

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

**3.00pm 1 APRIL 2014**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillor Randall (Chair); Councillor Peltzer Dunn (Opposition Spokesperson), Councillor Farrow (Opposition Spokesperson), Councillors Mears, West and Wilson

**Tenant Representatives** Heather Hayes (Brighton East Area Housing Management Panel), Jason Williams (Central Area Housing Management Panel), Alison Gray (Central Area Housing Management Panel), J Barry Hughes (North & East Area Housing Management Panel), Roy Crowhurst (West Hove & Portslade Area Housing Management Panel), John Melson (High Rise Action Group), Tony Worsfold (Leaseholder Action Group), Charles Penrose (Sheltered Housing Action Group) and Ann Packham (Tenant Disability Network)

**Apologies:** Councillors Kennedy and Pidgeon and Ron Gurney (West Hove & Portslade Area Housing Management Panel.)

**PART ONE**

**47. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

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

47.1 Councillor West declared that he was attending as a substitute for Councillor Davey.

**47(b) Declarations of Interests**

47.2 There were none.

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

47.3 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.

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

**48. MINUTES**

- 48.1 The Sub-Committee considered the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2014.
- 48.2 John Melson asked for clarification with regard to paragraph 45.6 when the Fraud Manager had advised that a council home must be a person's sole or main residence. The Chair agreed that this statement was ambiguous. The Senior Lawyer explained that the Fraud Manager's comments had been correctly minuted but the legal test was 'only or principal home'.
- 48.3 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee meeting held on 11 February 2014 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

**49. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS****Tribute to Chris Kift and Don Turner**

- 49.1 The Chair paid tribute to Chris Kift who had died recently. Chris had greatly contributed to the tenants' movement and had been a skilful and fair Chair of the City Assembly. The Chair suggested that when a new scheme was opened in future it should be named after Chris.
- 49.2 The Chair paid tribute to Don Turner who had been the Labour Chair of the Housing Committee from 2003-2007. He would be remembered for his support for housing. The Chair called for a period of silence to remember both Chris and Don.

**PV Solar Panel Programme**

- 49.3 The Chair informed the Sub-Committee that a PV Solar Panel Programme was under way on six sheltered housing schemes. There was £500,000 in next year's budget for more PV work and £360,000 had been received from Centrica for more PV and insulation work.

**Tenancy Fraud**

- 49.4 Two serious cases of tenancy fraud had been detected and were coming to court. An extra staff member was working on fraud.

**Warwick Mount – Problems with Anti-Social Behaviour**

- 49.5 The Chair reported that there had been a meeting with Warwick Mount tenants to discuss anti-social behaviour problems which had resulted in extra security. A wider look was being taken at anti-social behaviour in the Eastern Road area.

**Future of the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee**

- 49.6 Councillor Farrow asked the Chair if there could be a discussion on the future of the Sub-Committee. The Housing Management Area Panels had become aware of the administration's proposal to abolish the HMCSC.
- 49.7 The Chair explained that this was not solely the administration's proposal. The matter had been discussed at both the Constitution Review Working Group and Leaders' Group and a decision had not yet been taken. A report on the future of the Sub-Committee would be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee on 1 May. In the meanwhile, the matter had been discussed at the Area Panels. The East Area Panel had been well attended and there was a split view on the subject. Some people had felt that there was too much politics in the Sub-Committee. 85% of those present favoured having four area panels that reflected ward boundaries.
- 49.8 Councillor Mears expressed concern that tenants were not given the opportunity to vote on this matter or give their views. This was possibly the last meeting of the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee.
- 49.9 The Chair replied that the proposal was not a secret. Political group leaders would have known about the proposal since July 2013.
- 49.10 Councillor Peltzer Dunn accepted that this matter had been raised at the Constitution Review Working Group of which he was a member. He felt it would be a retrograde step to disband the Sub-Committee. The West Area Housing Management Panel had called for a vote but had been told by officers that tenants did not have the right to vote on this matter. 100% of the tenants had been against the abolition of the Sub-Committee. He suggested that an indicative vote was taken on this issue.
- 49.11 Councillor West noted that it appeared that consideration of this proposal had been going on for some time. He was surprised that councillors had not raised their objections before. If councillors were unhappy with the proposal they would have an opportunity to change the recommendations at the Policy & Resources Committee, where the administration did not have a majority. The proposal had to be decided by mutual agreement.
- 49.12 The Chair stated that there were two City Assembly meetings a year and a Tenants Scrutiny Panel. He considered that the Housing Management Area Panel meetings were more useful than the Sub-Committee. The proposals would not affect the various action groups such as the High Rise Action Group.
- 49.13 John Melson considered that the action groups would be affected as they did not have representatives on the Area Panels. He questioned which area panel, would be appropriate for members of the High Rise Action Group to attend.
- 49.14 The Chair noted that Mr Melson had been in attendance at the Central Area Panel.
- 49.15 Mr Melson stated that there had been consultation with councillors but not with tenants' groups. Tenants had made it clear at a meeting with the Head of Income, Involvement

