

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

4.00pm 18 JUNE 2014

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Randall (Chair), Councillor Phillips (Deputy Chair), Peltzer Dunn (Opposition Spokesperson), Wilson (Group Spokesperson), Bowden, Barnett, Daniel, Farrow and Mears.

PART ONE

1 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1(a) Declarations of Substitute Members

1.1 Councillor Bowden declared that he was substituting for Councillor Kennedy.

1(b) Declarations of Interests

1.2 There were none.

1(c) Exclusion of the Press and Public

1.3 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.

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

2 MINUTES

2.1 Councillor Peltzer Dunn stated that the minutes did not mention that he had thanked Councillor Randall for his services as Chair over the last year.

2.2 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the minutes of the Housing Committee held on 30 April 2014 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

(2) That the minutes of the Housing Management Consultative Committee held on 1 April 2014 be noted.

3 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1 The Chair reported that on Saturday 14 June he went to the special day on the level where he met tenants and officers. It was a successful day and tenants had made many useful suggestions.
- 3.2 The Chair reported that he had spoken at a conference on procurement at Birmingham last week.
- 3.3 A housing strategy Conference had taken place on 17 June 2004. The main session had four speakers, one of whom was a private sector speaker who provided a great deal of useful information. The Chair attended two workshops on older people and community land trusts. There were 130 people at the day. The Chair congratulated officers for organising the day.
- 3.4 Councillor Farrow congratulated the Chair for agreeing to hold this important event. It had been a useful day for networking with people with an interest in housing.
- 3.5 The Chair stated that two weeks ago he opened a Waste House. This was an excellent example of partnership working. Mears Ltd had been the main contractor and City College had been the Sub-Contractor. They provided about 230 training apprentices who took on most of the work. The Council had provided help with planning permission and storage.
- 3.6 The Chair stated he had attended a meeting of the Strategic Housing Partnership last week, where the housing strategy had been discussed. Meanwhile, he had he had recently talked to the Brighton Energy Co-op. He had also attended another high rise security meeting at Warwick Mount and attended the City Assembly.
- 3.7 Councillor Farrow referred to the Housing Strategy day and highlighted the concerns of private sector landlords. They represented a third of all housing supply in the city. He considered that it would be useful to have a strategic partnership with landlords and asked officers to look at this issue.
- 3.8 The Chair replied that there had been a Private Sector Housing Forum in the past, but it had been difficult to reach agreement. The council did have a constant dialogue with private landlords. The Chair asked the Executive Director, Environment, Development and Housing to prepare a briefing paper on this issue.
- 3.9 Councillor Mears suggested that it would be more helpful to have a report on this subject.
- 3.10 **RESOLVED** – That a report be prepared concerning the request for a strategic partnership with private landlords.

4 CALL OVER

4.1 It was agreed that all items be reserved for discussion.

5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

(a) Petitions

(i) Request to co-opt resident representatives onto the Housing Committee

5.1 John Melson presented the following Petition which was signed by 68 people.

“We, the undersigned, petition the Members of the Housing Committee to co-opt Residents’ Representatives from the four Area Housing Management Panels and four Special Interest Groups (Sheltered Housing Action Group, Leaseholder Action Group, High Rise Action Group and Tenant Disability Network) to the Housing Committee in an advisory and monitoring capacity in developing the Council’s Housing Management Policies and Strategies. “

5.2 The Chair responded as follows:

“Essentially, it seems that the proposal would replicate on Housing Committee a similar set up that we had on Housing Management Consultative Sub Committee (HMCSC) that has just been disbanded.

The decision was taken at Policy & Resources Committee and full Council to disband HMCSC in the knowledge that the involvement of residents through Area Panels is being strengthened – and this needs to have time to settle.

Reports for consideration by Housing Committee will first be taken to Area Panels, and tenant feedback will be specifically reported within the report. This will enable councillors on Housing Committee to make decisions, as with other council committees, but informed by tenant representatives’ views. Area Panel representatives will also receive summaries of the decisions made at Housing Committee.

In addition, it is not within the gift of individual committees to decide upon constitutional matters. Such decisions need to be approved by Full Council. Also, within the Council’s constitution the membership of Housing Committee is fixed at 10 members of the authority.

If the petitioners wish, they can refer this petition to the correct committee.”

