

Housing Management Panel: North Area

Date: **17 October 2019**

Time: **7.00pm**

Venue **The Housing Centre**

Members: **Councillors:** Fowler (Chair), Ward Councillors for the Area,
Delegates of Tenants Association in the area.

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For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact , (01273 291214, email greg.weaver@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

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Date of Publication - Date Not Specified

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: NORTH AREA

7.00pm 5 SEPTEMBER 2019

THE HOUSING CENTRE

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Theresa Fowler, Kate Knight, Lee Wares.

Representatives: Jenny Simmonds (Coldean Independent Vice Chair), Heather Hayes (Coldean Chair of Independent Group), Desmond Jones (Chairman Hollingdean R.A.), Peter Connor (Bates Area Rep), Terrence Hill (Bates Estate TRA Chair), Andrew Hunter (East Moulsecoomb Resident), Jane Hunter (Chair/secretary E.M.T.R.A North Area Panel Rep).

Officers: Martin Reid (Assistant Director of Housing), Sam Warren (Community Engagement Officer), Glyn Huelin (Head of Housing Repairs & Improvement), Simon Bannister (BHCC Community Engagement Officer), Ododo Dafe (Head of Income, Improvement, Customer Service, Housing Strategy & Housing Supply), Hannah Barker (Community Engagement Officer), Debbie Corbridge (Integrated Team for Families Manager).

16 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

17 APOLOGIES

18 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

18.1 There were no Chair's Comms.

19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

20 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME

20.1 Item 1 – Field Officers.

20.2 **AGREED** – That the response was satisfactory.

21 YOUTH SERVICE PAPERS

21.1 2 Officers gave a brief overview of the Youth Service. The following was stated:

- It was stated that HRA contributed to a percentage of the overall fund due to many services being relevant to old and young residents.
- £125,000 was being requested for a 6-month extension.
- An officer outlined the objectives and aims of the Hangleton & Knoll Project.

21.2 Members of the youth groups attended the panel and gave testimony to their experience and perspective. The following was stated:

- There were various opportunities provided for young people.
- Examples were provided regarding the various activities that were enjoyed.
- Young people were willing to meet other groups in different wards.

21.3 Residents had the following enquiries, statements and concerns:

- A resident enquired as to the lack of other 3rd sector voluntary groups.
- It was enquired if the group required a subscription.
- It was enquired if there were any works taking place in Hollingdean.
- An opportunity to link in with the residential association was offered.
- A further offer for the group to attend a resident group meeting for the possible acquisition of funding for other programs through the Healthy Neighbourhood Fund was made.
- Residents enquired of the number of people who attended the Coldean Youth Group and if there was room for more.

21.4 Councillor Wares proposed that some young people become ambassadors for Youth Groups.

21.5 Officers responded to residents' statements, concerns and enquiries with the following:

- The proposal of youth ambassadors would be looked at.
- Nothing had yet been set in Hollingdean yet though there were possible projects were being considered.
- The positive aspect of engaging with residents with regard to consultation for funding in future was considered.
- It was stated that a buddy scheme also be considered.
- A basic financial breakdown till 2021 was given.

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

22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

23 Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT UPDATE

22.1 An officer gave a brief overview of the Performance report. It was stated that there were some areas of concern in regards to empty properties and the removal of bulk rubbish. It was stated that the initial page had 9/39 areas that were underperforming however there were several other indicators that highlighted improvement. It was further stated that performance had improved generally over the last quarter.

22.2 Councillor Wares stated noted the difficulty in disseminating all the data provided and suggested panel members take this away and provide questions at the next North Area Panel.

22.3 A resident noted that it wasn't just Council tenants with untidy gardens, it was stated that tenants of HMOs and students were also a part of the problem.

22.4 An officer stated they were happy for members of the panel to bring questions to the next meeting. It was further stated that Field officers worked across Brighton and confirmed that improvement, as indicated in the report, was due to Field Officers and the Untidy Gardens Project.

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

24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The meeting concluded at

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

Items from North Residents Only meeting on 12th September June 2019

1. Door entry systems

There were several concerns about provision of door entry systems in low-rise blocks.

- Horton Road, Hollingdean
There are 8 blocks without any door entry systems. There are ongoing problems with anti-social behaviour in the blocks, including drug use, alcohol consumption, used needles being left lying around and people urinating in the communal areas.
- Hawkhurst Road, Coldean
The door entry systems are very old. They have been repaired repeatedly and there are now bits of metal sticking out which are dangerous for residents. The residents feel it is now time they were replaced.
- Highbrook Close, Bates Estate
There are problems with the trade buttons on the door entry systems. The systems are so old that it isn't possible to remedy this, and therefore new systems are needed.

The meeting agreed that all of these blocks need renewal or installation of new door entry systems, but none of them are scheduled to be done at present.

Action: 2 stars (I I)

It was agreed to put this forward to the Area Panel and request that all of these blocks be surveyed with a view to adding the installation of door entry systems to the planned maintenance programme.

Response from: Jamie Smith, M&E Team

There are currently no plans to install door entry systems at Horton Road, Hollingdean. Generally our programme is focused on the maintenance of existing systems. We have noted that the stairwells currently have a large open space and do not have a communal main entrance door which a door entry system could control.

We would be happy to meet with residents to discuss their concerns around the ongoing anti-social behaviour that residents have experienced and appreciate this must be difficult for residents. I will refer this across to our Housing officers and Community Engagement Officers to contact residents and look at what solutions we can put in place to support residents.

The Door Entry System in Hawkhurst Road, Coldean has been identified for replacement at 1-4 and 6-9 Hawkhurst and is currently part of the 2021-22 replacement programme.

It would be really helpful if residents could report any concerns with the system to the repairs desk bhcc.repairs@mearsgroup.co.uk x0800 052 6140 or 01273 294409 with further information around location so it can be passed to the correct team to resolve.

During a site visit to check the door entry system we have noted that there was a metal security plate on the main entrance door which is in place to protect the latch from potential break in or anti-social behaviour.

The door entry systems in Highbrook Close, Bates Estate, have been identified for replacement at 323-330, 331-338, 339-346, 347-354, 355-368 and 369-382. Early engagement letters sent out on 17th June 2019 to residents and formal consultation letters were sent to leaseholders on 5th July 2019. Works have already commenced at 323-330, 331-338, 339-346, 347-354 and residents received a letter on the 4th September notifying them of the installation starting on 11th September.

In addition Horton Road has now had a housing officer allocated to the case and a block letter has gone out to the residents asking for more details and providing guidance on managing risk and reporting. The local PCSO's have been notified and asked to carry out drive-by's and provide a police presence. However, the North Team does need sufficient information before there can be any enforcement action.

Please let me know if you would like further information on any of the above.

2. Fire at Hollingdean refuse and recycling depot

There were concerns about the major fire at Hollingdean recycling depot on 26th August that may have had serious impacts on the health of people living nearby in Nettleton Court, Dudeney Lodge and other surrounding streets in Hollingdean.

A cloud was seen hanging over the depot for two weeks after the fire and local people are worried about possible chemical particles in the air locally.

Hollingdean Resident Association has attempted to contact Brighton and Hove City Council and Veolia, but have not been able to get any information.

Veolia plan to carry out an internal investigation but there is further concern that the outcome of this will not be made public.

Action: 2 stars (I I)

It was agreed to put this forward to the Area Panel with the following information being requested:

- a. What is the potential impact on local residents of the fumes from the fire?
- b. What is being done to prevent this from happening again?

Response from: Response Annie Sparks & Larissa Reed

Briefing on fire at Hollingdean Lane

At 22.50 on Sunday 25 August there was a fire at the waste transfer station in Hollingdean Lane

Council staff (Ian Greene) was on site from 23.00.

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service were in control of the operation with initially 6 fire appliances were on site (this rose to 10 over the course of the incident)

Veolia manager on site and advised that was that it was non-toxic waste- the waste was general waste from households and seafront bins.

ESFRS sent out social media communications (tweet) advising people to close their windows, the council resent this message out. It was agreed that ESFRS would lead on communications for the incident.

It was advised by ESFRS that there was no requirement for any properties to be evacuated. The Fire Service did not knock on any doors, the police and council followed their lead on this. This was due to the late hour and not wanting to cause alarm or distress to residents. Under the Emergency Planning process, the councils Gold Commander, Pinaki Ghoshal was called at 1.10am on 26 August and given an update of the situation.