& Improvement that they did not accept the proposal to disband the Sub-Committee. Mr Melson stated that tenants should be allowed to vote on the issue.

- 49.16 Heather Hayes stressed that there was currently an opportunity for tenants to speak to councillors and senior officers at the Sub-Committee meeting. She expressed concern that this would not be the case at the Area Panel meetings.
- 49.17 The Chair agreed that it was important that senior staff should attend the Area Panels. It was also important that there was good tenant attendance at the meetings.
- 49.18 Tony Worsfold queried where the views of the Leaseholder Action Group would be considered. Mr Melson agreed that leaseholders had a genuine concern as they would not have a voice in future.
- 49.19 The Chair agreed for an indicative vote from tenants at the meeting. There was a unanimous vote in favour of retaining the Housing Management Consultative Sub-Committee.

## **50. CALL-OVER**

- 50.1 **RESOLVED** – That all items be reserved for discussion

## **51. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

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

## **52. ISSUES RAISED BY COUNCILLORS**

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

## **53. RESPONSE TO TENANT SCRUTINY PANEL REPORT ON STANDARD LETTERS**

- 53.1 The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment, Development & Housing which set out the Housing response to the recommendations of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel in their report on standard letters.
- 53.2 Miriam Binder gave a presentation on the Tenant & Resident Scrutiny Panel report. Ms Binder outlined the purpose and process of the scrutiny review and stressed the importance of language in conveying ideas from one person to another. Different groups used language in different ways and language impacted on them in different ways. The report highlighted how language was taken for granted and how there was a need to be more aware when talking to disparate groups.
- 53.3 Councillor Mears thanked the tenants who had been involved in the Scrutiny Review. She supported the recommendations of the review and the use of plain English.

- 53.4 John Melson thanked the Scrutiny Panel for their excellent work.
- 53.5 Councillor West agreed that it was easy to talk in jargon. He recalled that the council had been awarded a Crystal Mark for its use of plain English. However, if English was not the first language there would be a problem. He welcomed the recommendations.
- 53.6 Charles Penrose noted that use of plain English in the council had worked for a while but had disappeared. He would like to see the Panel take it further and investigate council forms which were not as clear as they should be.
- 53.7 The Chair mentioned that he had received a letter from a tenant who had given up applying for a transfer as she found the forms too arduous. He thanked Ms Binder and her colleagues on the Scrutiny Panel for their work on the scrutiny panel report.
- 53.8 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the evidence, findings and recommendations of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel relating to standard letters used in Housing, be noted.
- (2) That the actions Housing will take in response to the Tenant Scrutiny Panel's recommendations be noted.

#### **54. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3 2013/14**

- 54.1 The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment, Development & Housing which covered Quarter 3 of the financial year 2013/14. The report was presented by the Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement.
- 54.2 Councillor Wilson referred to paragraph 4.2.1 – Percentage of responsive repairs passing post-inspection. This stated that out of the 1,278 jobs that were post inspected, 82 failed. Under row 7 of paragraph 4.2 – Percentage of repairs completed right first time, it stated that 97% had been the target and 98.09% achieved in 12/13 year end. Councillor Wilson asked for clarification on the statistics. What was the percentage that did fail?
- 54.3 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement explained that the actual job was inspected, not jobs completed first time. This was linked to Row 6, in paragraph 4.2 – Percentage of response repairs passing post-inspection. There was no direct correlation to percentages of repairs completed right first time. 6.5% of the 1278 jobs had failed.
- 54.4 Councillor Wilson replied that it would be useful to have percentages that failed in future reports.
- 54.5 John Melson commented that there were no questions about the quality of the work being carried out. There was a need to review the performance report and the information contained on the report card. He suggested phone surveys and more random calling.

