

Housing Management Panel: Central Area

Date: **12 February 2020**

Time: **2.00pm**

Venue **Hampshire Lodge, off Veronica Way, Brighton BN2
1JW**

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

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FURTHER INFORMATION

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact , (01273 291064, email kat.hoare@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

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Date of Publication - Tuesday, 4 February 2020

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: CENTRAL AREA

2.00pm 18 DECEMBER 2019

BARNARDS CENTRE, ST JOHNS MOUNT, MOUNT PLEASANT, BRIGHTON, BN2 0JP

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Hugh-Jones (Chair), Rainey

Voting Representatives: Barry Hughes (Sylvan Court), Theresa Mackey (Highcroft Lodge), Martin Cunningham (Hampshire Court), Carl Boardman (Warwick Mount), Jason Williams (Hereford Court), Jane Thorp (Hanover), Eileen Stewart (Somerset Point), Tony McCoy (Sloane Court), Emma Salcombe (Essex Place)

Non-Voting Delegates: Trish Barnard (Hereford Court),

Officers: Glyn Huelin, Rebecca Mann, Ben Stride, Justine Harris

Guests: Alan Cooke, Sarah Booker-Lewis

35 APOLOGIES

35.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Powell and Rita Devitt.

36 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

36.1 Several points of accuracy were made in relation to the minutes with the following corrections made shown in bold italics and strikethrough below:

31.3 Councillor Clare Rainey had the following enquiries, concerns and statements:

- Clarification was sought regarding **what** the perceived difference was, following the departure of Sharon Davis.

32.1 The Chair gave a brief update on the Housing Committee Work Plan and stated the following:

- Various key targets were being considered such as 800 ~~councils~~ **council homes**, 700 additional affordable homes along with continued improvement of council housing.

36.2 The following matters of clarification were made: with regard to minute item 31.4, it was explained that repairs were not funded by the EDB but by the HRA.

36.3 With regard to minute item 31.4, the Chair asked if windows due for maintenance had been looked at.

36.4 Panel representatives relayed multiple accounts of problems with windows. It was explained that at Warwick Mount, the windows in every flat required inspection as the mechanisms were rusting and failing.

- 36.5 Officers clarified that the maintenance programme was currently being reviewed however, the windows at Warwick Mount would be inspected as there appeared to be a specification issue.
- 36.6 Panel representatives proposed expanding the brief of resident inspectors to include issues such as those raised at Warwick Mount. Some concern was expressed regarding the technical skill required to inspect building issues and that only Housing Managers had undertaken the training required to assess structural and maintenance issues.
- 36.7 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes of the previous meeting be approved and signed as the correct record subject to the above corrections.

37 CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF COUNCIL HOUSING PRESENTATION

- 37.1 The Panel received a presentation from Alan Cooke detailing the history and development of social housing in Brighton & Hove. The presentation commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Addison Act which led to council's becoming large-scale builders of social housing.

38 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME

- 38.1 (Question 1: Anti-social Behaviour) The Panel asked whether residents were legally permitted to take photographs to provide as evidence towards investigations and how for how long CCTV records were kept.
- 38.2 Officers confirmed that residents could submit evidence and that CCTV recordings were kept up to 28 days.
- 38.3 The Panel asked for confirmation that the currently installed fire doors could null and void certain insurance policies. Further questions and comments were made about whether a 2-inch gap underneath the door met fire regulations and ensured safety from smoke inhalation.
- 38.4 Officers confirmed that as long as a consistent fire plan was in place, there would be no impact upon insurance claims. It was explained that 2i-inch gaps were standard for fire doors as the doors expanded in the event of a fire. In the event of a fire, smoke and fire would rise to the ceiling so would not permeate through the gap at the bottom of the door.
- 38.5 **RESOLVED-** That the answers to the various Resident Questions be noted.

39 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET UPDATE

- 39.1 In response to questions asked, Officers clarified that the Project had been established for a three-year period but may well extend beyond that and residents living in areas without a resident's association could apply via the Housing Customer Service Centre, RIO's or ward councillors.

40 CITY CLEAN UPDATE FOR CENTRAL WARD

- 40.1 The Panel heard from representatives from Hampshire Court that numerous problems had been experienced by vehicles parking in front of dropped kerbs and the work done to address that had not been good enough. Furthermore, it was explained that residents of Essex Place were experiencing huge problems with two local commercial garages that were blocking access and blocking pavements and roads. Attempts to resolve the problem had not been successful.
- 40.2 In response, officers stated that they would contact the associations direct to discuss the issue. It was agreed that a report to a future meeting specifically on parking may be useful.

41 PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 2

- 41.1 The Chair asked if the steep upward trend for claimants of Universal Credit to be in rent arrears had continued.
- 41.2 Officers clarified that the rate had slowed and detailed methods of support available for claimants in such circumstances.
- 41.3 The Panel expressed concern that a quarter of social housing tenants were in rent arrears and asked whether there was sufficient officer resource to ensure that people were helped to avoid those arrears build up.
- 41.4 Officers explained that recruitment to vacant posts in the area had been complicated however, had recently been filled. It was proposed that a report detailing the work undertaken around tenancy sustainment be brought to a future meeting.

42 CITY WIDE REPORTS

- 42.1 **RESOLVED-** That the various Citywide reports and the information contained therein be noted.

43 TENANT AND RESIDENT ASSOCIATION UPDATES

- 43.1 The Panel representatives provided updates on their resident association activities.

44 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 44.1 Representatives from Sylvan Hall stated that an outside consultant had been appointed to investigate recycling in the block and would report their findings to Cityclean.
- 44.2 Officers detailed the offer made available by the Community Engagement Team for £250 grants for resident lead arts projects.
- 44.3 It was agreed to move summer meetings of the Panel to a start time of 7pm with autumn and winter meeting start time remaining at 2pm.
- 44.4 It was agreed to receive a report to a future meeting on repairs.

The meeting concluded at 4.05pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

Area Panel items from Central Area Residents Meeting 2nd January 2020

1. Leaseholder Disputes - Action: 3 Stars (★★★)

Leaseholders are continuously raising numerous problems over work carried out by the Council. There seems to be very little improvement.

The following overall problems were noted:

- Disputes are logged by the council but no stats are drawn from them or presented to Housing Committee. Formal dispute stats can be used for prevention of disputes, and for councillors to be aware of the issues. At Select Committee in December 2018, Larissa Reed stated that there had been 500 formal leaseholder disputes in a period of 10 years. Why has the information contained in these disputes not been used to prevent disputes?
- At Saxonbury there have been 5 lots of works over 7 years to a total cost of £55K per leaseholder. Both the level of cost and the level of disruption are unreasonable and outrageous.
- Disputes are dealt with on an individual basis, which means that one person might get satisfaction from the dispute process but every other leaseholder who has suffered the same thing on the same estate doesn't. The same applies to tribunal outcomes.

The importance of raising these concerns at every possible forum was noted, and it was agreed to put these items on the agenda for the next Area Panel.

Conditions at The Willows, following roof replacement:

Between July and November, 4 months, there were 9 reports of water ingress to different parts of The Willows from:

- roofer putting foot through roof
- guttering badly installed
- lead flashing inexplicably removed
- downpipes smaller than the ones they replaced
- gutter brush not clipped
- major cause - roofing teams unprepared for adverse weather and not safeguarding de-tiled roof.

Between each of these 9 breaches, repairs were done which created more breaches. The only reason we know about this is because one resident there kept a log with photos, videos, and emails, which is 125 pages long.

The leaseholder has been advised to apply to P & I for compensation, with no advice as to how. There is no process in place for compensation, which sort of suggests

that no one gets any. Can the council supply numbers and figures for those compensated during the life of the Mears contract?

The leaseholders there are paying £14K for this catalogue of bodgemanship, and bodgemanship is not occasional, it is standard. Is this fair?

-----Response -----

**Response from Geof Gage Acting Head of Housing (Property & Investment) / Business & Performance Manager – Housing –01273 293235 and Gary Gurr - Leasehold Services Manager
T 01273 294676**

Thank you for your questions and feedback. The council does welcome feedback from our leaseholders and we are committed to engaging and responding proactively to leaseholders concerns.