At 2am on 26 August, the Executive Director Environment Economy and Culture visited the site as he has responsibility for waste. – The person who is Gold Commander never visits the site of an incident whilst the incident is happening.

As is usual with emergencies of this nature, the lead authority was ESFRS and the council took a supporting role.

The incident was led and closed by ESFRS.

Following the fire, a small number of complaints were received about the effects of smoke. Advice was sought from PHE (Public Health England) and was shared

- Some of the substances present in smoke can irritate the lining of the nose, eyes, throat and lungs, and may cause symptoms such as coughing, feeling short of breath, chest pain, runny nose and eyes. In most cases these are short term.
- If symptoms persist, residents should seek medical advice call NHS 111. In the case of an emergency call 999.
- If residents were already seeing a health care practitioner about a long term health condition, such as lung or heart conditions, they should discuss their concerns with them.
- Although ESFRS were the lead agency, Public Health England was notified and all the communications from ESFRS and subsequent Council communication was consistent with PHE guidance for these situations. In effect this means the information provided to members of public on the basis of the ESFRS risk assessment by ESFRS and then reiterated by BHCC was a 'public health response'. PHE have not raised any significant public health issues for us to address locally.
- Officers have written to five local GP practices requesting any relevant activity subsequent to the event. One has confirmed they were not aware of any cases of clinical significance and we are following up to receive feedback from the other four practices. We are also aware that Royal Sussex County Hospital had not experienced any increased activity resulting from the fire in A&E or admissions.

- Officers from our Public Health Team were in contact with Public Health England, after the incident (on the Monday) and PHE confirmed that no additional public Health action was required.

Issues going forward

- We understand that this is concerning for residents and If there is evidence of ongoing clinically significant health impacts related to the fire we will contact PHE to seek further advice.
- We are happy to deliver further communications on the effects of smoke inhalation if this is required or wanted (e.g. reiterating the advice that any health impacts are usually short term, vulnerable people are at higher risk, people should seek medical advice if concerned). We will collaborate with PHE on this
- We are arranging a debrief with all key agencies including ESFRS and Public Health England. This is usual in any multi agency emergency.

3. Community Engagement Officers

There seems to be some confusion about the role of the Community Engagement Officers. Ian from Hollingdean Residents Association has been given a summary of their responsibilities from the Community Engagement Manager, but has been told by the local Community Engagement Officer that it is not their responsibility to deal with issues he raises and that they can only attend Residents Association meetings every 3 months. There was also concern that the Community Engagement Officers aren't doing any outreach to encourage residents to participate in the Resident Only meetings, Area Panel meetings or other aspects of the Resident Involvement structure. Terrence put forward the proposal that residents might find it easier to organise in micro Associations that cover just one or two streets or blocks, rather than a whole estate.

Action: III for North agenda setting meeting and all Area Panel agenda

Response from: Sam Warren, Community Engagement Manager, Communities, Equality & Third Sector- Team: 01273 296821

The Community Engagement Team is a new service that supports all residents within the city to be involved in any council service. Whilst the team have maintained their work with tenants groups, Area Panels and Service Involvement Groups, we are also working with a range of community groups, working on Neighbourhood Action Plans, supporting the development of volunteering and Neighbourhood Hubs.

As a team we are very keen to engage more residents in all areas of the councils work. In order to do this we have recently recruited a new administration worker and replaced the Estate Development role as this will enable the CEO's to get out onto our Estates and into the communities to do more face to face work with residents and community groups.

The team cover the whole city and cannot be available to come to every tenant association meeting, however we will always try to attend where possible and definitely do not have any policy that says we would only attend once every 3 months. If a resident, community or tenant group would like to work with a council service on an issue or idea, the role of the CEO's would be to support both the group and the service to communicate and resolve the problem or progress an opportunity. As the question doesn't state a specific issue I would like to offer to meet with the Hollingdean Residents Association to try to resolve any misunderstanding.

In relation to Area Panels and resident only meetings we are keen to involve as many tenants as possible, currently the structure and Terms of Reference for Area Panels state that only reps are able to participate fully in meetings and any other tenant would need to be an observer, it would be interesting to open this up to welcome more people. We are especially keen to ensure that all the tenant structures are more representative of the whole community including involving more young people, BME and LGBTQ residents in decision making. I welcome working with all groups and Area Panels to look how we open up participation. If you have ideas or thoughts on how we can engage more residents please do contact me directly on Sam.warren@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Items from Central Residents Only meeting on 17 September June 2019

1. Equality and inclusivity of Customer Services

1. Future Repairs Task and Finish Group

Members of the *Future Repairs Task & Finish Group* raised some serious concerns about the proposed division of contracts.

- A continuation of the contract system used with Mears is likely to result in the same problems.
- The qualifying and long-term agreements give a monopoly to big companies, across eleven work-streams.
- Consideration needs to be given to changes in laws which will affect this process once Britain has left the European Union.

The Task & Finish Group will continue to raise these issues, but they also need to be discussed at Area Panel and Housing Committee. It is vital the right decisions are made now, as this will affect the service residents receive for many years.

Response from David Canham, Senior Programme Manager 01273 293165

The contract with Mears is a ten year partnering contract which will end on 31 March 2020. The council agreed at September 2018 Housing & New Homes Committee, and at October 2018 Policy, Resources & Growth Committee to deliver these services in a different way from April 2020.

It is important to identify that repairs and replacement works will be separated and carried out through different arrangements. Repairs will be carried out by the council's in-house repairs team and replacement works will be through the contracts detailed below.

In addition the council will be responsible for specifying, tendering and quality control on all works with Customer Service and Quality Assurance functions also being delivered directly by the council.

Planned maintenance and improvement works will be delivered by a number of contractors who will competitively bid for the works. The works will be split into seven lots and contracts will be awarded for a five year period (with an option to extend by 2 years depending on performance). The lots are as follows:

- *Lot 1: Kitchens and bathrooms replacement*

Item 27 (b)

- Lot 2: Internal and external repairs and maintenance
- Lot 3: Windows
- Lot 4: Roof replacements
- Lot 5: Doors – flats and street property doors (including fire doors)
- Lot 6: Doors – main entrance doors
- Lot 7: Communal and domestic rewiring

For major capital works, contractors will bid to join a Framework. The Framework will be split into two lots – one for works under £300k, and the other for works over £300k. Splitting the lots this way will provide more opportunities for small, medium, and local businesses. Each lot will have up to six contractors on it, who will then competitively bid for major capital works projects as they occur.

The legal framework for public procurement will for the most part remain the same once the UK has left the EU. One key difference will be the need to send notices to a new UK e-notification service instead of the EU Publications Office.

Contracting authorities such as the council, have a legal obligation to publish public procurement notices. In a no deal scenario, contracting authorities may no longer have access to the EU Publications Office and the online supplement to the Official Journal of the EU (OJEU) dedicated to European public procurement. Therefore, the government has amended current legislation to instead require UK contracting authorities to publish public procurement notices to a new UK e-notification service. The new service is called Find a Tender (FTS).

Residents Question Time

Items from East Resident Only Minutes 19/09/19

1. Decent Homes Standard

The Residents' Meeting on 20th June raised concerns that several properties have fallen below the Decent Homes Standard, particularly in relation to their kitchens and bathrooms. It was felt that the response provided to Area Panel was inadequate and that further information is required from Housing Services on how they will ensure that all of their properties are of a decent standard.

Action: 3 stars (III)

It was agreed to raise this at the Agenda Setting meeting requesting that Housing Services explain the response in more detail and state what action will be taken, detailing timescales, plans and priorities after the end of the current contract. Provide information on whether the Brighton and Hove Decent Homes Standard is being reviewed with a view to ensuring it provides a guarantee that tenants' homes are of an acceptable standard, particularly those who have already had either kitchen or bathroom works done as part of the project. Further detail has to be provided on the percentage of homes which met the standard during the original assessment, compared with how many do so now.

Response from Marcus Richardson, Interim General Building Manager

T: 01273 293070

The current Mears contract ends on 31st March 2020, but we will be looking to finish planned programmes in February/March, to allow for snagging and invoicing of these works before the contract ceases.

