

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: CENTRAL AREA

2.00pm 21 FEBRUARY 2018

BARNARDC - BRISTOL ESTATE

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Gibson (Chair), Councillor Adrian Morris.

Representatives: Elaine Stewart (Somerset Point), Jason Williams (Hereford Court), Tony Price (DPCA), Tom Worsfold (LAG), David Spafford (Ardingly Court), Roger Small (Leach Court), Carl Boardman (Warwick Mount), Martin Cunningham (Hampshire Court), Tony Mccoy (Sloane Court)

Officers: Sharon Davies (Project Manager), Annie Sparks (Regulatory Services), Janet Dowdell (Tenancy Services Operation Manager), Marcus Richardson (General Building Manager), Eddie Wilson (General Manager Mears), Hilary Edgar (Housing Services Operations Manager), Rebecca Mann (Resident Involvement Officer)

36 APOLOGIES

36.1 Apologies were received from Theresa Mackie.

37 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

38 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

39 EDB BUDGET

39.1 The chair opened up the discussion to members of the panel.

39.2 Residents had the following statements, concerns and enquiries:

- It was noted that overheads are due to increase over the ensuing years, clarification on the anticipated spend of £401,000 was sought
- It was noted that areas that do not have a highly organised resident association can become a cause for concern
- It was stated that the budget had been previously used for illegitimate maintenance, however it was good that community projects had taken precedence
- A resident was concerned that that the subsequent implementation period following a successful bid stated the implementation period of the program and ensuing works was too long

39.3 The Chair enquired the panel's satisfaction with EDB and further requested clarification if discretion had previously been made to apply EDB bids on highways land

39.3 Officers responded to resident's statements, concerns and enquiries with the following:

- Will follow up with resident regarding the slow implementation of bids
- It is possible to see if bids can be used on highways as well as housing land.

40 CONSULTATION DURING CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

41.1 The panel considered a report on the Consultation during contract negotiations by the Sharon Davies, Business & Performance Project Manager. It was stressed that engagement with residents will be at the heart of the programme and that the tender process will take place between November 2018 – May 2019, with contracts to be awarded in July 2019 and the mobilisation phase to be April 2020. It was also noted that smaller groups of tenants will be engaged during the valuation process.

41.2 Residents had the following statements, enquiries and concerns:

- A concern was raised in regards to whether consideration had been paid to the cost of implementation, the resident gave an example of practices of excess on behalf of Mears construction group on a call out to perform maintenance works on taps
- It was enquired if the report to Housing and New Homes Committee had been embargoed

41.3 Eddie Wilson, General Manager Mears, allayed concerns by stating that Mears were committed to getting value out of the contract

41.4 Officers had the following responses to resident's concerns:

- It was confirmed that the report was not embargoed
- Procurement advice has been taken to look at the market activity, where the market has changed, other options will be considered. It was further stated that BHCC is currently looking at other Councils for information, attaining legal advice and exploring other options and processes that could be implemented

41.5 The Chair agreed with the request for a meeting ahead of the report at a later date.

41 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME

41.1 (Item 4 – East Ward – Laundry Tokens)

41.2 Residents had the following statements, enquiries and concerns:

- It was stated that the number of overall tokens available had been reduced
- It had been noted that resident working groups had previously been consulted ahead of any major changes, however no consultation had been provided recently on this
- Concern was registered for users that rely more heavily on this may be at risk

41.3 An officer stated that they would look to set more consultation events in future as this was good practice in helping to address concerns.

41.4 (Item 1 – Central Ward – Defunct Cables and Aerials)

41.5 A resident stated that the response received was inadequate. A concern was raised over the technical aspects of the change over which led to a surplus of unused wiring and leftover cables unfit for purpose.

41.6 An officer responded to the concern stating that when contacted, providers had dealt with some issues. However it was being addressed block by block and invited residents to show examples of this so that it can be resolved.

42 FIELD OFFICER

41.1 Annie Sparks, Regulatory Services Manager, gave a brief overview of the Field Officer role. She further noted that the role looks to expand and evolve depending on the needs of the area at that given time.