1. We do recognise that this is an important area and therefore we log each and every dispute we receive. Disputes cover a range of service charge issues and, in many cases, do not involve large numbers of leaseholders in one block or even large sums of money. The subject for disputes varies between different services as you would expect. Currently we do not report the detail of disputes to Housing Committee however we will discuss with the Housing Committee adding this to the quarterly performance indicators report.
2. We recognise that this individual block has seen a number of capital work contracts over the period mentioned which has resulted in contributions from some leaseholders in the region of the £55,000 mentioned. For some leaseholders the costs are challenging. This is why we have introduced the extended payment options and Tracy Mears, our Leasehold Liaison Officer will meet with any leaseholder who wishes to discuss payment options. Stock conditions surveys will guide plans for future maintenance and we have given a commitment to early engagement and to taking on board, as far as possible, suggestions made at the Leaseholder Event held on 11 January for leaseholder involvement in future maintenance plans. We have undertaken extensive engagement with residents at Saxonbury with regard to the current works. As part of our future works planning we will be considering all works required to an estate or block and working with tenants and leaseholders around how best to schedule work either in one project or over a number of years.
3. We can confirm that where the leasehold team receive a dispute under the Leaseholders' Disputes Procedure which results in a credit to an individual leaseholder, all leaseholders of the block who have incurred the charge will receive the same credit based on the proportional share they pay. This will be the case for all disputes not just those relating to repairs and maintenance. The council does learn from cases where we don't get things

right first time and are making a number of changes in how we deliver our services through the current Future Repairs & Maintenance Programme and other change programmes in Housing.

4. The works to the Sylvan Hall estate comprised of roofing and other works to four blocks. We have acknowledged the reported incidents to The Willows and to one area of this roof in particular. All works are managed on site by qualified Site Managers and then signed off by council surveyors and Building hence we are confident that the overall standard of workmanship undertaken by the roofing contractors is of an acceptable standard and quality. However, we do acknowledge and apologise for the particular issues which residents have brought to the council's attention. We have been working with Mears to resolve these and ensure the works are completed to the required standard.

We hope that the above information is helpful. The council is working closely with the Leaseholder Action Group and all leaseholders to develop our new Repairs and Maintenance services and we are looking forward to continuing this work over the rest of this year as new services are introduced.

Other Area's Three Star Responses

2. Parking: Mears's Vans (West) - Action: 3 Stars (★★★)

Two problems were reported:

- Mears vans are regularly parking in resident permit spaces in Conway Court
- Parked vans are blocking access to wheel-chair storage space used by Alison Gray in Ellen Street. They move when requested, but then re-park in the same space.

It was agreed that parking by Mears staff has been a general, city-wide problem over the period of Mears's contract with the Council. When the service is taken in-house in April, the problem of parking and respect for residents' access and parking spaces needs to be addressed. Two specific suggestions were made:

- a) signage on wheel-chair storage doors to indicate access is needed at all time
- b) the possibility of providing designated parking for repairs staff be considered.

Action: ★★★ for agenda setting meeting

-----Response -----

Response from Delia Hills, Mears Customer Care Team, 01273 296821

Mears response to the 2 bullet points:

Mears sincerely apologise for the discourteous parking at Conway Court; this is a clear breach of the Mears Code of Conduct. This issue has been cascaded to all line managers to address with their operatives and Mears has asked that should any future parking issues arise, they are reported immediately to the Mears Helpdesk on 0800-052-6140. Also photographic evidence emailed to bhcc.repairs@mearsgroup.co.uk would be very helpful. Once again, please accept our apologies.

Response from Robert Keelan, Housing Manager for Hove and Portslade, 01273 293261

Mears operatives have a map of where they can park on housing estates and they should keep to these areas. They also have dispensations that are in the van windscreens that give for example an hour's parking in controlled parking in the city. Sometimes, operatives will try and tuck in to various corners on housing estates so that they can load or unload their materials or do a quick job and this is the situation that Ms Gray refers to on Ellen St which is an area between the low-rise blocks and the garages.

The scooter store mentioned in the enquiry is a non-standard store put up when the major refurbishments were happening on the Clarendon estate and has been left there since. The store is not obviously a scooter store and I have had previous conversations with Ms Gray about keeping it that way to not highlight there is a valuable scooter inside. A Housing Officer in the West team has as a result of this enquiry been tasked with contacting Ms Gray and this should happen before the end of January. The Housing Officer will look at the store and sort any signs or floor markings required.

The housing team rent out parking spaces to individuals, so any spaces that are removed from this pool to turn into contractor spaces would give a reduction in income to the Housing Revenue Account. It would inevitably be the sites in the city centre where parking is at its tightest, where revenue from renting is maximised that the problems occur, and contractor van spaces would be requested. Contractor bays would bring its own problems e.g. if a leaseholder has someone working in their property and had their own contractor who may be in a standard car etc so it would be difficult to enforce.

There are no plans to bring in contractor spaces on the Clarendon estate but we can resolve Ms Gray's immediate problem. If there are any examples of inconsiderate parking, please raise with Mears giving them the registration numbers and the operatives will be spoken to.

3. Estate Development budget (EDB) (West) - Action: 3 stars (★★★)

It was agreed to ask for an update on all EDB bids and outstanding work at the next Area Panel.

-----Response -----

Response from Lian Baker, Community Engagement Assistant (EDB), 01273 294651

The new Community Engagement Assistant Lian Baker started in post at the end of last year, and has taken over the running of the Estates Development Budget. Lian will be the contact point for all residents', leaseholders' and other council officers for any EDB issues. We do acknowledge and appreciate the frustration groups may feel, having worked hard producing and consulting on a bid, as in past years the communications about the progress of bids has not always been as good as it could have been and sometimes groups have been unaware of the outcome of the panel's decision. To resolve this, Lian is contacting all of the associations/groups about the outcome of their bid within 3 working days of the panel meeting and final decisions.

This new process will mean that Lian will ensure that Mears, the groups and the Community Engagement Officer are all aware of any correspondence. The Community Engagement Team will be able to follow communications about the progress of projects and make sure residents and groups are kept fully informed at each stage of a project.

4. Knightguard contract - Action: 3 stars (★★★)

There are lots of concerns about:

- standard of work
- failure to complete on time
- Knightguard renewing doors when they only need repair

This has been going on for some time and the council do not appear to be taking action to enforce Knightguard's contractual obligations, or fining them for poor performance.

It was agreed to raise this at the Agenda Setting meeting and request the following information:

- What oversight is there of the contract in relation to performance?
- When Knightguard inspects doors and decide that they should be renewed rather than repaired, what checks are carried out by the council to ensure value for money?

- Is there a break clause in the contract that would enable the council to terminate it and invite tenders from more suitable contractors?
- Have Knightguard been fined or penalised for poor performance or failure to complete on time?

-----Response -----

Response from Geof Gage Acting Head of Housing (Property & Investment) / Business & Performance Manager – Housing –01273 293235

Thank you for your questions relating to main entrance door contracts.

When installation of a new door entry system has been finished, they are 100% quality control checked and signed off by the councils Housing Mechanical & Electrical Team. This is documented with a sign off sheet and photos. Repairs carried out are percentage checked monthly.

Knightguard do not deal with main entrance doors and do not install, replace or survey any main entrance doors. Inspection works are carried out by surveyors and the doors are installed by Mears.

The low voltage contract awarded to Knightguard does have Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which are monitored during monthly contract meetings. Knightguard were exceeding the figures original set out and these were increased, Knightguard are exceeding these figures.

These KPIs include;

- Contact resident with 24hrs is 97% and Knightguard have been achieving 100%.
- Repaired within one week is 90%, current performance has been maintaining mid 90%.
- Right first time fix is 90%, current performance has been achieving high 90% and often 100%

Main entrance door replacement is neither managed nor ordered through the door entry contractor. Main entrance doors are on a programme that is managed directly by a surveyor of BHCC and in considering a replacement many factors will be considered not only the condition and residents are consulted accordingly.

Main entrance doors are not procured by the door entry manager or contractor and will be a separate Lot of planned works under the new contract, which is being tendered at this time.

The appointed contractor will be subject to KPI's and there will be conditions that would allow for termination of contract if deemed to be necessary as there are in any contract.

- **What oversight is there of the contract in relation to performance?**

The councils Housing Mechanical & Electrical team oversees the Knightguard contract which relates only to maintaining and upgrading door entry systems including individual flat handsets and associated cabling. The contract also covers CCTV in housing. The contract is managed by a dedicated council electrical engineer who oversees the contract and associated works on a day to day basis, all works are approved, signed off and inspected by a council officer. Knightguard are not responsible for replacing main entrance doors and do not have any role in deciding whether doors should be replaced or maintained. Main entrance door maintenance and replacement is overseen by a council surveyor and works are delivered via a different contractor.