We have stock condition surveys happening now which we expect to finish early in the new year, these surveys only cover 20% of the housing stock, but we also gather information on stock condition from empty properties. We will continue to build detailed information around our stock by carrying out further surveys each year. These combined with some of the existing information held in the councils asset management database will provide details which will influence planned programmes of work post April 2020. In addition to these programmes, the repairs service when responding to jobs also refer properties which they feel require whole replacement of housing attributes like kitchens, windows, doors etc., if they are beyond economical repair.

Once the stock condition surveys are complete, we use the information to generate draft planned programmes and we will engage with residents as required ahead of works.

Going forward the new planned programmes will continue as they have been throughout the duration of the current Mears contract, but using new contractors once we have completed procurement of these contracts. Once the procurement has been completed and contractors have been appointed, this will be communicated with residents.

We will continue to review the standards that we work to alongside any review of the decent homes standard undertaken by government.

If residents are concerned about the condition of any specific properties please contact us through the repairs helpdesk and we will arrange for a surveyor to come and visit.

Mears can be contacted on 0800 052 6140 or 01273 294409

Or by Email: bhcc.repairs@mearsgroup.co.uk

2. Anti-Social Behaviour at Robert Lodge

There are increasing problems of anti-social behavior at Robert Lodge.

There are now two flats currently being used by drug dealers. One of them has an elderly tenant whose flat has effectively been taken over by 'cuckoos' who are using the tenant to do deliveries, constantly have people coming to the flat and having regular all-night parties that are disturbing other residents in the block. The other flat is being used by drug dealers, but there isn't the same problem of parties. The garden area in the middle of the blocks and grass area at the bottom of Manor Way are used by dealers at night, and it isn't unusual to find several people queuing up to buy from them.

Cars and taxis are constantly coming and going during the night causing further disturbance.

Residents' lives are being made a misery but they are also very scared by this.

Numerous reports have been made to Housing and the Police and one of the flats has been raided on several occasions, but there doesn't seem to have been any action by Housing against the tenants of the flats.

Action: 2 stars (II)

It was agreed to raise this at the Agenda Setting meeting requesting that Housing outline what action is being taken to enforce the tenancy conditions of the tenants in the two flats being used by drug dealers

Response from Rachelle Metcalfe, Housing Manager East Housing Team

T: 01273 293196

The East Housing Team, based at Whitehawk Community Hub, deal with the management of council tenancies in the East of the city, which includes Robert Lodge. The East Housing Team deals with a wide range of tenancy management issues, including anti-social behaviour, cuckooing and drug-related nuisance. The East Housing Team has not received any reports of cuckooing, drug-dealing, parties or associated drug-related anti-social behaviour at Robert Lodge from any residents or from the police. We cannot take action unless we receive reports from witnesses with the details of the nuisance.

The process for reporting anti-social behaviour is outlined on the Brighton & Hove City Council website and in the tenant handbook, it is also often publicised in the Homing In

magazine and is often discussed at residents meetings and in contact with Housing staff. There is one telephone number for residents wanting to contact Housing to report anti-social behaviour, or any other issue, it is the Housing Customer Services Team on 01273 293030 or residents can email them on housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk. Alternatively, residents can make an online report via the Brighton & Hove City Council website www.brighton-hove.gov.uk. Noise nuisance issues should also be reported to the Environmental Protection Team on 01273 294266 or online via the Brighton & Hove City Council website.

Any criminal activity should be reported to Sussex Police on 101 for non-emergencies and 999 in an emergency. Reports can also be made online via the Sussex Police website www.sussex.police.uk or by emailing them on 101@sussex.pnn.police.uk. In addition, reports can be made anonymously by telephoning Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

In order to take action against someone's tenancy we need written evidence from witnesses with details of times, dates and details of the incidents they have witnessed. We will then work with witnesses and other agencies to tackle the problem. This will include making appropriate referrals to address support needs. If we have sufficient evidence, we have a range of options for taking tenancy enforcement action, including serving a Notice of Seeking Possession, which is the first step in eviction proceedings; making an application to the County Court for an injunction or making an application to the Magistrates Court for a Closure Order. The council can only evict a tenant after obtaining a court order and a court order will only be granted if the court has been presented with strong, corroborated evidence and it must be satisfied that the action is reasonable and proportionate.

Cuckooing is a high-priority for both the police and Housing and we work together to tackle the perpetrators and support the victims. Sussex Police and the Housing Teams across the city have worked together to obtain Closure Orders which close down properties for 3 months where serious drug-related anti-social behaviour is occurring. However, we rely on residents to report details of incidents that they have witnessed so that we have the evidence in order to take the appropriate action.

3. Journalists at Area Panel Meetings

Area Panel meetings are for tenants, leaseholders, council officers and Councillors, but are not open to the general public. The minutes name all those present, but do not specify the names of individual residents in the reporting of what is said at the meeting.

However, recently the attendance of journalists has become a regular occurrence, with reports then appearing in the local media and on Facebook - there was recently a Facebook post that named a tenant and what they said at the Area Panel meeting.

This has raised concerns that resident's reps could be vulnerable to repercussions if their comments at the meetings are published alongside their names.

The meeting felt that there need to be some guidelines on the expected conduct of those invited to meetings, particularly in relation to what information can then be reported to the wider public.

Action: 3 stars (III)

It was agreed to raise this at the Agenda Setting meeting requesting that clear guidelines be given on reporting of discussions at Area Panel meetings

Response from Clare Saul, Head of Communications

As these meetings are not open to the general public, it would be appropriate I think for Chairs – of agreed with the Panel - to be clear at the beginning of every meeting that journalists are not invited to attend them and will not be admitted. That is the best way of preventing information be published that is personal or sensitive.

What might be difficult is if some people do want media to attend to hear discussion on an issue or if they then talk to the media outside of the meeting and tell a reporter who said what, although the reporter would have to verify comments that they didn't directly hear...

What's also difficult is if people at the Area Panels take to social media following a meeting and publish details of discussions. We know that local reporters trawl the Hanover Facebook page and others across the city, looking for stories to use from these groups.

I would be very happy to come and talk with Chairs and Vice Chairs and indeed panels about how to maintain good relationships with media whilst protecting people's privacy during the meetings.

4. Poor Construction of new Robert Lodge blocks

The new Robert Lodge South and Robert Lodge North blocks were built in 2015/16. Several problems are now arising due to the poor quality of work and cost-cutting in the latter part of the build when the North block was being built. The Residents Association is concerned about the following problems:

Ground sinking

The pavements and grass areas are sinking around the south block. The pathways are now so uneven that it is not safe for residents on mobility scooters to use them and there is concern that somebody could trip and injure themselves.

It is thought this may have been caused by a landfill system used after the old Housing Office was demolished. Excavated land was filled with plastic 'crates' laid over with plastic membrane. The area over this was filled with soil, which may now be filtering down into the cavities in the plastic 'crates', causing the ground to sink.

Lack of insulation in North block

The sound and thermal insulation in the North block is of poorer quality than that in the South block, so residents are disturbed by noise from neighbouring flats and have higher heating bills.

Poor staking and maintenance of trees

The stakes used to secure the trees have rotted at the base, leading to the trees getting damaged. One tree has completely fallen down. Another has snapped in high winds, and another is becoming very high and spindly, so is vulnerable to wind damage.

The Residents Association have contacted the arboriculturalists and the Parks Department on several occasions since June to ask them to carry out essential tree works, but nothing has been done.

Action: 3 stars (III)

It was agreed to raise this at the Agenda Setting meeting to request that:

- A representative from the Property & Investment Team and Community Engagement Team to arrange a site visit with Chair and Vice Chair of the Robert Lodge Residents Association, Gerry Lewis and Chris El-Shabba, to discuss the issues.
- Remedial work be done to the trees and stakes urgently, as well as information on original plans for tree planting and a commitment to replace those which are unable to recover from damage.
- The Council should re-visit the recent works at Robert Lodge and determine whether or not the contractors should be instructed to put right the serious flaws, particularly in regards to land movement, that have appeared since the completion of the works.

