- 32.1 The Chair and Mr Crowhurst left the room prior to the presentation of this item.

- 32.2 The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment, Development & Housing which provided an update on Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes batching and refurbishment. The report was presented by Mr Ben'Okagbue, Head of Property and Investment (Housing). The report set out the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) position with regards to the batching of dwellings for lease to Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes (BHSC) in Batch 8, and provided an update on the progress of current refurbishment of BHSC properties. The report set out the proposals for bringing forward one of the batches from May 2014 to March 2014.
- 32.3 Councillor Peltzer Dunn thanked officers for the report, and said that it made sense to transfer properties as soon as possible.
- 32.4 Councillor Mears asked for clarity that officers had delegated powers to approve the variation to the contract. Ms L Woodley, solicitor confirmed that they did. The solicitor said that the deal had originally been agreed by a Special Cabinet meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2011. The Special Cabinet authorised the Strategic Director of Place, the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance, after consulting the Deputy Leader (Executive) and Cabinet Members for Housing and Finance to:
- (a) settle any outstanding or new issues that may arise during negotiations,*
  - (b) settle the terms of the required suite of documents with Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes Limited and the Funders,*
  - (c) decide on the properties to be leased to the company; and*
  - (d) take all steps necessary or incidental to completion and/or implementation of the overall transaction.*
- The Head of Law was authorised to draft, finalise and execute all documents necessary to completion and/or implementation of the overall transaction. The deal as completed a week later recognised that batches could be brought forward with the agreement of the parties (BHCC, Seaside and Santander) and if Batch 8 was to come on stream earlier it would not trigger a Deed of Variation. Provided that the Strategic Director of Place, the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance were happy to exercise their delegated authority, there would be no need for a further committee report.
- 32.5 Councillor Peltzer Dunn asked whether a further report on this matter would come to the next Housing Committee meeting for a decision. The solicitor said that would not be necessary as there was no decision to be made as officers had delegated powers on this matter.
- 32.6 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 6.55pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of



# HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE SUB COMMITTEE

**Agenda Item 39**

Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Housing Management Performance Report Quarter 2 2013/14</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>11 February 2014</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director Environment, Development &amp; Housing</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Ododo Dafé</b>	<b>Tel: 293201</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>ododo.dafe@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This Housing Management performance report covers Quarter 2 of the financial year 2013/2014. It incorporates changes suggested at previous meetings, such as including results from the equivalent quarter last year.







### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee notes and comments on the report.

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

- 3.1 The report continues the use of the 'RAG' rating system of red, amber and green traffic light symbols to provide an indication of performance, and also trend arrows to provide an indication of movement from the previous reporting period. Where indicators are red or amber explanations have been provided.

#### 3.2 Key to symbols used in the report:

Status		Trend	
Performance is below target (red)		Poorer than previous reporting period	
Performance is close to achieving target, but in need of improvement (amber)		Same as previous reporting period	
Performance is on or above target (green)		Improvement on previous reporting period	

#### 4.0 Rent collection and current arrears

\*As these targets are year end (rather than for each quarter), no traffic lights or trend arrows will be applied to this table until the Quarter 4 2013/14 report.

Performance Indicator		Target*	Q2 12/13	Year End 12/13	Q2 13/14
1	Rent collected as proportion of rent due each year (arrears of £826,189)	98.66%	98.74% (£47,449,358)	98.66% (£47,559,925)	98.37% (£49,902,607) <b>projection</b>
2	Tenants with more than seven weeks rent arrears	2.85%	2.41% (286)	2.63% (310)	3.26% (381) <b>cumulative average</b>
3	% of those in arrears who have a current Notice of Seeking Possession (NOSP)	27.02%	12.02% (338)	25.87% (722)	11.71% (357) <b>cumulative average</b>
4	Households evicted because of rent arrears	Less than 0.29%	0.03% (3)	0.08% (10)	0% (0) <b>year to date</b>
5	Rent loss due to empty dwellings	1.6%	1.16% (£547,300)	0.76% (£357,781)	0.92% (£458,500) <b>projection</b>
6	Former tenant arrears collected (current total £513,178)	18%	8.64% (£46,186)	18.10% (£96,216)	15.51% (£79,578) <b>year to date</b>
7	Rechargeable debt collected (current total £227,565)	11%	3.98% (£9,357)	10.80% (£24,561)	6.85% (£15,591) <b>year to date</b>





##### 4.0.1 Percentage of rent collected as proportion of rent due each year by area

Area	Target	Q2 12/13	Year End 12/13	Q2 13/14
North (includes Sheltered housing)	99.12%	98.95% (£13,123,788)	99.12% (£13,550,150)	98.95% (£14,229,332) <b>projection</b>
West	98.69%	98.77% (£9,626,790)	98.69% (£9,604,919)	98.57% (£10,143,944) <b>projection</b>
Central	98.87%	98.76% (£9,053,385)	98.87% (£8,952,438)	98.59% (£9,343,287) <b>projection</b>
East	98.13%	98.53% (£15,643,400)	98.13% (£15,449,313)	97.62% (£16,186,044) <b>projection</b>
All areas	98.66%	98.74% (£47,449,358*)	98.66% (£47,559,925*)	98.37% (£49,902,607) <b>projection</b>

\*Includes collection from small number of HRA properties used as Temporary Accommodation.

##### 4.0.2 A table presenting information relating to the impact of the reduction in Housing Benefit for under occupying households is attached as Appendix 2.

#### 4.1 Empty home turnaround time

Performance Indicator	Target	Q2 12/13	Year End 12/13	Q2 13/14	Status	Trend
Average re-let time in calendar days (BV212)	21	18	15	21		
Average re-let time in calendar days (no exclusion periods as per BV212)	32	30	32	39		





























##### 4.1.1 Average re-let time in calendar days – no exclusion periods as per BV212

Performance has significantly improved since the previous quarter, with the average re-let time falling from 70 to 32 calendar days. Turnaround time remains high because 71 long term (6 weeks or more) empty properties have been brought back into use following major works, such as structural works including floors, walls and roofs and installations of lacking amenities like gas, electricity and heating.

The target for this indicator is set at 21 days in order to have a better fit with our financial inclusion work in trying to ensure that tenants have appropriate information, advice and support to minimise the numbers seeking high interest loans or purchase agreements in order to equip themselves for their new home.

##### 4.1.2 A table presenting a snapshot of long term empty properties is attached as Appendix 1.

## 4.2 Property & Investment

Performance Indicator		Target	Q2 12/13	Year End 12/13	Q2 13/14	Status	Trend
1	Emergency repairs completed in time	99%	99.64% (1,962)	99.57% (8,281)	99.83% (2,970)		
2	Routine repairs completed in time	98%	99.71% (8,394)	99.78% (33,799)	99.85% (7,499)		
3	Average time to complete routine repairs (calendar days)	15 days	8 days	9 days	12 days		
4	Percentage of appointments kept by contractor	95%	93.02% (7,291)	94.56% (27,434)	94.23% (6,987)		
5	Tenant satisfaction with repairs (respondents from period who were satisfied or very satisfied)	95%	97.63% (1,795)	97.03% (7,493)	99.03% (1,735)		
6	Percentage of responsive repairs passing post-inspection	95%	93.50% (1,410)	95.44% (4,728)	94.95% (715)		
7	Percentage of repairs completed right first time	97%	97.62% (10,814)	98.09% (45,717)	99.30% (10,412)		
8	Cancelled repair jobs	Under 5%	13.43% (1,406)	11.04% (4,875)	4.03% (410)		
9	Percentage of homes that are decent	98.5%	91.9%	95.33% (11,347)	98.26% (11,688)		
10	Energy efficiency rating of homes (SAP 2009)	62.8	61.5	62.5	63.0		
11	Percentage of planned works passing post-inspection	97%	98.65% (804)	99.37% (2,221)	99.70% (336)		
12	Stock with a gas supply with up-to-date gas certificates (of 10,375 requiring one)	100%	99.84% (10,453)	99.97% (10,387)	99.99% (10,374)		
13	Percentage of empty properties passing post-inspection	98%	97.44% (114)	98.99% (591)	100% (159)		
14	Average time taken (hours) to respond to callouts for lift faults	-	-	-	4h 09m	-	
15	Lifts restored to service on same day as callout	-	-	-	93.93% (201)	-	

#### 4.2.1 **Percentage of appointments kept by contractor**

Although the target was missed, performance against this indicator is being monitored on a weekly basis and has been continually improving since last quarter. We are pleased to report that performance is well above the target so far into Quarter 3.

#### 4.2.2 **Percentage of responsive repairs passing post-inspection**

Performance very narrowly missed the target in Quarter 2, and has improved since the previous quarter. All jobs that fail are recorded and discussed with the operatives who carried them out. Of the 753 jobs that were post inspected, 38 failed: 28 required further works to complete the repair, six were due to poor quality work, three had errors on the worksheets, and one was deemed to have failed by the supervisor because the expectations of the tenant were not fully met, although the technical requirements were.



















#### 4.2.3 **Percentage of homes that are decent**

Although performance is narrowly (0.2%) below the interim target, the number of properties failing to meet the standard fell from 409 at the end of Quarter 1 to 207 at the end of Quarter 2. We are on course to meet the standard by the end of December 2013.

#### 4.2.4 **Stock with up-to-date gas certificates**

Only one property did not have a current safety certificate as of 30 September. The service was successfully carried out on 3 October once the tenant allowed access to the property. Scheduling for both gas contractors (Mears and PH Jones) is already in place to visit all properties requiring a new certificate up to the end of Quarter 3.

### 4.3 Estates Service

Performance Indicator		Target	Q2 12/13	Year End 12/13	Q2 13/14	Status	Trend
1	Quality inspection pass rate of our cleaning service	98%	98% (188)	98% (719)	99% (200)		
2	Quality inspection pass rate of our minor repairs service	99%	100% (149)	99% (657)	100% (206)		
3	Completion of cleaning tasks (percentage completed out of all tasks due)	98%	98% (13,482)	98% (53,424)	99% (14,500)		
4	Emergency removals of bulk waste completed within 1 working day	100%	100% (6)	100% (17)	100% (48)		
5	Routine removals of bulk waste completed within 5 working days	98%	99% (803)	98% (3,270)	94% (619)		
6	Emergency maintenance and replacement of lights completed within 1 working day	100%	100% (330)	99% (718)	99% (126)		
7	Routine maintenance and replacement of lights completed within 5 working days	97%	98% (224)	94% (1,410)	97% (287)		
8	Neighbourhood Response Team jobs completed within target times	96%	97% (1,868)	97% (8,027)	95% (1,437)		
9	Graffiti removals completed within target times	100%	100% (8)	92% (25)	100% (11)		

#### 4.3.1 Routine removals of bulk waste completed in time

The target was missed due to increased pressures on the team due to staff sickness and additional work including filling grit bins in advance of winter and setting light timers in advance of the clocks going forward. Therefore, routine bulk removals were less of a priority than emergency removals, of which 100% were completed in time.

#### 4.3.2 Emergency maintenance and replacement of lights completed within 1 working day

Only one emergency light replacement missed the 1 working day target. The tenant was not at home at the time of the appointment, but the work has since been done.

#### 4.3.3 Neighbourhood Response Team jobs completed within target times

The target was missed due to increased pressures on the team as per the commentary in paragraph 4.3.1.

#### 4.4 Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

Performance Indicator	Q2 12/13	Year End 12/13	Q2 13/14
Cases closed without need for legal action	97% (115)	95% (279)	95% (109)
Cases closed resulting in legal action	3% (4)	5% (16)	5% (6)
Cases closed without eviction	98% (117)	97% (286)	96% (110)
Cases closed resulting in eviction	2% (2)	3% (9)	4% (5)
Customer satisfaction with cases managed by the ASB Team*	80% (5)	82% (23)	83% (5)

\*Percentage of victims from complex cases handled by the ASB Team who said they were either 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the way the case was dealt with. Of the 115 ASB cases closed during Quarter 2, 17 were closed by the ASB Team and 98 by the Tenancy Team.

##### 4.4.1 Reports of ASB incidents in wards with 500 properties or more\*











Ward	Number of incidents	...per 1,000 properties
Queen's Park	249	143
East Brighton	261	115
Hollingdean & Stanmer	107	83
Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	72	46
Patcham	24	44
Hangleton & Knoll	46	38

##### 4.4.2 Reports of ASB incidents by type\*

Category	Number	Percent
Personal (eg verbal abuse, harassment, intimidation)	127	12%
Nuisance (eg noise, pets and animal nuisance)	190	18%
Environmental (eg graffiti and fly-tipping)	718	69%
Total	1,035	100%

\*Figures for reports of ASB incidents are significantly higher than for the previous quarter because the methodology has been revised to cover incidents reported across the whole of Housing Management, including bulk waste and graffiti reported to the Estates Service team.

## 4.5 Sheltered housing

Performance Indicator	Target	Q2 12/13	Year End 12/13	Q2 13/14	Status	Trend
Residents with an up to date support plan (of those requesting one)	100%	98% (854)	98% (844)	97% (861)		
Residents who decline a support plan	3% or under	2% (18)	3% (25)	2% (22)		
New residents with a support plan completed within 21 calendar days	100%	100% (21)	95% (76)	80% (16)		
Call each resident personally (if requested)	100%	100%	100%	100%		
Provision of at least one social activity per week (in 21 of our 23 schemes)	100%	100%	100%	100%		

### 4.5.1 Residents with an up to date support plan (of those requesting one)

Performance remains steady compared to the previous quarter. The target was missed because 25 appointments to review support plans were overdue, all of which were either because the tenant was unavailable (due to hospitalisation or respite care) or because of staff absence due to sickness. These missed appointments are rescheduled as soon as the tenant is available, and staff cover is arranged where necessary.

### 4.5.2 New residents with a support plan completed within 21 calendar days

Three of the four support plans that missed the 21 day target were due to limited staff numbers due to sickness (as per paragraph 4.5.1). In the other case the tenant had initially declined a support plan but changed their mind. All four support plans have since been completed.



## **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION:**

- 5.1 The performance measures in this report demonstrate whether we are delivering quality service for scrutiny by councillors, residents and the public at large.

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

### Financial Implications:

- 6.1 Although there are no direct costs arising from the recommendations in this report, changes in most performance areas will have a financial implication. The area with the most significant financial impact is the ability to collect rents from tenants. Recent income collection indicators are suggesting that the arrears for current tenants are increasing, however the 2013/14 budget for the contribution to bad debt provision is currently just sufficient to meet this increase. Given the current economic climate and the on-going welfare reform changes, these indicators are being very closely monitored to ensure that any financial implications arising are highlighted in the monthly Targeted Budget Management (TBM) report for the HRA, which is reported quarterly to Policy and Finance Committee.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks* *Date: 20/01/14*

### Legal Implications:

As this report is for noting, there are no significant legal implications to draw to the Sub-Committee's attention.

*Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley* *Date: 23.01.14*

### Equalities Implications:

- 6.3 Where appropriate, equalities implications are included within the body of the report.

### Sustainability Implications:

- 6.4 Where appropriate, sustainability implications are included within the body of the report. The increase in the energy efficiency rating of homes reflects an improvement towards the council's sustainability commitments, among other objectives such as reducing fuel poverty and deprivation.

### Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 6.5 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report. Cases of anti social behaviour involving criminal activity are worked on in partnership with the Police and other appropriate agencies.

### Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 6.6 There are no direct risk and opportunity implications arising from this report.

### Public Health Implications:

- 6.7 There are no direct public health implications arising from this report.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 6.8 There are no direct corporate or city wide implications arising from this report. However, two performance indicators featuring in this report (the percentage of homes that are decent and the energy efficiency rating of homes) are among those used to measure success against the Corporate Plan Priority of Tackling Inequality.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

1. Appendix 1. Long term empty properties
2. Appendix 2. Outline of under occupation arrears and related information

**Documents in Members' Rooms:**

1. None

**Background Documents:**

1. None

## Appendix 1. Long term empty properties

<b>General needs and sheltered long term empty properties (6 weeks or more)</b>		
<b>Calendar days empty as at 27/12/13</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Status</b>
55	East Brighton	Let - new tenancy commencing 27/01/14
55	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
62	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
83	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
97	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
104	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
111	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
125	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
139	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
146	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
146	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
174	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
174	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
195	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
202	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
209	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
223	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
244	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
244	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
251	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
251	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
265	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
293	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC

<b>General needs and sheltered long term empty properties (6 weeks or more)</b>		
<b>Calendar days empty as at 27/12/13</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Status</b>
300	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
321	East Brighton	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
341	East Brighton	Requires completion of substantial major works to this property and a neighbouring property before being re-let
139	Goldsmid	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
230	Goldsmid	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
237	Goldsmid	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
62	Hangleton & Knoll	Let - new tenancy commencing 13/01/14
76	Hangleton & Knoll	Undergoing major works to build extension - due April 2014
167	Hangleton & Knoll	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
223	Hanover & Elm Grove	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
111	Hollingdean & Stanmer	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
216	Hollingdean & Stanmer	Ready to let – currently being advertised
300	Hollingdean & Stanmer	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
62	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
69	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	Ready to let
76	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	Ready to let following extensive major works
83	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	Ready to let
125	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
132	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	Due to be used to house decanted tenants of another property whilst extension built
160	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC

<b>General needs and sheltered long term empty properties (6 weeks or more)</b>		
<b>Calendar days empty as at 27/12/13</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Status</b>
167	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
188	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	Undergoing major works
230	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
251	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
286	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
1,980	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean	With BHCC undergoing major refurbishment. Awaiting cladding as part of project affecting other properties.
69	Patcham	Undergoing major works
118	Patcham	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
195	Patcham	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
216	Patcham	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
293	Patcham	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
328	Patcham	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
48	Queen's Park	Ready to let
48	Queen's Park	Let - new tenancy commencing 20/01/14
55	Queen's Park	Let - new tenancy commencing 13/01/14
55	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
62	Queen's Park	Let - new tenancy commencing 27/01/14
83	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
97	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
97	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
132	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
132	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC

<b>General needs and sheltered long term empty properties (6 weeks or more)</b>		
<b>Calendar days empty as at 27/12/13</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Status</b>
139	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
146	Queen's Park	Ready to let and being advertised
153	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
160	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
216	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
293	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
293	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
328	Queen's Park	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
139	South Portslade	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
195	St. Peter's & North Laine	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
293	St. Peter's & North Laine	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
489	Westbourne	With BHCC awaiting major refurbishment. Requires planning permission to merge with adjacent property - both properties small studio flats with shared facilities
97	Wish	Let - new tenancy commencing 27/01/14
48	Woodingdean	Let - new tenancy commencing 13/01/14
83	Woodingdean	Ready to let following extensive major works
202	Woodingdean	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
230	Woodingdean	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
286	Woodingdean	Leasing to Seaside Homes - batch date TBC
<b>Total of 83 dwellings</b>		

<b>Temporary accommodation long term empty properties (6 weeks or more)</b>		
<b>Calendar days empty as at 27/09/13</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Status as at 21/11/13</b>
1,552 to 1,805	Central Hove (1 property containing 2 flats)	With BHCC awaiting major refurbishment. Requires planning permission to merge with adjacent property - both properties small studio flats with shared facilities
870 to 1,868	Goldsmid (1 property containing 2 flats)	With BHCC awaiting major refurbishment. Requires planning permission to merge with adjacent property - both properties small studio flats with shared facilities
1,552 to 1,889	Queens Park (block of 9 flats)	To be redeveloped. Site of proposed Brooke Mead Extra Care Scheme - planning application proceeding
870	Westbourne (2 properties containing 3 flats)	With BHCC awaiting major refurbishment. Requires planning permission to merge with adjacent property - both properties small studio flats with shared facilities
871	Withdean (4 prefab bungalows within above land)	Part of redevelopment site. Approval granted for demolition of these unlettable prefab bungalows once contract to refurbish main buildings completed
<b>Total of 20 dwellings</b>		





## Appendix 2. Outline of under occupation arrears and related information

Item	Indicator	Baseline (end March)	End July	End Aug	End Sept	End 2013/14 forecast
1	Number of council households affected by the under occupation charge at month end	949	867	862	753	606
3	Percentage of under occupying council households who are in arrears at month end (numbers in brackets)	29% (224)	67% (581)	66% (565)	77% (578)	75% (465)
4	Average arrears per under occupying council household at month end	£122	£154	£164	£160	£325
5	Total arrears of under occupying households at month end	£84k	£133k	£142k	£120k	£188k
6	Percentage increase in arrears of under occupying households since 1 April (amount of arrears in brackets)	0% (£84k)	59% (£133k)	69% (£142k)	44% (£120k)	124% (£197k)
7	Percentage increase in arrears of all current tenant arrears since 1 April (amount of arrears in brackets)	0% (£639k)	29% (£826k)	35% (£861k)	29% (£826k)	77% (£1.1m)
8	Arrears of under occupying households as a percentage of arrears of all current tenants	13%	16%	16%	15%	17%
9	Cumulative number of under occupying households who have moved through a mutual exchange	0	18	22	29	60
10	Cumulative number of under occupying households who have moved through the Transfer Incentive Scheme	0	22	25	35	72

**Source:** all data is from OHMS, the database of council tenants and properties used within housing management. Details of which households are affected are continuously updated onto this database using records provided by Revenues and Benefits.



# **HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE SUB COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item 40**

Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Brighton &amp; Hove Property Standard</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>11 February 2014 Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director of Environment, Development &amp; Housing</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Janine Healey</b>	<b>Tel: 293314</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>janine.healey@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

## **FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 This report concerns the policy areas and specification of work that is carried out to council owned and managed homes as part of the planned programme of improvement work.
- 1.2 These improvements ensure all Housing Revenue Account (HRA) managed properties meet and exceed the government's Decent Homes Standard (DHS), and is known locally as the Brighton & Hove Property Standard.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee note the recommendations in this report and that Housing Committee approves:

- 2.1 That all residents be offered additional choice of coloured wall tiles, when having a kitchen or bathroom installed.
- 2.2 That all residents be offered additional choice of kitchen cupboard doors and handles when having a new kitchen installed.
- 2.3 That all individual sheltered homes with a street entrance be offered an external security light, when upgrading the electrics to that property.
- 2.4 That all sheltered housing schemes with communal lounges have a hearing loop installed when upgrading electrics to communal areas.
- 2.5 That a change in policy is agreed to allow tenants who have installed their own kitchen or bathroom to have the other room modernised by the council, if it is old

or in disrepair (as per the age and condition requirements of the governments DHS).

- 2.6 To run a six to twelve month pilot enabling all 1 bed ground floor flats that become empty and require a bathroom replacement, to be considered for the installation of a level access shower instead of a bath.

### 3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

#### 3.1 Housing register need for properties with a mobility rating

- 3.1.1 The Accessible Housing Register links existing adapted and easier to access properties with individuals with specific needs. The draft Disabled Persons Housing Strategy aims to increase the supply of accessible homes for people with a range of needs and to pro-actively meet the demand for adaptations, rather than solely as a response to a community care assessment.
- 3.1.2 Mobility need is assessed as one of three categories: mob 1 for those who need full wheelchair access to mob 3 for those who can manage up to the third floor with a lift or up to three steps to access the property.
- 3.1.3 The demand on the housing waiting list (people that have actively bid in the past 12 months) demonstrates there are 297 people with a mobility need that are waiting for a 1 bedroom property.
- 3.1.4 Between November 2012 and November 2013 there were 57 one bedroom ground floor flats re-let. Of these, 21 had an existing adapted shower so were ring-fenced for applicants with a mobility need. Applicants (with a mobility need) who are re-housed into properties without a mobility rating or without a level access shower, are likely to result in an assessment request to Housing Adaptations and Occupational Therapy (HAOT).