- **When Knightguard inspects doors and decide that they should be renewed rather than repaired, what checks are carried out by the council to ensure value for money?**

Knightguard do not have any role in the process of deciding if main entrance doors are replaced or maintained, their involvement is limited to ensuring that the door entry system such as the panel is refitted or upgraded into a new or refurbished main entrance door. This is overseen and managed by a council electrical engineer.

- **Is there a break clause in the contract that would enable the council to terminate it and invite tenders from more suitable contractors?**

All our contracts do have appropriate break clauses including the new planned contract for main entrance doors.

- **Have Knightguard been fined or penalised for poor performance or failure to complete on time?**

As detailed above these works are delivered through two separate contracts. An update on current performance is included above. As part of our future repairs programme we will be developing performance indicators for planned works contracts which will be reported through Area Panels and Housing Committee. We are also working with the residents Task and Finish group to set up resident monitoring arrangements for the new services.

5. Antisocial behaviour response (East) - Action: 3 Stars (★★★)

Some of the problems at Robert Lodge have been resolved as a result of raising them at the Area Panel. It is hoped that the council will now take action to sort out the problems with residents on the other side of the block.

There is still concern that elderly and vulnerable residents do not feel they can report antisocial behavior, even when it is having a serious impact on them, due to fears that they will be targeted.

It was also felt that the council is not enforcing the tenancy agreement and probationary tenancy conditions, in relation to antisocial behaviour and drug dealing by tenants. There was a previous commitment by the Council to carry out visits to new tenants after three months, six months, and one year. The meeting wanted to check that this is still taking place following recent changes to staffing structure.

It was agreed to raise this at the Agenda Setting meeting and request the following information:

What percentage of new tenants are being visited to ensure they are meeting their tenancy conditions at three months, six months and one year?

-----Response -----

Response from Rachelle Metcalf, Housing Manager East Housing Team

T: 01273 293196

As part of our Introductory Tenancy procedure, Introductory tenants are visited by the Rehousing Team 14 days after their tenancy starts, then the area Housing Teams carry out a second visit at four months and a third visit at 8 months. The purpose of the visits is to answer any questions the tenant may have, confirm their responsibility for rent payments and adhering to the terms of the tenancy agreement and to identify any support needs. We raise any complaints that have been received about the behaviour of the tenant or their visitors during these visits. If there are tenancy breaches during the course of the Introductory Tenancy we can serve a Notice to Extend, which extends the Introductory Tenancy by a further 6 months, to allow time to remedy the breach. Alternatively, in the most serious cases, we can serve a Notice to Terminate the Introductory Tenancy and take possession action in the County Court to end the tenancy. As with any tenancy action, we need evidence from witnesses to support our action.

6. Estate Development Budget (EDB) (East) - Action: 3 stars (★★★)

Chris reported on the following matters:

- A survey has gone out to residents to consult on the type of work that is carried out under the Estate Development Budget.
- Any outstanding work from 19/20 is to be completed before the Mears contract terminates on 31 March 2020.

There was a discussion about Quick Bids, as Associations are still not being advised of the outcome. This was previously discussed at the East Residents meeting on 18th October 2018 and the problem has still not been resolved.

-----Response -----

Response from Lian Baker, Community Engagement Assistant

T: 01273 294651

The new Community Engagement Assistant Lian Baker started in post at the end of last year, and has taken over the running of the Estates Development Budget. Lian will be the contact point for all residents', leaseholders' and other council officers for any EDB issues. We do acknowledge and appreciate the frustration groups may feel, having worked hard producing and consulting on a bid, as in past years the communications about the progress of bids has not always been as good as it could have been and sometimes groups have been unaware of the outcome of the panel's decision. To resolve this, Lian is contacting all of the associations/groups about the outcome of their bid within 3 working days of the panel meeting and final decisions.

This new process will mean that Lian will ensure that Mears, the groups and the Community Engagement Officer are all aware of any correspondence. The Community Engagement Team will be able to follow communications about the progress of projects and make sure residents and groups are kept fully informed at each stage of a project.

Lian and the Community Engagement Manager will continue to work with the new in-house repairs and maintenance team to ensure that the hand over is as smooth as possible for all current and future Estates Development Bids. Any outstanding EDB works will still be honoured if not complete by April 2020.

7. Door Entry Systems and Antisocial behaviour in low rise blocks (North) - Action: 3 stars (★★★)

This has now been discussed at two North Area Panel meetings and reported in the Argus. It has also been discussed by the other Residents' Meetings around the city, particularly in relation to problems of residents feeling too scared to report antisocial behaviour and the need for the Council to look at alternative ways for reporting that could overcome this problem.

Those present didn't feel that the response to Area Panel adequately addressed the problems that had been raised, particularly in relation to Horton Road, Hollingdean, where there have been known problems of antisocial behaviour for 5 years.

a. Collecting evidence and complaints from residents

Residents in Horton Road have stopped reporting antisocial behaviour to the Council, because they feel that nothing is being done and they are fearful of possible repercussions from perpetrators when they do report it. However, the Residents' Association has a log of 70 complaints. They are particularly concerned about two flats that have been taken over by drug dealers (known as cuckoos).

It is understood that anonymous reports cannot be used as legal evidence. However, it was felt that they should be recorded by the Council and used to plan appropriate responses. This would give the Council a more detailed picture of the concerns of local residents and the possible need to collect evidence in alternative ways when there is known to be ongoing and serious problems of antisocial behaviour that are affecting the lives of local residents.

b. Surveillance cameras

At the October Area Panel there was an offer to install temporary cameras in some of the blocks to collect evidence of the problem. This has still not happened and as a result two months' worth of evidence is not available. The meeting felt that the installation of temporary cameras should now happen urgently.

c. Estate Services team and evidence of drug use

The Estate Services team have not reported evidence of antisocial behaviour or drug use. This is because they only clean the blocks once a week. In between a local resident cleans the block because they don't want to have to live in a dirty and unsafe environment.

The meeting agreed that this matter should be addressed at the Area Panel again, specifically in reference to the two following proposals:

a. Installation of door entry systems

That plans for door entry installation in low-rise blocks be reviewed, and for Horton Road to be added to the schedule of major work for new secure door entry systems.

b. Reporting of antisocial behaviour

That antisocial behaviour recording be reviewed. Firstly, people should be able to report problems in a way that does not result in them feeling that they are in danger, or there is a risk that the perpetrators will find out they've made a complaint and take revenge. Secondly, the Council should consider how it could collect its own evidence without having to rely on reports from residents.

-----Response -----

Response from Sam Warren, Community Engagement Manager, 01273 296821

We note that the resident only meeting on 17th December was close after the area panel on 9th December, so there was not much time for any actions suggested to be taken. We ask residents to take this into account.

The main action offered in that response was that the Community Engagement officer would work with and support a cross service meeting, involving the association, Housing Officer, PCSO to talk through the issues face to face. We understand at time of writing that the Community Engagement Officer has met with the Hollingdean rep several times since 17 December, with the following suggested ways forward from those conversations being actioned:

In relation to the lack of Estate service reporting due to the resident cleaning the block, firstly we would like to acknowledge the work and effort put in by this resident and secondly we would suggest that Rebecca Mann works with this resident to look at what is being found and how to report this without risk.

With the support of the Community Engagement Officer and the Resource Centre, Hollingdean group committee has drafted a questionnaire. The purpose was discussed; to gauge whether this is a community issue, designed to address issues of anti-social behaviour in Horton Road, including the positives of living in Hollingdean, what can be made better as a basis, rather than asking if there are drug problems in the area.

Following discussions with the Housing Officer team, due to the sensitivity of the concerns raised around this matter the committee have been advised to allow further time for investigation, unravelling the different stories and incomplete information. The Housing Team are also trying to liaise with Hollingdean rep directly on this matter and it would be good to see a timescale in place for this work. The Hollingdean Rep and Rebecca can work with the Housing team to get this in place. When the investigations are complete there is an agreement to have a multi-agency meeting which will decide on next steps to resolve the issues.

The Hollingdean Rep has also asked Housing North to send a generic letter to give advice on drug dealing/what to look out for to residents. Rebecca Mann will support and liaise with them on how best to do this and report back with a timescale

Regarding Installation of door entry systems

Note from Community Engagement Team

We note that there are no doors on which to install door entry systems as the blocks at Horton Road are the open stairwell design. Therefore the question is also about main entrance doors as well as the electronic door entry system.

Response from Geof Gage, Acting Head of Housing (Property & Investment) / Business & Performance Manager 01273 293235

We have looked into this and there is no possibility of our considering installing doors to these blocks.