Response from Sam Smith, Lead City Regeneration Programme Manager

T: 01273 291383

On Monday 7 October, I visited Robert Lodge along with Ian Bingham (Westridge Construction), Catharine Whitby (Project Architect – Brighton and Hove City Council - BHCC), Marcus Richardson (Property & Investment Team - BHCC) and Keely McDonald (Community Engagement Team - BHCC) where we met Chris El-Shabba (Robert Lodge Resident Association Representative)

Footpaths

With regards to the footpaths, we took photographs of the areas around the tree pits to the south of the south block, where the ground appears to have sunk. We discussed various ways in which to rectify the issue, and will now contact our civil and structural engineers, HOP, to request they visit site and advise us on the feasibility of remedial options.

Trees

With regards to the trees, some appear to have outgrown the straps which help support them, and the timber support structures are failing in places. There is also some growth at the base of several trees which requires removal. We will contact a landscape / tree specialist asap in order to arrange a visit, and any subsequent remedial works necessary, to ensure the continued and healthy growth of the trees.

North Block Thermal Performance

With regards to the thermal and acoustic performance of the north block, it is correct that the construction of the north block was different to that of the south block. This decision was not made on the basis of cost, but was made on the basis of location, logistics and time of year at which the block was built.

The south block was constructed with a concrete frame, and a lightweight metal framing system behind the brickwork forming the 'inner leaf' of the building. This was not an appropriate method of construction for the north block due to its position close to Manor Way, a two way bus route, since concrete deliveries would have impacted the bus service.

The size and location of the north block, coupled with the fact that it was constructed from Spring onwards, lent itself to a traditional 'brick and block' masonry construction methodology. Brick and block is durable, and has a higher thermal mass than lighter methods of construction.

U-values are used to measure how effective elements of a building's fabric are as insulators. The lower the U-value of a building's fabric, the more slowly heat is able to transmit through it, and so the better it performs as an insulator.

The construction summary from our sustainability consultant confirms U-values as follows for each building element as constructed at Robert Lodge North; (NB: numbers in brackets are current building regulations Part L minimum standards)

Roof AS BUILT: 0.11W/m²K (0.20W/m²K minimum standard)

Floor AS BUILT: 0.11W/m²K (0.25W/m²K minimum standard)

External Walls AS BUILT: 0.20W/m²K (0.30W/m²K minimum standard)

Windows AS BUILT: 1.4W/m²K (2.0W/m²K minimum standard)

We would note that the north building flats have their own individual gas boiler, (located in the flat store) whereas the south building flats are heated from a large communal boiler, located in a separate plant room. This is likely to explain the disparity between heating bills, since it is our understanding that the buildings are billed differently as a result.

North Block Acoustic Performance

With regards to acoustic performance, the building was constructed to 'Robust Details' which isolate parts of the building fabric to minimise sound transmission through the structure of the building. The building was subject to sound testing on completion and was found to meet all the requirements of Part E of the building regulations, and in fact achieved a good improvement on the minimum standards.

We received a complaint related to sound transmission from a tenant once the building was occupied, and subsequently engaged an acoustician to carry out further independent tests. Although the tests demonstrated that the building was fully compliant with current building regulations, Part E, we went on to carry out substantial remedial works, to improve the situation for an individual tenant who was disturbed by noise from elsewhere in the building.

Again, the mass of the masonry construction should in fact be beneficial to the acoustic performance of the building, when compared to lighter methods of construction.

We will feedback to the next Resident Association meeting once H.O.P. Consulting Engineers have visited, and we have a quote for the tree inspection.

Items from West Residents Only meeting on 17 September June 2019

1. Equality and inclusivity of Customer Services

There is still significant concern about the overall move in the council towards online communication. It was felt this discriminates against people with disabilities and those who cannot afford computers.

Although there are sometimes other methods of contact, these tend to be slower and less effective. Also, if you ring you are sometimes told that what you need to do is to fill out an online form. There is often no option to fill out a paper form.

It was agreed to raise this at the Tenant Disability Group as well as the Area Panel.

Action: III for West agenda setting meeting and all Area Panel agendas

Response from: Anna Spragg, Equalities Manager, Communities, Equality & Third
Sector- T: 01273 291343

There is not an overall move in the council towards online communications. We are committed to working in partnership with customers to ensure council services are inclusive and accessible to everyone. We have developed Our Customer Promise, a set of commitments based on customer feedback aimed at ensuring we are doing the best we can for our customers. As part of this we recognise that customers have different needs with regards to communication. Though many people prefer online communication as a quicker and more convenient method, we appreciate that it will not be appropriate for everyone. Therefore, we offer customers different ways to contact us and access our services. Where a customer has specific needs, our aim is to work with them to find the best ways to communicate.

In additions, the council part funds a digital inclusion charity, who support people to get access to the internet not just for council services but for things that may help them- such as online shopping for those who have reduced mobility. Further information, including a case study about this can be found here: <https://www.citizensonline.org.uk/digitalbrightonhove/>.

We also provide free resources to support residents to get online should they wish to – this includes free digital support sessions and free paces to access the internet in Brighton & Hove. Further information can be found here: <https://digitalbrightonandhove.org.uk/>

We are fully committed to ensuring our services are inclusive and accessible for everyone, including the ways we communicate. Feedback from residents identifying any situations where this is not happening is really helpful as it supports us continually to improve. If a resident has experience with a council service where alternative communications has not been offered, we would like to know about it so we can understand and address the situation. We would encourage residents to provide feedback to our services if they're not accessible.

Thank you for raising this concern. We really value your feedback and want to get this right every time.

2. Rats at Clarendon & Ellen

At the last Area panel in September, residents argued that if a problem with rats was exacerbated by building works then the council has the responsibility to sort this out.

The council policy on this needs to be clear and it has been requested that this is included in the next area panel.

Action: III for West agenda setting meeting and all Area Panel agendas

Response from:

Hilary Edgar, Housing Services Operations Manager, Income, involvement & Improvement –
T: 01273 293250

Glyn Huelin. Head of Housing Repairs & Improvement/ Business & Performance Team- T:
01273 293306

3 What will help us to build strong Residents' Association

The following points were raised in discussion:

- Associations can appear a bit dry and formal. Would having a different format and title help- for example 'Friends of...?'
- Associations need to be open and friendly, in publicity and at meetings.
- There needs to be more varied and imaginative ways of involving people, including looking at options for using skype and online communication (in addition to meetings). There needs to be an open discussion about what the possibilities are and how these could be implemented.
- How to get people involved is a major issue- it's often the same few people who come along. It was agreed that more discussion, support and sharing of experience around this issue would be useful.
- A lack of progress with issues that residents raise discourages involvement and demoralises participants. Getting action would encourage people to get involved.
- Community Engagement officers (CEOs) could have more of a role as residents' advocates, helping them to get action and progress issues. This would involve a more active role in making sure items raised at residents' meetings got an adequate response that moved things forward.
- It's important that residents' voices are heard and acknowledged. There's a lot of frustration because issues seem to disappear or get side-lined. Good communication would make difference, even if the outcome isn't always exactly what you wanted.
- Make meetings and events more fun!

- People will get involved if there's an issue that concerns them. How do you a) find out what these issues are and b) raise them in a clear and constructive way?
- Publicity about the association activities could do with a re-vamp and be more dynamic and lively.
- A re-assessment of areas covered by individual associations would be helpful – looking at options to make them bigger or smaller.

It was noted that the Resource centre can help with publicity design and ideas as well as looking at ways of increasing involvement and other aspects of running a Residents' Association. Contact Kate on 01273 606160 / kate.page@resourcecentre.org.uk for more information.

It was agreed this is a useful discussion that needs to be ongoing and that delegates would report back on the issues raised at area panels

Action: III for West agenda setting meeting and all Area Panel agendas

Response from: Sam Warren, Community Engagement Manager/ Communities T; 01273 296821

Item on the agenda for discussion, reply to North on similar issues.

The Community Engagement Team is a new service that supports all residents within the city to be involved in any council service. Whilst the team have maintained their work with tenants groups, Area Panels and Service Involvement Groups, we are also working with a range of community groups, working on Neighbourhood Action Plans, supporting the development of volunteering and Neighbourhood Hubs.

As a team we are very keen to engage more residents in all areas of the councils work. In order to do this we have recently recruited a new administration worker and replaced the Estate Development role as this will enable the CEO's to get out onto our Estates and into the communities to do more face to face work with residents and community groups.