#### 3.2 Recommended options

- 3.2.1 **Design additional choice:** The coloured wall tiles are approx £13 p/m<sup>2</sup> compared to £6 p/m<sup>2</sup> for white tiles. This will add up to approx £30 per install for those that chose coloured tiles. Gloss kitchen cupboards are more expensive than the other options available and depending on the layout of the kitchen will add up to an approx £300 per install for those who chose this style. It is anticipated that extra choice of design will continue to increase residents' feelings of pride and personalisation of their home.
- 3.2.2 **Sheltered lighting and hearing loops:** External lighting to sheltered properties with a street entrance will incur an additional cost of around £115 per install. Hearing loops cost approx £500 to £600 to install. There are 23 lounges in sheltered schemes, ten of which already have hearing loops. A programme of 13 installs would cost £7,800 plus an annual service of around £55 per system.

- 3.2.3 **Tenant installations:** Of the sample of 71 stock condition surveys carried out this year which were looked at for this piece of work, 8 of them had a tenant installed kitchen or bathroom. Six of these residents had fitted both a kitchen and a bathroom, so the new policy would only apply to two properties. For these two properties, the bathroom was due for replacement in 15 years time. It therefore seems likely that this policy change will have a minimal impact on budgets, whilst addressing the feeling of unfairness for tenants who have invested in their homes.
- 3.2.4 **Showers in ground floor flats:** When replacing a bathroom in an empty property (ie to 1 bed flats on the ground floor) it would be timely to consider fitting a level access shower instead of replacing the bath. This is to create more opportunities for properties being suitable for those with mobility needs, and to ensure value for money by not removing newly installed baths following an assessment by an Occupational Therapist (OT).
- 3.2.5 Showers would only be installed in properties that have suitable external access and are then ring-fenced in the Homemove system for applicants with mobility need. The costs for this have been based on installing showers in approximately 15 properties that are re-let each year. It is not possible to accurately forecast the number of properties that will become empty and therefore the volume of work required. However this figure was arrived at in the following way:
- 228 x 1 bed flat re-lets between 6/11/12 and 25/11/13
  - 69 of these were ground floor
  - 32 of these had an existing adapted shower
  - 1 was a sheltered property.
- 3.2.6 This gives a potential remaining 36 properties to adapt when empty. Of these, 14 properties had a new kitchen or bathroom installed when the property was empty – suggesting these would have been suitable for a level access shower if the external access to the property was also suitable. It is now proposed to run a six to twelve month pilot of installations to monitor the demand for installations, associated costs, any delay in re-letting the property and to be certain of the effectiveness of the policy proposal.

#### 4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 **Kitchen and bathroom policy:** The age and condition assessment for kitchens and bathrooms is currently linked, meaning that both rooms have to fail the government's Decent Homes Standard in order for one of them to be modernised. This has created a great deal of dissatisfaction among residents and led to many formal complaints and enquiries. With this in mind, the first change that was investigated was to sever this linked assessment. However, over a period of a ten year programme of work, additional funding of £11m to £15m would need to be made (between £1.1m to £1.5m per year), therefore it is not financially viable at this stage.
- 4.2 **Sheltered showers:** Consideration was given to installing level access showers into sheltered properties when they become empty and when installing a new bathroom. However, due to the review being undertaken of the Older Persons and Sheltered Housing function, and the proposals in the draft Asset

Management Strategy to potentially increase the supply of sheltered housing schemes and extra care schemes within the city, it is proposed to put this on hold.

- 4.3 **Sheltered wifi:** To support digital inclusion, it was considered to install IT sockets and wifi into sheltered lounges. However the ongoing maintenance and ownership of the line was an issue and it is simpler to do this on a scheme by scheme basis directly with the Internet Service Provider. Funding for this has previously been provided via the Estates Development Budget and Resident Involvement officers and Mears will continue to support residents who bid for internet connections.
- 4.4 **Bathrooms:** Two items were looked at in some detail and then rejected from the proposals. The first was the option of installing a towel warmer in new bathrooms as part of either a bathroom replacement or heating upgrade. This was rejected due to a combination of cost and the towel warmer not being sufficient to heat the bathroom.
- 4.5 The second item was to provide an option of having a higher than standard toilet pan fitted as part of the bathroom replacement. After discussions with HAOT and suppliers, this was rejected due to a combination of cost and the need for adaptations to be personalised. HAOT would continue to design and support adaptations of this nature where required.
- 4.6 **Additional payment scheme:** There has been interest and support from residents, officers and contractors, to introduce a scheme whereby residents can chose to have more expensive or higher specification products installed as part of the programme of works, and for tenants to pay for this additional service. This might cover items such as decorative wall tiles, electrical sockets, electrical switches and towel heaters. This will be looked into as a separate piece of work.
- 4.7 **Adaptations policy:** Consideration was given to including guidance around removing unwanted adaptations from properties as part of the programme of improvement works. After consulting with residents and Councillors at Area Panels it was agreed that including a policy statement on removing adaptations created more confusion and uncertainty for residents, than the existing arrangement of not removing adaptations except in exceptional circumstances.

## 5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The piece of work was launched at City Assembly in May 2013 with a presentation and group discussions. It was also held as an agenda item at the Tenant Disability Network, Sheltered Housing Action Group, at an officer meeting with HAOT and at two rounds of Special Area Panel meetings.
- 5.2 Discussions were held around product availability and specification, improving communal areas and supporting an increased provision of properties with mobility ratings and specific policy options.

- 5.3 Existing data collected from the Asset Surveys and New Tenant Questionnaire surveys were also reviewed to identify any emerging priorities that residents have.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The reasons for the proposed change to the Brighton & Hove Property Standard, as it relates to the governments Decent Homes Standard, is to ensure that homes are continuing to be maintained to a standard which our residents and tenants agree is “decent”; while at the same time identifying and addressing any specific areas that residents consider unfair or unequal.

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

### 7.1 Financial Implications:

- 7.1.1 It is anticipated that the costs of the proposed changes can be met within the proposed Housing Revenue Account Capital Investment Programme budget for 2014/15.
- 7.1.2 Demand and costs will be monitored during the pilot for replacing baths with level access showers, along with any associated decreased demand for HAOT Community Care Assessments for council tenants. Any variations to budget will be managed and reported through the council’s budget management process.

Finance Officer Consulted:      Name Susie Allen      Date: 08/01/2014

### 7.2 Legal Implications:

- 7.2.1 The Partnering contract with Mears is flexible and provides the opportunity to review the level of service provided and the financial framework used to provide it. It is not necessary to issue a Contract Variation Notice for changes of this nature.

Lawyer Consulted:      Name Liz Woodley      Date: 28/01/2014

### 7.3 Equalities Implications:

- 7.3.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was reviewed at the commencement of this piece of work, and will be finalised following decisions being made at Housing Committee.
- 7.3.2 The proposals have a positive impact on equalities for some of our most vulnerable residents. Installing hearing loops in sheltered lounges supports improved socialisation and interaction between residents by removing a barrier to communication. External security lighting can increase the sense of security and safety for sheltered residents and reduce the likelihood of slips, trips and falls.

### 7.4 Sustainability Implications:

- 7.4.1 One of the aims of these proposals is to ensure the sustainable use and supply of council homes for residents of Brighton & Hove, both now and in the future. The equalities work around sheltered homes, level access showers and tenant's own installations aims to support sustainable use.
- 7.4.2 There is a potential for reducing unnecessary waste, when baths are fitted to properties whilst empty and then followed by a request for adaptations by the new resident.
- 7.4.3 The One Planet logo will also be included on the information leaflet, in line with existing council policy.
- 7.5 Any Other Significant Implications
- none
- 7.6 Crime & Disorder Implications
- 7.6.1 The recommendation to install a motion sensor security light to sheltered properties with a street entrance will help to provide residents with an increased sense of security against crime and anti-social behaviour



## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

none

### **Documents in Members' Rooms**

none

### **Background Documents**

1. Equality Impact Assessment
2. Allocations Policy
3. Asset Management Strategy (draft)



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Housing Revenue Account Budget 2014/15</b>	
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>15 January 2014 – Housing Committee</b> <b>11 February 2014 – Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee</b> <b>13 February 2014 – Policy &amp; Resources</b>	
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director of Finance &amp; Resources</b> <b>Executive Director of Environment, Development and Housing</b>	
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Monica Brooks and Susie Allen	<b>Tel:</b> 29-2279
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<b>Wards Affected</b>	<b>ALL</b>	

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report presents the proposed Budget for 2014/15 as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Members are required to consider the budget proposals including savings and service pressures as well as changes to rents, fees and charges.
- 1.2 This is the first opportunity we have had to bring the HRA Revenue Budget Report 2014/15 to HMCSC. The report had to be taken to the January Housing Committee to ensure it would go on to Policy and Resources Committee on 13th February. The Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme form part of the Council's overall budget and have been prepared on that basis. This includes a city-wide consultation process. As the thematic policy committee, Housing Committee are presented with the budget proposals of the administration and are invited to comment on the proposals and make recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee. The proposals, although agreed at Housing Committee, remain proposals until and unless they are agreed at budget Council. The approach adopted does not therefore prejudice HMCSC's ability to comment on the proposals in this report.
- 1.3 The council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) contains the income and expenditure relating to the council's social landlord duties, of approximately 11,800 properties and 2,600 leasehold properties. The income and expenditure related to these properties are accounted for separately from the council's other services/activities which form part of the council's General Fund.
- 1.4 In managing the HRA, the budget strategy continues to aim at reducing management overhead costs in order to optimise investment in service delivery to the benefit of our

tenants and leaseholders and that reduces inequality, improves homes and sustains local neighbourhoods.

- 1.5 At the time of writing this report the council is awaiting confirmation from the Government of the 2014/15 rent restructuring guidance relating to the target rent convergence date. The government is yet to confirm whether 2014/15 or 2015/16 will be the final year of rent convergence when setting the rents for April 2014. Therefore two sets of budget proposals and rent increases have been prepared based on each of the possible convergence years. Confirmation is due mid-to-late January and the report to Policy & Resources Committee will include the budget and rent proposals based on the confirmed rent convergence date.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee note the proposed draft 2014/15 revenue budget reported to Housing Committee on 15 January 2014, for recommendation that Policy & Resources Committee:
- (a) Approves and recommends to Council the budget for 2014/15 as shown in Appendix 1 according to the final year of rent convergence to be confirmed by government in its rent restructuring guidance for 2014/15.
  - (b) Approves individual rent increases and decreases in line with rent restructuring principles as determined by the Government and detailed in paragraphs 3.12 to 3.16, and according to the final year of rent convergence to be confirmed by government in its rent restructuring guidance for 2014/15.
  - (c) Approves the changes to fees and charges as detailed in Appendix 2.
  - (d) Approves the new service charges outlined in Appendix 2 including the phased implementation of the new Intensive Housing Management charge.

## **3. HRA BUDGET PROPOSALS 2014/15**

### **Summary**

- 3.1 A local authority's HRA must be in balance, and the authority must show in its financial planning that HRA income meets expenditure and that the HRA is consequently viable. The introduction of self financing of the HRA from 1st April 2012 means that the authority needs to ensure sufficient funds are available to meet the future management, repairs and investment needs of the stock. Self financing has given authorities the freedom to plan for the longer term and has given greater emphasis to the 30 year business planning process.
- 3.2 In a continuing drive to ensure value for money within the service, benchmarking of both service quality and cost is used extensively to identify opportunities for better efficiency. Benchmarking against comparator organisations and an analysis of the outcome of the Housing Quality Network value for money review in 2012 identified an efficiency savings target of £1.028m over 2 years to ensure that the service provides value for money. To continue this efficiency drive, the target set for 2014/15 was

£0.438 million and this has been met through a reduction in management costs of £0.488 million included in the savings in paragraph 3.10 below.

3.3 The HRA Budget 2014/15 aims to balance the priorities of both the council and housing residents within the context of the Corporate Plan 2011-2015, which sets out the council's strategic direction and priorities for the next three years, based around the four council priorities:

- Tackling inequality
- Creating a more sustainable city
- Engaging people who live and work in the city
- Modernising the council

3.4 The HRA revenue strategy focuses upon investment to deliver corporate priorities:

#### **1. Investment to tackle inequality and sustain rental income**

- Continued Investment in Prevention. Vulnerable residents of the City are over represented within the council's social housing stock. HRA investment in housing related support and the quality of council housing, promotes social inclusion and prevents negative impacts upon Health, Adult Social Care and Children's Services budgets preventing the need for costly statutory interventions such as homelessness support, corporate parenting, hospital and residential care admissions;
- Investment in housing support for older people. Enhancing our sheltered housing model. Working proactively to enable households to retain their existing accommodation and continue to live independently in their own homes;
- Continued investment in providing specialist support services for vulnerable council housing residents on low incomes including services that promote financial inclusion. This is critical for those households impacted by Welfare Reform ;
- Continued Investment through the EU 'Interreg' grant funding in the 'Learning Cities' project will deliver support to council tenants that enhance the employability of individuals, and so improve their and their family's life chances;
- Continued investment in specialist tenancy management and support services to support vulnerable council housing residents and services which tackle the blight of anti-social behaviour.

#### **2. Creating a more sustainable city**

The housing management service is developing a Sustainability Action Plan according to One Planet Living principles:

- Providing energy advice to council tenants from operatives as part of the annual gas check and through other energy advice initiatives;
- Tackling fuel poverty through continued investment in providing modern, energy efficient heating for council housing residents;

- Improving the sustainability and energy efficiency of the housing stock in line with the emerging One Planet Living Sustainable Action Plan for council housing. This will include insulation improvements, over-cladding projects, solar PV and improvements to communal lighting;
- Investing in estate regeneration and building new council homes to high sustainability standards;
- Action to increase asset value, tackle overcrowding, and improve well-being through continuation of the loft conversion / extension programme;
- A strategic programme to tackle damp and condensation to contribute to improving health inequalities.

### **3. Engaging people who live and work in the city**

- Further development of tenant and resident involvement and the new tenant scrutiny panel to ensure that tenants and leaseholders have a stronger voice in the management of council housing within the framework of current policies and priorities;
- Continuing to maximise the social value arising from investment in the Repairs and Improvement Partnership with Mears, through provision of local jobs, raising the aspirations of young people through apprenticeships, and creating local supply chain opportunities. To date this includes:
  - 65 apprentice and work opportunities provided
  - 95% local employment
  - 28 local businesses employed as subcontractors
  - Partnership with City College to enable 35 construction students to gain experience refurbishing empty homes
  - Estate Development Budget run as a not-for-profit business model
  - Supporting the “Waste House” project in partnership with the University of Brighton and Mears. More than 3,000 people, among them students, apprentices, local builders and school children are involved in building the house, with the ambition to train students and apprentices around emerging sustainable industries.

### **Budget Variations**

- 3.5 The HRA budget for 2014/15 is shown in Appendix 1 with the main budget variations detailed in Table 1 below. Employees’ costs include provision for a 1% pay increase along with any known increments.
- 3.6 The inflationary provision for non-employee costs ranges from zero to 2%, with the exception of some contracts where inflationary increases are agreed within the terms of the contract. All income budgets are zero-based<sup>1</sup> and therefore charges are estimated based on known increases in costs or inflation.

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<sup>1</sup> A zero-based budget is one that is wholly recalculated each year rather than changing incrementally.

- 3.7 The major works leasehold income budget has increased by £0.609 million to reflect a significant increase in planned major works during 2013/14 to blocks containing leaseholders.
- 3.8 The budget for capital financing costs of £8.564 million has increased by £0.416 million. In order to maximise capacity for future borrowing, this budget includes a set aside of £2 million for the future repayment of debt. The budget also includes the repayment of borrowing of £1.274 million with the remaining costs being interest on the outstanding debt.
- 3.9 The budget variances result in a surplus which will be used to support the capital programme and is shown as 'revenue contributions to capital schemes' within the Revenue Budget. Savings proposals, service pressures and changes to rents and fees and charges are detailed in paragraphs 3.10 to 3.20 with an Equalities Impact Assessment of the budget proposals shown in Appendix 3.

**Table 1: Main Budget Variations**

Variation	With rent convergence ending 2014/15 £'000	With rent convergence ending 2015/16 £'000
<b>Adjusted Budget 2013/14</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>
<b><i>Increases in Resources:</i></b>		
Savings Proposals as detailed in paragraph 3.10	(1,303)	(1,303)
Increase in rent for dwellings (net of empty properties)	(1,188)	(888)
Increase in major works income from leaseholders	(609)	(609)
<b><i>Reductions in Resources:</i></b>		
Employees pay award and other inflation	405	405
Service Pressures as detailed in paragraph 3.11	870	870
Increase in capital financing costs	416	416
Revenue contribution to capital schemes	1,350	1,050
Other Minor Variances	59	59
<b>Original Budget 2014/15</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>

### **Savings & Service Pressures**

- 3.10 The HRA Budget strategy provides savings of £1.303m for reinvestment in services and the capital programme in 2014/15 by:
- Reducing housing management costs by £0.488m following the redesign of services such as the estates cleaning and neighbourhood response services; reducing the number of service access points around the City and continuing improvements in efficiency;
  - Increasing income by £0.485m per annum through the introduction of service charges to tenants for common way electricity, lift servicing and a revision to the TV aerial charge to cover the servicing and maintenance element. This also

includes increases to the commercial property portfolio income. Details of the proposed fees and service charges are shown in Appendix 2.

- A net increase in income of £0.260m as a result of a revised charge to tenants in sheltered accommodation for intensive housing management, taking account of a remodelled service and the reduction in supporting people funding of £0.340m. The proposal is to redesign the sheltered service with costs covered by service charges eligible for Housing Benefit making the service more financially secure. The remodelled service will be more aligned to health and social care outcomes and designed to respond to the changing demographics of the older population.
- Reducing maintenance unit costs through service efficiencies in the Repairs and Maintenance partnership contract saving £0.070m.

3.11 The required reinvestment in services is currently estimated at £0.870m with the remaining savings of £0.433m being reinvested in the capital programme. The revenue pressures requiring reinvestment are:

- A review of the Homemove and Housing Options budgets has identified that a greater proportion of time is spent on HRA properties than previously budgeted resulting in a reallocation of costs of £0.132m;
- £0.258m is required for investment in staffing as part of our action to mitigate against the potential negative impacts of Welfare Reform and to reduce financial and social inequality. This includes housing management staff working with families in multiple deprivation and funding for a mutual exchange scheme supporting those under-occupying to move to more suitable and financially sustainable accommodation;
- In response to feedback from sheltered residents and the increasing complexity of needs of some residents, £0.160m is being re-invested in extra staffing for the Sheltered Service;
- An additional £0.030m to provide statutory storage facilities for HRA tenants who abandon their accommodation. This budget requirement results from a number of residents making a bid to take over the current storage space at Robert Lodge for community space;
- Investment of £0.145m for legal, health and safety, and human resources to support the delivery of service redesigns and to meet health and safety legislation within the property and investment service;
- A contribution of £0.145m for grants to community groups working in and around council estates to enhance community cohesion and the lives of our residents by, for example, helping to deliver the council's financial and digital inclusion programmes.

## **Rents 2014/15**

3.12 Rents for 2014/15 will continue to be calculated in accordance with the government's current rent restructuring guidelines. Target rents for each property are calculated based on the relative property values, bedroom size and local earnings. The act of moving tenants' current rents to the target rent is called rent convergence. In order to limit increases in current rents to reach target rents, the current guidance specifies a maximum rent increase equivalent to Retail Price Index (RPI) inflation + ½% + £2 per week.



- 3.13 The government has recently published a consultation document covering changes to social housing rent policy which is set to apply from April 2015 onwards. The current basis on which social housing target rents are set will still apply. The main changes to be introduced are that the annual increases with effect from April 2015 will change from RPI + ½% + £2 per week to Consumer Price Index (CPI) + 1%. This change will remove the flexibility of social landlords to increase social rents each year by an additional £2 where rents are below target.
- 3.14 For 2014/15 rents, local authorities must still use the September 2013 RPI of 3.2% plus ½% for setting rent inflationary increases. However the government has not confirmed when setting the rents for 2014/15 whether local authorities should treat 2014/15 or 2015/16 as the final year of convergence for limiting rent increases. This will be announced in January after the rent consultation ends. Therefore, the rent calculation and budgets proposed in this report are based on two assumptions: one which assumes that 2014/15 will be the final year of rent convergence and the other based on the final year being 2015/16. Confirmation will be received from the government in time for the final recommendations to Policy & Resources Committee on 13 February 2014.
- 3.15 Rent convergence in 2014/15 would result in an average rent increase of 5.43% for Brighton & Hove, as the majority of rents are increasing towards target rents. If rent convergence remains in 2015/16 the average increase will be 4.81%. Table 2 below provides details of the average rents and increases.

**Table 2: Rent increases**

<b>Rent Convergence Year</b>	<b>Average weekly rent increase 2014/15 %</b>	<b>Average weekly rent for 2014/15</b>	<b>Average weekly rent increase for 2014/15</b>	<b>Maximum weekly increase 2014/15</b>	<b>Lowest increase/ (decrease)</b>
Year 2014/15	5.43%	£83.72	£4.31	£7.28	(£1.37)
Year 2015/16	4.81%	£83.23	£3.82	£7.22	£0.57

- 3.16 It should be noted that approximately 70% of tenants are in receipt of housing benefit. The average rents still remain the lowest and the most affordable in the city, and offer our tenants secure accommodation. In 2013/14 rents were 69% lower than the private sector and in 2012/13 15% lower than housing associations in the area.

### **Fees and Service Charges 2014/15**

- 3.17 The government introduced rent restructuring with the aim of creating rents that are fair and affordable. Rents are not calculated to take into account any service charges and only include all charges associated with the occupation of a dwelling, such as maintenance of the building and general housing management services.

- 3.18 Service charges should therefore reflect additional services which may not be provided to every tenant or which may be connected with communal facilities rather than to a particular occupation of a house or flat. Different tenants may receive different types of service reflecting their housing circumstances. Tenants are already paying for a variety of different services such as cleaning services and grounds maintenance, depending on where they live in the City.
- 3.19 Now that the HRA is self financing, it is ever more important to ensure its long term viability. The authority must ensure sufficient funds are available to meet the future management, repairs and investment needs of the stock to keep homes decent and to invest in building new affordable housing.
- 3.20 The proposed fees and charges for 2014/15 are set out in Appendix 2. This year the proposals include new service charges to recover the costs of servicing and maintaining lifts and the costs of communal electricity in blocks of flats. It also includes a new charge for Intensive Housing Management which will replace the Supporting People charge. All service charges are reviewed annually to ensure full cost recovery and also to identify any service efficiencies which can be offset against inflationary increases, to keep increases to a minimum. New service charges and those that have increased by more than the standard inflation provision are explained in further detail in Appendix 2. In most cases the new charges will be covered by Housing Benefit. The impact of the new service charges on different groups in the community is included in the Equalities Impact Assessment at Appendix 3.

### **Medium Term Financial Forecast**

- 3.21 The introduction of self financing in 2012 has provided additional resources from the retention of all rental income and, through greater control locally, will enable longer term planning to improve the management and maintenance of council homes. Although there are additional resources available in the long term, self financing includes a cap (or limit) on the amount of HRA borrowing for capital investment by each local authority. This limit is currently set at £156.8m for Brighton & Hove and the estimated total borrowing up to 31 March 2017 is £117.4m, providing additional borrowing capacity of £39.4m. The government has recently announced in the Autumn statement that it will increase the funding available for new affordable homes, by increasing local authority Housing Revenue Account borrowing limits nationally by £150 million in 2015-16 and £150 million in 2016-17, allocated on a competitive basis and from the sale of vacant high-value social housing. This funding will support around 10,000 new affordable homes nationally and will form part of the Local Growth Fund, available to local authorities who have a proposal agreed by their Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Full details of these proposals have yet to be received by local authorities.
- 3.22 The HRA 30 year Business Plan will be updated in early 2014 to reflect the recent autumn statement announcements, the impact of the proposals from the social rent 2015/16 consultation and the 2014/15 budget proposals. This will enable a review of future opportunities for additional investment in existing housing stock and building new homes and how the housing debt could be structured to accommodate these plans or possibilities. In the meantime, until a debt strategy is developed, the Budget Strategy assumes that all revenue surpluses that are not required for capital investment are set aside for the repayment of debt. This will reduce the interest payments on existing debt and provide

greater headroom in the borrowing limit for future development opportunities. A Medium Term Financial Forecast for years 2014/15 to 2016/17 will be included as an appendix to the HRA budget report to Policy & Resources Committee in February once final confirmation of rent convergence is received from government.