Our main entrance door programme has a limited budget, and this is for the replacement of existing doors where they fall into disrepair or require upgrade.

The requirement for these blocks would also entail the installation of new door entry systems throughout which whilst a separate budget is also committed to upgrades and replacements of existing not installs of completely new.

Should further down the line there become an opportunity that we have met our obligations on our upgrades and replacements we may be able to consider this as a new install, but this would not be in the foreseeable future and not a consideration until 2024/25 if at all.

Regarding Reporting of antisocial behaviour

Response from Michael Raywood, Housing Manager – North Housing Team, 01273 290674

That antisocial behaviour recording be reviewed. Firstly, people should be able to report problems in a way that does not result in them feeling that they are in danger, or there is a risk that the perpetrators will find out they've made a complaint and take revenge. Secondly, the Council should consider how it could collect its own evidence without having to rely on reports from residents.

Thank you for your enquiry for which I address each point in turn below:

- (i) *“Firstly, people should be able to report problems in a way that does not result in them feeling that they are in danger, or there is a risk that the perpetrators will find out they've made a complaint and take revenge.”*

In the first instance all complaints regarding antisocial behaviour received by the council's housing team are dealt with in the strictest of confidence. Personal information about the complainant is not disclosed to the alleged perpetrator unless consent is obtained. In some instances, due to the very nature of a complaint, for instance threatening behaviour, the identity of the complainant would be invariably exposed. In others, there is a risk of exposing the identity of the complainant as the case progresses and is escalated to court. In such instances however, council officers are fully aware of the potential harm to victims and therefore protecting a

person's identity is integral when implementing a robust risk assessment that prevents victims from feeling that they are in danger upon reporting a problem such as antisocial behaviour.

If it was a matter of issuing a warning as a response to a complaint the council are able to send out generic warning letters however in order to address a specific problem, it can be difficult to conceal the identity of the reporter.

If the matter required a more formal enforcement action such as an injunction (or other) then the matter would be required to be referred to court. In accordance with the rule of law, a person is innocent until proven guilty and as such is entitled to a fair hearing/trial. This means that they would have the right to defend any allegations made against them. In absence of empirical evidence any case against an alleged perpetrator is weakened. Therefore, whilst it is admissible to submit anonymous accounts of an incident, the council's legal advice always encourages first hand testimony that can not only affirm the events that had taken place but also provide a first-hand account of the impact that such incident has had. This is not to say that the council's legal team would not accept anonymous or independent witness' but without first-hand accounts it can weaken the case. In support of protecting the victim the court can also make the necessary adjustments to conceal a person's identity such as the implementation of screens or using video link.

- (ii) *Secondly, the Council should consider how it could collect its own evidence without having to rely on reports from residents.*

Depending on the nature of the complaint the council can collect evidence in absence of a victim, such as, recording equipment for noise, covert surveillance in the form of cctv (although there is tight legislation surrounding this) for antisocial behaviour in the public domain, and in person (as a professional witness). To witness antisocial behaviour as a professional witness however, can be difficult as more often the incidents that occur are sporadic and outside council hours. That is not to say that they cannot be witnessed as in the absence of council officers the police (who work in partnership with the council) can also act as a professional witness.

I hope that I have answered the elements of your enquiry, if however you would like to speak further on the matter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Council housing performance

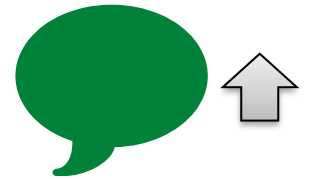
Quarter 3 2019/20 (Oct to Dec 2019)



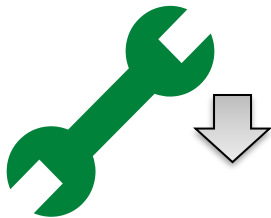
97.00%
Rent collected



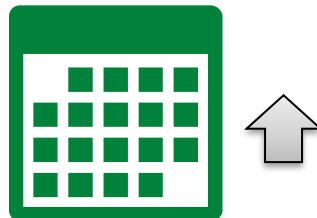
88%
Calls answered



95%
Satisfaction
with ASB cases



13 days
Routine repairs
completion time



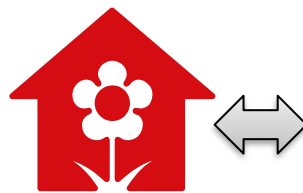
97.8%
Repairs
appointments
kept



17 days
Empty home
re-let time



97%
Cleaning tasks
completed



82%
Bulk waste
removed within
7 working days



92%
Five-year
tenancy visits
completed

Performance since previous quarter is:



Better



Same



Worse



Brighton & Hove
City Council

Quarter 3 2019/20 performance report – key trends

Top 5 scores (compared to target)

1. Average re-let time, excluding time spent in major works (17 days vs 21 day target)
2. Lifts – average time to restore service when not within 24 hours (6 days vs 7 day target)
3. Average time to complete routine repairs (13 days vs 15 day target)
4. Victim satisfaction with way closed ASB case dealt with (95% vs 85% target)
5. Lifts – average time taken (hours) to respond (1.9 days vs 2 day target).

Bottom 5 scores (compared to target)

1. Repairs Helpdesk – longest wait time (50 minutes vs 5 minute target)
2. Repairs Helpdesk – calls answered within 20 seconds (27% vs 75% target)
3. Stage one complaints escalated to stage two (16% vs 10% target)
4. Repairs Helpdesk – calls answered (57% vs 90% target)
5. Stage two complaints upheld (21% vs 18% target).

5 biggest improvements (since previous quarter)

1. Average re-let time, excluding time spent in major works (20 to 17 days)
2. Stage one complaints responded to within 10 working days (64% to 72%)
3. Victim satisfaction with way closed ASB case dealt with (90% to 95%)
4. Empty properties passing post-inspection (91.1% to 93.8%)
5. Responsive repairs passing post-inspection first time (93.80% to 95.90%).

5 biggest drops (since previous quarter)

1. Stage two complaints upheld (8% to 21%)
2. Repairs Helpdesk – calls answered within 20 seconds (65% to 27%)
3. Repairs Helpdesk – calls answered (91% to 57%)
4. Rent loss due to empty dwellings (0.61% to 0.97%)
5. Repairs Helpdesk – longest wait time (34 to 50 minutes).

Meeting action minutes

Meeting	Home Service Improvement Group (HSIG)		
Attendees	<p>Residents: Carl Boardman - Chair (Central Area Panel Rep (APR)) Eddie Cope- Vice Chair (Chair -Resident Inspectors), Jason Williams (Central APR) Lynn Bennett (East APR), Alison Gray & Muriel Briault (West APR), Terrence Hill (North APR), Tomm Nyhuus (Seniors Housing Action Group) Jane Thorp, Dave Croydon, David Spafford (Leaseholders Action Group) Gary Jones, (Residents) Ted Chapman (Observer)</p> <p>Staff: Hannah Barker (Community Engagement Officer) Geof Gage (Interim Major Works Manager) Glyn Huelin (Head of Housing Repairs & Improvement)</p>		
Apologies	Ian Beck, Chris El-Shabbah, Miles Davidson		
Venue	Conference Room	Produced by	Hannah Barker
Date/ Time	17 th September 11:00- 13:30	Completed	2019

Three documents circulated at beginning of meeting:

- 1) Core Partnership Group report 2) Project governance & engagement briefing, 3) Existing Specialist Mechanical & Engineering contracts

1. Update on actions from previous Home meeting, 12th June 2019

Field Officer costs: 17.1% from Housing Revenue Account (HRA). 24% of Field Officer referrals come from HRA properties. What about for Community Engagement Officers?

Action 1

Cost Benefit analysis discussion and information referred to Business & Value for Money Service Improvement Group (BVFM)

Minutes agreed

2. Project governance & earlier engagement processes - Glyn Huelin

{ref paper: Project governance and engagement briefing for HSIG – tabled at meeting}

Glyn talked through this paper, developed on request following last HSIG exercise; what members want to look into more. Including ongoing opportunities to do more consultation in the future to enhance these proposals.