In relation to Area Panels and resident only meetings we are keen to involve as many tenants as possible, currently the structure and terms of reference for Area Panels state that only reps are able to participate fully in meetings and any other tenant would need to be an observer, it would be interesting to open this up to welcome more people. We are especially keen to ensure that all the tenant structures are more representative of the whole community including involving more young people, BME and LGBTQ residents in decision making. I welcome working with all groups and Area Panels to look how we open up participation. If you have ideas or thoughts on how we can engage more residents please do contact me directly on Sam.warren@brighton-hove.gov.uk

4. Weeding and grounds maintenance

Concerns were raised about the deteriorating state of public areas on the estates. It's difficult to have pride in the place you live when the upkeep is increasingly neglected.

Clarendon & Ellen and Conway Court were given as an example of this; benches are unusable because of overgrowing trees and weeds are rampant. It's reaching the point of a health & Safety issue.

It was agreed that lack of grounds maintenance is a city-wide issue, although some areas seem to be receiving more services than others

It was agreed to raise these concerns at area panel and ask for a report on the grounds maintenance services in different areas

Action: III for West agenda setting meeting and all Area Panel agendas

Response from Sarah Carlisle, Operations manager, Cityparks Operations

T: 01273 294327

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

4.00pm 18 SEPTEMBER 2019

HOVE TOWN HALL, - COUNCIL CHAMBER

DECISION LIST

Part One

7 HOUSING AND NEW HOMES STRATEGIC DELIVERY TARGETS - 2019-2023

Contact Officer: Martin Reid
Ward Affected: All Wards

Tel: 01273 293321

- 1) That committee agrees the contents and timings of the work plan.
- 2) That committee agrees to receive a progress report on alternate meetings.
- 3) That the work plan and joint programme be referred to Area Panels for comment.

8 HOUSING SUPPLY UPDATE REPORT - 2019-2023

Contact Officer: Ododo Dafe
Ward Affected: All Wards

Tel: 01273 293201

- 1) That the Housing Committee note the contents of this report.
- 2) That the Housing Committee notes that estimates for new revenue spend on housing supply for 2020/21 will be included in the HRA Revenue and Capital Budget Report for approval in February 2020.
- 3) That Housing Committee recommend to Policy & Resources (P&R) Committee that for 2019/20, any new revenue costs (estimated at £0.100m) arising from the increased support for delivery of housing supply, should be met from HRA general reserves (current balance £6.980m).

9 HOME PURCHASE POLICY - PROGRESS UPDATE

Contact Officer: Diane Hughes
Ward Affected: All Wards

Tel: 01273 293159

That the Housing Committee:

- 1) Notes the outcomes of the Home Purchase Policy to date.
- 2) Recommends that Policy and Resources Committee agree an additional HRA capital budget of £3.000m for the scheme for 2019/20.
- 3) Recommends to the Constitutional Working Group a review of the financial limits applied to officer scheme of delegations.
- 4) Recommends use of the rent support reserve held within the HRA reserves to enable consideration of reduction of rents under the Home Purchase Policy to achieve social rents or 27.5% living wage rents.

10 EVICTIONS FROM TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION ANNUAL UPDATE

Contact Officer: Sylvia Peckham
Ward Affected: All Wards

Tel: 01273 293318

- 1) That the Housing Committee note the findings of the report.

11 HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION

Ward Affected: All Wards

- 1) That the Housing Committee give approval to commence consultation on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025.

12 NIGHT SHELTER & SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION FOR ROUGH SLEEPERS

Contact Officer: Jenny Knight

Tel: 01273 293081

- 1) That the Committee grants delegated authority to the Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care (HASC) to take all necessary steps to:
 - (i) Procure and award a contract for Two (2) years for the provision of a joint Night shelter Service and supported accommodation service to the value of £450,000 per annum.
 - (ii) The contract is to contain a break provision permitting the council to terminate the contract in whole or in part after one year.

13 FREDERICK STREET - SCHEME APPROVAL

Contact Officer: Laura Webster

Tel: 01273 292705

Ward Affected: St Peter's & North Laine

- 1) That the Housing Committee approves:
 - i. The proposed scheme of four new council homes at Frederick Street, Brighton under the New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme;
 - ii. The rent levels for the 2 bed flats are set at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates and the 1 bed flats are set at 37.5% Living Wage rates in line with the New Homes Rent policy.
- 2) That the Housing Committee recommend to Policy & Resources Committee to:
 - i. Appropriate the Frederick Street car park site (7-9, Frederick Street, Brighton, BN1 4TA) for planning purposes and delegate authority to the Executive Director for Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing to appropriate for housing once the development is complete.
 - ii. Approve the appropriation of land at Frederick Street from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account for £0.300m, being the best consideration reasonably obtainable.
 - iii. Approve the use of £0.300m of commuted sums held for housing purposes as a contribution to the total scheme costs.

14 DISPOSAL BY LEASE OF TWO SITES AT DUNSTER CLOSE, HOLLINGDEAN

Contact Officer: Emma Kumar

Tel: 01273 293297

- 1) That Housing Committee recommend to Policy & Resources Committee the disposal by lease of two areas of land identified at Dunster Close (Site A and Site B), to Bunker Housing Co-operative for a 125 year period with the freehold retained by the council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The granting of the lease for the site is on the basis that best consideration can take the form of an annual ground rent instead of an initial capital payment, and is subject to Bunker obtaining planning consent, securing funding and entering into a nominations agreement with the council.
- 2) That the decision at 2.1 be implemented by Housing who will report details and progress to the Housing Supply Members Board.

15 HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 2019/20

Contact Officer: Ododo Dafe

Tel: 01273 293201

Ward Affected: All Wards

- 1) That the Housing & New Homes Committee notes and comments upon the report.

HOUSING COMMITTEE	Agenda Item 7
	Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Housing Committee Priorities and work plan		
Date of Meeting:	Housing Committee 18 September 2019		
Report of:	Executive Director Neighbourhoods, Communities and Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Larissa Reed	Tel: 29-4286
	Email:	Larissa.reed@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 To seek agreement for the priorities and work plan for the Housing Committee and service for the next four years in order to inform future reporting to Committee on: key areas of officer focus and delivery; budget strategy, asset review, investment plans and resource allocation; resident engagement and formal consultation; engagement and consultation with partners and key stakeholders.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That committee agrees the contents and timings of the work plan.

That committee agrees to receive a progress report on alternate meetings.

That the work plan and joint programme be referred to Area Panels for comment.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Following the Local Elections in May 2019, the administration has worked with councillors from the official opposition to set out the key policy priorities for the coming four years. This will inform:
- the timeline for future reports to Housing Committee;
 - future alignment of service priorities, investment and resources;
 - planning for future engagement and consultation with our residents, partners and key stakeholders.

The key areas of work this report covers are:

- Providing additional affordable homes
- Improving Private Rented Housing
- Alleviating Homelessness and rough sleeping
- Achieving carbon reductions and sustainability in housing including addressing fuel poverty
- Improving council housing and community involvement
- Enabling more affordable home ownership
- Making fuller use of spare housing capacity
- Alleviating poverty.

3.2 Providing additional affordable Homes

The proposal is undertake the following work to improve and accelerate delivery of new housing supply over the period 2019-2023:

- Develop 800 additional council homes
- Develop 700 other new homes
- Review the rent policy to maximise the number of council homes replaced at social or living wage rents
- Develop the existing Hidden Homes strategy
- Develop a policy for the council to take the role of developer on major sites
- Explore greater use of modern methods of construction in our delivery of new homes.

3.3 Improving the Private Rented Sector

The proposal is undertake the following work to improve the quality and management of homes in the private rented sector over the period 2019-2023:

- Review and resubmit selective licensing scheme proposal to improve management and standards of private rented sector properties in the City
- Bring a report to committee identifying suitable sites to work in partnership with Community Land Trust for development
- Research and review an ethical loan scheme
- Develop the enforcement approach to private sector housing to reflect the full range of potential options available to improve management and standards
- Research and develop a social lettings agency
- Develop/commission an information/advice hub for private renters.

3.4 Alleviating homeless and rough sleeping

The proposal is undertake the following work over the period 2019-2023:

- Develop a Rough Sleeping Strategy (to include partnerships with community homeless and faith projects and delivery of homeless enterprise projects).
- Develop a Homeless Strategy, ensuring homeless people are involved in the design and development of services which directly affect them.
- Review /consult/adopt a Homeless Bill of Rights
- Provide a 365 day night shelter
- Expand Housing First
- Develop a strategy for the provision of council run short term temporary accommodation.