5.3 The Chair stressed that there were many other ways of working with tenants. This included working with the data base which contained 2000 names of people who could be contacted by telephone, email and letter. This was used in many ways, for example, for recruiting mystery shoppers, for focus groups on service charges, the Annual Report, the Tenancy Strategy, to promote the City Assembly and to recruit people for other committees. Officers were continuing to work on the data base and on improving the tenants’ webpage.

- 5.4 The Senior Lawyer confirmed that any change to the Housing Committee membership would have to be made by full Council via Policy and Resources Committee.
- 5.5 The Chair informed Mr Melson that he would find out the appropriate route for the petition. The matter might need to be considered by the Constitution Review.
- 5.6 **RESOLVED-** (1) That the petition be noted.

(ii) Manor Place Development

- 5.7 Amanda Sherratt presented the following Petition which was signed by 139 people.

“We the undersigned, whilst not opposed to the development of the above site, and in appreciation of the changes already made to the original plans, are opposed to aspects of the redesign and seek further improvements in the following areas:

Positioning of Balconies (Southern block)

It remains a significant concern that their current positioning will adversely affect Rugby Place/Bristol Street residents’ privacy and provide the potential for unsociable noise levels to occur. We feel the balconies (and main living areas of the flats) should face north to instil the sense of community with Robert Lodge that we were told was a key part of this development. This would also create a natural symmetry with the northern block.

Architecture:

The design at present does not reflect any aspect of the majority Victorian/Edwardian housing of the surrounding area, and in particular that of Rugby Place, the street it faces and dominates (we reference to your own policy QD2 in this regard).

Scale:

Whilst at 3 stories the block is now a similar height to neighbouring homes, the design of the large rectangular block itself will continue to overshadow and dominate a narrow terraced street. We request that the height be reduced to 2 storeys, and/or that white/cream rendering is used to soften the overall appearance and improve the design aesthetics.

Further, we seek clarification on the design/scale of the proposed footpaths, railings and planting, and in particular to the height of the railings (for security) and of the trees (for screening/privacy).”

(iii) Concerns from Robert Lodge Residents to the proposed plans to build two new blocks of flats

- 5.8 Amanda Sherratt on behalf of Robert Clarke, presented the following Petition which was signed by 83 people.

“We are appealing to all the committee members to please consider the following concerns from Robert Lodge residents with regards to the proposed plans from the Regeneration Team to build two new blocks of flats, one at the former Manor Place Rent Office situated at the southern end of Robert Lodge, with the second to be built within and on our treasured communal gardens at the northern end of Robert Lodge.

The Regeneration Team state they have amended the drawings to take the residents’ concerns into account, however I have to say I fail to see this, as the amended drawings are not to scale and do not paint an accurate illustration or a true picture of how this proposal will affect the lives of current Robert Lodge residents.

The new buildings will be much closer to the existing residents lounge windows than is shown on these amended drawings and without doubt problems for existing residents with regard to the loss of daylight, sunlight, privacy and overshadowing.

I find it hard to understand why the Regeneration Team have not bothered to visit, or look at the proposed outlook from inside any of the existing residents’ flats, if nothing else to see or take stock of the implications and impact on the lives of existing residents.

I ask you to please take off your political hats, ask yourself one question how you would feel, if a building company stated they wanted to build a three storey block of flats a few metres outside your or your parents, lounge and bedroom window?”

- 5.9 The Chair thanked Ms Sherratt for her petition and reading out Mr Clarke’s petition. There would be a full discussion on this matter under Item 8 - New Homes for Neighbourhoods – Final Scheme Approval, when the content of the petitions would be taken into account.
- 5.10 **RESOLVED-** (1) That the petitions relating to the Manor Place development be noted.

(b) Written Questions

- 5.11 Barry Hughes asked the following question:

“The City Council’s website tells us that; “Resident involvement is at the heart of everything we do in Housing.” However, the recent abolition of HMCSC has meant that certain groups have lost a direct conduit to influencing decisions made by the Housing Committee. I would request therefore that nominated representatives of the four City-wide ‘special-interest’ groups, the Leaseholders’ Action Group, High Rise Action Group, Sheltered Housing Group and the Tenant Disability Network be given voting rights at Area Panel meetings, with immediate effect.”