- **Q:** How does Housing communicate to people who can't read? Suggestion to use recording. **ACTION 2.1**
- **Q:** Suggestion to change wording on document to remove distinction between Leaseholders and tenants; in regards to costings; because, whether it's costs an individual Leaseholder or the HRA budget as a whole, value for money is important. **A:** Point taken and appreciated.
- **Q:** Re involving Tenants & Residents Associations (TRA) – local TRA has been involved in the 43 Manor Hill conversions, but not received full information. **ACTION 2.2**
- **Q:** Glyn received a document submitted by a member; requesting consideration of a clearer policy and process for standardized communications over leaseholder and

tenants early consultation where applicable, particularly where leaseholders have to raise funds. **A:** Glyn & Geof will look at this together then feed into the Programmes Task & Finish group (new contract arrangements following end of Mears contract)

ACTION 2.3

- **Q:** Are new homes considered major projects? **A:** in this context, no.

3. Specialist Contract Procurement Strategy Update : How we procure and Value for Money - Glyn Huelin

{ref briefing - Existing Specialist Mechanical & Engineering (M&E) contracts }

Glyn went through the briefing and the overseeing of arrangements. Glyn talked through the information about the 5 different major M&E contracts, who they are currently with, when they will end. Next steps are for Miles, Glyn and procurement colleagues to develop a strategy with options of how deliver. Previously they have been bundled up. Most involve both revenue (ongoing, repairs) and capital (one off, replacement) works. Different contracts require different approaches, different amounts of repair or replacement. An update on progress at **FUTURE MEETING**

- **Legionella** - This is mostly a regime of testing & maintenance of stored water
- **Door Entry Systems** – both servicing repairs and replacements
- **Contract compliance** – suggestion (incorrect perception) that a contractor has freedom to choose to repair or replace and this doesn't offer value for money. **Clarification for accuracy:** A council officer, contract manager, always makes choice between repair and replacement – the process is to raises a request, a works order.

Members further points: Surveyor and supplier should be as separated as possible. Repair and maintenance similarly - Why only one supplier for each activity?

- **Q: re above** – New Door Entry System at Westmount 3 years ago, please can residents see the paperwork for this? **ACTION 3.1**
- **Q:** is there a system or procedure for contract compliance that has standardized performance indicators (KPI) attached? **A:** each contract is different; we hold a contract meeting, some have KPI's
- **Warden Service** – in Seniors Housing – does the contract include Care Link? **ACTION 3.2**

P&I Team and work streams clarification:

- Specialist M&E contracts lasting 2 to 3 years
- In house team doing repairs, empty properties, EDB
- Major Projects team includes frameworks, multi trade projects, blocks, Hidden Homes
- New Planned Works contracts (replacing what was Mears) kitchens & bathrooms, doors – Task & Finish Programs group looking at this.

Chairs Q: Where will decisions get consulted on, made and reviewed?

A: Home Group and Leaseholders Action Group feed into Area Panels and up to Housing Committee. Depending on scale of costs, it may also go to Policy & Resources Committee.

4. Pigeons roosting under solar panels – from Resident Inspectors

Topic brought by resident inspectors and to be noted. **ACTION 4**

5. Subgroup report: Partnership Core Group by resident representatives.

{ref Core Partnership report Aug 2019}

- New project to re-carpet hard to let properties in Seniors Housing.

- Pilot project to redecorate and re-carpet empty properties is extending **ACTION 5**

6. Annual Election

Chair : Carl Boardman

Vice Chair: Terrence Hill

Core Partnership Group : Muriel, Jason, Eddie, Alison, Gary

EDB Panel : it was agreed that both area panel reps from each area go to the meeting, but only hold one vote for each area panel.

7. Subgroup report: Resident Inspectors (RI) by resident representatives.

- **Hidden Homes at Bristol Estate;** converting bin stores into homes – found a few problems. Application is at pre planning stage.
- All inspectors wear safety boots and flouros if on a building site
- ID badges with photo, name, role ('Resident Inspector') on them are being costed up ad will be issued by Housing Officer and held at Housing Centre office between each activity
- Training in London about 'how we work together for Housing in the future' attended by 3 RI. Shared information about what we do in Brighton with people from all over UK.
Good news story about a London new Association who worked hard form a new group and to improve a common area of grass at their housing.

8. Subgroup report: Estate Development Budget Panel by resident representatives

{ref report tabled at meeting by Terrence : in brief: }

- EDB Panel May & July. Panel are meeting every two months. No financial allocations or balances this financial year. Seniors Housing have been presented with their own budget, no details spending.
- Administrative support in the EDB Project delivery - vacancy within the Community Engagement, some Quick Bid costs missing.
- Online EDB application now operating. some on older forms. bids will continue to be accepted on old EDB paper application forms.
- no delay with project delivery because of April 2020 Repairs/Responsive "In-House".
- there were balances across some Panels financial spreadsheets due to the non-completion of some of last year's projects - these will be updated and I will report at half year interval or at future Home Group.
- EDB process in good health with Fairness at its core,
- future actions from recent EDB Review Outcomes and more Recommendations for 2020-21 later to come out of the EDB Review/Task Group- meeting quarterly
 - RI also looking at EDB works – very good reports on standard and improvement to peoples' lives. – e.g. Lindfield Court garden
 - Outcome of EDB Review; Seniors Housing given own budget directly.

9. What do residents want Home Group to look into – Session 2. A look again at the comments collected a the last meeting, and a further look in detail into each section

- **Suggested FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS x 2 (below)**
 - **Explanation of Scrutiny activity** - RI do scrutinize, but the formal process of Scrutiny involves a lengthy detailed inspection and report writing, at arm's length from service. (Brighton panel disbanded several years ago).
 - **Discussion:** How to have and deliver an overview of common issues raised at different meetings with objective of saving time.
- Resident Involvement structure is less straight forward than other resident forums
- Same people raise same issue at different meetings; staff to direct residents to correct

place.

- Residents could be helped to understand function of some meetings is to escalate issues
- Observation that every resident in the room is involved in several panels & groups.
- Resident Involvement Review 3 years ago suggested reduction of Area Panels (to one city wide panel that fed to Housing Committee) but it was rejected. We could look again at this.

9. Any Other Business

- **Aims & Objectives for Home Group** - Draft accepted and adopted
- Complaint re North Area panel and Home papers tabled at meeting unsatisfactory – noted.
- Central Area Panel raised issue about bin service being difficult for older residents at Hampshire court (low rise) where city clean assisted service cannot operate. This pointed out as an issue for Tenancy & Neighborhood Service Improvement Group (T&N SIG)
- **Q:** Environmental improvement Budget query – where is report? **A:** Justine Harris, head of Tenancy service now heads this. A Board is established which Geoff is on. Nothing yet to report. When it does it will go to T&N SIG.

Action : Description		Who
1	What % of Community Engagement Officer costs come from HRA vs central funds?	Hannah > Emma McDermot
2.1	How does Housing communicate and include residents who can't read in consultations?	Hannah > Equalities colleagues
2.2	Local TRA has been involved in the 43 Manor Hill conversions, but not received full information. Glyn will ask project manager to give Lyn an update	Glyn > Project manager
2.3	Request for standardized communications for early consultation especially re leaseholders feedback into the Program Task & Finish group	Glyn & Geof
3.1	New Door Entry System at Westmount 3 years ago, residents request to see the paperwork for this	Glyn to report back to Jane T
3.2	Re Warden Service contract: does it include Care Link?	Miles (cc Glyn)
4	Pigeons roosting under solar panels, what is our strategy to prevent?	Miles
5	Re Pilot project to redecorate and re-carpet empty properties that has been extended. What are the costs of this?	Geoff/ Glyn

Future meeting agenda items – Next meeting

1	Ref item 3: An update on progress on 5 different major M&E contracts procurement
2	Long term empty properties – houses empty for months vs long waiting list.
3	Look again at SHINE and thermal capacity of buildings & sustainability & saving energy

Business and Value For Money Meeting Minutes

4/12/2019 | 10.00am-12.00pm

Tyson Place (Moved to a café nearby due to the room being locked)

Attendees: David Spafford, David Croydon

Staff: Keely McDonald, Fabrizio Oliveri, Beth Hudson

Minutes Completed by: Beth Hudson

Section 1 – Welcome and Apologies

Introduction to new staff	
1	New administration staff members, Fabrizio Oliveri and Beth Hudson. New community Engagement Assistant – Lian Baker who mainly focuses on EDB.