3.5 Achieving carbon reductions and sustainability in housing including address fuel poverty

The proposal is undertake the following work over the period 2019-2023:

- Develop a policy to set out how we will work collaboratively to ensure housing contributes to making the city carbon neutral by 2030.
- Develop a new PV and energy efficiency strategy for council homes, to include standards for new homes
- Review the energy efficiency and provision on all new developments
- Investigate and report the possibility of bulk buying PV panels and other energy saving resources.

3.6 Improving council housing and community involvement

The proposal is undertake the following work over the period 2019-2023:

- Work with tenants to develop a 'decent environment' standard
- Develop a fire safety programme in conjunction with tenants and residents
- Review and develop a new tenant and community involvement policy/strategy for housing, ensuring we learn from the lived experience of our clients, meet the 'Involvement and Empowerment' standard and that co-production is at the heart of our tenant and resident involvement work
- Develop a policy for participatory budgeting.
- Develop the work undertaken with leaseholders to develop a new leasehold involvement policy, setting out how leaseholders can be

supported to be more proactively involved in capital works and other leasehold matters

- Making greater use of spare housing capacity.

3.7 Enabling more affordable home ownership

The proposal is undertake the following work over the period 2019-2023:

- Work with Community Land Trust to develop self-build opportunities
- Work with Homes for Brighton & Hove Partnership and registered providers in the city to develop 500 shared ownership properties for essential workers who live and work in the city.

3.8 Make fuller use of shared housing capacity

The proposal is undertake the following work over the period 2019-2023:

- Review our empty homes policy to ensure 650 empty private sector homes are brought back into use
- Develop a policy to incentivise households to relinquish council tenancies for other home ownership options as an alternative to right to buy
- Investigate the possibility of supporting a 'lodger' scheme and report to committee
- Undertake an impact assessment of short term holiday lets and air BnB in the city and consider options that may inform an approach to alleviate the most detrimental issues arising.

3.9 Alleviating poverty

The proposal is undertake the following work over the period 2019-2023:

- Ensure the in house repairs services includes measures to: provide opportunities for young people to develop skills, for example through apprenticeships; maximise community benefits, including through use of local firms and labour for supply chain as well as planned and major works; and, develop pathways to employment that are inclusive in offering opportunities to all the communities we serve
- Review arrears policy to ensure all action is taken at the earliest stage, support given and eviction is used as a last resort
- Develop an arrears policy for temporary accommodation, which gives tenants the same level of support and assistance as those in permanent accommodation.

3.10 The work plan is set out at appendix 1.

3.11 In appendix 1, the requirement for additional resource is set out, however each piece of work will require its own resource plan.

3.12 Although this is the proposed policy work plan for the housing service, some of the objectives will require permissions from other committees as they have the need for financial decisions to be made by Policy and Resources Committee.

3.13 Monitoring of the plan and programme

The plan (set out in appendix 1) has timescales for reports to come to Housing Committee; however it is proposed that, in addition a performance report is brought to alternate housing committees setting out how officers are progressing with the report and RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating the delivery progress on each area of work set out in the joint programme under appendix 2.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 This report sets out priorities for delivery for the next four years. Although it is understood that changes in legislation or priorities may affect this work plan, it enables work streams to be linked to ensure that work is completed in a coherent and planned way.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

5.1 There has been no formal community engagement on this report. However we propose to take this report for discussion at future Area Panels.

5.2 Housing Committee Priorities and work plan will inform planning for future engagement and consultation with our residents, partners and key stakeholders.

6. CONCLUSION

Housing is a key issue in the city. By having a clear work plan for the service, we will have the best chance of meeting the needs of city and maximise resources to improve performance in key areas.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any financial implications arising from any individual proposals will be explained in each committee report for consideration by members.

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks

Date: 03/09/19

Legal Implications:

There are no significant legal implications arising from this report. The implications of each project will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 28/08/19

Equalities Implications:

There are no significant Equalities Implications arising directly from the report. Equalities implications will be assessed for each project.

Item 28 (B)

	Report to Committee	Additional Resources Required
Providing additional affordable homes		
Develop 800 additional council homes	Year 1 Q2	Yes
Develop 700 other new homes	Year 1 Q3	Yes
Review the rent policy to maximise the number of council homes replaced at social or living wage rents	Year 1 Q3	No
Develop the existing Hidden Homes strategy	Year 2 Q2	Yes
Develop a policy for the council to take the role of developer on major sites	Year 2 Q2	Yes
Bring a report to committee identifying suitable sites to work in partnership with Community Land Trust for development	Year 1 Q3	No
Improving private rented housing		
Review & resubmit selective licensing scheme proposal to improve the management and standards of private rented sector properties in the City	Year 1 Q3	Yes
Research and review an ethical loan scheme	Year 2 Q3	No
Develop/commission an information/advice hub for private renters and consider options for a private tenants forum	Year 1 Q4	Yes
Research and develop a social lettings agency	Year 2 Q1	Yes
Develop the enforcement approach to private sector housing to reflect the full range of potential options available to improve management and standards.	Year 1 Q2	Yes
Alleviating homeless and rough sleeping		
Develop a rough sleeping strategy (to include partnerships with community homeless and faith projects and delivery of homeless enterprise projects).	Year 1 Q2	No

Review /consult/adopt a Homeless Bill of Rights	Year 1 Q3	Yes (To implement)
Provide a 365 day night shelter	Year 1 Q3	Yes
Expand Housing First	Year 1 Q4	Yes
Develop a strategy for the provision of council run temporary accommodation including Seaside Homes	Year 1 Q3	Yes
Develop a Homeless Strategy, ensuring homeless people are involved in the design and development of services which directly affect them	Year 1 Q2	No
Achieving carbon reductions and sustainability in housing including address fuel poverty		
Develop an action plan to set out how we will work collaboratively to ensure housing contributes to making the city carbon neutral by 2030.	Year 2 Q1	Yes (Delivery)
Develop a new PV and energy efficiency strategy for council homes to include standards for new homes	Year 2 Q1	Yes (Delivery)
Review the energy efficiency and provision on all new developments.	Year 2 Q1	No
Investigate and report the possibility of bulk buying PV panels and other energy saving resources.	Year 2 Q1	Yes (Delivery)
Improving council housing and community involvement		
Work with tenants to develop a 'decent environment' standard	Year 1 Q4	No
Develop a fire safety programme in conjunction with tenants and residents	Year 1 Q4	No
Review and develop a new tenant and community involvement policy/strategy for housing, ensuring we learn from the lived experience of our clients, meet the 'Involvement and Empowerment' standard and that co-production is at the	Year 2 Q3	No

heart of our tenant and resident involvement work		
Develop a policy for extending participatory budgeting.	Year 2 Q1	Yes
Develop the work undertaken with leaseholders to develop a new leasehold involvement policy, setting out how leaseholders can be supported to be more proactively involved in capital works and other leasehold matters	Year 2 Q4	No
Enabling more affordable home ownership		
Work with Community Land Trust to develop self-build opportunities	Year 2 Q2	No
Work with Homes for Brighton & Hove and registered providers in the city to develop 500 shared ownership properties for essential workers who live and work in the city.	On going	No
Make fuller use of shared housing capacity		
Review our empty homes policy to ensure 650 empty homes are brought back into use	Year 2 Q4	Yes
Develop a policy to incentivise households to relinquish council tenancies as an alternative to right to buy	Year 2 Q3	Yes
Investigate the possibility of supporting a 'lodger' scheme and report to committee	Year 2 Q4	Yes
Undertake an impact assessment of short term holiday lets and air BnB in the city and consider options that may inform an approach to alleviate the most detrimental issues arising.	Year 1 Q4	Yes
Alleviating poverty		

Ensure the in house repairs services includes measures to: provide opportunities for young people to develop skills for example through apprenticeships; maximise community benefits, including through use of local firms and labour for supply chain as well as planned and major works; and, develop pathways to employment that are inclusive in offering opportunities to all the communities we serve	On going	No
Review arrears policy to ensure all action is taken at the earliest stage, support given and eviction is used as a last resort	Year 2 Q2	No
Develop an arrears policy for temporary accommodation, which gives tenants the same level of support and assistance as those in permanent accommodation	Year 2 Q2	No