- 5.12 The Chair replied that individuals from the four groups already attended the Area Panels, however he accepted this was not representative. The Chair considered it was a reasonable request to seek the views of the Area Panels. This action would be taken.
- 5.13 Mr Hughes asked the following supplementary question:

“Currently councillors chair Housing Area Panel Meetings, however the councillors chosen for these roles are not always members of the Housing Committee. I believe that this practice is in error and that it would be more appropriate that a member of the City Council’s Housing Committee chair all Area Panel meetings. In this way councillors sitting on the Housing Committee would become better informed of the needs of Tenants and Leaseholders and be able to bring that knowledge to their work on the Housing Committee.”

- 5.14 The Chair replied that he agreed with this view. The Area Panels would be asked to consider the request. The Chair confirmed that the Area Panels would be able to make a decision on these issues and that there was no need for these matters to be referred back to the Housing Committee for endorsement.
- 5.15 Councillor Peltzer Dunn requested that members of the Housing Committee should receive the minutes of all the Area Panels.
- 5.16 **RESOLVED-** That the written questions be noted and forwarded for consideration to the Area Panels.

(c) Deputations

- 5.17 The Chair noted that there were no deputations from members of the public.

6 ISSUES RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

- 6.1 There were no Petitions, Written Questions, Letters or Notices of Motion from Councillors.

7 HOUSING ADAPTATIONS SERVICE UPDATE REPORT

- 7.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Environment, Development and Housing which gave an update on council and private sector housing adaptations delivered in 2013/14 and commitments in 2014/15 and beyond. The report highlighted capital funding pressures this year and going forward in light of the end of the Private Sector Housing capital programme, and the options for managing the demand for major housing adaptations where this exceeded the capital available. The report was presented by the Head of Housing Strategy & Development – Private Sector Housing.
- 7.2 Councillor Wilson referred to paragraph 3.22 of the report and asked about the mechanism for recycling equipment. The Operations Manager, Housing Adaptations OT Team explained that the council was keen to avoid waste. Adapted properties were re-let to people with a matching need.
- 7.3 Councillor Farrow referred to recommendation 2.3 in the report. He felt that people with disabilities were the most discriminated against in the city and stressed that the council as landlord must not discriminate. Councillor Farrow asked for a firm date to be set for the submission of the options report.

- 7.4 The Chair emphasised that the future of both the private sector and council housing adaptations had to be considered. He had asked officers to try and identify more houses with disabled facilities. The options report would be brought to the committee as soon as the work was completed.
- 7.5 Councillor Mears remarked that the council should find money for adaptations as this work would lead to massive savings elsewhere in the council. Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 3.1 relating to the Integrated Occupational Therapy and Technical Team within housing. She asked for details about how much savings had been made on adaptations by Adult Social Care and how much they had contributed to adaptations work.
- 7.6 The Operations Manager, Housing Adaptations OT Team explained that the average DFG grant last year was £9,000. When the Better Outcomes Report was written in 2007 the average DFG was around £6,000. Officers had not been able to gather local evidence although there were interesting individual case studies where it was known that the cost of adaptations saved a considerable amount compared to someone entering into residential care. With regard to Adult Social Care, in addition to the DFG they did make provision of £100,000 each year in social care funding, which was discretionary.
- 7.7 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the out-turn in 2013/14 and commitments in 2014/15 and beyond be noted.
- (2) That the work already being done in Housing to more proactively manage the demand for adaptations and make the best use of the capital funding in both council and private sector, be noted.
- (3) That it is agreed that an options paper come back to a future Housing Committee meeting to outline potential options to mitigate pressures identified.

8 NEW HOMES FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS

- 8.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Environment Development and Housing which focused on development proposals for four sites the Estates Regeneration Team now wished to progress through planning and construction stages. Members were asked to agree rent level and associated level of HRA subsidy

for each scheme. The sites were at Flint Close, Portslade, Foredown Road Portslade, Hardwick Road, Hangleton and Manor Place, Whitehawk. The report was presented by the Housing Programme Manager.