### Projected HRA Revenue Reserves

- 3.23 Table 3 details the projected revenue reserves for 2014/15 which are estimated at £4.298m as at 31 March 2015. Movements in reserves include a contribution of £1.500 million to fund the 2013/14 capital programme with a further £0.500 million for 2014/15 and an estimated contribution of £0.237 million from the 2013/14 revenue forecast outturn.
- 3.24 The recommended working balance (minimum level of reserves) is £2.800 million. Therefore, after taking this into account, usable revenue reserves are projected at £1.498 million at 31 March 2015, which can be used to support one off items of expenditure.

**Table 3: Projected Unearmarked Revenue Reserves at 31 March 2015**

	<b>£'000</b>
Reserves at 1 April 2013	6,061
Plus: Forecast contribution from 2013/14 Revenue Outturn at month 7	237
Less: Use of Reserves to fund the capital programme 2013/14	(1,500)
<b>Projected reserves at 31 March 2014</b>	<b>4,798</b>
<b>Less use of reserves to fund the capital programme 2014/15</b>	<b>(500)</b>
<b>Total Projected Balance at 31 March 2015:</b>	<b>4,298</b>
<b>Applied to:</b>	
Working Balance	<b>2,800</b>
Usable revenue reserves	<b>1,498</b>

- 3.25 Estate Development Budget reserves, which are held separately from the HRA general reserves above, are £0.246 million as at 1 April 2013. These reserves relate to committed revenue and capital expenditure for schemes agreed in previous financial years that are not yet completed.

## 4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The budget process allows all parties to engage in the scrutiny of budget proposals and put forward viable alternative budget proposals to Budget Council on 27 February 2014. Budget Council has the opportunity to debate both the proposals recommended by Policy & Resources Committee at the same time as any viable alternative proposals.
- 4.2 Rents have been set in accordance with the government's rent restructuring guidance. In previous years, the Housing Subsidy Determination controlled rent setting increases by removing resources from local authorities through non compliance. Although the subsidy

system is now abolished, increases in rents above rent convergence will be subject to the rent rebate limitation which sets a limit on the level of rent increases. Any increases above this limit would result in a loss of Housing Benefit Subsidy, which is payable by the HRA.

- 4.3 The government's policy for rent restructuring is to ensure rents are fair and equitable nationally. Although the authority can set rents at a lower level than rent restructuring, this would bring the rents out of line with national policy. The government's self financing valuation agreed at April 2012 is based on using the rent restructuring formula and was set at a level to provide a balanced business plan over the next 30 years. Reducing rental increases away from those levels included in the valuation will affect the 30 year Business Plan and therefore reduce the level of resources available to fund future repairs, maintenance and improvement works. For example a 1% reduction in the rental increase for 2014/15 (saving each tenant an average of £0.79 per week in rent increase) would result in a loss of rental income of approximately £1.5 million over the next three years (£5.7m over 10 years, £24m over 30 years).
- 4.4 This budget proposes new service charges for lift servicing and maintenance, electricity for common ways and mobility scooter storage bays. These are estimated to raise £0.108m, £0.276m and £0.006m respectively per annum for the HRA (at 2014/15 prices). There is also an additional charge proposed to be added to the current TV aerial charge to allow for the on-going servicing and maintenance. This raises a further £0.051m per annum. These charges are only for those tenants that directly benefit from these services. The income from these charges will be used for investment in maintenance and improvements to tenants' homes. Over a ten year period, this amounts to £4.410m excluding inflationary increases.

## **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 At the Citywide Assembly, in November 2012, residents looked at a list of service priorities originally identified at Area Panels and discussed in groups their views about each area. They then identified specific areas of work that they would like to see prioritised. The wider Assembly then voted on each of these areas. Priorities which received the most support from either the assembly or from other tenant feedback included:
- Solar panels for revenue generation and reducing bills
  - Review assets to see if any can be sold e.g. offices, garages or land
  - Reacting to, and feeding back on, anti-social behaviour
  - Increase rents for new homes and those who can afford it
  - Lifts to be repaired quicker
  - Draught proofing checks for homes
  - Faster response when repairs are reported
  - Reacting quickly when a vulnerable tenant has not been seen
- 5.2 These tenant priorities have continued to inform the budget setting process for 2014/15. The various tenant groups around the City have been consulted and shared their views on a variety of budget issues, for example:

- Tenants have been consulted through Area Panels and HMCSC on the office accommodation/access to service changes and the agreement to close the 4 remaining cash desks and Selsfield Drive housing office which forms part of the proposed efficiency savings for the budget.
- There has been consultation around the new Brighton & Hove Standard for Decent Homes spend for next year to include more choice on kitchen and bathroom finishes, and tenants have been involved in working up a revised Lettable Standard to achieve better value for money for the capital programme.
- Tenant involvement meant that amendments were made to the capital programme in relation to the loft and extension scheme to ease overcrowding.
- Similarly, the Business and Value for Money Service Improvement Group has identified support for financial inclusion work for tenants as a priority for them.

5.3 Further consultation will start immediately after Housing Committee and focus on the implementation of the new service charges and further consideration of how any adverse impact on tenants and leaseholders can be mitigated..

5.4 It is proposed that the consultation should take the form of focus groups with affected tenants (particularly those not in receipt of Housing Benefit) and meetings with the Sheltered Housing Action Group and the High Rise Action Group.

## 6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires each local authority to formulate proposals relating to income from rent and charges, expenditure on repairs, maintenance, supervision and management and any other prescribed matters in respect of the HRA. In formulating these proposals using best estimates and assumptions the Authority must set a balanced account. This budget report provides a breakeven budget and recommends rent increases in line with current government guidance.

## 7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

### Financial Implications:

7.1 The financial implications are contained within the main body of the report.

*Finance Officer Consulted:* Monica Brooks/Susie Allen      *Date:* 11/12/13

### Legal Implications:

7.2 Section 6 of the report outlines the legal framework for the HRA. The Housing Committee cannot approve the HRA Budget for 2014/15. The council's constitution provides that the Policy & Resources Committee is responsible for formulating budget proposals for approval by full council.

*Lawyer Consulted:*                      *Name* Liz Woodley                      *Date:* 09/12/13

### Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 The HRA budget funds services to people with special needs resulting from age, vulnerability or health. To ensure that the equality impact of the budget proposals is fully considered as part of the decision making process, an Equality Impact Assessment screening document for the HRA budget proposals has been prepared and is included in appendix 3 of this report. Full equality impact assessments have been developed on specific areas where required. As part of the council's engagement process, a series of meetings are planned to be held with specific communities of interest in January/February to explore the issues for these groups arising from the council's budget changes.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.4 The HRA budget will fund a range of measures that will benefit and sustain the local environment. The self-financing settlement will provide a framework within which all local authorities can sustain their stock in a good condition in the future. This should enable the council to deliver a range of measures that will benefit and sustain the local environment.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 7.5 Financial risks have been assessed throughout the development of the council's HRA budget. The introduction of Self Financing means that all the risks inherent in running social housing landlord services will now transfer from the government to the local authority. The key risks which will need to be managed and developed as sensitivities and scenarios within the model may include:
- Inflationary risk where expenditure inflation is greater than income, particularly with rental increases determined by national rent policy;
  - Managing interest rate fluctuations and the debt portfolio;
  - Long term capital and maintenance responsibilities compared with available resources;
  - Balancing regeneration and redevelopment needs with tenants priorities.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 7.6 The Budget seeks to improve the quality of housing and services provided to tenants across the City.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

1. Appendix 1: HRA Forecast Outturn 2013/14 and Budget 2014/15
2. Appendix 2: Fees and Service Charges 2014/15
3. Appendix 3 : Equalities Impact Assessment

**Documents in Members' Rooms**

None

**Background Documents**

1. 2014/15 Housing Revenue Account Working Papers





## HRA Forecast Outturn 2013/14 and Budget 2014/15

	2013/14 Adjusted Budget	2013/14 Forecast Outturn	2014/15 Original Budget (with rent convergence ending 2014/15)	2014/15 Original Budget (with rent convergence ending 2015/16)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Employees	8,594	8,608	8,838	8,838
Premises - Repairs	11,028	11,032	11,199	11,199
Premises - Other	3,363	3,192	3,413	3,413
Transport	143	142	132	132
Contribution to Bad Debt Provision	288	288	291	291
Supplies & Services	1,770	1,794	1,854	1,854
Third Party Payments	147	144	183	183
Support Services - From Other Departments	2,034	2,126	2,182	2,182
Revenue Contributions to Capital Schemes*	20,774	20,774	22,124	21,824
Capital Financing Costs	8,148	7,917	8,564	8,564
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>56,289</b>	<b>56,017</b>	<b>58,780</b>	<b>58,480</b>
<b>INCOME</b>				
Rents Dwellings *	(49,235)	(49,218)	(50,423)	(50,123)
Rents Car Parking / Garages	(823)	(867)	(876)	(876)
Commercial Rents	(446)	(466)	(506)	(506)
Service Charges	(5,397)	(5,317)	(6,583)	(6,583)
Other Recharges and Interest	(388)	(386)	(392)	(392)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(56,289)</b>	<b>(56,254)</b>	<b>(58,780)</b>	<b>(58,480)</b>
<b>TOTAL DEFICIT / (SURPLUS)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(237)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>

\* Note that the budget proposal with the rent convergence year of 2015/16 results in £0.300 million less rental income with a corresponding reduction in expenditure through the revenue contribution to capital schemes.



### Housing Revenue Account Fees and Service Charges Proposals 2014/15

All fees and service charges are reviewed annually to ensure full cost recovery and also to identify any service efficiencies that can be offset against inflationary increases to keep increases to a minimum. The following table lists all of the HRA fees and service charges proposed for 2014/15. New charges, and those charges that are proposed to increase by more than standard inflation, are explained in further detail below the table.

	Number of tenants affected	Estimated Number not eligible for HB	Eligible for HB	Current Average Weekly Charge 2013/14	2014/15 proposed Average increase/ (decrease) %	2014/15 proposed Average Charge	2014/15 Proposed average increase/ (decrease) per week £	Comments
Grounds Maintenance	5,757	1,444	Yes	£0.64	1.0%	£0.65	£0.01	Contractual increase
Communal cleaning	5,482	1471	Yes	£2.78	Nil	£2.78	Nil	Full cost recovery without increasing charges because of reduced staffing costs within this service
Communal heating – gas	1,110	1,110	No	£8.94	2.2%	£9.13	£0.19	See heating paragraphs below
Communal heating - electric	79	79	No	£7.13	17.0%	£8.34	£1.21	See heating paragraphs below
TV Aerials	4,942	1,297	Yes	£0.56	36.0%	£0.76	£0.20	New element to pay for servicing and maintenance. See Paragraphs below
Sheltered Services – common ways	850	112	Yes	£8.44	2.5%	£8.65	£0.21	Contractual increases to aid cost recovery
Sheltered Services-laundry	827	109	Yes	£1.33	Nil	£1.33	nil	No contractual increase
Water	147	147	No	£3.43	5.0%	£3.60	£0.17	Average Increase for recovery of costs.

	Number of tenants affected	Estimated Number not eligible for HB	Eligible for HB	Current Average Weekly Charge 2013/14	2014/15 proposed Average increase/ (decrease) %	2014/15 proposed Average Charge	2014/15 Proposed average increase/ (decrease) per week £	Comments
Video Entry	12	3	Yes	£0.96	Nil	£0.96	nil	No change
Guest rooms	n/a		No	£8.80 per night	Nil	£8.80	nil	No Change
Intensive Housing Management (was Supporting People)	850	73	Yes	£12.85	17.2%	£15.06	£2.21 in 2014/15	Supporting People charge to be replaced by a new Intensive Housing management charge – see paragraphs below
Garages & Car Parking	2,377	N/A	No	£8.27	3.2%	£8.54	£0.27	September RPI
<b>Proposed new service charges</b>								
Electricity – communal ways	5,410	1,467	Yes	n/a	n/a	£1.00	£1.00	See details in paragraphs below
Lift Servicing and maintenance	2,452	571	Yes	n/a	n/a	£0.85	£0.85	See details in paragraphs below
Mobility Scooter Storage			No	n/a	n/a	£4.00	£4.00	See details in paragraphs below

## Heating

The heating and hot water service charges for residents with communal gas fired boilers are proposed to increase by an overall average of 2.16% or £0.19 per week from 1 April 2014. Changes to charges vary between the maximum reduction of 14.1% or £1.21 per week to a maximum increase of 15.1% or £1.07 per week. Under the current corporate gas supply contract, the unit price for gas is revised annually in October each year. From October 2013, the unit price for gas has increased by an average of 4% for blocks with communal boilers. However, the latest review of gas consumption shows a reduction in estimated energy consumption in a number of blocks resulting from a mixture of improvements including boiler upgrades and replacements, and the installation of solar panels for hot water. This has

therefore contributed to the overall average increase in service charges of 2.16%. This compares favourably with the recent domestic increases announced in the press of between 10% and 12% and demonstrates the value for money that tenants are receiving from being part of the corporate contract for gas.

Two council blocks (Elwyn Jones Court and Broadfields) are heated by electric heating systems. Service charges for these blocks will be amended from 1<sup>st</sup> April to reflect the new contract price and the latest estimates of consumption. This will mean an average increase from £7.13 per week to £8.34 – a rise of 17% (£1.21 per week) for these tenants. This is a large increase, however, these tenants received a 16.5% reduction in their heating charges from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 with no increases since. The average charge per week still represents good value for money when compared to the average bills across the South East.

### **TV Aerials**

The current charge for digital TV aerials of £0.56 per week, which is for the installation costs associated with the aerials, is being increased from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to £0.76 per week to reflect the annual servicing and maintenance costs. This charge is eligible for housing benefit.

### **Water**

147 tenants receive a service charge for water as the council pays the bills for some meters and recharges tenants accordingly. Charges proposed for 2014/15 are being set at an average increase of 5% to an average charge of £3.60 per week. The increase ranges from 0% to a maximum increase of 10% or £0.33 per week. These increases reflect the expenditure for water during the past year as well as estimated inflation from Southern Water for 2014/15.

### **Intensive Housing Management (replaces Supporting People charge)**

The current Supporting People charge of £12.85 per week is being replaced by a new charge for 'Intensive Housing Management' to reflect a proposed redesign of the sheltered service. It should be noted that the current service charge has not been subject to inflationary increases since it was introduced in 2003 and therefore does not reflect the cost of the service. The new charge has been calculated at £19.92 per week but to limit the increase to tenants, the budget proposes that the increase is phased-in over a three-year period. For 2014/15 the proposed charge is £15.06, an increase of £2.21 or 17.2%. The new charge will be eligible for Housing Benefit. It is estimated that 73 tenants that currently pay the £12.85 charge will be affected by this increase. All tenants required to pay this increase will be visited to explain the changes and to ensure that they are claiming all the welfare benefits available to them.

### **Transitional Protection for Sheltered Tenants**

33 tenants in sheltered blocks do not pay the current support charge of £12.85 as they have received transitional protection since the charge was introduced in 2003. This report therefore proposes that this protection be removed gradually over a three-year period. The proposal is that any tenant currently receiving transitional protection should pay one third (£6.64) of the new charge in the first year. Then the remainder of the charge will be phased in over a further 2 years. All tenants receiving transitional protection will be visited to explain the introduction of the charge and to ensure that they are claiming all the welfare benefits available to them.

### **Electricity for public ways and lifts**

This is a new service charge for the electricity associated with the lighting in and around blocks of flats including landing lights, outside lighting of walkways between blocks and electricity for lifts. Leaseholders in blocks of flats already pay for public way electricity in their service charges. It is proposed that those tenants living in blocks of flats that benefit from this communal lighting should also pay for these services. This achieves greater equity as otherwise it means that all tenants, including those in houses, are paying towards these services, which is neither equitable nor correct. The charge varies for each block depending on the consumption of electricity and ranges between £0.09 to £2.75 per week, the average charge being £1.00. This charge affects 5,410 tenants across the city. The majority will not have to pay this charge as it will be covered by their housing benefit. An estimated 1,467 tenants will be eligible to pay this charge.

### **Lift servicing and maintenance**

Similarly, this is a new service charge that aims to ensure that only those tenants with lifts in their blocks pay for lift services along with Leaseholders who already pay these service charges. This service charge recovers the annual costs of servicing each of the 102 lifts in the City as well as any revenue maintenance charges associated with the lift. The proposed charge is £0.85 per week for the 2,452 tenants across the city. The majority (1,881) of tenants will not need to pay this charge as it will be covered by their housing benefit. An estimated 571 will be eligible to pay this charge.

### **Mobility Scooter Storage**

Brighton and Hove city council is working with East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service to keep communal landings as safe as possible. After extensive consultation with members and residents, mobility scooter storage units have been built at a number of blocks round the City. The proposed charge for each store is £4.00 per week, including scooter charging electricity costs.

Electricity usage will be monitored over a six month period and tenants will be notified of any change to the charge as necessary.

# Budget Screening Equality Impact Assessment Template 2014/15 – Service-Users

1. Service Area	Housing (Council Housing: Housing Revenue Account)	2. Budget Proposal Ref. <i>(to be completed by Finance)</i>
3. Head of Service	Geoff Raw	
4. Budget Proposal	<p><b>Briefly and simply explain what budget changes are proposed.</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>Approach:</b> The Housing Revenue Account is ring fenced for the management and maintenance of council owned housing stock. Our aim is to reduce our management and preventable maintenance costs to free up money to tackle inequality and improve homes and neighbourhoods</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 1. Annual Rent Increase</b> Increases in rent charges are calculated in accordance with the Governments rent restructuring guidelines. Local authorities use the September 2013 Retail Price Index of 3.2% plus 0.5% for setting rent inflationary increases plus £2 where rents are below target rents. The government has yet to confirm when setting the rents for 2014/15 whether local authorities should treat 2014/15 or 2015/16 as the final year of convergence for limiting rent increases. This will be announced in January. Therefore, the rent calculation and budgets proposed in this report are based on two assumptions, one with the final rent convergence year of 2014/15 and the other based on the final year being 2015/16. Confirmation will be received from the government in time for the final recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee on 13th February 2014.</p> <p>For the rent convergence year 2015/16, this results in an average rent increase of 5.43% for Brighton &amp; Hove which is equivalent to an average increase of £4.31 per week, increasing the average rent to £83.72. For the rent convergence year 2014/15, this results in an average rent increase of 4.81% for Brighton &amp; Hove which is equivalent to an average increase of £3.82 per week, increasing the average rent to £83.23.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 2. Service Charges</b> To increase six of our service charges in line with contractual inflationary increases. Four other service charges will remain at 2013/14 levels.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 3. Savings - Estate Regeneration (£32,000)</b> Salaries of staff working on regeneration projects can be charged to the relevant capital projects to reduce</p>	

Different Groups to be included in assessment	Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO	Describe potential impact (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)	Action/s (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u> : Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
		<p>revenue costs.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 4. Savings - Reduction in Housing Management costs (£316,000)</b> Decrease in staffing costs arising from service redesign such as reduced number of housing offices and cash desks.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 5. Savings - Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting (£435,000) - (Common way electricity - £276,000; lift maintenance £108,000 and TV aerial maintenance £51,000)</b> Leaseholders pay their share of the costs for their building for common way electricity, lift maintenance and TV aerial maintenance but the tenants' share of the costs are currently being covered by all tenants' rental income rather than being directly paid by those tenants living in the blocks that benefit. The proposal is to charge these services directly to the tenants that receive the services.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 6. Savings - Remodel sheltered housing and charges (£260,000)</b> Sheltered Housing services are currently partially funded through housing related support funding (formerly Supporting People). This funding has been reducing year on year and is coming to an end which risks the viability of the service. The proposal is to redesign the sheltered service with costs covered by service charges eligible for Housing Benefit (HB) making the service more financially secure. The remodelled service will be more aligned to health and social care outcomes and designed to respond to the changing demographics of the older population. Through the review of Sheltered Housing we are also seeking to enhance the service based on feedback from consultation with residents, staff and other stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 7. Savings - Redesign of service delivery in the Estates service (£140,000)</b> Review service to match resources with demand with some posts being deleted. Service charging realigned and opportunities for more value for money work explored - subject to consultation.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 8. Savings - Efficiencies in Repairs &amp; Maintenance Partnership Contract (£70,000)</b> To reduce costs of empty property repairs through the use of agreed target pricing with contractor.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 9. Savings - Increase charges within HRA commercial property portfolio (£50,000)</b> Review management arrangements of the commercial property portfolio and ensure property rents are in line</p>	



Different Groups to be included in assessment	Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO	Describe potential impact (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)	Action/s (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u> : Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
	with the market.		
5. Summary of impacts		<p><b>Highlight the main / most significant potential impacts which will need to be mitigated or avoided</b></p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 1. Annual Rent Increase</b> This generates income to invest in homes and services for council housing residents. An increase in rents in conjunction with the Government's Welfare Reform Act, changes to housing benefit entitlement from April 2013, such as the under occupancy rules, could lead to financial difficulty for those households affected and those households on a fixed/low income. This may result in loss of income to the Council through rent arrears, and costs associated with the recovery of rent arrears and supporting tenants to downsize to smaller accommodation.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 2. Service Charges</b> Service charges fund services that benefit council housing residents. An increase in service charges will affect those tenants living in specific types of properties i.e. flats and sheltered housing schemes and those households on fixed/low incomes.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 3. Estate Regeneration</b> No impact from these proposals.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 4. Reduction in Housing Management costs</b> Reducing the number of service access points and closing all cash offices may initially make accessing the service more difficult for a small number of tenants, particularly older tenants</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 5. Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b> It is proposed that these services will be charged directly to the tenants that benefit from them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electricity for common way lighting and lifts. This will affect an estimated 5,410 tenants and is eligible for Housing Benefit (HB). Current data suggests 1,467 (28%) tenants who are not eligible for HB will have to pay</li> </ul>	

Different Groups to be included in assessment	Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO	Describe potential impact (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)	Action/s (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u> : Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
		<p>an average charge of £1.00 per week ranging from £0.09 to £2.75, although 878 tenants will pay less than £1 per week;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifts maintenance - to pay for the cost of lift servicing, maintenance and insurance. It will affect 2,452 tenants. The charge is £0.85 per week and will be eligible for HB, so it is estimated that 571 tenants currently not on HB will have to pay this charge;</li> <li>• TV aerial maintenance – for those blocks that had new digital aerials fitted last year. This charge is an additional element that is being added to the TV aerial service charge for aerial service/maintenance. The charge will be eligible for HB and is 20p per tenant per week. Of the 4,942 tenants affected, 3,645 are eligible for HB, so it is estimated that 1,297 will have to pay this charge.</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget Proposal 6. Remodel sheltered housing and charges</b> Potential for increased service charges with an impact on self-funders and those currently receiving transitional protection. The charge is estimated at £19.92 but is being phased-in over a three year period so that the proposed charge for 2014/15 is £15.06. Current figures suggest that 73 self payers, currently paying £12.85, will need to pay the new charge, an increase of £2.21 per week. It is also proposed to phase out transitional protection for approximately 33 tenants who are self funders but currently do not pay this charge at all. The proposal is that these tenants would pay £6.64 per week in 2014/15. Because of the nature of sheltered housing, impacts will be experienced by older and disabled people.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 7. Redesign of service delivery in the Estates service</b> No significant impact for any particular group however changes will be reviewed after 3 months</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 8. Efficiencies in Repairs &amp; Maintenance Partnership Contract</b> It is not anticipated that the efficiency savings indentified will affect our residents.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 9. Increase charges within HRA commercial property portfolio</b> No specific impact on any particular group but will affect all HRA commercial tenants in general where their agreement allows for rent increases. The Council must give proper advance written notice of the rent increase however increased rents risk increased arrears which could result in some tenants losing their commercial lease affecting employment opportunities.</p>	