Appendix 2 - Joint – Labour/Green 2019-2023 Housing Programme

Theme	Combined Manifesto Pledges
Innovatively Providing additional affordable and truly affordable homes	New homes • Develop an emergency plan to expand housing supply within 100 days • Drive an accelerated programme to buy & build homes including a minimum of 800 new council houses maximising the use of borrowing and Right to Buy receipts. • Develop 700 other new homes that are as affordable as possible over 4 years on mostly brownfield sites (including above car parks and shopping centres) • Aim to buy back all homes put on the market that have been lost through the right to buy
	Increased affordability • Replace council homes lost at social rents where money can be found • Greatly increase provision of council homes at living (27.5% LWR) & social rents
	Innovative Development • Create innovations to drive development such as city-wide small site & hidden homes strategy, and mixed tenure developments to deliver mixed communities, enable intergenerational living and fund more truly affordable living and social rents through commercial income • Borrow to buy land for affordable housing... we will seek to buy the Brighton General Hospital site to avoid its privatisation • Explore possibility of the council itself being a developer on major developments. Over time, aim to develop the council's own capabilities and reduce costs by directly employing staff and building stable teams to work on council projects. • Urgently explore a programme of quick build, e.g. modular homes to quickly alleviate housing. • Increase social housing stock by buying off plan from developers at discount.
	Community led housing • Within 6 months identify 10 sites & work with community to develop them. • Use public land for community led housing at a price to maximise social value (ie living rents for people in housing need) Look at creating an ethical loan scheme where BHCC matches community investors.

Theme	Combined Manifesto Pledges
Improving Private Rented Housing	Enforcement/licensing • Work towards selective licensing of private rented driving up conditions • Drive fire safety improvements in private sector properties across the city. • Create a dedicated private rented sector enforcement team to proactively enforce housing and energy efficiency standards, including fixed penalties and taking action against landlords for breaches of environmental health and safety regulations. Tackle hazardous housing conditions by increasing capacity for 'HHSRS' hazard inspection and taking the initiative in identifying properties for inspection. • Campaign alongside other councils on shared issues such as proper regulation of short-term lets and business rates for landlords of houses in multiple occupancy.
	Cost saving • Set up a council run not for profit lettings agency • Support the expansion of good landlord schemes (where rents do not exceed LHA) model for more affordable private rented housing • Expand existing schemes encouraging landlords to offer homes to those on benefits and low incomes, including establishing an ethical letting agency • Seek ways of stopping landlords refusing to let to people on benefits, issues with referencing and no-go lists.
	Private renters voice and support • Set up an information/advice hub for private renters to tackle discrimination, ensure renters know their rights and enable better community involvement. • Set up a tenants' forum for private renters

Theme	Combined Manifesto Pledges
Alleviating Homelessness and rough sleeping	Support for rough sleepers • Work towards eliminating the need for rough sleeping • Consult on how best to implement a Bill of Rights for homeless people • Provide a 365 day a year night shelter • Expand Housing First by 300% • Support the development of homeless guardianship schemes • Strengthen coordinated partnership working with community homeless and faith projects • Explore options for voluntary contribution to homeless support to be added to tourist amenity providers e.g. Restaurant and Hotels. • Seek opportunities for homeless enterprise with voluntary organisations and local businesses e.g. tour guide enterprise
	Improving temporary and emergency homeless accommodation • Involve homeless people in a wide-ranging review of all support offered to homeless people • Buy and build homes to meet a range of housing needs, including temporary/emergency accommodation, supported housing, housing first and general needs housing. • Replace privately-run temporary and emergency accommodation with council-owned provision, thereby also saving money in the longer term and look at converting existing council commercial residential accommodation into homeless accommodation to maximise social value from council assets • Negotiate a new Seaside Homes agreement which ends the loss of funds for the council under the current deal, protects current tenants and enables Seaside Homes to develop new ways of supporting homeless people (such as providing properties for Housing First) • Explore use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for an expansion of Homeless support. • Ensure new developments are of benefit to the city by applying a Community Infrastructure Levy that represents a full share of the city's infrastructure needs

Theme	Combined Manifesto Pledges
Achieving carbon reductions and sustainability in housing including addressing fuel poverty	Achieving Carbon neutrality by 2030 • We will take all action required to make our city carbon neutral by 2030 • Aim to build new council housing at sustainability levels that will significantly contribute towards our ambitions • Develop low-carbon housing as a model in conjunction with the Community Land Trust • Recycle building materials wherever possible as a first step towards a circular economy • Make (promote) community sustainable energy the first port of call for housing developments requiring sustainability installations • Treble housing spending on PV and fuel efficiency measures for council homes and setting ambitious fuel poverty reduction targets– Consider distributing low cost biogas from food waste to council tenants/low income households • Buy PV panels and other energy saving resources in bulk and supply at a mutually beneficial cost to residents, Brighton Energy co-op, 3rd sector organisations and/or commercial installers in the Brighton and Hove area • Build well insulated carbon neutral Council housing with solar panels

Theme	Combined Manifesto Pledges
Improving council housing and community involvement	Improving council housing • Develop and implement a “decent environment” standard for council estates to go alongside the decent home standard • Drive fire safety improvements in council owned properties across the city.
	Enhancing community involvement • Review community involvement in housing • Extend participatory budgeting to environmental improvements to estates • Improve transparency and accountability in the housing department (taking the proposals of the housing coalition as the starting point) • Meet the regulator's Involvement and Empowerment standard • Establish more joint work with residents in decision making ('co-production') involvement in decision-making around housing policy and service delivery • Involve residents in fire safety
	Leaseholder services • Continue to ensure that leaseholders' voices are heard and financial support is offered where necessary • Introduce greater transparency and earlier involvement with leaseholders over proposed capital works (an approach of negotiation rather than legal action) • Reduce the high interest rates charged when providing a loan for residential leaseholders struggling with large bills for works

Theme	Combined Manifesto Pledges
Enabling more affordable home ownership	Home ownership • Explore expansion of self-build opportunities • Provide 500 + shared ownership homes (through the joint venture and other developments)
Making fuller use of spare housing capacity	Empty Properties • Use measures including Compulsory Purchase Orders to target unoccupied and underused properties. • Bring at least 650 empty housing properties back into use. • Provide grants for households relinquishing council tenancies. • Pursue schemes to develop, expand and promote lodger provision to maximise use of spare rooms. • Step up moves to pick up and prevent illegal sub-letting and fraudulent right to buy applications. • Explore how to restrict conversion and spread of short-term holiday let homes or air BnB property development.

Theme	Combined Manifesto Pledges
Alleviating austerity	Support • Explore ways to increase council support for those struggling to afford the cost of housing • Make full use of discretionary housing payments • Protect from eviction anyone in arrears resulting solely from bedroom tax, universal or credit shortfalls. • Seek to protect tenants with new licences from Service Charge arrears evictions. • Ensure eviction is always a last resort. • Provide any specific support required for women, BAME tenants, refugees, asylum seekers and other marginalised groups who often bear the brunt of welfare changes and face a higher risk of eviction.
	Local income opportunities • Ensure local home building is providing opportunities for young people to develop skills for example through apprenticeships • Use regeneration schemes to provide social and sustainability benefits e.g. Local energy suppliers and employment • Changing the way the council outsources its services so as to help small local suppliers win council contracts or by bringing services in house

LEASEHOLDERS ACTION GROUP

Committee meeting 20th July, 2019, 10.30 at Laburnum Grove.

Meeting D of 2019/2020.

Present: David Spafford, Peter Boakes, David Croydon, Graham Dawes, Rosemary Johnson, Jane Thorp.

Apologies: Keith Marston, Tony Worsfold.

1. MINUTES of 10th June 2019.

AGREED as correct record.

2. MATTERS ARISING

B3: AGREED future meeting dates; 23/9, 9/11, 14/12, 6/1, 16/2, 2/3.

B4: AGREED standard agenda.

B6: DS to contact LR with the suggestion she meet with 2 or 3 of the committee to hear what she is not being told: DS was contacted by LR, wanted meeting with LAG before next HNHC meeting; fixed for Wednesday 28th August, 6.30.