- 8.2 The Housing Programme Manager stated that officers were recommending that the rent model was set at 80% market rent capped at LHA rate. There had been public consultation in relation to all four schemes and officers were trying to address concerns raised.
- 8.3 There had been a great deal of public concern raised about the development at Manor Place at the consultation event. Officers had listened to the concerns and tried to address them. These changes to the design included redesign of the northern block, reducing the height of the southern block by one storey, setting balconies inwards, changing the brick colour and moving the entrance to the southern block. The Robert Lodge garden would be smaller as a result of the proposals but improvements to the gardens would be made. Full details were set out in the table in paragraph 5.5 of the report.
- 8.4 The reason balconies were being provided was that it was necessary to provide private amenity space to the flats to comply with planning policy. Balconies had been provided on the southern side of the building as it was always preferable to have balconies facing south and it would make them useful for growing plants and herbs.
- 8.5 Councillor Mears stated that her main concern were the balconies. She asked why balconies were being provided to new residents when existing residents did not have them. Councillor Mears was concerned that community space was being taken away from the Robert Lodge garden. She felt that existing tenants were not being treated in the same way as new tenants. Councillor Mears also had questions relating to the Whitehawk Library site.
- 8.6 The Chair replied that a planning requirement had been introduced to provide amenity space (in this case balconies) since Robert Lodge was built.
- 8.7 The Head of City Regeneration explained that a report on the Whitehawk Library site would be brought to the committee in due course. The site would be used to provide 87 new homes.
- 8.8 Councillor Wilson raised questions relating to the residents' request to turn around the southern block, planning permission and parking. The Housing Programme Manager replied that turning the flats around would have a significant detrimental effect on the quality of the end flats. The planning application was likely to be submitted in early July. Planning would expect a plan to be submitted with regard to controlling the construction, and showing the traffic impact on local parking.
- 8.9 Councillor Peltzer Dunn referred to the claim in the petition from Robert Lodge residents that the new buildings would be much closer to the existing residents lounge windows than is shown on these amended drawings. He asked if this was a valid statement. The Housing Programme Manager replied that planning officers had advised that the plans should be amended to set back and reduce the footprint of that block. He stressed that Housing Committee was not a decision making meeting for the final

design. The Head of City Regeneration explained that the petition had been received late and officers had not had an opportunity prepare a full response.

- 8.10 The Executive Director Environment, Development and Housing stressed that a planning decision was not being made at today's meeting. Any issues with the design would need to be resolved through the planning process.
- 8.11 Councillor Phillips informed members that she knew this area well and was pleased that the plans had been amended based on feedback. She noted that there was already a modern block in Rugby Place which set a precedent. She hoped that when the designs were submitted to planning there would be a city car club place available. The Housing Programme Manager said he would investigate if this was possible.
- 8.12 The Chair expressed concern about the rent level being set at 80% which he felt was too high. He had talked to officers about this and had been told that 70% of tenants would be on housing benefit. Officers also felt that if the intermediate rate was agreed it would result in a loss of income to the housing revenue account and fewer homes being built. However, there were no other affordable homes being built and the Chair preferred a 60% rent level.
- 8.13 Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 3.6 in the report which explained that higher rents would be mitigated by lower fuel bills.
- 8.14 Councillor Farrow believed that rents should be genuinely affordable and 80% was not genuinely affordable. However, he questioned whether more homes could be built if the 80% rent level was not agreed.
- 8.15 Councillor Daniels stated that agreeing a 60% rate would cause resentment among other tenants as tenants moving into the flats would have lower rent and lower energy costs. It was important to be equitable.
- 8.16 The Principal Accountant informed members that an 80% rent level would require a subsidy of £820,814. A 60% rent level would require a subsidy of £1,673,000. This would be affordable for the housing revenue account but it would reduce resources for the future.
- 8.17 Councillor Mears asked if the Chair was asking for 60% across the city or for this scheme only. The Chair confirmed that he was asking for 60% for this scheme.
- 8.18 Councillor Peltzer Dunn stated that although he had sympathy with the Chair's proposal he was concerned that it would adversely affect the HRA by £850,000. It would also be setting a precedent.
- 8.19 Councillor Phillips stated that although she would like to agree the 60%, she noted that 70% of the tenants would be on housing benefit and all the tenants would have reduced energy costs. The extra subsidy required was significant. As a result she would support the rent level at 80% but would like some clarification on what sort of education and support there might be for energy saving measures.