Different Groups to be included in assessment	Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO	Describe potential impact (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)	Action/s (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u> : Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
6. Key actions to reduce negative impacts	<p><b>What actions are proposed to reduce or avoid potential negative impacts and increase positive impacts?</b></p>		
	<p><b>Budget Proposal 1. Annual Rent Increase</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment in providing specialist support services for vulnerable residents including the development of services promoting financial inclusion, and piloting the Community Banking Partnership Model. This investment will help to sustain income collection to the HRA. (NB: 'vulnerability' in this context may be as a result of a 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010, or may relate to substance misuse, domestic/sexual violence, literacy or finance, for example. It may also change over the period of the tenancy.)</li> <li>• Communication with residents about the forthcoming changes to Housing Benefit (HB) through our website, City Assembly, Homing in, Tenant Associations, Tenant Disability Network and mail shots to affected tenants.</li> <li>• Financial Inclusion Co-ordinators in post to provide targeted case by case support to those households experiencing financial difficulties.</li> <li>• Discretionary Housing Payments fund and other discretionary support options through the Local Authority</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget Proposal 2. Service Charges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four service charges will remain at 2013/14 levels. 6 service charges will be increased by contractual inflationary increases with charges for heating and water also being adjusted for consumption.</li> <li>• Financial Inclusion Co-ordinators in post to provide targeted case by case support to those households experiencing financial difficulties.</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget Proposal 3. Estate Regeneration</b> No impact from these proposals</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 4. Reduction in Housing Management costs</b> An EIA will be completed. All customers who use cash desks and Selsfield Drive will be advised of alternative service access points/methods and assisted in setting up new payments.</p>		

Different Groups to be included in assessment	Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO	Describe potential impact (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)	Action/s (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u> : Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
			<p><b>Budget Proposal 5. Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future increases will be restricted to contractual obligations</li> <li>• Targeted case by case support to those households experiencing financial difficulties using the Community Banking Partnership model, providing specialist independent money and debt advice, financial literacy training, access to affordable banking products and a possible hardship fund</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget Proposal 6. Remodel sheltered housing and charges</b></p> <p>An EIA will be completed on the service remodel. The new service charge will be eligible for Housing Benefit (HB) so that anyone receiving HB will not have to pay the charge. Almost 90% of residents in sheltered housing are on HB and so will not experience a financial impact but 73 residents who currently pay £12.85 will experience an increased charge. The newly calculated service charge of £19.92 will be phased-in over a three-year period to avoid large increases. In 2014/15 the proposed charge is £15.06, an increase of £2.21. It should be noted that the current service charge has not increased with inflation since its introduction in 2003. The new charge includes the proposal for additional staffing to enhance the service as part of the service review in line with feedback from residents and other stakeholders. A further 33 tenants who are self funders are currently protected from paying the existing support charge under the Transitional Protection scheme which has been the case since 2003. Transitional Protection will also be phased out to bring parity with other self funding sheltered housing residents. Again this will be phased in over a three-year period. The charge for these tenants in 2014/15 will be £6.64 per week. Meetings will be offered to all sheltered residents impacted by the introduction of the new service charges to offer 1:1 financial and benefits advice.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 7. Redesign of service delivery in the Estates service</b></p> <p>No significant impact for any particular group however changes will be reviewed after 3 months</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 8. Efficiencies in Repairs &amp; Maintenance Partnership Contract</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is not anticipated that the efficiency savings identified will affect our residents.</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget Proposal 9. Increase charges within HRA commercial property portfolio</b></p> <p>Commercial property tenants will be advised to read their lease and seek legal advice. A guide to common commercial lease terms will be developed to support tenants.</p>

<b>Different Groups to be included in assessment</b>	<b>Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO</b>	<b>Describe potential impact</b> (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)	<b>Action/s</b> (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note:</u> Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
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**7. Complete all three columns for each group**

<p><b>Age</b> (people of all ages)</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>Budget Proposal 1. Annual Rent Increase</b> Reduction in housing benefit (HB) through the Government’s welfare reform could potentially affect 804 working age households (7% of all properties). This alongside rent increases could cause financial difficulty. 71% of our tenants are aged between 16 - 64.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 2. Service Charges</b> An increase in service charges could impact upon older residents in sheltered housing (850 tenants) who receive charges for heating, water and common ways.</p>	<p><b>Budget Proposal 1. Annual Rent Increase</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Payments for the most vulnerable tenants/those facing exceptional hardship</li> <li>• £0.150m will be maintained into the budget for measures to promote financial inclusion .</li> <li>• Targeted casework for those households affected by the HB changes including promoting the Tenant Incentive Scheme to downsize.</li> <li>• Financial Inclusion Co-ordinators in post to provide targeted case by case support to those households experiencing financial difficulties.</li> <li>• 70% of tenants are on housing benefit</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget Proposal 2. Service Charges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Inclusion Co-ordinators in post to provide targeted case by case support to those households experiencing financial difficulties.</li> <li>• Housing Benefit payable on all service charges apart from heating and water charges and nearly 90% of tenants in sheltered accommodation are in</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Different Groups to be included in assessment</b></p>	<p><b>Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO</b></p>	<p><b>Describe potential impact</b> (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)</p>	<p><b>Action/s</b> (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u>: Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.</p>
		<p><b>Budget Proposal 4. Reduction in Housing Management costs</b> Older people are over-represented in the declining numbers who visit offices and cash desks to pay rent</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 5. Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b> An increase in service charges could impact upon older residents in sheltered housing (850 tenants) with lifts. Sheltered tenants have already being paying for common ways through existing service charges.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 6. Remodel sheltered housing and charges</b> Service redesign aimed to make the service more sustainable and better able to meet the needs of older people, particularly an increasing very old age group. Current projections mean that 73 sheltered tenants will need to pay the new charge after HB</p>	<p>receipt of HB</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 4. Reduction in Housing Management costs</b> Targeted work with people who use the facilities, to identify alternative service access and payment methods</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 5. Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Inclusion Co-ordinators in post to provide targeted case by case support to those households experiencing financial difficulties.</li> <li>• Housing Benefit payable on all service charges apart from heating and water charges and nearly 90% of tenants in sheltered accommodation are in receipt of HB</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget Proposal 6. Remodel sheltered housing and charges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An EIA will be completed on the service remodel</li> <li>• Housing Benefit payable on all service charges apart from heating and water charges and nearly 90% of tenants in sheltered accommodation are in receipt of HB</li> </ul>

<b>Different Groups to be included in assessment</b>	<b>Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO</b>	<b>Describe potential impact (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)</b>	<b>Action/s</b> (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u> : Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new service charge is being phased-in over 3 years. Current payers (73 tenants) will see an increase of £2.21 from 1/3/2014.</li> <li>• One to one financial and benefit advice meetings will be offered to all affected sheltered tenants</li> </ul>
<p><b>Disability</b> (a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>Budget Proposal 1. Annual Rent Increase</b> Rent increases will affect those on a fixed or low income who are not in receipt of full HB. Tenants may also be affected by changes in the Government's welfare reform and changes to DLA and ESA which may cause financial difficulty</p>	<p><b>Budget Proposal 1. Annual Rent Increase</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £0.070m continues to be included in the budget to ensure access to Discretionary housing payments for the most vulnerable tenants/those facing exceptional hardship</li> <li>• £0.150m will be maintained into the budget for measures to promote financial inclusion</li> <li>• Targeted casework for those households affected by the HB changes including promoting the Tenant Incentive Scheme to downsize.</li> </ul>

Different Groups to be included in assessment	Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO	Describe potential impact (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)	Action/s (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u> : Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
		<p><b>Budget Proposal 4. Reduction in Housing Management costs</b> People with a mobility or learning disability may find it more difficult to change service access and payment methods.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 5. Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b> Increased service charges will affect those on a fixed or low income who are not in receipt of HB. Tenants with disabilities may also be affected by Welfare Reform changes to DLA and ESA which may cause them financial difficulty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Inclusion Co-ordinators in post to provide targeted case by case support to those households experiencing financial difficulties.</li> <li>• Full EIA on rents and service charges increases due to be completed</li> <li>• 71% of tenants are on housing benefit</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget Proposal 4. Reduction in Housing Management costs</b> An EIA will be completed. Targeted work with people to help access services differently, setting up payments by, for example, direct debit.</p> <p><b>Budget Proposal 5. Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Benefit payable on all service charges apart from heating and water charges (70% of all tenants are on Housing Benefit)</li> <li>• To provide information on the changes to the Fed and Tenant Disability Network how tenants can access support and advice.</li> </ul>



<b>Different Groups to be included in assessment</b>	<b>Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO</b>	<b>Describe potential impact</b> (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)	<b>Action/s</b> (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u> : Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
		<p><b>Budget Proposal 6. Remodel sheltered housing and charges</b></p> <p>Service redesign aimed to make the service more sustainable and better able to support older and disabled people with higher support needs. Current projections mean that 73 sheltered tenants will need to pay the new charge after HB</p>	<p><b>Budget Proposal 6. Remodel sheltered housing and charges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An EIA will be completed on the service remodel</li> <li>• Housing Benefit payable on all service charges apart from heating and water charges and nearly 90% of tenants in sheltered accommodation are in receipt of HB</li> <li>• The new service charge is being phased-in over 3 years. Current payers (73 tenants) will see an increase of £2.21 from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014.</li> <li>• One to one financial and benefit advice meetings will be offered to all affected sheltered tenants</li> </ul>

<b>Different Groups to be included in assessment</b>	<b>Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO</b>	<b>Describe potential impact</b> (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)	<b>Action/s</b> (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u> : Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
<b>Ethnicity/Race</b> (this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality, including refugees and migrants; and Gypsies and Travellers)	<b>Yes</b>	<p><b>Budget Proposal 1 &amp; 5. Rent increases and Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for those for whom English isn't a first language not to understand information on changes to their service charges</li> <li>• Isolated members of ethnic groups may be less easily able to learn about changes and may find it more difficult to access support</li> <li>• For some tenants where English is not their first language completing forms/applications can be a barrier</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget Proposal 4. Reduction in Housing Management costs</b>  <b>Budget Proposal 6. Remodel sheltered housing and charges</b>            No disproportionate impact on this group</p>	<p><b>Budget Proposal 1 &amp; 5. Rent increases and Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Benefit payable on all service charges apart from heating and water charges (70% of tenants are on Housing Benefit)</li> <li>• Translation and interpreting services are available for all tenants</li> <li>• Communicating these changes as early as possible will allow households time to prepare.</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget Proposal 4. Reduction in Housing Management costs</b>  <b>Budget Proposal 6. Remodel sheltered housing and charges</b>            No specific action</p>

<b>Different Groups to be included in assessment</b>	<b>Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO</b>	<b>Describe potential impact</b> (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)	<b>Action/s</b> (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u> : Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
<b>Gender</b> (both men and women are covered under the Act)	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget Proposal 1. Annual rent increase</b> Increased rents and/or reduction in housing benefit through the Government's welfare reform changes can affect those on fixed/low incomes. 804 households have been identified as potentially affected by the under occupancy rules. Of these a higher number (59%) of female sole tenants are affected compared to 25% male and 16% joint tenants.	<b>Budget proposal 1. Annual rent increase</b> Ensure support is provided to under-occupying households to downsize, apply for Discretionary Housing Payment, or increase incomes through for example employment of money advice.
<b>Gender reassignment</b> (a transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. A person does <u>not</u> need to be under medical supervision to be protected)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Budget Proposal 1 &amp; 5. Rent increases and Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No disproportionate impact on this group, however transgender people may experience poverty due to discrimination in employment or lack of economic support from family and friends and may face financial difficulties through increased rents and service charges</li> <li>• Our data indicates that we have 21 transgender tenants of which 90% of them are in receipt of housing benefit</li> </ul>	<b>Budget Proposal 1 &amp; 5. Rent increases and Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Benefit payable on all service charges apart from heating and water charges (70% of tenants are on Housing Benefit)</li> <li>• Trans Equality Scrutiny Panel may make specific suggestions for how to improve housing services to transgender residents</li> </ul>

<b>Different Groups to be included in assessment</b>	<b>Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO</b>	<b>Describe potential impact</b> (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)	<b>Action/s</b> (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u> : Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
<b>Religion or Belief</b> (any religion with a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief. The Act also covers lack of religion or belief)	<b>No</b>	No disproportionate impact on this group	No specific actions
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> (the Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people)	<b>No</b>	No disproportionate impact on this group	No specific actions
<b>Child Poverty</b> (Children and young people in families living on less than 60% of national median income before housing costs. In B&H around 22% of all children.)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Budget Proposal 1 &amp; 5. Rent increases and Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those households on fixed/low incomes may be affected by rent/service charge increases</li> <li>• Two thirds of households in social housing experience multiple disadvantage</li> <li>• In Brighton &amp; Hove 10,235 children are living in poverty or 20% of all children (2010 figures, Brighton &amp; Hove Local Information Service)</li> <li>• The Brighton and Hove Child Poverty Commissioning Strategy identifies welfare reform as a key imminent pressure on</li> </ul>	<b>Budget Proposal 1 &amp; 5. Rent increases and Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Benefit payable on all service charges apart from heating and water charges (70% of tenants are on Housing Benefit)</li> </ul> Work is being done to identify households affected by Welfare Reform changes to determine if there is a disproportionate impact on any group or geographical area and target support accordingly.

<b>Different Groups to be included in assessment</b>	<b>Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO</b>	<b>Describe potential impact (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)</b>	<b>Action/s (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant)</b> <u>Note:</u> Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
		family income and health	
<b>Other groups relevant to this proposal</b> (These groups will be specific and relevant to the service, including but not only: Carers, people experiencing domestic or sexual violence, looked after children, homeless people)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Budget Proposal 1 &amp; 5. Rent increases and Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families experiencing domestic/financial abuse from partners may be more negatively impacted by increases in service charges and reduction in income due to the pressure on the household</li> <li>Issues such as caring responsibilities, families experiencing divorce/separation, substance misuse, being ex armed forces or an ex offender can also have a significant impact on income and other aspects of financial exclusion</li> </ul>	<b>Budget Proposal 1 &amp; 5. Rent increases and Charge common way service charges to those tenants benefiting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing Benefit payable on all service charges apart from heating and water charges (70% of tenants are on Housing Benefit)</li> <li>Work is being done to identify households affected by Welfare Reform changes to determine if there is a disproportionate impact on any group or geographical area and target support accordingly.</li> </ul>

Different Groups to be included in assessment	Possible positive or negative impact on group/s? YES/NO	Describe potential impact (positive effects and negative impacts or potential barriers)	Action/s (including details of a full EIA to be completed if required/relevant) <u>Note</u> : Actions should be directly related to the potential impacts identified.
<p><b>8. Cumulative impacts</b> (proposed changes elsewhere which might worsen impacts identified above)</p>	<p><b>Are any cumulative impacts identified across your service area from proposals in other departments OR from other service areas? Please explain what these might be</b></p> <hr/> <p>We have not been advised of any impacts arising from proposals from other departments or services areas except for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Housing (Strategic General Fund Functions) EIA</b> - identified £472k of savings from Homemove and Housing Related Support costs being recharged. The proposals in this EIA address the savings required.</li> </ul>		

## Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee

## AGENDA ITEM 42

Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme 2014-2017</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>13 February 2014 – Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b> 27 February 2014 – Council 11 February 2014 – Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee 15 January 2014 – Housing Committee
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director of Environment, Development &amp; Housing</b> <b>Executive Director of Finance &amp; Resources</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Benjamin Ben'Okagbue - Head of Property &amp; Investment</b>
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Tel: 29-3857</b>
<b>E-mail:</b>	<b>benjamin.ben'okagbue@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>
<b>Wards affected:</b>	<b>All</b>

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the 2014/15 capital programme and provides a provisional capital programme for the following two years, 2015/16 & 2016/17, for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The report takes into consideration the latest resources available and commissioning investment priorities.
- 1.2 The council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) relates to the council's social landlord duties in respect of approximately 11,800 properties and 2,600 leasehold properties.
- 1.3 This is the first opportunity officers have had to bring the HRA Capital Budget Report 2014/15 to HMCSC. The report had to be taken to the January Housing Committee to ensure it would go on to Policy and Resources Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> February. Both the Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme form part of the Council's overall budget and have been prepared on that basis. This includes a city-wide consultation process.
- 1.4 As the thematic policy committee, Housing Committee are presented with the budget proposals of the administration and are invited to comment on the proposals and make recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee. The proposals, although agreed at Housing Committee, remain proposals until and unless they are agreed at budget Council. The approach adopted does not therefore prejudice HMCSC's ability to comment on the proposals in this report.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee note the HRA Capital programme for 2014-2017 reported to Housing Committee on 15 January 2014, for recommendation that Policy & Resources Committee approves and recommends to Council the HRA capital programme budget of £28.876 million and financing for 2014/15 as set out in paragraph 4.1.

## **3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

- 3.1 The 2014 - 2017 provisional HRA Capital Programme aims to balance the priorities of both the City Council and our residents to achieve a good quality, sustainable, and fit for purpose housing stock which delivers against emerging housing commissioning investment priorities as identified in the housing commissioning framework. The Capital Programme is developed within the context of the Corporate Plan, which sets out the council's strategic direction and priorities, based around the four council priorities:

- Tackling inequality
- Creating a more sustainable city
- Engaging people who live and work in the city
- Modernising the council

- 3.2 The capital strategy will focus on meeting the overarching housing strategy and corporate plan priorities through investment in building new homes, and improving the quality and sustainability of the existing housing stock. The HRA capital strategy aims to ensure that every pound invested reaches beyond the housing service and contributes to regeneration, tackling inequality, creating training and employment opportunities and improving sustainability. In supporting these priorities the capital programme will focus on:

### **1) Tackling Inequality**

The Capital budget strategy focuses upon:

- § Investment in building new affordable homes on HRA land and specific garage sites. The development of new housing also has a strong economic multiplier impact on the local economy (estimated at £3.51 of economic output for every £1 of public investment) creating jobs and supply chain business opportunities
- § Continuing the improvement in the quality of existing council homes by achieving the Brighton & Hove Standard (Decent Homes Standard) across the housing stock by the end of 2013. Research by Nottingham Trent University has estimated that every £1 spent on Decent Homes improvements creates £1.46 in local spend through orders to trades people and suppliers in the area
- § Increased investment in adaptations to enable council tenants to live independently in their homes. Adaptations to housing are aligned with Adult Social Care's focus on prevention and re-ablement, which minimises delayed discharges of care and avoidable admissions to hospital and reduces the pressure on health and social care budgets.
- § Action to increase asset values, tackle over-crowding, and improve health and well-being through the continuation of the loft conversion and home extension programme.



- § Tackling health inequalities through an ongoing strategic programme to prevent damp and reduce condensation in homes.

## **2) Creating a more sustainable city**

- The capital programme will focus on improving the sustainability and energy efficiency of the housing stock by reducing waste and delivering more affordable warmth:
- Tackling fuel poverty through continued investment in providing modern, energy efficient heating for council housing residents.
- Improving the sustainability and energy efficiency of the housing stock in line with the emerging One Planet Living Sustainable Action Plan for council housing. This would include insulation improvements, cladding projects, solar thermal and photo-voltaic (PV) and improvements to communal lighting.
- Investing in estate regeneration to make best use of our existing assets and building new council homes to high sustainability standards.

## **3) Engaging people who live and work in the city**

- The budget strategy continues to provide £0.540m for the tenant-led estate development budget. This budget is operated using a not-for-profit model to maximise social value.
- The lift replacement programme was accelerated and investment increased as a direct response to consultation in 2012/13. Consultation this year has also informed our discretionary capital spend.

## **4) Modernising the Council**

- The proposed HRA Capital Programme is anticipated to contribute significantly towards providing modern and sustainable services, with works under the following main headings:

Improving Housing Quality  
Brighton & Hove Standard Works  
Sustainability & Carbon Reduction  
Tackling Inequality  
Building New Council Homes

The proposed expenditure is detailed below.

## **4 FUNDING THE 2014/15 CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

- 4.1 The 3 year programme is funded from a variety of sources including revenue surpluses, general reserves, borrowing, capital receipts from leasing properties to Seaside Community Homes and Right to Buy sales and grants. The proposed programme for 2014/15 and the funding arrangements are outlined below. This programme does not include any re-profiling identified from the 2014/15 targeted budget monitoring.

	<b>Budget 2014/15 £'000</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Improving Housing Quality	7,839
Brighton & Hove Standard Works	4,675
Sustainability & Carbon Reduction	7,447
Tackling Inequality	3,915
Building New Council Homes	5,000
<b>Total Programme</b>	<b>28,876</b>
<b>FUNDING</b>	
Revenue Contribution to Capital	21,824
Borrowing	1,200
HRA reserves	1,333
Capital Receipts (incl BHSCH, net RTB receipts)	3,189
HCA Grant (Brooke Mead)	1,200
Other Grants	130
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>28,876</b>
<b>Projected Capital Reserves at 31 March 2015</b>	<b>(2,400)</b>

- 4.2 The majority of the capital programme is funded from the from rental income (after meeting revenue costs) of £21.824 million, supported by borrowing of £1.200 million for which the capital financing costs are included in the revenue budget.
- 4.3 The programme includes grant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) of £1.200 million towards the development of Brooke Mead extra care housing ( a further £1.200 million will be available in 2015/16 for Brooke Mead) . In addition, the funding includes £0.130 million from the national sustainability scheme, run by utility companies, called the Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP). The funding is generated from work that brings about carbon use reductions in the housing stock.
- 4.4 The programme assumes that there will be capital receipts available during 2014/15 from the leasing of properties to Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes. Investment will be used to maintain our homes to the Brighton & Hove Standard and potentially fund other strategic housing priorities.
- 4.5 In June 2012, the council signed an agreement to retain any net additional 'right to buy' (RTB) receipts for investment in new affordable homes. The 2014/15 budget includes the use of £0.600 million retained RTB receipts towards building new homes. The balance of retained RTB receipts will be held in reserves until 2015/16 and then used to offset against the costs of building new council homes programmed in that year. Capital reserves at 31 March 2015 are projected at £2.400 million which reflects the estimated retained RTB receipts.

## **5. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014-2017**

- 5.1 The investment programme for 2014/15 is £28.876 million and is detailed in Appendix 1, along with the provisional programme for the following two years.
- 5.2 The 3 year Capital Investment Plans provide the council with the certainty to plan, build and let accommodation to meet both general and specialist housing needs across the city. This 3 year plan takes its lead largely from that consulted on and agreed last year. It is critical to delivering our Housing Strategy objectives and outcomes. During 2014/15 we will be reviewing the Housing Strategy and identifying opportunities for new and future investment, respecting existing capital programme commitments.
- 5.3 Consultation with our tenants, leaseholders and investment stakeholders will continue to inform the shape of the Housing Strategy and its implementation through improvement programmes and investment in individual schemes. The programme will also be published on the council's website. Resident engagement and consultation on the implementation of the agreed plans will be supported through existing arrangements with our delivery partners including Mears.