Section 2 – Agenda items, agreements and future action

Agenda Item 1 - Engagement Strategy	
Discussion/ Points Raised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KM – We are looking to develop the Engagement Strategy with the consultation of all SIGs. <p>Meaningful Consultation and Current BVFM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents would like input to policy - Residents would like input into expenditure, they weren't consulted on the recent Housing Revenue account budget - Confusion around the purpose of the different SIGs, there are some overlaps. - Residents feel that when BVFM report to housing committee, information is watered down. - Residents feel they are consulted about minor issues but higher level issues are just imposed on them. - I&E and other group minutes to be received quicker - The residents would like all group SIG and citywide group meetings documents to be available online <p>Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All meetings have the same 20 people attending - They feel that currently the population is uninformed - They would like wider representation of the population in Brighton, some groups are underrepresented. Wider involvement was promised but not achieved. - Everyone should be involved, not just association members. Not all housing in the area have Resident Associations, but there should still be a division in groups between housing issues and general engagement strategies within the city. - All meetings should be attended by councillors - CEOs need to be targeted to work more directly for the public and

	<p>councillors rather than the council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reports/minutes should be more tractable – the art of precis-writing. - Something to mimic like/hate buttons if possible for collecting data. - Too many abstract nouns as job titles – DaveS suggested a top level concrete division of buildings/people. - Way too many meetings. <p>BVFM Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Engagement team want as many people involved as possible in contributing to the new Engagement Strategy. - We are trying other ways to reach new people from underrepresented groups such as door-knocking and pop-up events. - Tenants would like to know when these are happening, they would like to join/shadow if possible. - The Involvement & Empowerment (I&E) group will be focusing on the new Engagement Strategy and all other Service Improvement Group members are invited to join. - Use surveys to gain a wider reach of people. - Content of SIGs to be wider and include higher level issues. <p>Other Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaseholders are not notified of changes and budgets, they would like to be involved in the discussions on maintenance etc of properties and know what costs are preferably before they go ahead. - There should be a separate consultation for repairs and maintenance of buildings, recent experiences with unnecessary works going ahead that haven't fixed the problem. - When reporting problems, residents don't feel that they have the same leverage as CEOs. - The group highlighted that informal groups don't have the same representation as formal groups, there should equal opportunity to be fully involved with or without a formal group. - CEOs need to be targeted to work more directly for the public and councillors rather than the council. - Reports/minutes should be more tractable – the art of precis-writing. - Something to mimic like/hate buttons if possible for collecting data. - Too many abstract nouns as job titles – Daves suggested a top level concrete division of buildings/people. - The group feels that there are too many meetings. - Clarity on difference between community engagement and community development – why do we use Trust for Developing Communities. - The Community Engagement team facilitate and support residents of Brighton and Hove to have a relationship with their council. Empowering and enabling them to have their voices heard. TDC carry out development work with activities and interest groups in Brighton and Hove e.g. youth work.
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Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sent out question/information to the rest of the BVFM members to ask them the same questions and thoughts that have been discussed today. 	Who KM	Deadline
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send Team Structure to BVFM members • Create 'Useful Contacts' file for BVFM members for general queries • Find out if the SIG docs can be available online 	BH BH BH	
Agenda item 2 - Citywide Conference			
Agreement / Decision	Concerns from the group that the attendance at the Citywide Conference isn't large enough to warrant holding the conference.		
Agenda item 3 – Universal Credit Update			
Agreement / Decision	The group were interested in find out some more in-depth figures, the specific figures are listed below as actions.		
Action(s)	<p>Find more stats/figures on the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The numbers of people involved in comparison to population as well as %. • The number of people living in poverty. • The number and % of people living in areas. • Figures on transfer between UC direct payments to landlords, how the transfer is going and how many people have/plan to have the direct payments. • The number and % of people being sanctioned and what they're being sanctioned for. 	Who KM	Deadline
Agenda item 4 – Home Group Updates			
Agreement / Decision	Concerns that the current standard of properties isn't up to modern housing standard.		
Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find the report that the quantity surveyor made for the comparative cost of scaffold/cherry pickers that came up in Home Group and have it as Agenda Item in Home Group meeting. 	Who BH	Deadline
Agenda item 5 – Any Other Business			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has been agreed to have no more print outs available, and to bring their own unless it new material. • There are currently issues to warrant scheduling future meeting. It is recommended meetings are paused until group members raise items. 		

Section 3 – Agenda for next meeting

1	Report from Home Group of Comparative Costs
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Meeting action minutes

Meeting	Senior Housing Action Group (SHAG)		
Attendees	<p>Resident's :Roy Crowhurst (Chair SHAG, Woods House), Ray Goble (Elwyn Jones Court), Eileen Stewart, Terry Rogan, Tomm Nyhuus (Somerset Point), Ernie Tidy (Churchill House) , Tony McCoy (Sloane Court), Tom Whiting, Rachele Frost (Leach Court)</p> <p>Councilor: John Allcock</p> <p>Partners: Peter Lloyd (Health Watch)</p> <p>Staff: Peter Huntbach (Seniors Housing Manger) Hannah Barker (Resident Involvement Officer) Glyn Huelin (Head of Housing Repairs & Improvement) Emma McDermott (Head of Communities, Equality and Third Sector)</p>		
Apologies	George Kouvaras (Leach Court)		
Venue	Leach Court	Produced by	Hannah Barker
Date Time	31 July 2019 10am- 12.30pm	Minutes completed	13 Aug 2019

Minutes & Matters arising - Update on actions from previous meeting

	Description
1	Peter circulated information about recycling to all schemes. The Manor Paddock resident is available to talk to residents about how to increase recycling.
2	Somerset Point; 2nd door paint job was completed well, thank you. Q: Can funding be recouped from 1 st poor standard paintwork job? Q: would like to hear that sub-contractor won't be used again. A: Action: Glyn will follow up.
3	Sloane Court: lighting being installed. Mears kept residents waiting 2 hours to discuss what was wanted; dusk till dawn, pointing downwards. Scheme manager put report through.

Items discussed, agreements and future action

1) Chairs Communications
<p>Task & Finish Group looking at new Repairs, Maintenance, Planned and Major Works contracts. Running till end March 2020. Looking at: Avoid problems in early days of Mears, ensure smooth changeover, repairs desk and other IT contracting & upgrading, training schedule, 85% staff coming over, 168 new staff, Resident Inspectors work to continue incl. looking at Key Performance Indicators.</p> <p>Cllr comment: keep money in house, make services more responsive,</p>

importance of good communications.

Tony McCoy elected as Seniors Housing rep on Task & Finish group.

Woods House has 4 unwanted new tables. 2 to go to Leach Court, 2 to Sloane Court

2) New Community Engagement Team – Emma McDermott

New team will look at how the council engages with all communities; incl. faith, seniors, people with disabilities. How can we do better and how do we improve services. Resident Involvement Officers are now part of the new team, with Communities Officers. Can work with any member of the community. Continue with landlord services, now can also help in conversations with other teams. More flexible responsive offer. Team also sits with Jonathan Best, who manages the Communities Grant fund scheme, so we can link more easily with funding.

Q: Where will capacity come from? **A:** In part from the larger team and partly administrative duties being passed onto administrators.

Q: Gap in disability awareness and provisions for blind & partially sighted people. This reflected on by many individuals and groups. **ACTION:** Emma McDermott to meet with Tony to discuss further.

3) Update on Scheme review

Paper: Brighton and Hove Seniors Housing Standards (DRAFT 2019)

Developing a standard for our bricks and mortar. We have now heard back from the external consultant and those broad strokes. Now we look into detail and costing; e.g. sensory loss expertise in decorations. And with Seniors Housing Action Group and Tenant Disability Network; residents inform the report. E.g. adding mobility scooter storage and CCTV. Planning a full report to Housing Committee to ask councilors to agree Standard.

Are we heading in the right direction?

Example of standard: level access balconies. Most of our buildings are not purpose built and restrict access in various ways. Chair: Request for surveys on all current schemes; is it possible that these restrictions are improved? Standard shows difference across our schemes and feeds into level of investment needed.

Timeline; 1) agree standard 2) detail.

- perhaps residents would benefit from a fast communal broadband service provided by the council – into homes, so over and above the free access recently installed into communal areas.
- All schemes are fitted for Sky & Virgin Freeview.
- Voluntary social care provided informally between neighbors of concern; Communities team could take up these issues and help to support informal neighborliness.

Action: Peter to ask Estates; can we fit mini ramp over balcony entrance raised lip, to improve access for some residents to their balconies that cannot use them.

4) Peter Huntbach update

Papers: Draft Welcome leaflet and Scheme Manager Service' about the offer

Scheme manager levels: recent sick leave and annual leave has meant service under staffed. Looking into developing bank staff to help, as not always able to get agency staff. They will be able to do calls.

Some schemes have ability for residents to simply press an, "I'm okay" button. This doesn't suit everyone as some need more interpersonal contact.

Q: Why are scheme managers on training? Shouldn't they already be trained?