- 54.6 Mr Melson referred to paragraph 4.2.3 – Lifts restored to service within 24 hours. He was dubious about the accuracy of these figures. There could be delays and reports could get lost in the system.
- 54.7 Mr Melson referred to a bad job carried out on a balcony enclosure and asked about delays at Manor Place. The Chair replied that work at Manor Place was to be carried out in two stages. The number of properties was not being reduced. Balconies were a problem in Essex Place. They would be checked and Mr Melson would be updated.
- 54.8 Councillor Mears agreed that there were major issues with balconies. She had contacted Mears Ltd about this issue. She found that they were sub-contracting staff who did not speak English as their first language. The work carried out was satisfactory when staff were supervised. When they were not supervised there were serious issues of safety. For example, materials had been thrown from balconies.
- 54.9 Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 4.1.1 in relation to average re-let times. This stated that 'average re-let time for both indicators is higher than last year because of the need to allow time for financial inclusion work to equip prospective tenants for their new home'. Councillor Mears asked how long this would take.
- 54.10 Councillor Mears referred to Appendix 1 – Long term empty properties. She asked for details on figures on properties that had gone over to Seaside Homes. The Chair replied that the latest figures would be sent to her. Councillor Mears was concerned that bungalows in Manor Place had been boarded up for some time. They needed to come back into the housing stock.
- 54.11 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement explained that in terms of financial inclusion work there was not one fixed package of work. An expert in financial inclusion was working on this issue.
- 54.12 Councillor Mears stressed that the function of the landlord was to let properties. Currently, work was being carried out in relation to vulnerable people before property was let. Councillor Mears thought this information could be provided to new tenants.
- 54.13 The Chair explained that the aim was to support people and to sustain tenancies.
- 54.14 Councillor West referred to paragraph 4.4 – Anti-social behaviour. He asked why the council did not report on all wards. The Head of Tenant Services stated that this information could be included in future reports.
- 54.15 Councillor Peltzer Dunn referred to paragraph 4.2 – Property & Investment. He pointed out that the figures quoted in rows 1 and 2 (Emergency repairs completed in time/Routine repairs completed in time) did not add up to the figures quoted in row 7 (Percentage of repairs completed right first time). For example the Year End figure in row 7 was 3637 more than the year end totals in 1 and 2 combined.
- 54.16 The Head of Housing explained that row 7 was not a combination of rows 1 & 2. Another category carried out was 'urgent and complete'.

- 54.17 Councillor Peltzer Dunn questioned why this information was not included in the report. He referred to Row 3 (Average time to complete routine repairs) and noted the average time had increased by one third. He referred to Paragraph 4.3, Row 5 (Routine removals of bulk waste completed within 5 working days). He was worried to note the declining numbers.
- 54.18 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement explained that the waste removal figure was different due to the amount of bulk waste left out. Officers had carried out a considerable amount of work to encourage residents to use the council's bulk removal service. She made reference to paragraph 4.3.2 of the report. It was necessary to prioritise some jobs.
- 54.19 The Chair stated that bulk waste was always being dumped on the estates and was dealt with pretty quickly.
- 54.20 John Melson noted that decent homes work was not mentioned in the report. There were concerns about this issue and the way surveys had been completed.
- 54.21 The Chair expressed concern that replacement windows in Warwick Mount had been overlooked.
- 54.22 Councillor Wilson referred to the last page of Appendix One – Outline of under occupation arrears and related information. She noted rows 9 & 10 in relation to the cumulative number of under occupying households who had moved through a mutual exchange or the transfer incentive scheme. Councillor Wilson asked what had happened to the remaining households.
- 54.23 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement explained that some of these residents had reached a considerable age and were not impacted. Other households had children under the age of 10 and different genders. As soon as the children reached 10 the household was no longer impacted. Some people had a child who came back from university or had taken in a lodger.
- 54.24 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

## **55. LESSONS TAKEN FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF RELOCATING MANOR PLACE HOUSING OFFICE**

- 55.1 The Sub Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment Development & Housing which provided information on how the experience and learning from the relocation of the Manor Place Housing Office has informed work to close the Selsfield Drive Housing Office. The report was presented by the Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement (Housing). She stressed that there had been a targeted approach in the way customers were supported as a result of the Selsfield Drive closure. This was set out in paragraph 3.2.2 of the report.
- 55.2 The Chair mentioned that at the full Council meeting, Councillor Meadows had asked a question about PayPoint. She had heard that some tenants had been charged to use PayPoint.