### **a.) Improving Housing Quality**

- 5.4 Health & safety works remain the key basic requirement for ensuring the wellbeing of all residents, visitors and those working on housing assets. This area of works includes door entry systems, close circuit television (CCTV), water tanks, lifts, ventilation shafts, dry risers, fire alarms, asbestos management, roofing, lighting, structural building work, preventative damp work, cyclical maintenance and decorations programme.
- 5.5 The 3 year programme includes substantial investment in lift replacements and modernisation, including considerable improvements to energy performance. This budget was increased to reflect tenants' support to accelerate where practical the lift replacement programme. The increased funding reflected in this programme is enabling the new lifts to be installed across the city within 7 years, rather than the original plan to complete programme within 10 years. Over the next year, replacement and upgrading will focus on installing new lifts at Hereford Court, Theobald House, Thornsedale, Philip Court, Sanders House, Nettleton Court and beginning the 2-year programme at Leach Court, subject to any leasehold requirements, where they apply. Energy performance on the new lifts is improved by both more efficient motors, and controls, such as low energy 'standby' modes when not in use.
- 5.6 Fire Safety and Asbestos management budgets throughout the period reflect the need to retain good levels of risk management in these key areas. In many cases, such as the door replacement programme, highly secure and fire compliant doors are being fitted, which also reduce drafts and improve energy efficiency for residents.
- 5.7 The Minor Capital works budget includes a provision for programmed works identified by residents where their homes and buildings require large or complex repairs, also a sum for surveys and preparatory works.
- 5.8 The budget includes a specific programme for tackling condensation and mould growth. This essential work deals with a potential health hazard, and work to prevent effects of condensation and damp have been integrated into the cyclical area-based investment programmes. Fire Safety and Asbestos management budgets

throughout the 3-year period reflect the need to support our good track record of risk reduction in these key areas. Other budgets for ensuring water safety and the security of residents, for example through modern, well maintained door entry systems, make up our ongoing planned investment in safety and security in this area.

#### **b.) Brighton & Hove Standard Works**

- 5.9 The capital programme reflects the ongoing need to maintain dwellings at the Brighton Homes Standard (which incorporates and expands on the requirements of the Decent Homes standard). Works to improve homes including ensuring that internal elements such as kitchens, bathrooms, central heating systems and rewiring homes, as well as external elements such as doors and windows, all meet the benchmark standards. Additionally, basic health and wellbeing requirements are assessed, and the required safety levels met. Although, with decency on target to be achieved by December 2013, with an associated reduction in some capital budgets, significant investment will still be required to ensure that sustainable standards agreed with residents are maintained to help prevent and treat those properties falling out of the standard, and for further investment in areas that provide comfort and security and improve energy efficiency. For example upgrading insulation and installing high efficiency boilers.
- 5.10 A large scale electrical wiring programme to upgrade and improve communal lighting and controls, is now well underway, with provisional programmes published on the website.

#### **c.) Sustainability & Carbon Reduction**

- 5.11 Tackling inequality and creating a more sustainable city are key priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan aligned to One Planet Living commitments. The Council is committed to improving the energy efficiency of the City's housing, reducing the cost of living at a time when energy prices continue to rise. The aim is to help households to access affordable energy efficiency measures, in particular people on low incomes. This will assist in tackling fuel poverty and contribute to reducing the City's carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions. In addition, the Council is committed to contributing to the development of the One Planet approach to ensure Brighton & Hove will improve energy security, become more resilient to shortages and price increases in energy and other resources and take opportunities for growth in environmental sector jobs.
- 5.12 The Council has a strong track record of significant investment to increase the energy efficiency of the City's council housing stock. The Housing Investment Capital Programme 2013-2016 (approved by February 2013 Policy & Resources Committee) included a budget of £1.555 million for the installation of Solar Photovoltaic Arrays (Solar PV), estimated to achieve over 240 installations. The investment programme for 2014 -2017 continues to provide for the annual installation of Solar PV and we are committed to updating our business modelling to inform a review of proposals for installing Solar PV to the all the potential council (HRA) assets.
- 5.13 One of the key strategic priorities outlined in the City-wide Housing Strategy 2009-14 is to improve housing quality; to make sure that residents are able to live in decent homes suitable to their needs. Our strategic goals under this priority include, reducing fuel poverty, minimising CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and improving tenants' homes, ensuring they are of high quality and well maintained.

- 5.14 Brighton & Hove faces a number of challenges in increasing the energy efficiency of its housing stock:
- Homes contribute the most significant source of carbon dioxide in the City at 42% of Brighton & Hove's measured carbon footprint, or 514,000 tonnes per year, compared to 31% nationally;
  - Domestic emissions in the City (including Council homes) account for around 57% of the city's total emissions from buildings;
  - Fuel poverty was estimated to be 12.2% in 2011 in Brighton & Hove, higher than the South East average;
  - The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment identifies the relationship between poor housing and poor health outcomes, in particular fuel poverty and poor thermal comfort. Director of Public Health Annual Report has identified good quality housing as important for building wellbeing and resilience and housing in the City as an area representing a particular vulnerability.
- 5.15 Where considering the energy efficiency of the city's housing stock there are also wider national energy challenges that need to be reflected, including:
- Rising energy costs - prices expected to double by 2030;
  - Rising energy demand - expected to double by 2050 due to electrification of transport and population growth;
  - De-carbonisation - 5% renewable energy within 8 years, 30% by 2030; 80% all energy 'de-carbonised' by 2050;
  - Energy security - UK has only 14 days power reserves compared to France and Germany with >80 days, a 5% drop in imports could lead to 'sustained blackouts within weeks'.
- 5.16 Identifying funding and investment opportunities for home energy efficiency improvements to maintain the high standards of the previous programmes is a challenge we must face. With less central government funding available we are looking to access alternative funding streams to finance energy efficiency programmes, these include:
- The 'Green Deal' and Energy Company Obligation;
  - Feed In Tariffs – (Feed-in Tariffs (FITs) that became available in Great Britain on 1st April 2010. Under this scheme energy suppliers have to make regular payments to householders and communities who generate their own electricity from renewable or low carbon sources such as solar electricity panels (PV) or wind turbines).
- 5.17 As at the end of December 2012 the average SAP rating (using rdSAP09) across the council housing stock was 61.9.
- 5.18 Against the background of rising fuel costs, it is imperative that we reduce energy wastage by ensuring homes have modern heating systems and are well insulated to minimise the number of households suffering from fuel poverty. £9.3 million is included over the next three years to replace and upgrade a number of the communally heated systems alongside individual domestic replacements and improvements. Where practicable, renewable energy is being incorporated within

these projects, for example, in 2013/14 the 2 sheltered schemes received a communal solar hot water system along with new high efficiency boilers. It is intended to undertake more of these types of project, subject to feasibility surveys that are now being undertaken.

- 5.19 Insulated over cladding provides an additional protective layer to our buildings this has a number of benefits including energy efficiency. The programme also includes survey and installation of cavity wall insulation and loft insulation top ups to 270mm, where construction types and location allow it. In addition it is proposed to fund the completion of ongoing major projects at Essex Place and Phase 2 of the improvements at the Bristol Estate.

#### **d.) Tackling Inequality**

- 5.20 The capital programme has been proposed with the inclusion of the following discretionary items of spend:

##### Estate Development Budget (EDB)

- 5.21 The Estate Development Budget is included at £0.540 million per annum. Working collectively with our residents and Mears, officers wish to explore ways of returning even greater value for money and levels of customer satisfaction. EDB bids will be integrated into larger planned programmes of works, where it makes sense to do so, in order to achieve greater economies of scale and therefore get more for EDB money.

##### Improving adaptability and accessibility

- 5.22 The housing adaptations budget was increased last year by £0.300 million per annum to £1.150 million to reflect the growing need for minor, sensory and major housing adaptations as a result of an ageing population, applicants with disabilities particularly children living longer with more complex needs and to help residents continue to access and live comfortably in their own home rather than in residential care settings. In addition the budget helps ensure we make the best use of other capital investment programmes e.g Decent Homes and below the Conversion & Extension project, to joint work & co-fund the relevant works where there is a disability need These projects are delivered by working together with Occupational Therapy professionals, The budget proposals for 2014/15 to 2016/17 are to continue at the same level of funding at £1.150 million per annum.

##### Conversion and Extension of Existing Dwellings

- 5.23 The 3 year capital programme includes a budget of £4.3 million over the next 3 years for loft conversions and extensions to help alleviate overcrowding and to facilitate any required adaptation works, in some of our family homes. These projects have already helped to reduce the number of overcrowded families, and provide good quality family homes that meet the specific needs of vulnerable residents. We have identified many overcrowded families whose homes would benefit from adaptations, special needs or lifetime homes requirements that are integrated with the investment works where possible. These projects help local families to be in a position to plan for the future by being based in a suitable location for the long-term. This budget will provide up to 20 extensions per annum, depending on the size and complexity of each project. Additionally, this budget will assist with current plans, some of which are at an early stage, to undertake a limited number of property conversions. These conversions would help provide some additional modern units to help deliver strategic priorities. This may include additional general needs, sheltered, or specialist accommodation as necessary on a case-by-case basis.

### Fencing

- 5.24 This budget provides for a strategic approach to improving boundary fencing across the city. Fencing has been identified by residents as an area where greater resources should be allocated based on safety and security needs and a policy is being developed with partners and residents to reflect this.

### Cycling Facilities

- 5.25 This proposed budget supports sustainable lifestyles by allowing communities to identify and install improved cycling infrastructure, such as secure, dry storage facilities and lighting.

### **e.) Building new council housing**

- 5.26 The Housing Investment 2012-2020: Strategy & Implementation Plan report approved by Housing Committee on 26 September 2012 outlined proposals for future redevelopment and new build opportunities on HRA land. This included developing the final feasibility, design and build of 29 new housing units on garage and car parking sites. A contract was awarded to the Guinness Partnership in November 2013 for the delivery of four of these sites (estimated 27 units which will be handed back to the council for management) and a strategy is under development for the delivery of new housing on the remaining sites. The current capital programme includes funding for the development of these schemes, with a £1.000 million provision for building costs during 2014/15 and a further £3.900 million in the provisional 2015/16 programme.
- 5.27 Following Housing Committee approval on 13 November, Policy & Resources approved a budget up to a maximum of £8.3 million for the development of extra care housing at Brooke Mead. The costs are indicative at this stage with estimated expenditure profiled as £3.0 million in 2014/15 and £5.3 million in 2016/17. The development costs modelled, (based on 44/45 units) are indicative at the time of writing this report and therefore if there are any significant variations to the proposed capital scheme and funding these would be reported back to Policy & Resources committee in accordance with council's standard financial procedures.
- 5.28 The programme includes £1.0 million estimate for the commencement of the development on the infill sites Manor Place (17 units) and Preston Road (4 units), with a further £2.3 million over the following 2 years. Housing Committee on 13 November gave approval for delegated authority to the Executive Director of Environment, Housing & Development in consultation with the Director of Finance and Resources to award the contract following completion of procurement of delivery partner/s for the development of new housing at the sites above.

## **6. CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 Both the Asset Management Panel (AMP) and Repairs and Maintenance Monitoring Group (RMMG) have successfully and effectively worked with BHCC staff and Mears to ensure that there is a thorough and transparent management of the programmes, and improvements to them. Both RMMG and AMP are represented on the Core Group, and are also to have representatives on the Partnership (operational) group and technical forum groups. All these groups will continue to work closely with BHCC and Mears as a partnership to ensure that contract expectations and requirements are met, and exceeded where possible.

- 6.2 The information on the strategy and commitments of the 3-year capital programme for the period 2012-2015 was presented to residents in early 2012, and details circulated widely, including being available on our website. The 2014-2017 3-year plan seeks to build on these solid foundations and deliver the long-term commitments that were made in these programmes, in a transparent manner, whilst reflecting any new priorities that have emerged in consultation with residents, such as speeding up the lift replacement programme. As more details emerge, further details will be reported as appropriate, to allow further discussion of the investment strategy and programme.
- 6.3 All leaseholders have been, or will be, consulted about individual contracts carried out as part of the programme in full compliance with the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002.
- 6.4 It is important to note that every project cannot be foreseen within our planning strategy and where ad-hoc projects are needed to be carried out this will be done through existing and new processes and procedures that incorporate effective communication and engagement with all residents in the properties concerned, regardless of their individual tenure. All appropriate resident groups are to be fully included in this consultation.

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

### Financial Implications:

- 7.1 Financial Implications are included in the main body of the report

*Finance Officer Consulted: Susie Allen Date: 9<sup>th</sup> December 2013*

### Legal Implications

- 7.2 In its role as landlord, the Council has statutory and contractual obligations to maintain the structure of and installations in its housing stock. The proposals contained within this report will assist the Council in fulfilling those obligations. All contracts over £50,000 must be under seal and comply with the Council's Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, and with EU legislation, where relevant. The Council must take the Human Rights Act into account when making decisions but it is not considered that any individual's Human Rights Act rights would be adversely affected by the recommendations in the report.

*Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley Date: 09/12/13*

### Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 All projects carried out include full consideration of various equality issues and specifically the implications of the Equality Act.

### Sustainability Implications:

- 7.4 This programme supports the One Planet Council targets and Sustainable Action Plan. Housing is a key contributor to the Carbon Emissions reductions commitments and will help to reduce the number of residents affected by fuel poverty and rising energy costs.

Project briefs are issued on all projects and require due consideration of sustainability issues, including energy conservation and procurement of materials from managed and sustainable sources.



Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 7.5 All contracts are entered into with a requirement for site security. Specific projects, directly address security and prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 7.6 The prime risks associated with this report are those associated with major construction projects. Full account of risk is taken through compliance, in all works, with the Construction Design & Management Regulations, which amongst other measures, require preparation of project specific Health & Safety Plans.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 7.7 The Housing Capital Programme reaches to all parts of the city. It seeks to provide substantial improvement to the Council's housing stock and improve quality of residents' lives in their homes. The implementation of the proposed programme will take account of all relevant best practice guidelines and be developed to provide ever improving performance targets.

**8. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

- 8.1 No alternative options were considered.

**9. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires each Local Authority to formulate proposals relating to capital expenditure in respect of the HRA. The council's constitution and financial regulations require that capital budgets are approved through the Committee system.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

1. HRA Capital Programme for 2014-17

**Documents in Members' Rooms**

None

**Background Documents**

1. Draft Asset Management Strategy 2013

## HRA Capital Programme 2014 – 17

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>Budget 2014/15</b>	<b>Provisional Budget 2015/16</b>	<b>Provisional Budget 2016/17</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Improving Housing Quality</b>			
Door Entry Systems & CCTV	251	247	249
Water Tanks, Ventilation & Fire Alarms	292	288	290
Lifts	2,349	2,215	2,230
Fire Safety & Asbestos Management	465	467	424
Minor Capital Works	349	345	341
Roofing	1,453	1,344	1,353
Condensation & Damp Works	465	351	330
Structural works	471	631	930
Cyclical Decorations	1,744	1,636	1,765
<b>Brighton &amp; Hove Standard Works</b>			
Dwelling Doors	430	409	390
Kitchens & bathrooms	1,628	1,636	1,647
Rewiring - Domestic/ Communal	1,105	1,052	941
Windows	1,512	1,402	1,353
<b>Sustainability &amp; Carbon Reduction</b>			
Solar PV Citywide project	514	721	520
Domestic/Communal Heating Improvements	2,468	3,606	3,475
Insulation improvements (incl overcladding)	4,465	5,234	4,272
<b>Tackling Inequality</b>			
Estate Development Budget	540	540	540
Disabled Aids & Adaptations	1,150	1,150	1,150
Conversions & Extensions	2,035	1,402	1,412
Fencing	58	58	58
Cycling Facilities	52	52	52
Housing ICT Budget	80	100	100
<b>Stock</b>	<b>23,876</b>	<b>24,886</b>	<b>23,822</b>
<b>Building New Council Homes</b>			
New Build - Garage sites	1,000	3,900	0
Brookemead extra care	3,000	5,300	0
Infill sites	1,000	1,300	1,000
<b>Total Building New Council Homes</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>10,500</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Total Programme</b>	<b>28,876</b>	<b>35,386</b>	<b>24,822</b>

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Lettable Standard</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>11 February 2014</b> <b>Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director of Environment, Development &amp; Housing</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Satti Sidhu</b>	<b>Tel: 293219</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>Satti.Sidhu@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report concerns the policy areas and specification of work that is carried out to council owned and managed homes when a property becomes empty.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION:

That Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee note the recommendation in this report and that Housing Committee approves:

- 2.1 That the revised Lettable Standard be applied for work to all properties becoming empty across the city.

### 3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Lettable Standard had not been reviewed since before the start of the contract with our repairs partnership with Mears, which started in April 2010.
- 3.2 Some proposals were made and included some additions to the previous standard. The revised standard initially led to Mears projecting an increase in cost per property to bring the home up to the revised standard
- 3.3 The full revised Lettable Standard was trialled in all properties that became empty from December 2012 until May 2013. Please see appendix 1 for the comparison between the old and revised standard.
- 3.4 Comparative costs were collected during the pilot and were measured against the costs for the same period the previous year.
- 3.5 The pilot also measured the quality of work carried out and how satisfied new tenants were with their new home.

- 3.6 A sample of empty properties had been post inspected to enable data to be gathered on the quality of the work carried out. This was completed through a new initiative of Resident Assessors that was also being piloted. A group of 10 residents, selected from the Asset Panel and from the Repairs and Maintenance Monitoring Group, completed a post inspection check sheet. The Assessors were given training to enable them to decide whether or not work was of the expected quality.
- 3.7 A resident satisfaction survey commenced in November 2012 to gather tenant views on the standard of the property when first let. The surveys started prior to the revised Lettable Standard, to give some comparative data for analysis.

#### 4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 It was not possible to investigate other options as we are contracted to work with our repair partners Mears.
- 4.2 A pilot to assess the implications of the revised standard was carried out to establish likely impacts.
- 4.3 Cost data was collected to determine the financial impact and the results are presented below.

##### Comparison of average monthly cost (rounded to nearest £)

	2011/12	2012/13
<b>December</b>	£1,790	1,460
<b>January</b>	£1,700	£1,800
<b>February</b>	£1,500	£1,150
<b>March</b>	£1,810	£1,090

- 4.3.1 New schedules of rates (the cost of work carried out) were not established for the additional elements such as hard wired smoke alarms. This has meant revising the standard to this point has not impacted on cost and has been absorbed by

	2011/12	2012/13
<b>Number of properties</b>	539	384
<b>Total cost</b>	£889,353	£583,667
<b>Average cost per property</b>	£1,650	£1,520

the contractor under the previous schedule of rates.

4.3.2 It can be assumed, based on the cost data, that we have achieved value for money by improving the standard at no extra cost. Please see appendix 2 for further information on costs.

4.4 Data on new tenant satisfaction levels were collected for the first time as part of the revised lettable standard. The areas of focus that the questionnaire covered were:

- § How satisfied or dissatisfied a tenant was with the standard of their new property
- § What would improve their satisfaction
- § Did the tenant have to report any repairs themselves
- § What are the 3 most important improvements needed inside their home
- § What are the 3 most important improvements required outside their home
- § What are the 3 most important improvements needed in their new neighbourhood
- § What additions they would like to have seen in their new home

4.4.1 In total 23 survey responses were received out of 114. 8 responses were received before the pilot began and 15 during the period.

4.4.2 The overall result is positive with 22 of the 23 respondents either fairly or very satisfied with the condition of their new home.

4.5 A new initiative commenced as part of the lettable standard pilot. Residents had the opportunity to assess the quality of work completed whilst a property is empty.

4.5.1 The Resident Assessor initiative will now be fully implemented where residents are trained to inspect work carried by our partners Mears.

## **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

5.1 A report and presentation was given at the November 2013 Area Panels. No further suggestions for change were made by residents at any of the meetings.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

6.1 The reasons for the proposed change to the Brighton & Hove council property Lettable Standard, is to ensure consistency with the contract with our repairs partner Mears. It also ensures we have up to date specifications our contractors should work to.

## 7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

### 7.1 Financial Implications:

- 7.1.1 The pilot data indicates that the costs of the new lettable standard can be met from within current Housing Revenue Account budgets. The costs associated with empty properties will continue to be monitored as part of the monthly Targeted Budget Management (TBM) process and any variances will be reported accordingly.

Finance Officer Consulted:      Name Monica Brooks      Date: 30.1.14

### 7.2 Legal Implications:

- 7.2.1 Once a property is let to a tenant, the tenancy agreement and section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 impose various repairing obligations on the council as landlord. These include an obligation to keep in repair the structure and exterior of the property and installations for the supply of water, gas, electricity and drainage. The revised lettable standard will assist the council in discharging those obligations.

Lawyer Consulted:      Name Liz Woodley      Date: 31.1.14

### 7.3 Equalities Implications:

None

### 7.5 Crime & Disorder Implications

None

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

- 1 Comparison table
- 2 Cost data

### **Documents in Members' Rooms**

none

### **Background Documents**

none





Appendix 1

Lettable Standard comparison table compiled from the 'Empty Homes Technical Lettable Standard'

Number	Void Standard September 2001 (Current)	Proposed Standard
1	<p><b>General</b></p> <p>Dwelling to be free from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• infestation</li> <li>• rising or penetrating damp</li> <li>• failure or damage to the structure</li> </ul> <p>All fixtures fittings wall and base units, worktops, floor coverings, etc must be in good working order and fit for purpose.</p>	<p><b>General</b></p> <p>Dwelling should be free from</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All types of infestation</li> <li>• Rising or penetrating damp</li> <li>• Failure or damage</li> </ul> <p>All fixtures fittings wall and base units, worktops, floor coverings must be in good working order and fit for purpose.</p>
2	<p><b>Electrics</b></p> <p>Inspection and testing, once completed a certificate should be issued.</p>	<p><b>Electrics and Energy Performance</b></p> <p>An electrical inspection to be carried out and an energy performance certificate completed.</p>
3	<p><b>Gas</b></p> <p>A CORGI registered contractor to test and undertake any work needed. On completion a certificate should be issued.</p>	<p><b>Gas inspection</b></p> <p>Completed, passed and landlords safety certificate issued.</p>

4	<p><b>Floors</b></p> <p>Any unlevel and unsafe floor will be made good.</p> <p>Any unsafe areas of floor screed shall be made good using a latex levelling screed.</p> <p>All loose/lifting floor tiles shall be securely re-fixed using appropriate adhesive.</p> <p>There should be impervious flooring in the bathroom, kitchen and WC.</p>	<p><b>Floors</b></p> <p>Any unlevel and unsafe floor will be made good.</p> <p>Where new metric boards are used to carry out repairs, then the gap between any adjacent boards shall be no more than 6mm width.</p> <p>Any unsafe areas of floor screed shall be made good using a latex levelling screed.</p> <p>Where solid floors exist, they will be repaired with matching material, this applies to finished surfaces and unfinished surfaces in the dwelling.</p> <p>All loose/lifting floor tiles shall be securely re-fixed using an approved adhesive where they are a suitable and safe material, the tile/s remain in tact (complete) and the flooring surface can be made safe. Where appropriate defective tile locations can be in filled with latex. This does not apply to the Kitchen, bathroom or WC.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances where a vinyl sheet cannot be fitted a vinyl tile will be considered with the council's approval.</p> <p>All laminate or engineering flooring should be assessed for suitability, to reduce nuisance noise to neighbours; if this type of flooring is in multiple occupancy buildings then it should be removed.</p>
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<p>5</p>	<p><b>Walls and Ceilings</b></p> <p>All to be left fit to receive decorating.</p> <p>Damaged areas are to be hacked off and re-plastered.</p> <p>Should the previous tenant have artexed the walls, it should be hacked off and recharged to the previous tenant.</p> <p>Should the ceiling be in a poor condition, consideration should be given to applying an artex finish.</p> <p>Damaged or missing skirting boards to be replaced.</p>	<p><b>Walls and Ceilings</b></p> <p>All wall and ceiling finishes are to be left in-situ to receive a decorative finish by the incoming tenant. Where there is wall or ceiling paper of a suitable quality to be painted, will remain in-situ.</p> <p>The Empty homes surveyor will assess the surfaces, identifying areas of blown or spalling plaster. 200mm<sup>2</sup> or greater then the area will be repaired.</p> <p>Damaged areas are to be hacked off and re-plastered.</p> <p>The painting or decoration is the responsibility of the incoming tenant. Other wall or ceiling coverings will remain in-situ where it is found.</p> <p>Polystyrene coving or tiles will be removed and the surfaces made good.</p> <p>If there is an artexed ceiling or wall which is in need of repair and this repair cannot be done without disturbing the existing artex, then the supplier by default will follow their safety processes. If the report comes back positive for asbestos then the repair should be carried out in the most cost effective way.</p> <p>All missing/defective sections of skirting board and door architrave to be replaced.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p><b>Kitchens</b></p> <p>Must be ventilated either by windows or extractor fan.</p>	<p><b>Kitchens</b></p> <p>Must be ventilated by means windows or extractor fans.</p>

Stainless steel sink with a single drawer.