41.2 Residents had the following statements, concerns and enquiries:

- A resident enquired what form of transport will be available to the Field Officer
- It was enquired how this new role would relate to the Resident Involvement Officer's
- A resident enquired in what capacity the Field Officer will operate as
- A resident requested a breakdown of funding for the role

41.3 Officers responded to resident's questions, statement and concerns with the following:

- Field Officers will have access to the City Car Club, paid public transport and the use of bikes, it was stressed that the transport provided would be dependent on the situation at the time
- It was stressed that the role would not overlap the Resident Involvement Officer's, rather that it was designed to supplement various roles in and around Brighton
- Officers stated that the Field Officer role will be involved with areas such as noise pollution, food safety inspections, health and safety inspections, licensing and planning. It was clarified that the Field Officer will not be involved heavily in the aforementioned departments, rather that they would assist in small ways such as providing photographic evidence, assisting in cases regarding domestic noise, buskers, alarms, street trading, providing pro-active assistance with air quality by providing tube changes to air quality monitors across the City and more.
- An Officer clarified that Field Officers would be invited to future Housing Management Area Panels
- It was clarified that £42,000 would be transferred from noise money found in the Housing Revenue Account, it was also confirmed that other areas were being looked in to for funding.

41.4 **AGREED** – that the report be noted.

43 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT GROUPS

43.1 Barry Hughes enquired if Service Improvement Groups were still useful. He further enquired if it may necessary for a full review of Service Improvement Groups to determine their effectiveness.

- 43.2 A resident stated that Service Improvement Groups are often held at a time in the day which can be an issue of inconvenience for many residents
- 43.3 An Officer agreed that a review of Service Improvement Groups could be carried out, it was further suggested that task and finish groups could be implemented alongside this. It was further agreed that following the review, the business plan will be looked at together with what has been achieved by Service Improvement Groups
- 43.4 The Chair noted that this was raised at the previous meeting; he suggested that a Resident Only meeting could discuss the review. He further stated that previously it had been confirmed that during the summer, Area Housing Management Panels would be held in the evening.

44 PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 44.1 Residents had the following statements, concerns and enquiries:
- Further clarification on the status of anti-social behaviour cases being at 81% was requested
 - An concern was registered in regards to BHCC's practice of closing a case without the consent of the victim
 - Clarification of the figures regarding the lift program was sought
- 44.2 Officers responded to resident's enquiries with the following:
- It was clarified that the stats in regards to anti-social behaviour come from the Housing. It was further noted that the satisfactions survey with victims produced a slight drop in satisfaction levels. The officer further stated that it was imperative to maintain contact with people in future
 - It was stated that cases are not closed without the consent of victim, however after a period of time if there is no resolution to a conflict such as a neighbour's dispute, then the case will be closed formally whilst details will maintain archived for future evidence should similar matters arise. It was stressed that no case history is ever fully removed from the system
 - It was clarified that there was a large lift replacement program in Goldsmid ward that skewed the figures, further to this it was confirmed that almost half of all lifts had been replaced. It was also noted that lifts that still need replacing have been an ongoing issue.
- 44.3 The Chair requested that the panel be made aware in future of how many cases of anti-social behaviour had been closed without agreement.

- 44.4 **AGREED** – that the report be noted.

45 THE PROCUREMENT OF LEGIONELLA ASSESSMENT AND CONTROL SERVICES FOR HOUSING STOCK

- 45.1 Martin Hedgecock, Facilities & Building Services Manager, gave a briefing to the panel on the Procurement of Legionella Assessment and Control Services for Housing Stock report. He stated that the report centred on statutory duties surrounding legionella control and the risks within blocks.

45.2 **AGREED** – that the report be noted.

46 TENANCY FRAUD AMNESTY

46.1 The panel considered the report on Tenancy Fraud Amnesty. The officer noted that the program will take effect from the beginning of April to the 31st May, with the aim to encourage tenants to return keys to properties that are being illegally sub-let or not in occupation. During this time no prosecution will be pursued.

46.2 A resident enquired if whistle-blowers would be dealt with as well

46.3 An officer stated that the fraud team will follow up on whistle blowers at all times and that this is not restricted to just the period of the tenancy fraud amnesty, rather that this is an ongoing operation all year round.

46.4 The Chair stated that he was very happy to hear that last year 21 homes were recovered. He also stated that the fraud of right to buy is also another area of concern and praised BHCC with its success in its ongoing effort of tackling that.

46.5 **AGREED** – That the report be noted.

47 INFORMATION FROM COMMUNITIES CO-ORDINATOR

47.1 A resident enquired what the purpose of the role is.

47.2 An officer stated that the new role was funded to bring communities together.

48 CITY WIDE REPORTS

48.1 **RESOLVED** – that the reports and minutes of the various Citywide groups be noted.

49 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

50 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

50.1 The date of the next meeting will be the 23rd May 2018.

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of