- 55.3 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement (Housing) confirmed that tenants should not be charged for the use of PayPoint. She asked for details of shops or organisations that were charging.
- 55.4 Councillor Farrow reported that he had received complaints from a number of tenants and residents about charges for the use of PayPoint. He was aware of a shop in Moulsecoomb that made a charge. Councillor Farrow thought that the use of post offices should be encouraged. Councillor Farrow stated that tenants and residents were not happy with the closure of the Selsfield Drive office and that there was need to ensure that council tenants on the estates received a reasonable housing service. Councillor Farrow considered that there needed to be a small housing office on the new development.
- 55.5 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement confirmed that officers were promoting the use of post offices when they had PayPoint facilities.
- 55.6 Councillor Mears thanked officers for the report which she welcomed. She had noted some of the lessons that had been learnt from the closure of Manor Place and would watch the progress of the Selsfield Drive closure with interest.
- 55.7 Roy Crowhurst asked why it took so long to apply for a PayPoint card. He had waited 6-8 weeks for a card to arrive. Mr Crowhurst stated that when a payment was made through PayPoint it took up to 5 days to appear on the rent record at the Council.
- 55.8 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement was sorry to hear that Mr Crowhurst had to wait so long for a PayPoint card. This was unusual. She assured Mr Crowhurst that although it took a while to process payments through PayPoint, the council would not contact tenants to say their payments were in arrears. The council were able to see which tenants paid by PayPoint. In the meanwhile, officers had identified the shop in Moulsecoomb which was charging for the use of PayPoint. The business owner would be contacted by officers and an update would be provided.
- 55.9 **RESOLVED** - That the learning taken from Manor Place and applied to the planning of the Selsfield Drive Housing Office, be noted.

## 56. PARK ROYAL - LEASEHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT

- 56.1 The Sub Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment Development & Housing which informed members of the legal enfranchisement process which leaseholders had invoked. The Council's new role of 'tenant' resulting from enfranchisement was explained. From Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2014 the Council was no longer the freehold owner of the two Park Royal buildings. The report recommended the disposal, on the open market, of the remaining tenanted flats as and when they become empty, in order to fund additional affordable council accommodation across the city. The report was presented by the Head of Property & Investment.
- 56.2 The Leasehold Manager explained the leasehold enfranchisement process. For the process to succeed, two thirds of the flats in the building have to be sold. The group of leaseholders have to make up 50% or more of the flats concerned.



- 56.3 The Chair stated that he was not convinced by the argument of recommendation 2.3 and considered that the flats should be retained by the council. These were very nice flats and there was a need for affordable housing in the city centre.
- 56.4 Councillor Farrow stated that his group did not agree with recommendation 2.3. He asked why council tenants should not live in a desirable area. He considered that the council homes should be preserved. When the flats became empty, other people in housing need could be placed there.
- 56.5 Councillor Peltzer Dunn concurred. He felt it would be a retrograde step to sell the flats when accommodation was so difficult to find. He did not see an argument put forward for not disposing of the flats. Officers might think it was more difficult to manage a block where the council did not own the freehold; however, this was not a sufficient reason for disposing of the flats.
- 56.6 John Melson considered that the council should retain all council property.
- 56.7 Councillor West also agreed that he could not see why tenants should not be able to live in these flats. He questioned whether investing capital receipts from the sale of the flats into the provision of additional affordable council accommodation would actually save any money.
- 56.8 Councillor Mears asked for clarity about the capital receipts mentioned in recommendation 2.3. She was not sure if these were to go to the HRA or general fund. Councillor Mears considered paragraph 6.2 open ended. She did not support the report.
- 56.9 Councillor Wilson referred to recommendation 2.3. She was concerned at the transaction costs that would be incurred and that the money from capital receipts would be less than expected.
- 56.10 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the content and recommendations in the report be noted.
- (2) That Housing Committee be requested to note the completion of sale of the freehold and the change of freeholder and management of the two Park Royal buildings.
- (3) That the Housing Committee be informed that the Sub-Committee do not agree to the recommendation to dispose of the remaining interest in 24 flats in nos 1-44 and 45-85 Park Royal, when they become empty.