Make good any damaged ceramic wall tiles to the splash back.

2 double socket power points.

CCU and gas cooker point.

All Kitchens are to have a suitably rated door/s fitted.

**Existing Kitchens**

There should be as a minimum\*;

- Stainless steel sink top with single drawer.
- Kitchens which are too small to fit a 1000x600mm sink unit can be fitted with a 1000x500mm.
- double base unit with draw-line and complete with rolled worktop.
- A 1000x300x600 wall unit securely fixed to the wall.
- 

\*Where reasonably practical existing kitchens should be capable of receiving the three basic modern day appliances, a cooker, a washing machine and a fridge (or fridge freezer) where there is suitable space or minor adjustments can take place to any existing layout, even where this may reduce storage capacity.

**Ceramic Wall Tiles**

Damaged or cracked wall tiles will be made good. If no splash backs exist, three rows of 150x150mm white tiles should be fitted.

Cooker spaces should be tiled from floor to the high of the splash back.

**Kitchen Flooring**

In addition to the floor section, all loose/lifting floor tiles shall be securely re-fixed using an approved adhesive. Where they are a suitable and safe material, the tile/s remain in tact (complete) and the flooring surface can be made safe.

Where this can not be achieved in the kitchen then a new vinyl floor will be laid.

The standard Colour is either Blue or Grey (these colours give best durability). All joints are to be seam welded.

		<p>Threshold strips will be supplied and fitted at each door threshold using an appropriate fixing.</p> <p><b>Appliances</b> The opening dimensions for existing kitchens should accommodate standard 600mm (width) size freestanding appliances. Where it is not possible, the Re-housing Team will be advised.</p> <p><b>Lighting</b> The lighting to be adequate for the size of the kitchen; either a 1200 Luminaire (with diffuser and end caps) or a 2DR light fitting.</p> <p><b>Electrical Socket Outlets</b> Kitchen – 2no switched doubles and CCU incorporating a 13A socket and low level cooker spur outlet if not already fitted.</p> <p><b>New Kitchen or Significant Repairs</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. If the dwelling <u>has not</u> received a decent homes survey, then this should take place. Where it fails the survey, the kitchen should be improved using the decent homes kitchen processes. The kitchen will need to comply with the relevant elements of the B&amp;HCC specification 5.2. Decent Homes Standard.</li><li>2. If the dwelling <u>has already been surveyed</u> using the decent homes survey previously, then the Kitchen repairs will need to be carried out using the empty homes budget to achieve the same and relevant elements of the B&amp;HCC specification 5.2. Decent Homes Standard.</li></ol>
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		<p>3. If the dwelling <u>has already had a recent decent homes kitchen installation</u> but is in need of significant repair, then the supplier should use the recharge process, where there is wilful damage or neglect.</p>
7	<p><b>Bathroom and WCs</b></p> <p>Bathroom and WCs can be separate or combined and ventilated either by window or extractor fan.</p> <p>Tiles and splash back provided to bath and WHB. Min height exceeds 300mm.</p> <p>Bath and WHB should have sound joint to the wall.</p>	<p><b>Bathrooms &amp; WCs</b></p> <p>Bathroom and WCs can be separate or combined and ventilated either by window or extractor fan.</p> <p>Should neither exist then an extractor fan is to be fitted, controlled through the light switch.</p> <p>Where there is only one door between the WC and the Kitchen (food preparation area) then a extractor fan shall be supplied with and over-run facility and a small wall mounted wash hand basin shall be supplied, <u>unless there is suitable hand wash facilities nearby</u>.</p> <p>Where there is an external WC <u>as an additional facility</u>, it can be retained if suitable. If it is not it will be removed.</p> <p>Tiles and splash back provided to bath and WHB. Min height exceeds 300mm Any cracked or damaged tiles will be replaced and made good.</p> <p>Any damaged sanitary ware to be repaired where possible.</p> <p>All taps to be serviced where appropriate.</p> <p>A new Plastic WC seat and cover will be provided.</p>

		<p>Level access showers should be in full working order. Where a shower and shower curtain rail exists, then this should be left in-situ for the incoming tenant.</p> <p>Electric and gravity feed showers over the bath should be in full working order if not these units should be removed and the making good of holes. Where there is an electric shower then there must be a RCD type consumer unit in situ.</p> <p>Any suspected DIY electrical shower installation shall be removed where it is deemed to be unsafe.</p> <p>Bath panels need to be in good condition free from cracks and holes.</p> <p>Any existing bathroom cabinet shall be removed and the surface/s made good.</p> <p>All waste water and water supply will be tested and visually inspected externally.</p> <p>All sanitary ware will have suitable furniture, fittings and fixtures.</p> <p><b>Wet Rooms</b> Existing wet rooms will be serviced and tested. A visual inspection of all adaptations will be carried out, including inspection of the floor. If there is a perceived safety risk with any fitted adaptation, then the supplier is to inform the Re-housing team.</p>
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		<p><b>New Bathroom or Significant Repairs.</b> Where the existing Bathroom is beyond repair, the bathroom will be assessed on an item by item approach.</p> <p>If there has been a recent installation but needs significant repair, the recharge process should be used.</p>
8	<p><b>Doors</b></p> <p>Front door will have a cylinder lock and a 5 lever mortice lock complying to BS 3621.</p> <p><b>External</b> Front and rear doors to be free of rot or decay, hung correctly to prevent water penetration and easy to open and close.</p> <p>Any glazing to be free of cracks, chips or holes with putties and beading complete.</p> <p>Doors will be hardwood, wedged and glued construction suitable for glazing if required. Side or rear doors to be constructed in the same manner, fitted with a dead lock and barrel bolt.</p> <p><b>Internal</b> Bathroom, WCs and bedrooms to be</p>	<p><b>Doors</b></p> <p>Front door locks will be changed by the estates service team change locks and issue 2 keys. This does not include mortice or dead locks on a wooden style door, or any other locks to any other doors.</p> <p><b>New IG Doors or existing Materdoors</b> Remedial work identified to IG or Materdoors.</p> <p>Assessment (for replacement/repair) for damaged older style doors should be identified.</p> <p>Where existing glazing is required to be renewed in half or fully glazed doors then it shall be in accordance with the current British Standards and Codes of Practice for glazing.</p> <p><b>Internal Doors</b> All rooms will have a suitable internal door.</p> <p>Kitchens shall have doors constructed with a solid core offering 30 minutes fire resistance and smoke resistance, tested to current British Standards and codes of practice.</p>



	<p>internal quality doors.</p> <p>Kitchen shall have doors constructed with a solid core offering 30 minutes fire resistance and smoke resistance. Any glazing shall be the same as for the external doors.</p>	<p>Internal door glazing shall be as for external doors and in accordance with current British Codes of Practice for glazing.</p> <p><b>Larder doors and under-stair doors.</b> These doors will be of a suitable quality and functional design, with appropriate furniture.</p>
9	<p><b>Windows</b></p> <p>Shall be free from rot or decay and fitted to prevent water penetration, with ease of opening and closing.</p> <p>To be fitted with opening lights to provide ventilation.</p> <p>Glazing to be free from cracks, holes and chips with putty and beading completed.</p>	<p><b>Windows</b></p> <p>All window types and materials shall be free from rot or decay offering ease of use for opening/closing and fitted correctly to prevent water ingress.</p> <p>Windows not of this standard to be considered for replacement either during the empty period or later date (programmed schedule).</p> <p>Windows to be fitted with opening lights to provide ventilation. This includes working trickle vents.</p> <p><b>Traditional Wooden Casement Style, Crittle or Sash Windows</b> Where the dwelling is in a conservation area, ensure BHCC are compliant with all relevant planning rules for window types.</p> <p>Glazing to windows shall be free of cracks, holes and chips, and putties/beading complete.</p> <p>Obscured glazing to bathroom and WC, where appropriate.</p> <p>Safety catches to be fitted as standard for first floor and above or a means to lock</p>

		<p>the window openers.</p> <p><b>Window Servicing</b> All windows will be checked and where possible serviced to ensure they function correctly.</p> <p>Window security will be checked. Ground floor windows may have handles changed and first floor or above may have security catches fitted where appropriate.</p> <p>At least two window keys will be left where all windows have the same lock type. Where window locks vary, at least one key will be left for ground floor windows.</p>
10	<p><b>Joinery</b></p> <p>Stair treads, risers and strings shall be securely fixed to the framework, with no splits, gaps or holes posing a risk.</p> <p>Treads and risers shall be capable of receiving floor covering</p> <p>Staircase and landing balustrades and banisters must be securely fixed. Any missing balustrades/banisters are to be matched in profile as near to original as possible.</p>	<p><b>Joinery</b></p> <p>Stair treads, risers, nosings and strings shall be securely fixed to the framework with no splits, gaps or holes posing a risk. Treads and risers shall be capable of receiving a floor covering.</p> <p>Staircase and landing balustrades and banisters must be securely fixed. Any missing balustrades/banisters are to be matched in profile as near to original as possible.</p>

<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>Electrical socket outlets</b></p> <p>Kitchen 2 no switched doubles and CCU with 13a socket.</p> <p>Lounge 2 no switched doubles.</p> <p>Main or only bedroom 2 no switched doubles.</p> <p>Other bedrooms 1 no switch double.</p> <p>Halls/landings 1 Single.</p> <p>Bathroom/WC none.</p>	<p><b>Electrical socket outlets</b></p> <p>1. Where there is no rewire due:</p> <p>Kitchen 2no switched doubles and CCU with 13a socket  Lounge 2no switched doubles  Bedroom 2no switched doubles  Other bedrooms 1 no switched doubles  Hall/landings 1 no single  Bathroom/WC none</p> <p>2. New or partial rewire due:</p> <p>Bedrooms 3 double sockets  Bathroom shaver socket  Hall 1 double socket  Landing 1 double socket  Kitchen as in BHCC specification 5.5.2  Living room 4 double sockets  Dining room 2 double sockets</p> <p>3. Switching arrangements for lighting  Rooms with one entrance – one way switching  Rooms with 2 entrance points – 2 way switching  2-gang switches where appropriate</p> <p>Low energy external lights to be switched from internal positions alongside the front and back door.</p>
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		<p>Standard rose and bayonet fittings will be used with the following variations.</p> <p>Kitchen lighting – 2DR (enclosed round light fitting) or a fluorescent strip lighting will be fitted.</p> <p>External lighting - vandal resistant low energy bulkhead lights will be supplied and fitted to the principal entrance door position switched from inside the property.</p> <p>Bathroom lighting – sealed low energy fitting controlled by a pull switch within the bathroom.</p> <p>Hard wired smoke detectors to be installed depending on the dwelling layout and levels.</p>
12	<p><b>Heating</b></p> <p>Source of heating shall be provided in the form of a gas fire, hot water radiator, electrical storage heater.</p>	<p><b>Heating</b></p> <p>Source of heating is to be provided; this is to be in the form of gas fire, central heating, hot water radiators or electric storage heater.</p> <p>If central heating is not fitted then it must be upgraded to a modern standard for central heating and domestic water. This will also necessitate removal and making good of any gas fire.</p>
13	<p><b>Plumbing/Sanitary Ware</b></p> <p>Direct mains cold water supply to kitchen sink and bathroom WHB.</p> <p>Direct mains cold water supply or indirect supply from a storage tank to the</p>	<p><b>Plumbing and Sanitary Ware</b></p> <p>Direct mains cold water supply to kitchen sink.</p> <p>Direct mains cold water supply or indirect supply from cold water storage tank to the bathroom, WHB, bath, shower and WC.</p>

<p>bath/shower/WC.</p> <p>Sanitary to be sound, clean and securely fixed and fitted with plastic seat.</p> <p>All kitchen WHB and bath taps to be in good working order.</p> <p>All cold water pipes not within the occupied area must be lagged to prevent freezing.</p> <p>The WC cistern to be inspected and serviced as appropriate, if beyond repair then the cistern is to be replaced with a suitable alternative.</p> <p>All taps within the dwelling are to be in good working order. If replacement is required, they should be replaced as a pair.</p>	<p>The water mains stop-valve feeding the dwelling will be located, inspected and serviced to ensure it is fully operational.</p> <p>Water supply connection points for domestic appliances (tenants white goods) will have isolation valves; these will be inspected, serviced and operational.</p> <p>Waste water arrangements for washing machines etc will remain in-situ, be inspected and serviced or be provided should the dwelling be deficient in this service.</p> <p>Where any defective taps are changed, then these shall have isolation valves fitted.</p> <p>A means of heating water and supplying hot water to sink, WHB, bath or shower.</p> <p>Sanitary ware to be in sound, clean condition and securely fixed and fitted with a plastic seat with hinged lid.</p> <p>The WC cistern to be inspected and serviced as appropriate, if beyond repair then the cistern is to be replaced with a suitable alternative.</p> <p>All taps within the dwelling are to be in good working order. If replacement is required, they should be replaced as a pair.</p> <p>Bath pillar taps will be retained where possible and there are no showering facilities, these will be serviced or replaced on a like for like basis.</p> <p>Bath mixer taps with a shower hose attachment will be refurbished, where a new</p>
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		<p>replacement mixer is required and the water pressure is sufficient then a thermostatically controlled mixer will be installed. Where there is inadequate water pressure and a mixer tap is deemed unsuitable then consideration for pillar taps maybe an option.</p> <p>Any existing shower curtain pole will be left in-situ where it is serviceable. Where the bath has a shower attachment, the service provider will ensure that there are sufficient wall tiles to cover the arc of the shower rose (e.g. tiled to a suitable height 1200mm from bath shoulder) and a shower rail is either in-situ or is provided. The incoming tenant will be responsible for supplying their own shower curtain.</p> <p><b>Domestic Water Tap Configuration</b> This applies to all plumbing, the hot tap to left of cold tap.</p> <p>All cold water supplies pipes (or vent pipes for hot water tanks) or tanks not within the occupied space of the premises, must be insulated to prevent freezing.</p> <p>Ensure an appropriate cover is fitted to the CW storage tank.</p>
<p>14</p>	<p><b>External</b></p> <p>Dwelling should be water and weather tight and free from visible defects to the roof coverings, chimney stacks, flashing, guttering, downpipes, rendering, tile hanging and facing brickwork.</p>	<p><b>Clearance</b></p> <p>All rubbish is to be cleared and disposed of. Including external areas, sheds garages etc.</p>

	Paths, paving and steps shall be safe, damaged areas to be made good.	
15	<p><b>Decoration</b></p> <p>Usually the responsibility of incoming tenant. Although decorating vouchers available in certain circumstances.</p>	<p><b>Internal decoration</b></p> <p>The internal decoration of the property is the responsibility of the incoming tenant.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances, partial room decoration (wall or ceiling), rooms or the whole property maybe decorated, where it is appropriate.</p> <p>The dwelling may have wallpaper left on the walls.</p> <p>In some circumstances decorating vouchers may be issued to the incoming tenant. The amount will be determined by the Re-housing Team. To qualify, an assessment shall be made based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The condition of the existing internal decoration prior to repair works. Possibility of recharging the previous tenant should be considered.</li> <li>• The ability and viability of letting the property.</li> <li>• Any special need of the prospective tenant</li> </ul>
16	<p><b>Cleaning</b></p> <p>Property shall be cleared of all previous tenants effects.</p>	<p><b>Cleaning</b></p> <p>A thorough clean, including sanitary ware, kitchen facilities, all floor surfaces, coverings, internal windows and fixtures and fittings.</p>
17	<p><b>Asbestos</b></p> <p>Any identified asbestos to be dealt with in</p>	<p><b>Risk assessment</b></p> <p>Assessment carried out paying regard to the HHSRS to ensure no 'Category A'</p>

	accordance with the council's policy.	hazards remain.
18	<p><b>Adaptations</b></p> <p>These should be advised to housing management and allocations sections. They will decide and advise on the need for removal.</p>	<p><b>Adaptations</b></p> <p>These should be advised to the Re-housing Team as part of the pre-termination visit process. Re-Housing Team to advise if the adaptation is to be removed, if there is no notification then the supplier will assume that the adaptation will remain in the dwelling.</p>
19		<p><b>Decent Homes/ Stock Survey</b></p> <p>On notification a survey will take place to assess the condition and to take steps to improve the stock to decency, unless a survey has already taken place.</p>
20		<p><b>Loft inspection</b></p> <p>The loft space will be surveyed and inspected for overall condition, including but not limited to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant Chattels and items left in the loft space or unauthorised use of the loft, storage, living space, velux type windows etc - recorded as unauthorised alteration etc</li> <li>• Visual inspection for daylight from holes or gaps in roofing construction, water penetration staining on any surfaces e.g. Felt, Rafters, Purlins or Trusses etc</li> <li>• Visual inspection of the chimney breast and party fire wall for ingress of rainwater etc.</li> <li>• Visual inspection below any cold water tank/s or Header tanks for leaks, if they are used. If redundant make a note, communal CW tanks may still be operational.</li> <li>• Visual inspection of the loft hatch condition and operation. Removal of</li> </ul>



any fixed access ladder to the loft space.

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**Utilities and Services**

**Telecommunications**

Where present the existing telephone connection point/s to be left in situ. The master socket (NTE) must be left on-site regardless of its condition.

Any secondary sockets (extension sockets) and cabling may also be left in-situ where the cables are deemed to be safe and secured to the dwelling fabric and not interfere with any empty refurbishment works.

**Digital TV Points** (where applicable) from the communal satellite dish and aerials will remain in-situ.

**Any Existing Aerial or Satellite Dish** can be left on the building only when it is believed to be safe from a ground level visual inspection.

Where unsafe, a separate order will be placed to remove the Aerial or Satellite Dish and make good any fixing holes or cable entry points and use the recharge processes where appropriate.

**Water Meter**

Where they exist it will be the responsibility of the incoming tenant to contact the local water company and take their own meter reading.

		<p><b>Door Entry Systems</b> Audio entry system from external point of access, linking to a handset and door release in each flat is to be visually inspected for obvious defects or damage. If defective necessary liaison or hand-off to BHCC to commence any service repair.</p> <p><b>External Meter Boxes</b> These will be refurbished to ensure security. The tenant is expected to obtain their own key for the external meter boxes. Where there is a locked bespoke meter cupboard without a key, then the supplier will where appropriate use a locksmith type services and leave these meter cupboards unlocked for the tenant to arrange for their own key.</p> <p><b>CareLink Services</b> These will be retained in the dwelling where they exist e.g. Sheltered Homes. These are expected to be tested by the Sheltered Homes Scheme Manager. Where CareLink equipment is left in a dwelling that is not sheltered accommodation, the Re-housing team will advise to recover the equipment and any necessary storage arrangements.</p>
22		<p><b>External elevation and areas</b></p> <p><b>External inspection</b> The dwelling is to be weather-tight and water-tight with no visible or apparent signs of defective/damaged roof coverings, chimney stacks, flashings, fascias, soffits, gutters, downpipes, renderings, tile hanging, facing brickwork, aerials or satellite dishes, porches, or other building features or fabrics etc, which may impair the safety of the premises, incoming tenants and members of the public.</p>

		<p>A ground level visual inspection is to take place for single story to low rise properties, from all visual aspects and elevations to assess the general condition of the external structure.</p> <p>Where the dwelling is in a medium to high rise the inspection will be more limited, vantage point or a limited external visual inspection from the ground level.</p> <p>A comprehensive survey should be undertaken and relevant works orders raised to remedy any noted defects. Where there are several, the Re-housing team will be advised, as this will impact on the turn around timescales and availability of the dwelling.</p> <p>The main existing paths, paving and steps shall be safe and on a firm bedding. Any damaged areas considered to be a safety risk are to be made good in similar materials and left safe.</p> <p>Existing hand rails shall be in a safe condition.</p> <p>This does not include any patio area, garden area/s where the incoming tenant is responsible for inspecting their grounds.</p> <p>Existing boundary walls, fencing and gates , shall be in a safe condition or will be made safe.</p> <p>External lights, where they exist will be inspected for safety and operation; any necessary remedial actions will be undertaken.</p>
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		<p>Any unauthorised external lights, power supplies or water service to the external grounds or building will need to comply with the relevant regulations and safety standards. Where the service does not meet this standard, then the service will be removed.</p> <p>External storage cupboards or purpose built storage out-buildings will be inspected for security, the door and frame will be serviceable.</p> <p>Any outbuilding structure will be assessed on the same basis as the external inspection for the dwelling as appropriate and detailed above.</p> <p>External decorations are normally programmed and cyclic works, where the condition of the external dwelling is below an acceptable standard; then the supplier will note the deficiencies and investigate when the property will be programmed for a survey, if known.</p> <p>Where Sheds are left in-situ by the previous tenant, these need to be assessed for safety and usability, if the structure is safe it can remain, if unsafe then it will be removed and the recharge process followed.</p> <p>Fencing to the gardens, grounds and boundaries of the dwelling are in general terms the responsibility of the tenant (except where there are communal gardens or areas). Where the existing fence is unsafe and there is a risk of collapse, it will be removed the fence after communicating with any neighbours impacted by such action.</p> <p>Where the fence adjoins public land and there is a risk to the public, then an alternative arrangement can be made to make this boundary safe e.g. fence</p>
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replacement, the supplier will consult with the Re-Housing Team.

Fence heights must not exceed the building regulation heights for rear gardens or front gardens.

The garden or grounds are to be cleared of all bulk waste of chattels left by previous tenant/s.

Any ponds or pits are to be filled in and made safe.

Any decking will need to be assessed for safety and structure, where it exceeds 300mm above the ground level at the highest point, then consideration for removal and recharge process. The alternative is to landscape the grounds where reasonably practical to achieve 300mm or less.

Any trees growing within a close proximity of the building and on the footprint of the dwelling will need to be assessed for safety and possible structural damage to the dwelling, boundary wall/s and adjacent buildings.

Any infestations of weeds or plants which are known to be invasive and/or detrimental to the value of the dwelling and BHCC estate are to be dealt with by appropriate processes need may need specialists.

Any infestation of rodents will be dealt with whilst the dwelling is empty, the programme of tasks to eradicate the rodents that may need to continue after the dwelling is passed back to BHCC for re-letting. Any infestation will be advised to the Re-housing team.