A: important to refresh some training, or introduce latest best practice, e.g. supporting bereavement commissioned by Cruise. What we need to do more is to share with residents what training our scheme managers are attending to help improve communications.

Q: how many scheme managers now? **A:** 26 or equivalent of 20 Full time = 920hours. This is an increase on our staff resource, plus other housing providers are reducing the number of staff. We know visible scheme managers are important, it's a service you pay for and we need to deliver.

Point: we need to have capacity to cope with absence and plan for it. Also, we have an aging workforce *and* need to look at recruitment and retention.

Q: Any resident scheme managers? **A:** on 3 sites, Yes.

Door cameras video linked front door bells. Could be fitted for people who it would be most helpful for. We don't yet have costings.

Fall monitors work anywhere in scheme, but don't locate where the person is.

Action: Peter to report that back and ask and how to solve it.

Draft Welcome Leaflet: intention to improve this leaflet – feedback sought. We do also meet new people, induction is an important part of the process for new lettings. Happy to also look at the induction process with Action group too.

Q: is there a link between scheme manager and Lettings team? **A:** Scheme managers are informed and they make a phone call. Still more to do on improving that service – e.g. speed of response is slow.

Point: Leaflet should point out to new tenants that they are moving into a community where there are opportunities to help each other.

5) Round Robin

Pet Friendly schemes Q: When is decision? **A:** this is decided on a case by case basis. Sometimes we have empty properties where the only applicant wishes to bring a pet. Interested tenants need to speak with their Scheme manager.

Any rules on parties and children? A: grandchildren and friends can visit as long as they understand where they are

Lift still out of action at Slaone Court with confused story of work not being

done. **Action:** Glyn will look into this.

Wifi in communal Areas Delighted to have this and Sloane Court is applying for EDB quick bid for a properly accessible decent set up. (e.g. ergonomic mouse, accessible sized keyboard and screen) Research at Hampshire Court and Leach court where out of date poor standard equipment is seldom used.

Response: that equipment was bought some time ago with a government fund then. Equipment recommended at the time through SCIP (Sussex Community Internet Project)

Info: Guidance about using communal area Wifi has just gone to Scheme Managers.

Action: Peter to consider audit of digital equipment

Alterations & Adaptations: mainly wet rooms - good but takes far too long in some cases. Delays in assessment through to contractors installing. Chair is looking into this.

Estates can do minor adaptations e.g. handrails

Residents happy when communications inform us what is going on. E.g. Somerset Point regarding windows and doors, communications has been really good.

If residents have problems with major works or repairs, the Property & Investment Team can be contacted. 01273 293427

Councilor final note: Thank you for the invite and quality of debate here. Heard about your emphasis on maintenance and communication being key, that scheme managers are important and the adaptation process waiting times are unreasonable. Will return as much as I can, want to be accessible to you, appreciate the officers working for you too.

Actions

1. Somerset Point; Can funding be recouped from 1st poor standard paintwork job? Would like to hear that sub-contractor won't be used again. **Glyn will follow up.**
2. Disability awareness and provisions for blind & partially sighted people is poor at the council. **Emma McDermott** to meet with Tony to discuss further.
3. **Peter** to ask Estates; can we fit mini ramp over balcony entrance raised lip, to improve access for some residents to their balconies that cannot use them.
4. Fall monitors work anywhere in scheme, but don't locate where the person is. **Peter** to report that back and ask and how to solve it.

Tenants Disability Network

October 2019 Minutes

21st October 2019

Hampshire Lodge, Hampshire Court, Brighton

Attendees: Alison Gray, Muriel Briault, Ann Packham, Martin Cunningham

Sue Fever – East Sussex Association for Blind and Partially Sighted People

Council officers: Emma McDermott (Head of Community, Equalities and Third Sector),

Sarah Potter (Operations), Rebecca Mann (Community Engagement Officer)

Introduction and Apologies

Apologies: Chris El Shabba and Jason Williams

Minutes of last meeting and matters arising agreed.

Disability Transport

Alison explained that Victoria Garcia formerly of Brighton and Hove Buses is now working with Disability Transport working for government to change accessibility for buses. This was welcomed by members of the meeting as they remembered her attending a previous TDN meeting many years ago.

Buses now publicise that you must move for priority users and driver will ask people to move. New buses will be more wheelchair accessible.

1) Disability Pride

Disability Pride – buddy system for people with learning disabilities.

Yes there is. (Tom confirms can invite – Jenny Skelton (Founder of Disability Pride)

Action invite to future meetings once agreed by TDN

Action: 2.1 Contact Possibility People – project for people different disabilities

Action invite officers for specific items rather than a commitment to attend each meeting.

3) Sea Lanes

Action: 3 RM to ask where the application has got to? Tom to get update.

4) Deaf Services Forum

Emma McDermott explained there is a Deaf Services Forum which she facilitates. Some police officer trained on deaf awareness/ sign language, just waiting on funding.

Action: We would require a Deaf Services Liaison Forum co-ordinator – who could interpret. Agenda send invite in advance/discuss on phone.

5) Dementia Awareness

(Martin) raised that there is a lack of support from NHS – users eg. Not reminded of appointments and loses appointments. Working with Dementia Care/Alzheimers to change legislation. Technology now allows residents to be traced if they appear missing or have a fall – alerts 999/ Carelink.

6) Sue Fever B&H Care Co-ordinator

Head Office – Hailsham and East Sussex but based in Hove Park Villas

Share with other sight loss organisations, guide dogs, support vision impaired up to 30, RNIB. Their office building is set up for people with sight loss and majority who work there fall under this remit and have sight loss. Works well for those who work there and meetings.

Resource Centre Kitchen

It is set up for high technology – talking clocks, a hot drinks water machine which beeps to alert the user once cup is filled, it's accessible for all These items are for sale and people can buy and try before they buy help those sight los.

Referrals eye hospital, self referrals, GP's Social Services.

Can do visits – check how managing around own homes – kitchen and other areas, also need emotional support , financial issues – benefits and advice, form filling, refer on to other agencies if more complicated. Varies. Isolation. Rehab Officers for Visually Impaired (ROVI's) help people negotiate the streets, struggling to read, low vision clinic in B&H area – Somerset Street. ROVI's based there as well. – magnification aids –

Isolated – home visiting volunteer service -38 who visit same clients on weekly basis. Befriending Volunteers so can't do 'jobs' round the house as volunteers. Bespoke – if someone wanted to run – would find volunteer to match. Ongoing recruitment and training. There is usually a waiting list. They are police checked, thoroughly interviewed and trained to deal with sight loss.

Vision awareness training – staff and volunteers, relatives.

Social activities first Friday in month (50-100 people) carpet bowls, creative activities, games, quizzes.

Evening

- Opp Somerset Point. Exercise groups for those who are less active
- Generally people over a certain age.
- Falls and trips over – common occurrence.
- Funding is at a premium.

Deaf/blind group meet at Sue's office – 12 members – average 80 year olds. Most active, cooking, exercise – 10 pin bowling.

Sound tennis group – various places. Travel all over the world, have tournament – average age 50s and 60s – run by members itself

Out and About Group – regularly monthly – murder mystery, pub night quiz, walk, sports (various) Active for Life – King Alfred Leisure Centre. Lose sight lose independence – access to sports when lose sight important.

Contact Sue:

Email: sue@eastsussexblind.org

Train guide dogs at the office in Hove – change in training – rewards instead of being told 'no'.

Head Office 01323 8332252 – referrals .

Case study of tenant – could we ask a resident to speak about the issues faced around the home – digital awareness (accessible technology)

(If it is deemed that there is a need for this in the future Sue can facilitate she will. Also enable groups but also support where needed. Also if huge need for digital awareness this can be set up)

Living Well Plus – sensory equipment – assisted technology – Sarah Potter raised. Funding to provide equipment – Sarah asked Sue if working with

Grant Finder – free search for volunteer and organisation – Becca to email Sue with Donna’s details for applying for grants. Social groups. Action Done.

Newsletter – Volunteers for Sue’s Group. Peers – those with disabilities included. Volunteer drivers required. Volunteer office assistants, social groups.

Sue will provide article for newsletter. Action Sue provided and Rebecca forwarded to Alison.

Digital Inclusion – on next meeting agenda. Action Request resident to attend to speak about experiences.

Equalities – Look out how the council can offer help so not left behind. How do we support them? Basics, accessibility **RM to contact Digital Design Team**

Could the group do Peer-Peer training eg Martin is very skilled in IT.