- 8.20 The Chair agreed that this was a critical point and he had spoken to officers about this issue. There was some evidence in the past that people with energy efficient homes thought they did not have to be economic with their heating.
- 8.21 Councillor Wilson stated that the only fair way of dealing with the issue of rent levels would be to consider a paper which would investigate the possibility of having the same rate across the city. Considering the rate on individual schemes would create disparity. In the meanwhile, she supported the 80% rate and stressed that there needed to be fairness across the city in these matters.
- 8.22 The Chair stated that although he felt uncomfortable with the 80% rate he accepted the argument that more homes were needed in the city.
- 8.23 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the design of the new homes be noted.
- (2) That the rent model set at 80% market rent capped at LHA rate be approved.
- (3) That the estimated levels of subsidy required from the HRA for the chosen rent model(s) be approved and that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Environment, Development and Housing and the Executive Director of Finance and Resources to agree reasonable amendments to that subsidy if changes arise.

9 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2014 - 2019

- 9.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment Development and Housing which outlined the development of Brighton and Hove City Council's Homelessness Strategy 2014-19 which was a sub strategy of the Citywide Housing Strategy. The strategy set out the council's strategic approach to responding to and preventing homelessness in its area.
- 9.2 The Service Improvement Manager Housing Options gave a presentation in which he set out the background, vision, guiding principles and strategic objectives of the strategy. The presentation also covered priority groups and issues and details of how the strategy would be delivered, monitored and reviewed.
- 9.3 Councillor Wilson raised the issue of the unintended result of welfare reform in relation to the shared room rate and the lifting of the upper level to 35. As a result people under 35, even if they were working, would not be able to access private rented tenancies as landlords were worried about the risk of them becoming unemployed. There were also fears about the effect of universal credit on tenancies.
- 9.4 The Chair mentioned that these concerns had been discussed at the Housing Strategy Day. He emphasised that the partnership element of the strategy was very successful. Public Health was also carrying out work at the moment on a strategy for better health care for homeless people. The Chair suggested it would be useful to ask Alistair Hill, Public Health Consultant to speak to the Committee about this work at a future meeting.
- 9.5 Councillor Mears referred to page 134 of the agenda which made reference to the Homeless Integrated Programme Board. Councillor Mears asked to see the terms of reference of the Board and asked for reassurance that it covered all the whole of the

homeless strategy and not just single homeless. Councillor Mears referred to the diagram on page 131 of the agenda and expressed concern that it looked as if there would be no decisions made at Housing Committee about homelessness and that this matter would be considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

- 9.6 Councillor Mears asked what would happen to the Supporting People budget. There were a large number of people in the voluntary sector doing work around homelessness. She asked how this money would be spent and for reassurance that there would be no cuts to the voluntary sector around the services they delivered.
- 9.7 The Executive Director Environment, Development and Housing explained that there were plans to integrate the supporting people budget with health and social care. Meanwhile, the Housing Committee would continue to make its own decisions and would remain sovereign in its own right. However the Health and Wellbeing Board could refer matters to the Committee. With regard to the budget, the council would soon be entering into budget consultation and it would be up members to decide how the budget should be allocated.
- 9.8 The Service Improvement Manager Housing Options informed members that the Homeless Integrated Programme Board was chaired by the Clinical Commissioning Group. The Homeless Operation Board was attended by officers. The Better Care Programme Board was chaired by the Executive Director Adult Services and reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board. The governance in this area was still being developed, but information would be brought to the committee in due course.
- 9.9 With regard to the question about single people, members were informed that the issues considered by the Homeless Integrated Programme Board were matters such as the Homeless Pathways Hospital Pilot and around drug and alcohol misuse. It was suggested that when Alistair Hill, Public Health Consultant attended the Committee he should be asked to bring the terms of reference of the programme board and address the issues raised at this meeting.
- 9.10 The Head of Housing Support (Supporting People) explained that she was a member of the Homeless Integrated Programme Board as a housing representative. It was chaired by Alistair Hill and had an agreed terms of reference. The Board's remit was to look at integrating health and social care specifically for homeless clients, people in temporary accommodation and rough sleepers. In terms of commissioning the Board could make recommendations but did not have a decision making role. The idea of the Board was to get people from Public Health, Housing, Adult Social Care and GPs around the table to discuss services for homeless clients. It was confirmed that the Board was discussing issues relating to single homeless people.
- 9.11 Councillor Mears expressed concern that this work was all around single homelessness. She stressed that homelessness could be caused by domestic violence and family breakup.
- 9.12 Councillor Farrow expressed concern about the budget for Supporting People. At the housing conference Andy Winter, Chief Executive of the Brighton Housing Trust had stated that a decision would be made on the budget in March. The Executive Director of Environment, Development and Housing replied that he imagined that Mr Winter was

referring to the budget process in February 2015. Budget papers would be available for councillors in the summer/autumn period. The Chair explained that Mr Winter was probably referring to the fact that the supporting People programme was due to finish in March.