## **57. TENANTS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS RECOGNITION POLICY**

- 57.1 The Sub Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment Development & Housing which informed members that the Tenants and Residents Associations Recognition Policy outlined the requirements for a tenants' or residents' association in a council housing area to be recognised by the council. The policy updated the existing Recognition Policy and Model Constitution and brought the Policy in line with the Code of Conduct agreed at Housing Management Sub-Committee in December 2012. The report was presented by Resident Involvement Manager.

- 57.2 Councillor Peltzer Dunn referred to the appendices attached to the report. He understood the need for more public meetings; however, if it was considered necessary to have a certain number of committee meetings in the past, he asked why it was not considered necessary now. Councillor Peltzer Dunn referred to the Housing Policies appendix. He asked for an explanation of paragraph 7.3. 'The council will only recognise one association in a given geographical area.'
- 57.3 The Resident Involvement Manager replied that Councillor Peltzer Dunn's comments about the number of committee meetings would be incorporated into the report to Housing Committee. With regard to paragraph 7.3, the council would not recognise two associations in a block. The Chair stated that the wording of this paragraph needed to be changed to make it clearer.
- 57.4 Councillor Peltzer Dunn referred to paragraph 7.4 of the appendix on Housing Policies. 'An association can agree to extend its area of benefit at a general meeting, but this has to be a neighbouring area without a recognised association.' Councillor Peltzer Dunn asked what was meant by 'area of benefit'?
- 57.5 The Chair explained that it was an expression used for Credit Unions. It was agreed that the Resident Involvement Manager should change the wording of this paragraph.
- 57.6 Councillor Peltzer Dunn expressed concern that there could be a situation where there was a residents' association in an area where housing was sold on a freehold basis. This would be situated on the area of benefit. Did a resident who lived in a property purchased under the right to buy and sold several times since, have a right to be included in the area of benefit?
- 57.7 The Resident Involvement Manager replied that everyone had a right to be a member of a residents' association. The only people who did not have a right to vote were non resident leaseholders.
- 57.8 Councillor Peltzer Dunn and the Chair did not consider this information to be correct.
- 57.9 Barry Hughes informed the Sub-Committee that Sylvan Hall Tenant Association specified which blocks were in the area of benefit. He suggested specifying the geography from the start. Councillor Peltzer Dunn replied that this did not solve the problem of areas where there was a mixture of freehold and leasehold.
- 57.10 Charles Penrose referred to paragraph 3.3 on the first page of the report. This stated that four committee meetings a year would be changed to four general meetings a year. He stressed that when associations had an AGM people had to be forced to come down to make up the quorum. He asked how a quorum would be obtained for an Annual General Meeting under the new system. The Resident Involvement Manager replied that the quorum was quite low – less than 10. Tenants would agree the number for a quorum.
- 57.11 Councillor West referred to paragraph 7.4 of appendix 1. He queried if there would be consultation with people in the area on whether they wanted to be part of the extension of the area of benefit.

- 57.12 John Melson stated that the Hi Rise Action Group defined membership of the group as a 'resident who lived in council housing'.
- 57.13 Councillor Farrow stated that he would like to see four public meetings a year. All the Woodingdean TRA meetings were for tenants and residents. Organisations had to decide how many meetings they needed and a public meeting was required where officers could be held to account. There were mixed areas of housing in Woodingdean and the Resident Engagement Officers were doing an excellent job. There was a need to look after everyone's interest.
- 57.14 Barry Hughes referred to Appendix 1, Paragraph 4. He thought the idea of a Social Media Officer was a good one. In relation to the general meetings, Mr Hughes stressed the need to react to things on a day to day basis. His association had 11 meetings a year. People had to be taken by bus to attend the AGM and they had a quorum of 10. Mr Hughes thought that no more than seven persons of an association should need to request to the Chair or Secretary that there should be an Annual General Meeting.
- 57.15 John Melson stated that the Hi Rise Action Group had four general meetings of which one had to be the AGM. A committee meeting was only arranged if something special occurred. The next meeting was on 17 April at 7.00pm at Essex Place and he looked forward to seeing people there.
- 57.16 Alison Gray was concerned that the report and appendices did not mention Community Interest Companies. These were governed by company law. The Resident Involvement Manager reported that the Bristol Estate CIC did not meet this policy.
- 57.17 Alison Gray confirmed that the every member of the Bristol Estate was a member of the CIC. This was not recognised. Not one meeting this year had been quorate. The Chair agreed this situation needed sorting out.
- 57.18 Councillor West referred to amendments to the constitution, Appendix 1, Paragraph 7. He was concerned that changes to the constitution could be made without notice.
- 57.19 Charles Penrose referred to Appendix 4, Paragraph 8 concerning the representative of the Area Panel. Presently, if a representative did not attend three consecutive meetings and had not sent apologies they were derecognised. That should be retained in the constitution.
- 57.20 John Melson stated that people were not automatically derecognised. The matter was referred back to the Area Panel. Mr Melson explained that associations could request that all minutes and audited accounts be submitted to the council. The CIC could not have these restrictions placed on them. There needed to be a formal tenants' voice which was not the CIC.
- 57.21 Alison Gray agreed. She reported that there were no minutes of the last AGM and no audit submitted. The CIC had been fined on seven occasions.
- 57.22 Councillor Mears informed members that she had major concerns about the CIC and asked for clarity about this organisation. The Chair agreed that this subject could be looked at in future.