Have Seniors Housing talked about Digital Inclusion? RM to contact Seniors Housing Peter Huntbach

Action: Becca to invite Sam to discuss what we can offer around digital inclusion for funding.

Adaptations

- 📄 Adaptations completed – on track to complete as many major housing adaptations in council homes as last year and within the budget £1.15m
- 📄 Staffing – we have recruited an extra Housing Customer Support Officer on the Adaptations side, Michael Malone, to help with the volume of work in the team, and in the process of recruiting an additional Home Improvement Officer (HIO) for a fixed term 12 months and an Occupational Therapist (OT) for 6 months, to help speed up the assessments and delivery of adaptations, particularly for council tenants
- 📄 Local Energy Advisory Partnership (LEAP) – the council is working with LEAP to offer eligible residents, including council tenants, a free energy and money saving service; LEAP advisors can install free simple energy

saving measures such as LED light bulbs and draught-proofing, check the best energy tariff for you, arrange a free money advice consultation and help find funding for further energy-saving home improvements. Sarah offered to draft a piece for the next TDN newsletter and submit to [tdnbhcc@gmail](mailto:tdnbhcc@gmail.com) – *done 23/10*

- 🌈 Looking ahead – the guide to getting housing adaptations done, originally written with the help of TDN, needs updating and TDN's help again! Sarah asked if this piece of work could be included on TDN's work plan going ahead

Newsletter

- Don't spend your own money get an assessment by OT's – need proper assessment as health needs can change.
- Sue's article
- Things more light hearted Travel Diary – Alison to provide. Coach trip, igloo – overcoming barriers.
- Martin two articles
- Bring draft of articles to next meeting.
- Sarah to bring article

Service Improvement Groups

We are looking to encourage as wider participation in our Service Improvement Groups as possible. Below is some information about each group. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact the relevant Community Engagement Officer, their details are below each group.

Home Group

Home oversees repairs and the capital works programme. They elect to the Panel that votes on Estates Development quick bids. They are developing the Resident Inspector programme where residents inspect homes before they are let, look at the seniors' studio conversions, and are shadowing Mears and K&T Heating operatives.

Contact: Hannah Barker | 07771 389497 | Hannah.barker@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Neighbourhood & Tenancy

N&T look at improving the appearance of our estates and the neighbourhood or block as a place to live. They gave feedback on the layout of the new Tenancy Agreement. They will be working on the grounds maintenance and estate inspection reviews, and anti-social behaviour in response to matters raised by the Resident Only meetings.

Contact: Rebecca Mann | 07717 303183 | Rebecca.mann@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Involvement & Empowerment

I&E work on ways to involve more people and have developed 'roadshow' kit to take to community events and a new resident involvement leaflet. They are working on a new handbook for tenants and residents associations. A subgroup organises and reviews the resident citywide conference and another group is working on a new brochure for resident involvement.

Contact: Diane Coe | 01273 291376 | Diane.coe@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Business & Value for Money

BVFM keep an eye on Housing's Quarterly Performance and Annual Reports. They have looked at the resident representatives' Expenses Policy and association newsletters and grants. Their look at welfare reform and the work of the Income Management Team is important in the current climate. Open to looking at new projects and subjects. There are currently no active subjects that the group is looking into. Please come along and bring your ideas.

Contact: Keely McDonald | 07771 389434 | Keely.mcdonald@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Area Panel Briefing Paper

Procurement of contract for servicing, repair, maintenance and installation of lifts serving Council housing sites

10th, 11th, 12th & 13th February 2020

1. Summary

- 1.1 A contract has provided for the servicing, repair, maintenance and installation of lifts across housing sites since January 2012. The contract with the incumbent contractor, Liftec Lifts Ltd., ends on 1st April 2021 following the 1 year extension to the contract allowed within the provisions. Across the housing stock there are 107 passenger lifts and approximately 140 stairlifts/mobility hoists serviced and maintained through the existing contract.
- 1.2 We will be seeking approval from Housing Committee to procure a new contract covering this work. The proposal is to procure and award a contract for a term of 3 years, with the option of an extension for a period of up to two years following the initial three year term, subject to satisfactory performance by the provider.

2. Background

- 2.1 The average value of the servicing and maintenance of our existing lifts is approximately £200,000 per annum, this covers planned maintenance, planned service schedule, reactive repairs and breakdowns.
- 2.2 Since 2011, we've completed replacement or major modernisation works on 63 lifts across the city. There are 26 lifts, that were identified at the beginning of the contract, across the city that have not been replaced or modernised through the current contract due to continued levels of good service and reliability. A draft outline programme of planned modernisation and upgrades to a number of these lifts over the next 5 years is estimated to have a value up to £3million over the 5 years of the proposed contract term (including extension).
- 2.3 The outline programme of lift replacement/modernisation during the planned contract will be refined and monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure prioritisation of those lifts most in need of upgrade or modernisation. This programme is devised and monitored by the councils own lift engineer, in consultation with colleagues across housing, and is based on age, availability of parts and history or breakdowns and repair.

- 2.4 Where a lift is identified for replacement or significant upgrade, appropriate and specific consultation will be carried out with tenants and leaseholders in the affected block at the appropriate time. This includes writing to all residents and inviting all residents to meetings to discuss the proposed works.
- 2.5 Consideration has been given to separating the different elements of the existing contract. This could include separating the servicing and maintenance elements into one contract whilst separately tendering works for lift replacements and upgrades as individual and separate projects.
- 2.6 The preferred option is to tender all works within one contract. Our experience indicates that better reliability and operation of lifts is achieved when the contractor responsible for the installation of a lift is also responsible for the ongoing servicing and maintenance. Additionally, procurement of individual projects such as one off lift replacements would require additional resources being spent on procurement processes and project management of individual projects. It is also likely to lead to an increased risk of inconsistency in delivering projects.
- 2.7 The current contract approach has been successful, being robustly managed by a dedicated council officer and the performance monitored against a set of Key Performance Indicators reported through the housing management performance report. The dedicated contract management includes regular contract meetings and site visits to plan, inspect and sign off works. Recent decisions to carry out partial upgrades as opposed to replacements provides reassurance that the contract can be well managed and should reassure residents that costly works are not being carried out unnecessarily.
- 2.8 A 3 year contract with the option of a 2 year extension can provide good value for money as the costs of services are locked into the length of the contract, and allows the council to build a relationship with the contractor. The procurement of contracts of this complexity is resource intensive and can take around a year to complete. Having to re-procure contracts more frequently would come at a higher administrative cost. Shorter contracts are also less attractive to the market and may lead to less contractors bidding for the works.
- 2.9 The future repairs and maintenance programme is bringing in-house the housing responsive repairs and maintenance service as agreed at Housing & New Homes Committee, September 2018. As noted in the report to Committee at that time 'specialist works will continue to be delivered through individual contracts, with reports coming back to committee for authority to procure and award such contracts if required in accordance with the council's Constitution.' This contract falls within this category.

2.10 Lift, servicing, maintenance, repairs and installation is a highly technical and specialist area of work for which we do not have the skills and experience, beyond the contract management function, to deliver in-house. Repairs and maintenance of lifts requires specialist supply chains that the council does not have access to and would not have the resource and buying power of a specialist contractor working regionally, nationally and internationally across a larger portfolio of lifts. This would present significant risks to the ability to complete repairs quickly and therefore provide a good value for money service to residents.

3. Tenant and Leaseholder involvement

3.1 Discussion at these Area Panel meetings is a key element of the consultation process. This briefing paper will also be discussed at Leaseholder Action Group on the 2nd March 2020.

3.2 Leaseholders will also be consulted with throughout the procurement process if agreed at Housing Committee to proceed to procure.

3.3 All residents would be consulted with regarding a lift replacement or significant modernisation prior to works commencing, this would include resident meetings.

3.4 Leaseholders would also be consulted through the section 20 process on any proposed lift works where the leaseholder contribution would exceed £250.

4. Next Steps

4.1 A report is due to be presented to Housing Committee on 11th March seeking approval to delegate authority to the Executive Director for Housing Neighbourhoods and Communities to:

- (i) Procure and award contracts for the services described below for a term of 3 years.
- (ii) Approve an extension(s) to the contract referred to in 2.1(i) above for a period of up to two years following the initial three year term, subject to satisfactory performance by the provider.

Contact officers:

- Miles Davidson, Interim Manager of the Mechanical & Electrical Team, Housing, Miles.Davidson@brighton-hove.gov.uk
- Geof Gage, Acting Head of Housing Property & Investment, Housing Geofrey.Gage@brighton-hove.gov.uk