- 9.13 Councillor Phillips expressed concern at the way homelessness had increased over the last four years. She highlighted the problems of violence towards women and girls. She was aware that people stayed in abusive relationships due to fears about housing and other issues. Councillor Phillips felt that there was a vacuum in some of the agencies listed in the report. She suggested that the Survivors' Network and the Women's Centre should be contacted. The Chair confirmed that the Women's Centre had been consulted about the strategy.
- 9.14 The Service Improvement Manager Housing Options mentioned that officers had worked with Inspire. He asked members to adopt the strategy and stressed that officers would continue to talk with all the relevant groups. In the meanwhile, there was a very good housing and domestic violence working group that was looking at these issues.
- 9.15 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the Homelessness Strategy 2014-2019 be adopted.

10 IMPROVING HOUSING SUPPLY - HCA AFFORDABLE HOUSES PROGRAMME 15-18 UPDATE

- 10.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment Development and Housing which updated members on offers received in the local authority area for the 2015-18 Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) Affordable Homes Programme, including an outline of firm sites submitted by providers for the city's area as well as details of indicative supply. Members were also informed of additional funding options available to ensure best use of existing housing resources and to improve housing supply. The report was presented by the Head of Housing Strategy & Development – Private Sector Housing.
- 10.2 Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 3.6 in relation to the 2011-2015 Affordable Housing Investment Programme. She noted that the 2011-2012 rent total was 79% of the total affordable units and the 2014-2015 total rent was 38% of the total affordable units. She stressed that not everybody could afford shared ownership, and many schemes were now shared ownership only. She was concerned that the city was moving away from affordable rents, and felt that the planning authority should require developments to have 40% affordable homes with rented properties available.
- 10.3 The Chair stressed that the council were restricted by government policy with this regard.
- 10.4 Councillor Farrow mentioned that a speaker at the Housing Conference had referred to a fund available to convert commercial properties to homes. He asked for this to be investigated. The Chair replied that all opportunities would be investigated.
- 10.5 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the update on our Registered Provider partners' response to the Homes & Communities Agency 15-18 Affordable Homes Programme Prospectus in Brighton & Hove, be noted.

11 LIFT REPAIRS

- 11.1 Rosie Wakley, Mechanical & Electrical Manager, gave a presentation which set out how the council managed the van-stock service. Members were informed that most common parts were held on the van. Other commonly available parts could be ordered for next day service. Selected obsolete parts were stored locally. Some obsolete parts had to be specially made, sometimes abroad, or sent away for repair. At times specialist companies were called to deal with complicated lift repairs, resulting in a five day turnaround. Three experienced engineers were available at all times.
- 11.2 Liftec sent an email every afternoon which provided information on which lifts were out of service at that time. This information was communicated to councillors. There were not the resources available to have real time reporting but officers were looking to have electronic signage in the lobby of blocks providing information to residents. There was a partnership agreement with Liftec and regular meetings were held between Liftec and council officers to discuss performance.
- 11.3 The Chair thanked Ms Wakley for the presentation and commended staff who helped residents when lifts were out of action.
- 11.4 Councillor Bowden considered that Liftec was much better than previous contractors. Councillor Bowden pointed out that repairs were required not just due to parts wearing out. Repairs were sometimes needed as a result of vandalism or due to the actions of contractors who wedged the lift doors open. Councillor Bowden commended staff and ward councillors who supported residents when lifts were out of action. He also noted the financial burden of the cost of lift repairs on leaseholders.
- 11.5 Councillor Farrow thanked Ms Wakley for an excellent presentation. He referred to the issue of communication, and assumed that ward councillors were receiving the daily information provided by Liftec. Councillor Farrow asked for Housing Committee members to also be sent this information
- 11.6 Ms Wakley stated that she believed that the information was currently provided to ward councillors and would check to ensure this was the case. She would ensure that the information was also provided to Housing Committee members.
- 11.7 Councillor Daniels made a suggestion with regard to the issue of real time information. She stressed that the city had a large IT community who could be tasked with the challenge of finding a solution to this issue.
- 11.8 **RESOLVED** – That the presentation be noted.

12 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

- 12.1 No items were referred to the next Council meeting.

The meeting concluded at 6.17pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of