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### Recharges

Rechargeable works will be identified and sought where the outgoing tenant has damaged, neglected, misuse or removed the dwellings fixtures and fittings; such as kitchen units, worktop, sink, taps, powerpoints, power spurs, light switches, sanitary appliances and fittings, walls, ceilings, graffiti, floor boards, stair ways, banisters or balustrades, external and internal doors, internal doors, damage to door frames, window, window frames, window furniture, architrave, skirting, loft alterations or unauthorised use of the loft space, left rubbish, belongings or chattels in the dwelling or in the garden, or allowed the garden to become overgrown or have unsafe fences (not facing public right of way), dangerous shed/s or outbuildings or a pond/s.

If the outgoing tenant has carried out any unauthorised alterations that are unacceptable to BHCC such as; any services e.g. electrical, water supply and waste, structural alterations, blocking up door ways, removing storage cupboards, under stairs storage cupboards, laminate, wooden or engineering flooring, wooden panelling or mock panelling, loft alterations, conservatory.

If the outgoing tenant has lost bespoke meter cupboard keys, interfered or tampered with service meters causing disruption in the utility services.

This list is not totally comprehensive but gives examples.

Evidence will be taken, and photographed to commence the 'recharge', storage or disposal processes with the Client (Recharge Team).

		The same process will apply to where a tenant has either abandoned the dwelling or become deceased (following notification and agreement with NOK) leaving all chattels behind then the supplier will catalogue and take evidence photographs to commence the 'recharge, storage or disposal processes.
24		<p><b>Sheltered Housing</b></p> <p>This standard will be equally applied to sheltered homes, BHCC supply cooking facilities and fridges to sheltered dwellings; these are subject to cyclic Portable Appliance Test (PAT) by the Estate Services Team.</p> <p>The empty process will not alter the PAT routine cyclic safety tests. Where the supplied cooking facilities are found to be defective and can not be refurbished then a suitable replacement will be arranged.</p>
25		<p><b>Site Security</b></p> <p>Where appropriate the supplier will carry out any necessary site security arrangements; including alarming and netting the dwelling or security screens and doors. The supplier needs to proactively make Empty Homes secure from the receipt of responsibility.</p>
26		<p><b>Insulation and Energy</b></p> <p>Assessment made of energy efficiency, identifying current insulation and work required.</p> <p>To ensure each Dwelling has an insulation solution, where appropriate the supplier may follow local referral processes (where they exist).</p> <p>a) Provide 300mm insulation to loft spaces</p>

		<p>b) Provide 25mm insulation to all pipes within loft spaces c) Provide approved insulation jacket or 50mm insulation board to all water storage tanks within loft spaces.</p> <p><u>However, where there is risk for freezing pipes or tanks, then the supplier will make immediate arrangements to insulate the services and eliminate the deficiency.</u></p>
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**Cost Amounts**

<u>Month</u> <u>(1=January)</u>	<u>2011/12</u> <u>Total Cost</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>Average</u> <u>Cost per</u> <u>Empty</u>	<u>2012/13</u> <u>Total Cost</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>Average</u> <u>Cost per</u> <u>Empty</u>	<u>Total Sum</u> <u>of both</u> <u>Years</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Number of</u> <u>Empty</u>	<u>Average of</u> <u>Both Years</u>	<u>Increase / (Decrease) Between</u> <u>Years</u>
4	83,400	48	1,737.50	48,986	29	1,689.17	132,386	77	1,719.30	(48.33)
5	87,000	54	1,611.10	86,306	47	1,836.30	173,306	101	1,715.90	225.19
6	89,925	50	1,798.49	62,525	36	1,736.81	152,450	86	1,772.67	(61.68)
7	57,305	40	1,432.63	42,436	33	1,285.94	99,741	73	1,366.32	(146.68)
8	72,810	45	1,618.01	51,536	35	1,472.45	124,346	80	1,554.33	(145.56)
9	91,417	52	1,758.03	34,024	25	1,360.97	125,442	77	1,629.11	(397.05)
10	60,062	42	1,430.05	51,865	34	1,525.45	111,927	76	1,472.73	95.40
11	57,892	37	1,564.65	45,117	34	1,326.97	103,009	71	1,450.83	(237.68)
12	59,051	33	1,789.43	45,320	31	1,461.93	104,371	64	1,630.80	(327.50)
1	86,673	51	1,699.46	66,763	37	1,804.41	153,436	88	1,743.59	104.95
2	65,872	44	1,497.08	34,586	30	1,152.86	100,458	74	1,357.53	(344.22)
3	77,946	43	1,812.70	14,212	13	1,093.25	92,158	56	1,645.69	(719.45)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>889,353</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>1,650.01</b>	<b>583,677</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>1,519.99</b>	<b>1,473,031</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>1,595.92</b>	



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Sheltered Housing Review Update</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>11 February 2014</b> <b>Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director of Environment, Development &amp; Housing</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Peter Huntbach</b>	<b>Tel: 293248</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>Peter.huntbach@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

1.1 This report provides an update on the sheltered housing review.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

2.1 That Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee note this report.

**3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**3.1 The context of the sheltered housing review.**

3.1.1 The 2013 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Brighton and Hove identifies that although there are currently lower proportions of older people in the city, there are still over 35,000 people over 65 and this population set to increase and become more diverse. The largest increases will be in the 70-74 and over 90 age groups. 11% of the city's elderly live in council accommodation.

3.1.2 The JSNA also identified that older people are presenting with more complex health and care needs, and this trend is set to continue, presenting challenges to services that support them.

3.1.3 The JSNA also identified that there are inequalities across the city which are widening. The gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived people is now over 10 years for men and six years for women. There are similar inequalities in healthy life expectancy.

3.1.4 Most of the highest areas of deprivation are those in which council housing is concentrated. 51% of sheltered tenants live in the five most deprived lower super output areas of the city.

3.1.5 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 introduced a substantive strategic shift in how we respond as a nation to rising demands and increasing treatment costs:

- It recognised that more needed to be done to prevent illness as well as treat illness.
- It recognised that to reduce health inequalities, the social determinants of health also had to be addressed, such as housing.
- It re-instated the role of public health back to a local authority.
- It introduced Health & Wellbeing Boards so that health, public health, social care and housing could work together, achieving synergies between them.
- It placed NHS budget and commissioning to local GPs (Clinical Commissioning Groups) who could address local need and be locally accountable.
- Of local need, it established the duty of local authority and Clinical Commissioning Groups to prepare a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (delivered through newly created health and wellbeing boards).

3.1.6 The need to work more preventatively and in a more joined up way across the health, social care, public health and housing sector is now recognised as a fundamental to providing services.

3.1.7 As a society with an ageing population there has been an increasing understanding of what it is to grow old:

- There is a desire to see older people not as a deficit to society but as an asset.
- There is a desire to see an awareness of positive concepts of ageing, such as 'dignified ageing' or 'active ageing'.
- There is now awareness that loneliness can have a detrimental impact on health.
- There is a better awareness of the diversity amongst the elderly.
- There is a growing recognition of the 'very elderly' as a distinctive group (over 80s)
- There is an understanding that the younger elderly are an ideal age group to target preventative work, but who are often overlooked by services.

3.1.8 The review of the sheltered housing service has been conducted within this local and national context.

## **3.2 The council's sheltered housing service**

3.2.1 The council is the largest provider of sheltered housing in the city, with 23 schemes providing 851 units of accommodation. The service is provided by the equivalent of 21 full time scheme managers and three team managers. The service is managed by the Older Peoples Housing Manager.

3.2.2 The service is provided to older people (recognised as those aged 50 and above) with an identified support need with access via the council's Homemove process.

3.2.3 Nearly a third of sheltered tenants are now 80 years and over where a higher proportion may be expected to have or develop higher support needs.

3.2.4 The trend towards higher or complex support need identified by the JSNA has also one identified by staff and residents and currently 153 (18%) of sheltered tenants have been assessed as having a higher support need:

- 53 physical frailties or other needs (34%)
- 44 mental health conditions (29%)
- 31 alcohol dependency issues (20%)
- 25 learning disability (16%)

3.2.5 Due to increasing life expectancy and eligibility criteria that enable people in their 50s to live in sheltered housing, there is now a significant age range in the schemes. The largest proportion of the sheltered population are those aged between 60 and 80 (57%). There is also a significant number of those over 80 (32%) and a growing number of people below the age of 60 (11%).

3.2.6 People below 60 are often presenting with higher or more complex need when entering sheltered housing. All the 23 sheltered tenants in their 50s who moved in during 2013 had significant health or support issues:

- 11 had mental health issues (48%)
- 8 had physical health issues (35%)
- 3 had alcohol dependency issues (13%)
- 1 had a learning disability (4%)

### **3.3 The review process**

3.3.1 In March 2013 the service together with the Sheltered Housing Action Group (SHAG) presented to the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee on the need to review the service. The main reasons for the review being:

- The service had not been fully reviewed since the Best Value Review in 2000.
- The service aims and objectives weren't clear and tenants wanted to see a clear 'sheltered housing policy'.
- The demographic changes within the schemes were having an impact on service delivery and resident perceptions about who the service was for.
- The 'one size fits all' model of delivery was no longer sustainable.
- The funding model was no longer sustainable.
- The service appeared under-resourced.
- The new strategic direction described above offered opportunities for a more strategically relevant service e.g. delivering shared outcomes.
- The JSNA identified key health and wellbeing impacts that the service could help address as a preventative support service.

3.3.2 Following the presentation, the service contracted the Chartered Institute of Housing as the lead consultant in undertaking the review. The CIH were chosen as the housing sectors professional body and as they had been promoting the strategic role of housing in the new health, social care and public health landscape.

3.3.3 The review has taken the following steps:

- Consultation with sheltered housing tenants through meetings with tenant representatives, tenants in group meetings and meetings with individual tenants.
- Consultation and work-shadowing with the staff workforce.
- Consultation with stakeholders.
- A survey of sheltered tenants.
- An audit of the quality of service using the Service Quality Tool.
- Performance analysis.

3.3.4 At the start of the review, we instructed the CIH to fully involve the tenants in the review, so as well as meeting with SHAG the consultants visited our schemes to hold group and face-to-face meetings. And as SHAG had made its position clear in 2009 regarding the importance of site-based scheme management, we advised the CIH that we were not looking to significantly change this element of service.

3.3.5 The CIH are finalising their final recommendations to the council with a final report and action plan planned to be submitted to the Sheltered Housing Action Group in March 2014. Initial findings have been submitted.

### **3.4 The initial findings**

3.4.1 The CIH conducted a major survey of the sheltered tenants and all tenants were invited to respond, either on-line or through a paper survey.

3.4.2 The survey (of which 160 or 19% responded) found that:

- 83% said that the service was either good or excellent. Only 4% said it was poor.
- 86% said that the support was just enough. 17% said it was not enough.
- 46% said their support plan was useful.
- Of the benefits associated with sheltered housing, respondents made associations with being happy, being connected and being active and healthy.
- 30% had a support need that was met by someone other than their scheme manager. Of this group, 13% said the need was being met by a paid carer and 37% by family or friends.
- 11.5% said that they provided care themselves to another person.
- Of the key JSNA health impacts, the greatest impact for residents (in order of priority) were healthy weight / mental health / smoking / dementia / cancer.

3.4.3 These results echoed many of the observations of the service found as a result of group and face-to-face discussions.

(A full summary of the survey results is included in Appendix 1)

3.4.4 The CIH audited the quality of the service using a nationally recognised tool (the 'Service Quality Tool'). The methodology of the audit was:

- To use a sample of five sheltered schemes to scrutinise the service.
- To scrutinise the key policies and procedures of the service, such as the safeguarding procedures or the complaints procedure.
- To scrutinise the outcomes of the support being delivered by looking at the assessments and support plans for tenants.

- To meet with staff at all levels to ensure that policies and procedures were being followed in practice.
- To meet with tenants to listen to their views and to ensure that the service was being delivered in a way consistent to policy and procedure.
- Work-shadowing staff.

3.4.5 The audit and work-shadowing found that:

- The service met all core areas of inspection but performed particularly well in reducing or delaying the need for higher dependency services.
- The support plans reflected more intensive management support rather than housing related support.
- The role of the scheme manager included a higher proportion of housing management tasks than we had previously assumed.
- There were some inconsistencies in terms of services provided across the city.
- The service seemed to over emphasise health and safety.

3.4.6 The CIH conducted an 'Appreciative Inquiry' day, bringing together representatives from SHAG and the sheltered staff to look at where the service could be improved. Appreciative inquiry is a methodology used for studying and changing organisations.

3.4.7 The Appreciative Inquiry day found that:

- There were community tensions associated with too great a mix of age group and need.
- The schemes worked well when people engaged with each other as a community.
- There was a desire for different levels or types of accommodation.
- There was a desire for sheltered staff to be more involved in the assessment and letting process for sheltered housing.
- There was a desire for better communication particularly with maintenance issues.
- There was a desire for bureaucracies (expressed as 'paperwork') to be reduced.
- There was an over burden and over emphasis on health and safety.

(A full summary of the Appreciative Inquiry Day is included in Appendix 2)

3.4.8 The CIH also met with other stakeholders, including Adult Social Care, Public Health, the Commissioning Team and Age UK. The findings of this consultation found that:

- There was some confusion about the role, purpose and scope of sheltered housing.
- There needed to be more clarity on the assessment processes for sheltered housing.
- There could be more integration between sheltered housing and other services and organisations about the contribution the service could make towards the health priorities in the city.

- There needed to be a greater involvement of the voluntary sector, particularly in developing a wider range of opportunities for older people to contribute to their local community.

### **3.5 Sheltered lettings research**

- 3.5.1 Alongside the CIH review, the sheltered service also commissioned Housing's Policy and Performance team to research the issue of so called 'hard-to-let' sheltered housing.
- 3.5.2 Since 'Choice Based Lettings' was introduced in June 2005, there had been no formal research into how applicants and potential applicants to sheltered accommodation rate the process to both register and bid on properties.
- 3.5.3 The research sought to focus on specific groups of applicants to see if conclusions might be given as to why some sheltered housing properties are harder to let than others. The findings of the research will build into the final recommendations for a remodelled service

(A full summary of the research is included in Appendix 3)

### **3.6 The sheltered housing stock**

- 3.6.1 Although not the main focus of the sheltered review, which concentrates on the service delivery, it was acknowledged in our presentation to HMCSC in March 2013 that the schemes themselves (built between the late 1960s and 1990) presented their own challenges in terms of maintenance and facilities.
- 3.6.2 To address concerns about the sustainability of its housing stock, Housing has a long term investment programme to improve both its general needs and sheltered housing homes. To date, Housing has invested over £1 million in its sheltered homes through this programme, including new heating systems, energy efficient communal lighting, solar panel installation and lift renewals.
- 3.6.3. Included within this investment programme has been work to remodel schemes with shared bathrooms into schemes where such facilities are self contained. It is acknowledged that shared bathroom facilities are simply no longer appropriate for dignified ageing and the aim has been to end all sharing of bathrooms. As a result, most of our sheltered schemes which once had shared bathrooms have now been remodelled, including Laburnum Grove, Jasmine Court, Broadfields, Hazelholt and Jubilee Court.
- 3.6.4 There are now only two schemes with shared bathrooms: Sanders House and Evelyn Court, where some tenants already have their own self-contained facilities. Work to upgrade the 12 flats at Sanders House with shared bathrooms is due to begin in April 2014 (subject to budget approval and tender process) following completion of the feasibility and design stage in late 2013. We are also reviewing how best to deliver individual bathrooms for the 14 flats at Evelyn Court which do not have self-contained facilities and will be consulting tenants for their views and preferences.



- 3.6.5 The Property and Investment teams are also in the process of reviewing our sheltered stock to ensure they are 'fit for purpose' to meet the current needs and future needs. It is important the review of the stock and the service are fully 'joined up'.
- 3.6.6 The Housing Stock Review Manager, attended SHAG on 8 January 2014 to update representatives on works to the sheltered stock and a commitment was made to keep representatives and sheltered tenants more informed of the investment and review processes.

### **3.7 Initial response to the CIH review findings**

- 3.7.1 Although the final report is imminent, the findings of the works to date and the discussions we've had with the CIH have enabled us to take some first steps in improving the service.
- 3.7.2 Improving Financial Viability
- 3.7.3 The sheltered service has used the data from the CIH review to propose the remodelling of its charging mechanism. The service is proposing to make a charge to reflect the intensive housing management its scheme managers provide. With the establishment of a housing management charge, the service is less reliant on (reducing) supporting people funding, is more financially sustainable and can use rental income to increase the numbers of scheme managers.
- 3.7.4 To increase the number of scheme managers has been a strong message from the Sheltered Housing Action Group, and, subject to budget approval, the proposed financial changes will enable the service to increase the number of scheme managers from 21 to 25.
- 3.7.5 Full details of the proposals are contained within the Housing Revenue Account Budget 2014/15 report submitted for Housing Committee 15 January 2014 and Policy & Resources 13 February 2014.
- 3.7.6 Improving Assessment Processes
- 3.7.7 Tenants have raised concerns about the suitability of some older people with higher or more complex support needs entering sheltered housing, and have asked for more co-ordination between Homemove and sheltered housing prior to such accommodation being offered.
- 3.7.8 The interim report from the CIH also highlighted the importance of the assessment process in managing issues of need and risk. In response, the Homemove and sheltered teams now meet regularly (at an 'assessment panel') to assess the suitability of those applicants where their needs may be too high or too complex for the sheltered housing service to properly support.
- 3.7.9 This co-ordinated approach has resulted in some people with too high or too complex need being offered more suitable housing options, whilst for others who may be suitable for sheltered housing, the new assessment process has resulted in better co-ordination of support at an earlier stage.

### 3.7.10 Improving links with the voluntary sector

3.7.11 One of the interim recommendations was to make greater use of the voluntary sector, particularly in developing sheltered housing schemes as hubs of activity to address social isolation.

3.7.12 As set out in the HMCSC presentation in March 2013 the service already strong links with the voluntary sector and has delivered activities and events in collaboration with a number of agencies and organisations including Active Lightworks, Sussex Caring Pets, Bluebird, and Fabrica amongst others.

3.7.13 From April 2014 older peoples community and voluntary activities have been commissioned in locality or activity hubs across the city, with co-ordination and support being led by The Fed. The sheltered service is now working in collaboration with The Fed to ensure that sheltered tenants have better access to activities and organisations and to help extend the value of sheltered housing activities, where appropriate, to older people in the local neighbourhood.

### 3.8 **Next Step**

3.8.1 The Older Peoples Housing Manager, Peter Huntbach, presented the initial findings to SHAG on 8 January 2014. A commitment has been made to present the full and final report of the CIH review, together with an action plan of implementation, to SHAG at the next meeting (March 2014).

## 4. **ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

4.1 There are no alternatives at this stage although the review is likely to propose options for consideration.

## 5. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

5.1 Community engagement has been at the heart of the review, with sheltered tenants and representatives of SHAG being involved in the consultative processes. 19 sheltered schemes were visited by the CIH with public meetings being held at each together with individual meetings for those tenants who requested one. A survey was promoted at each scheme which could be completed in paper format or on-line. A survey was submitted by 160 (18.7%) of sheltered tenants.

5.2 The Older Peoples Housing Manager, Peter Huntbach, is attending the Older Peoples Council (OPC) meeting on 21 January 2014 and is showing OPC representatives a sample of sheltered schemes prior to the meeting on 16 and 17 January 2014.

5.3 A commitment has been made to present the full and final report of the CIH review, together with an action plan of implementation, to SHAG at the next meeting (March 2014).

## 6. **CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The sheltered housing review conducted during 2013 has been completed with initial findings presented to the service and conveyed to tenant representatives via the SHAG.
- 6.2 The Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee is asked to note this update prior to the full and final report.

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

### Financial Implications:

This report provides an update of the Sheltered Housing Review for noting and therefore there are no direct financial implications of this report. However, as mentioned in paragraph 3.7.2, the review has influenced the remodelling of the charging mechanism to tenants. The Housing Revenue Budget 2014/15 report presented to Housing Committee on 15 January 2014 proposed a new service charge for intensive housing management for tenants in sheltered accommodation. The new charge has been calculated as £19.92 per week. However, to limit the increase to tenants, this is being phased-in over a three year period. For 2014/15 the proposed charge is £15.06 and will be eligible for Housing Benefit. If approved by Budget Council on 27<sup>th</sup> February, this will replace the current supporting people charge of £12.85. The budget proposals also provide for four extra posts within the sheltered service. The full Housing Revenue Account Budget 2014/15 Report is available to read on the Council's web-site.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks*

*Date: 16/01/14*

### Legal Implications:

As this report is simply for noting, there are no significant legal implications to draw to the Sub-Committee's attention.

*Lawyer Consulted:*

*Name Liz Woodley*

*Date: 15/01/14.*

### Equalities Implications:

An Equalities Impact Assessment will be submitted with the final report of the review.

### Sustainability Implications:

The service aims to meet the One Planet Council sustainability commitment towards encouraging active, sociable, meaningful lives that promote good health and wellbeing. The review aims to build upon the work already undertaken within the service that already meets this objective.

### Any Other Significant Implications:

### Crime & Disorder Implications:

There has been a significant impact on some sheltered communities due to anti social behaviour and disruption, particularly where alcohol dependency issues have been a factor. The review aims to improve the way in which the service works with older people with higher and complex need where such needs have an impact within a sociable community.

#### Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

The review has been conducted following the completion of a risk register completed as part of the Housing Business Plan (2013/14) and individually as part of the Sheltered Business Plan (2013/14)

#### Public Health Implications:

The service aims to work more preventatively with regards to the health and wellbeing of older people, including making a positive contribution to public health.

The health and wellbeing and inequalities screening tool recommended by Public Health will be submitted with the final review.

#### Corporate / Citywide Implications:

The review aims to deliver a revised service that links to the (draft) city plan and is able to contribute towards sustainable neighbourhoods and ones which can help reduce inequalities within and between neighbourhoods.

The review aims to deliver a revised service that contributes towards the 2011-2015 corporate plan. In particular the revised service aims to enable older and vulnerable people to live health and independent lives, an outcome in the corporate priority of tackling inequality in the city.

The service acknowledges the 2012/13 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health ('Happiness – the eternal pursuit) as a key driver for the work undertaken within sheltered housing and the review.

The review aims to deliver against the key health impacts identified within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. In particular, the revised service aims to make a greater contribution in addressing the key health issues of:

- Smoking cessation.
- Health weight and nutrition
- Cancer prevention and early detection.
- Mental health and wellbeing.
- Dementia

The service aims to help meet the challenges and service objectives identified within Adult Social Care's Local Account.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

- 1 Resident Survey Results
- 2 Appreciate Inquiry Day notes
- 3 Lettings Survey

**Documents in Members' Rooms**

None

**Background Documents**

None



# Brighton & Hove Older Persons Review - Residents

	Response Count	Response %
1. Scheme Address		
Answered question	145	
Skipped question	15	
Total	160	

Do you currently receive care services in addition to the support you receive from your scheme manager service to help you to continue to live independently?

	Response Count	Response %
2. Yes	48	30.0%
No	106	66.3%
Skipped question	6	3.8%
Total	160	100.0%

Do you or anyone else in your house provide care and support to another person in the household?

3. Yes	18	11.3%
No	138	86.3%
Skipped question	4	2.5%
Total	160	100.0%

If you do receive additional care and support services please tell us who provides this?

4. Family	53	27.6%
Friends/neighbours	18	9.4%
Paid carer/social services	25	13.0%
Other	13	6.8%
Skipped question	83	43.2%
Total	192	100.0%

*Some people selected more than one category*

5. Roughly how often do you receive a visit from your scheme manager?

Every day	27	14.6%
Once a week	18	9.7%
Twice a week	7	3.8%
Once a month	13	7.0%
Never	8	4.3%
Get a call via the phone each day	57	30.8%
Other	25	13.5%
Skipped question	30	16.2%
Total	185	100.0%

*Some people selected more than one category*

6. Do you think the support you receive is

Almost right	139	86.9%
Too much	0	0.0%
Not enough	17	10.6%
Skipped question	4	2.5%
Total	160	100.0%

7. Please indicate below, how would you rate the service you receive from Brighton & Hove sheltered housing?

Excellent	56	35.0%
Good	78	48.8%
Average	18	11.3%
Poor	7	4.4%
Skipped question	1	0.6%
Total	160	100.0%

8. Please tick any of the boxes if you think that living in sheltered housing has helped you with any of the issues listed below?