- 57.23 Councillor Mears stressed that tenants should be fully consulted about the recognition policy. She asked how their comments would be considered.
- 57.24 The Chair explained that work would be done on the basis of the discussion at this meeting. There was a need to go back to the Area Panels and to investigate the issue of residents' associations and Community Interest Companies.
- 57.25 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the comments of the Sub-Committee on the proposed Recognition Policy be noted.
- (2) That the Area Panels be consulted on the Recognition Policy.
- (3) That officers investigate the issue of residents' associations and Community Interest Companies.

## 58. SECURITY IN HIGH RISE ACCOMMODATION

- 58.1 The Sub Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment Development & Housing which informed members of a number of unauthorised intrusions into council owned high rise accommodation. This had given rise to a review of how such intrusions could be prevented and recommended actions to address the situation. The report was presented by the Head of Tenant Services.
- 58.2 The Head of Tenancy Services informed members that paragraph 4 of the report highlighted key areas of concern and suggested ways to reduce the problems of intrusions and anti-social behaviour. Long term solutions would include a wider review of security in all council blocks. Costly solutions were being considered.
- 58.3 Alison Gray noted that St James House and other blocks in Kemp Town had been specifically mentioned in the report. She stressed that there were 4 or 5 rough sleepers in the storage area of her block of flats and residents felt intimidated. This matter had been reported to the police community support officers and to the council. Bedding had been removed from the rubbish area at the request of residents.
- 58.4 Councillor Farrow thanked officers for the report on this serious matter. Councillor Farrow considered that long term capital solutions would be required and noted the success of concierge services in London boroughs. He felt that there was a need to seriously investigate the introduction of concierge services in the city.
- 58.5 John Melson asked for the comments of the Hi Rise Action Group meeting to be added to the report. A caretaker type role might be required in blocks.
- 58.6 Councillor Mears welcomed the report on this serious issue. She felt it would be an excellent idea to have a concierge service. Councillor Mears informed members that she had recently had a phone call from a concerned tenant at St James House regarding an issue of drug dealing in the car park. Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 3.10 of the report which related to the St James House car park and

considered that there needed to be a conversation with the police with regard to the installation of CCTV.

- 58.7 The Chair noted the lack of police attendance at a recent multi agency meeting. He agreed that the installation of CCTV could be investigated.
- 58.8 Roy Crowhurst reminded the Sub-Committee that security was also an issue in low rise blocks, especially in social housing. However, CCTV did not always solve the problem. He had had his TV stolen and although CCTV had captured perfect pictures, the thief had not been indentified.
- 58.9 Councillor Wilson stated that she would like to see action on this issue extended city wide. She suggested other actions worth considering would be robust signage (with regard to the move on policy), and engaging with people who required support.
- 58.10 The Chair informed the Sub-Committee that there was an issue with dogs in Warwick Mount. Some of the dogs were aggressive. He asked officers to action the suggestions made by Sub-Committee members.
- 58.11 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the information set out in the report be noted.
- (2) That Housing Officers be requested to undertake the actions identified in paragraph 4 of the report and to report back to the respective Area Panels as necessary.

The meeting concluded at 5.52pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of