

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: CENTRAL AREA

2.00pm 11 SEPTEMBER 2019

HAMPSHIRE LODGE, OFF VERONICA WAY, BRIGHTON BN2 1JW

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Hugh-Jones. Clare Rainey.

Representatives: Jason Williams (Hereford Court Chair), Tomm Nyhuus (Somerset Point), David Spafford (Ardingly Court), Martin Cunningham (Hampshire Court), Tony McCoy (Sloane Court), Carl Boardman (Warwick Mount), Barry Hughes (SHRA).

Officers: Glyn Huelin (Head of Housing Repairs & Improvement), Melissa Francis (City Clean), Andy Stolton (City Clean), Sam Warren (Community Engagement Manager), Debbie Corbridge (Integrated Team for Families Manager).

16 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

17 APOLOGIES

18 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

18.1 **AGREED** – That the minutes were approved as a correct record of the previous meeting on 5 June 2019.

19 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

20 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME

20.1 Item 1 – How can we deal quickly and effectively with local upkeep and environmental issues?

20.2 Residents had the following statements, enquiries and concerns:

- The lack of officer presence on the ground was noted.
- Residents expressed concerns of data protection being a hinderance when referring elderly or vulnerable people who hadn't been visible for an extended period of time.

20.3 **AGREED** – that the response was noted.

21 ISSUES WITH KNIGHTGUARD CONTRACT

21.1 An officer gave a brief overview of the Knightguard contract and highlighted the following:

- It was stated that the Knightguard contract was long term and covered many areas from door servicing, CCTV and late repairs.
- It was noted that a long-term agreement with Mears for door replacement was in effect.
- It was recognised that a blanket approach had been wrongfully employed and that efforts were being undertaken to resolve this.
- There were a range of over 750 systems in effect across the City.
- It was clarified that the majority of doors were manufactured by Entry Tech and others.
- It was stated that current systems were over 30 years old and that efforts to repair this were being undertaken.

21.2 Residents had the following statements, concerns and enquiries:

- It was noted that there had been a history of wrongful implementation of works such as the provision of multi-steel doors to high-rise blocks and flats in 2015.
- It was stated that some

21.3 **AGREED** – that the response was satisfactory.

22 HAMPSHIRE COURT BINS

22.1 An officer gave a brief overview of the Hampshire Court bins from bin stores to the site by the turning circle. The following was highlighted:

- It was stated that due to a series of issues, it would not be possible to move the bins.
- It was stated that each time the site was visited there were vehicles parked in place.
- Further consideration was cited with regard to access such as terrain, paving slabs and bin wheels getting stuck when trying to remove bins.

22.2 Residents had the following statements, enquiries and concerns:

- Strong opposition to the update was expressed.
- It was stated that the estate was built over 55 years ago with reasonable bin collection procedures in place, confusion as to why the situation had changed since then was expressed.
- It was reaffirmed that residents were customers and that officers were not working hard enough to find a solution to this issue.
- Further to this it was stated that BHCC appeared to be catering to itself rather than the people.
- It was noted that bin men were largely responsible for their injuries due to malpractice.
- It was stated that officers were seemingly reducing the service.

22.3 Officers had the following responses to residents' questions, enquiries and concerns:

- It was stated that a large issue was the condition of terrain.
- It was clarified that residents would be made aware that they could receive assistance with future collections.

- It was agreed that officers would write letters to residents and await outcome of notifications.
- It was stated that there were rubbish clearance issues across many wards and that this would need to be looked at taking in to account many aspects as there was a possibility that any quick decisions could exasperate problems.

22.4 **AGREED** – that the update be noted

23 FIELD OFFICERS

23.1 A resident stated that there were no East Ward Attendees at the recent field officer consultation environmental program. An enquiry regarding attendance figures at other wards was made.

23.2 An officer stated that this would be followed up.

23.3 **AGREED** – that the update be noted.

24 SEASIDE HOMES

24.1 A resident gave a brief overview of the of Seaside Homes report. It was proposed that an update report be written and panel members were notified that there was a vacancy. It was clarified that there were currently 499 properties under management and that time was of essence and that resident voices were important.

24.2 Officers agreed that this was a very worthwhile and positive scheme.

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

25 YOUTH SERVICE PAPERS

25.1 An Officer gave a brief overview of the Youth Service. The following was stated:

- A financial account was provided in relation to HRA contributions.
- £125,000 was being requested for a 6-month extension.

25.2 Residents had the following enquiries, statements and concerns:

- A resident enquired of the ratio of young people to helpers.
- Residents expressed approval of the proposal and enquired if enough money had been requested.
- Reference to a changing population was made and that this was the focal point of the Youth Service's concerns.

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

- It was stated that different centres were being funded in the area, examples included:
 - Brighton Youth Centre
 - Tarnar Community Centre
 - Young People Centre
- Various groups were being run by the centres:

- Young Men and Women's Group
 - Football sessions
 - A youth club
 - Yearly Turner Festival
 - Brighton Youth Centre ran 2 Youth Clubs with 40-50 people
 - 4 art sessions
 - Dj and Gaming sessions
- The ratio was currently 3 helpers to 15 young people including 2 volunteers.
- 25.4 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.
 - Young people agreed to the proposal of meeting with older members of Sloane Court in an effort to further a sense of community and offered to sing carols for older people at a later date.
 - Examples of away days were further given as events that helped instil skills such as leadership and communication.
 - It was stated that such away days were beneficial for young people as many had difficulties in their private lives.
 - It was reaffirmed that places like Brighton Youth Centre were important to provide a place for young people that was safe from dark home environments and provided a venue that drew them away from drinking in parks etc.
- 25.5 **AGREED** – that the report be noted.

26 Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT UPDATE

- 26.1 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.
- 26.2 Residents had the following enquiries, statements and concerns:
- A resident noted the increase in rent arrears for those on universal credit.
 - A resident further noted that performance appeared worse than before.
- 26.3 Officers responded to residents' statements, concerns and enquiries with the following:
- It was confirmed that there was an increase in rent arrears.
 - It was further stated that this was in part due to more tenants enrolling to Universal Credit. It was also note that various logistical issues regarding the waiting time for the initial payment was also a reason for the increase.
 - It was stated that 24 of 39 that were on target and that a wide range of factors contributed to the issue,
 - It was stated that in some cases investments in work for long term gain caused short term issues.
 - It was agreed that possession of tenancy was difficult.

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

27 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

28 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

28.1 The next meeting is on the 23rd October 2019.

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of