

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: CENTRAL AREA

7.00pm 23 MAY 2018

BARNARD CENTRE, ST. JOHNS MOUNT, MOUNT PLEASANT, BRIGHTON, BN2 0JP

MINUTES

Present: Councillors

Voting Representatives:

Non-Voting Delegates:

Officers:

Guests:

1 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

2 APOLOGIES

2.1 Apologies were received by Theresa Mackie, Geoff Woodlaws and Carl Boardman.

3 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

5 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME

5.1 (Item 1 – Recycling problems)

5.2 Residents had the following concerns, questions and statements:

- There was no process to make sure signage was correct
- It was stated that there was no overview committed by City Clean
- It was asserted that the main issue in regards to refuse collections was growing amount of cardboard left by bins
- It was suggested that City Clean could provide a leaflet drop to notify residents of handy information

5.3 Officers had the following responses to resident's questions and concerns:

- It was stated that notices had been posted on newsletters to encourage better activity
- It was noted that at City Clean's present at the North Area Panel had addressed concerns in reference to rules regarding recycling
- It was suggested that residents notify City Clean which areas should be prioritised
- Effective communication was emphasised

5.4 Councillor Morris emphasised that residents should contact Councillors in order to escalate matters as soon as possible.

5.5 **AGREED** – That the report was noted

5.6 (Item 4 – Visitor’s Car Parking)

5.7 Residents had the following statements, concerns and enquiries:

- It was noted that no progress had been made on previous discussions regarding residents buying visitor permits in large quantity
- The recent review had not helped the current situation
- It was suspected that visitor permits were being rented out

5.8 Officers responded to resident’s questions, enquiries and concerns with the following:

- A new review was in the works and in the programme for the year with a view at looking at different options
- It was stated that there was a 3 strike process in action in place as a deterrent measure
- A task and finishing group was to be convened in order to follow this up
- It was clarified that resident permits contained a unique number which could be cross referenced to check if it had been sold on

5.9 **AGREED** – That the report was noted

6 EDB REVIEW

6.1 Hilary Edgar gave a brief overview of the Estate Development Budget, she clarified the current financial status and noted that it was due to undergo review that considered processes and procedures designed to make sure as many people as possible could benefit from it.

6.2 Residents had the following concerns, enquiries and statements:

- Concerns were expressed over the inability of the EDB Panel to defend the budget given to it
- The necessity of the budget was emphasised in reference to a growing feeling that estates were becoming dilapidated
- A resident enquired if it was necessary to take money from one area to pay for another in the case of over and underspend by different areas
- A further enquiry was made regarding what constituted council maintenance necessity and what should be bid on.

6.3 Officers responded to resident’s questions, concerns and statements with the following:

- It was clarified that the upcoming review would clarify what constituted council maintenance necessity and what needed to bid on

6.4 The Chair stated the following:

- The budget was decided by the Housing Committee
- It was clarified that EDB bids should be for improvements not to bring up to a standard.

7 PROCUREMENT OF A NEW IT SYSTEM FOR HOUSING

7.1 Ododo Dafe gave a brief overview of the report regarding the acquisition of the new IT system. She noted that there would be a procurement panel and that some residents who sat on Service improvement Groups would be invited to scrutinise the customer portal.

7.2 Residents had the following statements, concerns and enquiries:

- Information contained in the report was questioned, specifically that 2 residents with a lot of experience and other members were not consulted
- A resident enquired how many sight impaired people had been consulted
- Scepticism was raised in reference to the digital platform of the new system's security, it was noted that other major systems in commerce and other institutions had been compromised in the past.
- It was suggested that hackers could be employed to locate and identify any weaknesses in the system

7.3 Officers responded to residents' concerns, statement and enquiries with the following:

- It was stated that as part of the procurement process, officers would carry out necessary tasks, Councillors and residents would then be asked for feedback on areas that would be engaged with
- Residents opinion's on the customer portal would be requested
- It was clarified that procurement was only at an early stage, it was further noted that consultation would be pursued once the 3 companies involved had showcased their work
- It was emphasised that all efforts to mitigate any security concerns

7.4 The chair stated that any systems implemented would be tested and trailed for robustness and security

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

8 PROCUREMENT OF A PARKING ENFORCEMENT SERVICE FOR HOUSING LAND

8.1 Hilary Edgar gave a brief overview of the report of the procurement of a Parking Enforcement Service for Housing Land, she provided background information of the report and highlighted various specifics such as planned enforcement for bays and a one light touch parking scheme.