AGREED this to be at Hampshire Lodge, all Committee members (+ Barry Hughes) invited.

ACTION D1: DS to book meeting room and circulate calling notice.

B7: supply minutes of task-and-finish group about new works/maintenance arrangements: no minutes since last meeting; ONGOING. Usefulness of paperwork questioned.

B8: DS to talk to LR about Resource Centre support: refer to 28 August meeting. Leaseholder Support Officer post has been advertised and no suitable applicants, to be re-advertised; we want progress report on this at 28 August meeting too.

B10: KM to circulate the address of FB page: done.

B11: RFJ would write up the AGM in a journalistic report style (rather than minutes, but longer than Homing In copy limit) to be posted on the FB page: in hand.

B12: DJC to contact LR to ask what the "social values" cover and what the extra cost is: done; there is email correspondence.

AGREED: for agenda at 28 August meeting: we want to know the percentage cost of social values.

AGREED: every issue we take up with the council staff or members should have a "lead" committee member nominated to deal with it, and other committee members go through that lead person. Any committee person wishing to raise a general issue to raise with LAG committee first.

ACTION D2: JT to email all committee to explain this paragraph.

B13: RFJ to coordinate comments on council's AGM minutes; ALL to email their comments to RFJ: ongoing. Only one comment received; anyone got any more?

B14: RFJ to contact Barry (HI Editor): done. Next copy date 23 August.

AGREED: Include extending leases.

ACTION D3: PB/RFJ to discuss and arrange article.

B15: RFJ to contact Gary Gurr about situation on leaseholder survey; also to welcome him to his new job and look forward to seeing him at a meeting: done, waiting for Gary on next steps.

C1: GG to provide information on lease extension for circulation: ongoing.

C2: MR to write to all leaseholders on the estate about forward plans, and offering contact info: ongoing.

C3: GH to circulate draft template letters to committee: ongoing.

C4: BHCC to share Major Projects Summary report regularly with the committee, preferably circulated before the meeting: ongoing.

C5: Fran Hodgson to circulate T&F Group info: done.

C6: MR/GH to sort out data protection issues: ongoing.

C7: DS to fix next meeting venue etc.: done.

AGREED: all committee meetings with council staff to invite both local residents and local councillors; meetings without council staff we'll decide each time.

AGREED: Did the council send out emails to all leaseholders on their list about this meeting? - this issue to be raised at 28th August meeting under LAG support.

JT proposed a leaseholders' newsletter to be sent out to all those on council's email list (draft to committee for agreement).

AGREED: to be raised for agreement to circulate by LR on 28 August.

ACTION D4: JT to draft and circulate.

ACTION D5: DS to arrange the agenda for 28 August meeting including items noted above.

3. LEASEHOLDER COMMUNICATION

DS reported: he has fixed regular pre-meetings with Glyn Huelin to finalise agendas for committee meetings. Discussion about motivation and uses for these.

ACTION D6: DS to notify dates of these meetings, ALL to submit ideas/requests in advance.

4. ROUND ROBIN.

PB lives further up Burstead Close. The building is due for roof works. Scaffolding has gone up; should be unnecessary as there is a roof access hatch.

Discussion of alternatives, including brackets to which a scaffolding doughnut could be fixed rather than needed to be built up from ground level (less hassle for residents and less security risk).

Noted that a recent Planning Committee had turned down an application for handrails round the edge of a flat roof on aesthetic grounds.

5. MAJOR WORKS

Sunninghill Close emails - proposed new roof at high cost. This is labelled "Planned Works" rather than "Major Works".

AGREED that the new leaseholder prior consultation processes should work the same under either heading, indeed for all works requiring a s20 as £250 or above.

AGREED JT to be lead person on this issue.

ACTION D7: DS to include on agenda for 28 August meeting.

ACTION D8: JT to draft reply to MR's email.

7. NEW IT SYSTEM

New system has been delayed, and won't do everything it was thought to be going to do.

ACTION D9: DS to request update from LR at 28 August meeting.

9. NEXT MEETING.

28th August, with LR, see above.

Next Committee meeting with council staff 23rd September, 6.30pm.

Venue: Muriel is offering her community room. **AGREED**.

ACTION D10: DS to contact Muriel and circulate details, circulate local residents and councillors.

Area Panel Briefing Paper

Housing Health and Safety Update

17th October, 21st October, 22nd October, 23rd October

1. Summary

- 1.1. This paper updates area panels on health and safety in key areas for council housing stock. It includes updates on fire doors, large panel system built blocks and other items identified by central government.
- 1.2. The council is committed to providing safe homes and has worked to keep residents well informed around safety and the work that the council is doing in this important area.

2. Background

- 2.1. As part of the council's Housing Asset Strategy there is a clear focus on 'Providing Safe Homes'.
- 2.2. Regular updates have been provided to Area Panels and Housing Committee updating on work in this area including sprinklers, fire doors and fire safety.
- 2.3. We are continuing to follow post Grenfell government guidance and this report updates on a number of areas that relate to health and safety and fire safety across housing. These include:
 - Large Panel System buildings
 - Fire doors
 - Panels and balconies
- 2.4. A multi-agency Housing Fire, Health and Safety Board, which includes East Sussex Fire and Rescue, several Council departments, and related agencies, has been in place for several years to ensure effective use of these resources, good governance and a 'joined-up' approach.
- 2.5. Officers will be reporting on these items to Housing Committee in November 2019.

3. Large Panel System Buildings

- 3.1. Earlier this year, we carried out structural surveys on our eight 'large panel structure' tower blocks. These surveys were conducted by specialist structural

engineers and found that there are no structural issues with any of the buildings. The report also stated that the buildings are generally in good structural condition. The report did highlight some non-urgent repairs and these will be scheduled into our programme of planned maintenance.

3.2. We've written to residents of the blocks about the survey results and published the reports on our website at <https://new.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2019/large-panel-system-building-survey-results>. The eight blocks that were surveyed were:

- Dudeney Lodge
- Nettleton Lodge
- St James House
- Kingfisher Court
- Heron Court
- Swallow Court
- Falcon Court
- Kestrel Court

3.3. The reports identified some repairs to be carried out in 2019 which are being programmed in for completion before the end of this year as advised by our consultants. We are also reviewing other recommendations they have made and planning for further surveys to be undertaken in line with the report recommendations.

4. Fire Doors

4.1. The council has worked closely with both Central Government and East Sussex Fire and Rescue Services in managing the safety of fire doors across our housing stock.

4.2. Last year Central Government identified that a number of door suppliers failed to meet the expected performance standards required of fire doors. This included Masterdor fire doors. There are approximately 2,000 Masterdor doors in our housing stock across the city.

4.3. IG Doors, our current door supplier is not one of the suppliers whose doors failed. We are continuing to work with IG Doors to review certification for their doors.

4.4. The advice from government and National Fire Chiefs Council is that the additional risk is low. We have carried out additional fire risk assessments on our high-rise building and specifically looked at the impact of fire doors.

- 4.5. We are now looking at replacement programmes for doors including fire doors and are procuring new contracts for doors for operation from 2020.

5. Balconies and panels

- 5.1. Central Government have issued advice notes to local authorities on both balconies and panels on external walls.
- 5.2. The advice note on balconies indicates that balconies should not be made of combustible materials. The council has confirmed that the construction of our blocks and refurbishments carried out have used non-combustible materials.
- 5.3. The advice note also identifies that residents should be informed about the risks of storing any combustible materials on balconies and make clear that smoking, the use of barbecues and storage of flammable property on balconies can increase that risk.
- 5.4. As a result of this advice the council will be updating our “Fire safety in flats” information leaflet and updating all residents through our “Homing In” magazine.
- 5.5. As part of a focus on ensuring our homes are safe we are also reviewing any wood panelling that is in place on external walkways. This is not part of this advice note but is in line with our objectives of ensuring the homes we provide are safe.
- 5.6. The advice note on “Spandrel panels (including window panels and infill panels)” relates to panels that are part of the external wall of buildings. This note advises building owners to check the materials used in the panels.
- 5.7. The council is reviewing information and carrying out tests to panels in our housing stock. This will identify the materials used in any panels. Should any panels need to be removed and replaced then this work will be carried out as part of our capital works programme.

Contact officers:

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