	Yes	No	Total
Being active & healthy	89	20	109
Being happy	121	9	130
Being connected with others	100	18	118
Volunteering & taking part	41	40	81
Learning	19	50	69
Skipped question	9		9

*Some people selected more than one category*



9. Does your scheme manager help you with any of the following?

	Yes	No	Total
Report repairs	109	29	138
Paperwork/bills etc	55	56	111
Welfare benefits or other financial issues	45	62	107
Deal with rent arrears	23	66	89
Cope with mental health problems	36	59	95
Going shopping	4	83	87
Prepare meals	4	82	86
Personal health & hygiene	8	82	90
Other	13	53	66
Skipped question	9		9

*Some people selected more than one category*

Would you find it helpful to receive any of the following services listed below (please only tick Yes if you are currently NOT

10. receiving the service)

	Yes	No	Total
Go shopping	18	75	93
Prepare meals	7	80	87
Personal hygiene & health	9	75	84
Attend medical appointments	21	74	95
Housework	26	65	91
Attend social activities	13	75	88
Attend church/other worship	12	78	90
Minor repairs	32	62	94
Gardening	15	74	89
Befriending	16	76	92
Skipped question	46		46

*Some people selected more than one category*

11. Would you like to have more social activities arranged?

Yes	33	20.6%
No	72	45.0%
Skipped question	55	34.4%
Total	160	100.0%

12. If you would like more social activities what would you like?

Shopping trips	19
Cooking days	8
Bingo	14
Coffee mornings	19
Trips out	32
Educational talks	13
Keeping active fit & healthy	27
Skipped question	106

*Some people selected more than one category*

13. Do you need any other support to help you to stay living in your own home? (Please specify)

Answered	23
Skipped question	137
Total	160

14. Do you sometime feel lonely and isolated?

Yes	44	27.5%
No	102	63.8%
Skipped question	14	8.8%
Total	160	100.0%

15. Please could you let us know if you are involved in any of the following activities?

	Yes	No	Total
Organised club activities	40	68	108
Swimming	9	87	96
Walking	37	68	105
Bingo	28	78	106
Dancing	8	83	91
Other kind of exercise	22	75	97
Coffee mornings	37	75	112
Skipped question	18		18

*Some people selected more than one category*

16. Please indicate below if you participate in any of the following?

	Yes	No	Total
Volunteering	20	84	104
Educational courses/learning	11	83	94
Paid work	5	91	96
Work like activities	11	87	98
Skipped question	51		51

*Some people selected more than one category*

17. Which, if any, of the following health issues affects you?

	Yes	No	Total
Being over weight	30	83	113
Being under weight	8	90	98
Smoking	23	81	104
Cancer	11	89	100
Mental health (incl bereavement)	36	71	107
Dementia	12	88	100
Skipped question	31		31

*Some people selected more than one category*

How often do you go out of the house on a weekly basis to do things such as social activities, shopping, meeting friends or

18. relatives?

	Yes	No	Total		
Every day	69	21	90		
A few times a week	70	9	79		
Rarely	7	20	27		
Never	3	20	23		
Skipped question	7				
<i>Some people selected more than one category</i>					

19. Do you use an emergency pendant alarm?

Yes	69	43.1%
No	81	50.6%
Skipped question	10	6.3%
	160	100.0%

20. How often have you used the alarm over the past 6 months?

10 times	3	1.9%
5 times	14	8.8%
Once	17	10.6%
Never	75	46.9%
Skipped question	51	31.9%
	160	100.0%

If you have a support plan in place, which you look at with your scheme manager how useful do you think it has been in

21. improving your life?

Useful	74	46.3%
Not useful	12	7.5%
Don't have a support plan	49	30.6%
Skipped question	25	15.6%
	160	100.0%

Please indicate below how you rate the housing accommodation

22. you live in?

Excellent	66	41.3%
Good	67	41.9%
Average	17	10.6%
Poor	2	1.3%
Skipped question	8	5.0%
	160	100.0%

23. Are any of the issues listed below of concern to you?

State of the repair of the building	21	10.2%
Garden	26	12.7%
Design of the building	11	5.4%
State of the communal areas	7	3.4%
Design of your flat	15	7.3%
Shared bathroom facilities	2	1.0%
Lack of separate bedroom	19	9.3%
Other	12	5.9%
Skipped question	92	44.9%
	205	100.0%

*Some people selected more than one category*

24. How many bedrooms would you like if you moved?

Studio flat	17	10.1%
1 bed flat	74	44.0%
2 bed flat	29	17.3%
Other	6	3.6%
Skipped question	42	25.0%
	168	100.0%

*Some people selected more than one category*

If in the future we were going to build a new sheltered housing scheme in the area what advice would you give us from your

25. experience of living here?

Answered	21	13.1%
Skipped question	139	86.9%
	160	100.0%

What type of older persons housing should we consider building in the future if funds are available?

26. in the future if funds are available?

Bungalows (with support)	63	20.4%
Flats (with support)	31	10.0%
Sheltered housing	84	27.2%
Extra care/flexi care	38	12.3%
Retirement villages	68	22.0%
Other	3	1.0%
Skipped question	22	7.1%
	309	100.0%

*Some people selected more than one category*

27. Any other comments?

Answered	10
Skipped question	150
	160

28. If you would like a summary of the results, please tick the box

Yes	89
No	47
Skipped question	24
	160

We are intending to hold an event to discuss the results from this questionnaire, if there is enough interest. Please tick the box if

29. you are interested in attending

Yes	87
No	56
Skipped question	17
	160



## Brighton & Hove City Council

### Summary of Appreciative Inquiry workshop held on 24<sup>th</sup> October

Author: Domini Gunn



2<sup>nd</sup> January 2014





### Background

On 24 October 2013, around 120 service users from housing related support services across Brighton & Hove City Council attended a workshop session facilitated by CIH Consultancy with support from a number of City Council officers. This work forms part of an overall package of support being provided to the council by CIH consultancy in respect of the sheltered housing review. The aim of the workshop was to look at **the sheltered service that would best meet the future needs of the older people in Brighton & Hove.**

### Summary of findings from the Appreciative Inquiry workshop

The workshop was delivered against the Appreciative Inquiry's 4 themes and provided the opportunity for participants to explore what works well in the current service, ideas for an improved service offer and the shape that this might take. The key points arising from each element are summarised below.

#### What works well?

- Consistent staff cover based in each scheme or in a consistent group of smaller schemes
- Safe living environment with support & social contact when/ if needed
- Wet room installations
- Social activities (although limited in scope & inconsistent)
- Signposting to expert advice & support

#### Improving the service offer

- Greater consistency across the city in terms of
  - service delivery - e.g .what to expect in terms of support
  - social activities
  - specialist advice and support surgeries
  - communication
  - accommodation standards & facilities
- Clearer information for residents including on activities, repairs & staff cover arrangements
- Clarity & communication of the purpose and scope of sheltered housing (not residential care)
- More support for residents with complex needs & challenging behaviour
- Better use of grounds for leisure, exercise and community gardens & allotments





### Future delivery proposals

- Designate some sheltered schemes for people with complex needs and/or challenging behaviour with additional, intensive, specialist support
- Move the sheltered housing allocations service to the team so that the support needs of applicants are fully assessed, timely additional support and/or care packages are put in place and needs of other residents are considered when allocations are made
- Identify more opportunities for sheltered housing staff to liaise with other statutory and voluntary agencies to discuss issues and identify opportunities for improved multi agency working
- Develop and foster better connections with the wider community with sheltered schemes providing a hub for activities/ support to older people in the locality
- Develop and deliver, in partnership with residents and relevant agencies, a wide range of activities including social, educational, volunteering and personal development opportunities – “not just coffee mornings” – across the city
- Develop in partnership with local GPs, health & social care agencies & voluntary sector groups, and deliver a range of regular surgeries at sheltered housing schemes to include flu jabs, health checks, exercise classes, diet & nutrition, dementia support, money & welfare advice etc to be made available to older people in the wider community
- Develop a city wide charter for the provision of consistently high standards of accommodation and facilities – “up to date & aspirational”
- Ensure the delivery of consistent and continuous support that can be accessed quickly in times of need
- Reduce paperwork so that increased time is released for direct support & the development of a wide range of activities
- Separate building management/ health & safety role and resident support role
- Create happy, vibrant communities where people can live and age well!

Notes page



# **Evaluation report: Sheltered Housing 'Hard to Let' Survey**

Satti Sidhu  
Andrew Crossey

Performance & Improvement Team

December 2013



## **1.0 Aims of the report**

- 1.1 To report on the qualitative findings from four specific questionnaires distributed to a targeted sample of sheltered housing applicants.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Since 'Choice Based Lettings' was introduced in June 2005, there has been no formal research into how applicants and potential applicants to sheltered accommodation rate the process to both register and bid on properties. This research activity sought to focus on specific groups of applicants to see if conclusions might be given as to why some sheltered housing properties are harder to let than others.

## **3.0 Methodology**

- 3.1 The research activity focussed on qualitative structured questionnaires and sought to understand potential reasons that might lie behind four main scenarios, as detailed below.
- 3.2 One postal and three telephone questionnaires were created and approved by the corporate Performance, Analysis and Research team:
- 3.3 [Questionnaire 1](#) sought to understand the reasons why some older people apply to go on the general housing register, but do not apply for sheltered housing even though they qualify for it on the basis of their age.
- 3.4 [Questionnaire 2](#) focussed on why some sheltered housing applicants have never placed a bid on sheltered accommodation.
- 3.5 [Questionnaire 3](#) sought to understand why some schemes attract fewer bids and was intended to target individuals aged 60 and over who had placed at least one bid for sheltered housing accommodation within the last twelve months.
- 3.6 [Questionnaire 4](#) sought to understand what factors lead an individual to accept an offer of BHCC sheltered housing and was sent to all (215) new BHCC sheltered housing scheme tenants who had moved into their accommodation within the last two years, 2011-2013.
- 3.7 Upon advice from the corporate Performance, Analysis and Research team, questions were structured so that answers were consistent, with the format being 'tend to disagree / neither agree nor disagree / tend to agree' and the agreement that each survey to take no more than ten minutes to complete.

- 3.8 The customer data set used with Questionnaire 1 was taken from Locata and is available [here](#). The selection criteria applied consisted of - age range 60+, on general housing needs waiting list, not on the SHWL, and randomised ethnicity. This criteria yielded 1413 matching applicants which were then sorted by a randomised number. The target number of completed questionnaires was 5% of this list (70 applicants) but this was not achieved. A total of 18 completed questionnaires were returned and recorded as part of the data.
- 3.9 The customer data set used for Questionnaire 2 was again taken from Locata. The criteria used to obtain the selection was age range 60+, on general housing needs waiting list, on the SHWL, randomised ethnicity, and no bids within the last 12 months. This selection yielded 256 applicants which were again randomly sorted. The target number of respondents was 10% (26) and 25 completed questionnaires were achieved.
- 3.10 The data set used for Questionnaire 3 was not produced because the telephone questionnaire approach was abandoned after questionnaire 2. This was because of a very low contact/response rate being achieved and the length of time it was taking to complete questionnaires.
- 3.11 The 215 recipients of postal questionnaire 4 were taken from the New Tenancies Log Book for Q4 supplied by the Sheltered Housing Team and is available to view [here](#). In total, 91 completed responses were returned which was 42% of the total number of surveys sent (215).

## **Evaluation of qualitative research**

### **4.0 Questionnaire 1 - Why some older people on the general housing waiting list do not apply for sheltered housing**

- 4.1 The full results of questionnaire 1 (Understanding why some older people do not apply for sheltered housing) are available [here](#).
- 4.2 As expected, a substantial majority of respondents stated that they were on the joint housing register, that they had completed the application forms themselves and they were not on the register for sheltered housing (Questions 1, 2 & 3). This confirms the validity of the customer data set used.
- 4.3 50% of respondents said that they had not considered registering for sheltered housing (Question 4) and over half of these said that they either did not know or were not sure how to apply for sheltered housing (Question 5).
- 4.4 33% of respondents to Question 4 said that they had previously considered sheltered housing. Question 6 asked of all applicants so it could give some indication why sheltered housing might have been discounted or at least not actively pursued by this sub-group.

- 4.5 It is not possible to draw robust conclusions from such a small survey sample but it is interesting that the majority of responses to the question ‘If no, can you say why you haven’t considered sheltered housing?’ (Question 6) fall into the ‘Other’ category. The nature of these responses suggest a ‘positive’ decision not to apply for sheltered housing is being made by some respondents and these decisions are partly based around beliefs of how old, ill or dependent an applicant needs to be to qualify for sheltered housing.
- 4.6 The general tone of answers given to Question 7 seem to indicate that beliefs about sheltered housing are not necessarily fixed for this sample group and might be positively influenced by more information being provided in key areas; service charges, personal independence, and the differences between sheltered and general housing stock.
- 4.7 Equal numbers of respondents were both aware and unaware that eligibility for sheltered housing is based on support need requirements rather than age (Question 8), so it may be possible that the general understanding of eligible support needs and/or age is misunderstood.

## **5.0 Questionnaire 2 - Why some people on the sheltered housing waiting list are not actively bidding**

- 5.1 The full results of questionnaire 2 (why some SHWL applicants have never placed a bid) are available [here](#).
- 5.2 Over half of the respondents to this questionnaire either thought that they were not or did not know if they were on the joint housing register (Question 1) and in a marked difference to the responses to questionnaire 1, substantially more of this sample group said that someone else had completed the application form for them (Question 2). On the face of it this might indicate that there are a number of waiting list applicants who are not aware that someone has applied for sheltered housing on their behalf but, the number of respondents who thought that they were on the sheltered housing list (Question 3) was higher than the number who thought they were on the joint housing register generally. This could indicate a perception that a separate list for sheltered housing is operated.
- 5.3 Also, less people said that they knew about the choice based lettings scheme (Question 4) than those who said that they were registered for sheltered housing.
- 5.4 Question 6 confirms the accuracy of the selection criteria used to produce the target sample group. The phrasing of question 7 is poor but in the telephone survey activity this question was asked of all respondents. The main reason why respondents had not placed a bid in the last year was because they did not know how to bid and the second highest reason was respondents did not know that they needed to bid. This could be indicative of a sub-group of applicants that needs additional help to participate in the scheme but has either chosen not to or is not able to access the additional help that they may need.

- 5.5 Other reasons given for not bidding within the last year were that the process was felt to be too complicated, it did not provide enough information about properties (although this may be because some respondents were not subscribing to the newsletter), and that individuals had difficulty accessing the scheme when they had no internet access or support with bidding.
- 5.6 More positively, some respondents stated that they had not bid because they had found suitable alternative accommodation, circumstances had changed or they had decided to stay put for some other reason (not given). This would indicate that the joint housing register is not a completely accurate picture of who is currently actively seeking alternative accommodation.
- 5.7 The majority of respondents said that they did not know or were not sure how easy it was to understand and use the bidding process (Question 8) and there was a similar response to Question 9 which asked about the adequacy of the information provided about individual lettings. This may indicate a lack of participation in the scheme, although it does not give an indication as to why this might be.
- 5.8 The response to Question 11 is of concern. A significant majority of respondents did not know that additional help with the bidding process was available. If it is accurate to say that there is a lack of engagement within the scheme, this may be because applicants who need more help with it are not aware that the help is available. So, publicising the assisted bidding scheme could make a positive difference for a number of applicants who might otherwise be unsupported.
- 5.9 When considering access to the internet, there is a notable difference between respondents to questionnaires 1 and 2. Most respondents to questionnaire 1 have access to the internet whereas the vast majority of respondents to questionnaire 2 do not have access to the internet. More research would be required to quantify the precise impact that the lack of internet access has had on an individual's ability to participate in the choice based lettings scheme but it does seem reasonable to assume that it would potentially be a significant obstacle for some applicants.

#### **6.0 Questionnaire 4 - What prompted someone to accept an offer of sheltered accommodation**

- 6.1 The full results of questionnaire 4 (what factors contributed to the decision to accept an offer of sheltered accommodation) are available [here](#).
- 6.2 The two most popular reasons why an offer of sheltered accommodation was accepted (Question 2) were its location and the size/layout of the accommodation. 9 respondents stated that already knowing someone in the scheme was one of their main reasons but 23 respondents stated that one of their main reasons for accepting the offer was the staff/scheme manager. This would suggest that the experience gained by the applicant in the initial contact with the scheme manager is an important factor for many applicants in

their decision making process. Of the 'other' main reasons given for accepting an offer, only one respondent specifically stated that ground floor accommodation was a factor and this may be explained by the relatively high (38) importance being placed upon lifts.

- 6.3 Of the 'supplementary' reasons (Question 3) health, security, central heating, access to transport and free laundry facilities were the most popular reasons stated. Where additional health details were provided as part of an answer depression was cited as a factor with some applicants anticipating that the offer of accommodation would help them deal with the illness. No applicants stated that treatment rooms were a factor in their decision making and a small number made additional comments about not knowing what this option referred to.
- 6.4 A substantial majority of respondents in this questionnaire stated that they found the choice based lettings approach to allocations either very easy or fairly easy to use. Respondents who said that they did not find it either very easy or fairly easy tended to raise similar points as to why this was as respondents to Questionnaires 1 and 2. It may be that the positive experience of successfully securing sheltered accommodation influences a perception of the easiness of the choice based lettings approach and vice versa, but it may also be possible that the likelihood of achieving a successful offer of accommodation is determined in part by how easy an applicant finds the approach.
- 6.5 A significant number of respondents stated that have not placed bids on alternative accommodation since moving into their current accommodation (Question 6). Unfortunately the subsequent question focussed on those who had placed bids in this timeframe so why so many respondents had not was not captured. However, it may be suggestive that the information provided during the offer process was a fair representation of the accommodation on offer and this seems to be born out by the responses to Question 7, with the majority of respondents stating that based on their own experience the Choice Based Lettings scheme did always provide enough information to help an applicant decide whether they want to place a bid or not. For those who did not feel the same way (Question 8), the missing information that they would have found useful tended to focus on the physical attributes of the locality within which the scheme was located and the services in that locality.
- 6.6 More respondents (60) completed Question 10 than the total of those who did not answer yes to Question 9 (37) which suggests that the wording of supplementary question 10 could have been clearer. But, because more people (32) said that they would have found the Choice Based Lettings scheme easier had they known extra help was available than those who said they did not know the extra help was available (29) might indicate that there are some applicants who know extra help is available but are not using it.
- 6.7 The majority of respondents who had already moved into sheltered accommodation knew that 'assisted bidding' help was available to them



whereas a greater proportion of those on the sheltered housing waiting list did not know that this help was available.

- 6.8 One resident of Evelyn Court would like to have a pet, but believes they are not allowed within the scheme. One respondent from Muriel House stated that they previously had a cat which they were not allowed to take into the scheme. One resident from Lindfield Court does not have any pets but is looking for one.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

- 7.1 The overall result from the consultation activity indicates further work needs to be carried out to give definite conclusions. Some findings that may be helpful are outlined below.
- 7.2 Work could be done to improve awareness around qualifying criteria and the levels of support provided by sheltered housing schemes.
- 7.3 The sample for questionnaire 2 was taken from the joint housing register. Many respondents were not aware that they were on the joint housing register indicating a level of confusion about the status of individual applications. More information and advice may improve applicants understanding of the joint housing register.
- 7.4 It is striking how many people on the sheltered housing waiting list either did not know or thought they were not registered for sheltered housing and this may explain why some of them are not bidding for sheltered housing
- 7.5 The waiting list membership may be a little out of date. A review of the waiting list applicants should be carried out to determine whether applicants wish to remain on the register. Data abstracted from Locata on bidding activity showed that only 2,000 applicants out of a possible 17,000 registered applications had actively placed a bid in the past 3 months (Sept – Nov 2013).
- 7.6 Whatever the reasons for why, some sheltered housing applicants are not aware of the bidding process or do not fully understand that they need to actively bid in the scheme. Promotion of the assisted bidding scheme at an early stage of the registration process could ensure the support available can be accessed to prevent
- 7.7 Ensuring a lack of internet access does not block/hinder participation in the scheme. Further research should be carried out to understand the impact/s that no internet access has on the individual' ability to participate in the choice based lettings scheme and what more we should be doing to mitigate for these effects. Need to go through the process to get to know it, those who find the system easier to use are more likely to have a successful outcome.
- 7.8 There are also aspects that are location specific that require further investigation.

7.9 Also, more information about what life is like in a sheltered housing scheme generally as well as details about what may be happening in the specific scheme being offered would have been useful (repairs, social activities).

## **8.0 Conclusion**

8.1 The consultation activity was carried out in March 2013 and any recommendations made in this report will be superseded by the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) review of Sheltered Housing.

8.2 It is hoped that the evaluation report provides a useful insight into the experiences of applicants both registering and bidding for sheltered properties. If any clarity or research is required on any aspect of this report please contact Satti Sidhu, Performance & Improvement Officer.



## Brighton & Hove Seaside Community Homes

Latest Information – 6<sup>th</sup> January 2014

Since Seaside Homes went live in November 2011, we have leased a total of 351 properties and the partnership has now generated £16.7m for the HRA to continue the decent homes work.

The refurbishment programme continues well and as of the 6<sup>th</sup> January 2014 we have now completed 335 properties. The next batch of properties are due for transfer in May 2014 however this may take place earlier than planned at the beginning of March.

### Property Details

Property Type	Batch 1 1 <sup>st</sup> Nov 2011	Batch 2 1 <sup>st</sup> Feb 2012	Batch 3 30 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2012	Batch 4 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2012	Batch 5 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2012	Batch 6 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct 2012	Batch 7 March 2013	Total
Studio	5	1	5	3	6	8	12	40
1 Bedroom	19	21	20	12	27	23	32	154
2 Bedroom	20	17	12	18	16	17	12	112
3 Bedroom	14	9	3	2	6	4	2	40
4 Bedroom	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	5
<b>Total Properties</b>	61	48	41	35	56	52	58	351

The following tables provide a breakdown of the number of refurbished and un-refurbished properties received in each batch and progress made on refurbishment works.

<b>Table 1</b>	Refurbished Properties	Un-refurbished Properties
Batch 1	44	17
Batch 2	8	40
Batch 3	0	41
Batch 4	0	35
Batch 5	3	53
Batch 6	0	52

<b>Batch 7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>294</b>

*Table 1 - the breakdown of properties leased to date:*

At the time of handover Seaside Homes receives a mix of properties some of which have already undergone refurbishment and are ready to be tenanted and others for which refurbishment is about to commence.

### **Refurbishment – Progress to date:**

<b>Table 2</b>	<b>Refurbishment Works COMPLETED</b>	<b>Refurbishment Works Incomplete</b>
<b>Batch 1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Batch 2</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Batch 3</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Batch 4</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Batch 5</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Batch 6</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Batch 7</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>20</b>

*Table 2 – the breakdown of refurbishment works completed and those still incomplete:*

Since the beginning of 2013, the refurbishment team have completed an average of 11 properties per month.

The only remaining properties to be handed back are 243-245 Preston Road. The main refurbishments work were completed in December but a delay with the mains water supply means the property will not be signed off for another couple of weeks.

[www.seaside-homes.org.uk](http://www.seaside-homes.org.uk)