8.2 Residents had the following statements, concerns and enquiries:

- Clarification was sought in reference to if it was illegal to park in ambulance bays

- A pragmatic approach was requested in regards to the approach to the referral of license numbers

8.3 Officers responded to resident's statements and enquiries with the following:

- It was clarified that parking in ambulance bays was illegal
- The contract was soon to expire as a result BHCC had to go out to market by law
- Assurances were made that a modern pragmatic approach would be followed

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

9 ANNUAL REPORT

9.1 Ododo Dafe gave a brief overview of the Annual report, she stated that this was the 8th time an annual report had been presented to tenants. It was further noted that it was a Government requirement that residents must be notified on what BHCC was doing in terms of performance. It was clarified that the format would be similar to before with minor alterations

9.2 Residents had the following statements, enquiries and concerns:

- A yearly inspection to bleed the radiators was requested
- Concerns were expressed in regards to the work made to make estates safe

9.3 Officers responded to resident's concerns and enquiries with the following:

- It was confirmed that BHCC had a system that could help keep on top of scheduling inspections for radiators on the estate

9.4 **AGREED** – that the report be noted

10 RESULTS OF THE CENTRAL AREA PANEL QUESTIONNAIRE

10.1 The Chair gave a brief overview of the results from the Central Area Panel Questionnaire and focused on specific data points found on page 53.

10.2 Residents had the following concerns, enquiries and statements:

- It was enquired if this could be brought to the next Housing and New Homes Committee in order to ratify this
- Residents had concerns with the engagement
- A resident enquired if morning meetings were possible

10.3 Officers responded to resident's questions and concerns with the following:

- BHCC held a longstanding commitment to review the terms of reference for area panels
- In reference to the Housing Committee held last June, an officer stated that a decision was made to review area panels for a further year and to provide questionnaires, it was clarified that this would inform the changes
- Officers stated they would be happy to follow this up with a more comprehensive report
- Officers confirmed they were happy to try new venues for future meetings

10.4 The Chair encouraged residents to bring along an extra member to the next Central Area Panel

10.5 **AGREED** – that the results be noted.

11 LONELINESS & ISOLATION

11.1 The Chair enquired feedback in reference to any problems faced regarding support for both Area Panels and anything else

11.2 Residents had the following enquiries, concerns and statements:

- Residents offered many programs to help combat issues surrounding loneliness and isolation
- It was suggested that various programmes and workshops could be promoted via the City Wide Conference
- It was noted that more people meet away from the club and by their flats

11.3 Officers responded to resident's enquiries and concerns with the following:

- In the most recent edition of 'Homing In' various events happening in the city to help tackle this were advertised
- It was noted that many activities were being held to keep people involved, it was further noted that many other efforts were being made to engage people not yet at the age for senior housing such as country walks, exercise classes etc
- Feedback regarding how to make better use of community rooms was sought

11.4 The Chair requested possible community rooms to be brought up at a future agenda, he further introduced a project called 'Hidden Talents.'

12 COUNCIL HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

12.1 Residents had the following statements, enquiries and concerns:

- This would be brought up at the next Tenancy Improvement Group
- It was stated that Homemove system was too rigid and that flexibility should be emphasised
- It was stated that requests for resident's input was too late in the process and that residents were not informed or informed too late of various changes in procedure

12.2 Officers responded to resident's concerns and enquiries with the following:

- It was confirmed that despite change in procedure, residents wouldn't be impeded in their decision to move
- It was clarified that the consultation was held across the city as it was not just for Council tenants but for everyone
- Residents were eligible to move if they had lived in their home for more than 12 months however the process would be slightly different
- It was further clarified that the allocation policy didn't state that residents couldn't move

13 PERFORMANCE REPORT

13.1 Ododo Dafe gave a brief overview of the Performance Report, she noted that it was identical in template to the previous report and included info that tenants had requested. She further stated that the information consisted of easily accessible information rather than a large report, also that as this was an end of year report information regarding previous years and how BHCC compares with other organisations. It was confirmed the information regarding Legionella and Asbestos was included along with a report on properties that had been empty for 6 weeks or more, this included the amount of rent that had been lost as a result of this.

14 CITY WIDE REPORTS

14.1 **RESOLVED-** That the reports and minutes of the various Citywide groups be noted

15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

15.1 A resident raised a concern regarding leaseholders not residing in Brighton being participants in Area Panels. Clarity surrounding this issue was sought.

15.2 An officer stated that there was a feeling that it shouldn't matter that the person didn't live in Brighton as they owned a building that was and therefore should be allowed to have a say in what happens.

15.2 The Chair stated that he was aware that this point had been raised, it was further stated that leaseholder workshops had been conducted and were the scope of Leaseholder involvement.

16 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on the 5th September 2018.

The meeting concluded at 21:15pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of