

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: NORTH AREA

7.00pm 22 MAY 2018

HOUSING CENTRE, MOULSECOOMB

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Hill (Chair), Councillor Meadows,

Representatives: Pete Weston (Vice Chair), Sharon Bratten (Tenant), David Metcalfe (Chair GCMTRA), John Marchant (ECMTRA), Ray Metcalf (ECMTRA), Terence Hall (Bates Estate), Peter O'Connor (BETRA), Sarah Rowntree (NMTRA Area Rep), Theresa Biggs (ECMTRA), Heather Hayes (Coldean Independent Group), Jennifer Simmonds (Coldean), Jane Hunter (EMTRA Area Rep), Andrew Hunter (EMTRA)

Officers: Eddie Wilson (Mears General Manager), Brett Wells (Health & Safety Manager), Hilary Edgar (Housing Service Operations Manager), Ododo Dafe (Head of Income Involvement and improvement)

Guests: Sarah Booker-Lewis (Local Democracy Reporter)

1 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

2 APOLOGIES

2.1 Apologies were received from Hayley Smith.

3 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

5 CITY CLEAN UPDATE

5.1 Residents had the following concerns, enquiries and statements:

- There was no noticeable work conducted regarding recycling bins
- There was unclear notification from City Clean
- It was further stated that there was a possible issue regarding old age people moving bins to collection points
- Concerns were expressed regarding the communication between City Clean
- It was widely agreed that students were causing the most mess in the area
- An update on the aforementioned concerns was requested

5.2 A City Clean representative responded to resident's enquiries, concerns and statements with the following:

- Wheelie bins were the main format of recycling being pursued as they took up almost as much space as a box
- Glass was still being collected in black boxes
- A survey was being conducted and bins were to be sent out next month
- An AC scheme was being implemented to help alleviate elderly people's concerns
- The representative offered up their direct email address to help circumvent issues regarding operations of City Clean's phone service
- It was confirmed that efforts were being made to increase the performance of collectors due to recycling collection being negative

5.3 Councillor Meadows promoted Community composting schemes.

5.4 The chair stated that echoed resident's concerns regarding communication issues between the public and City Clean. She clarified that the new wheelie bins gave info regarding what is allowed.

5.5 **AGREED** – that the update was satisfactory.

6 ROUND ROBIN

6.1 Residents had the following statements, concerns and enquiries:

- The costings of bids was queried as resident's managed to attain the same bid for less money than what was quoted
- Concerns were raised regarding labour costs
- It was stated that a low number of people that are going to benefit from this is too low

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

- Concerns regarding lack of attendance of people winning bids was welcomed
- Officers stated they were willing to listen to other suggestions to help address problems regarding the presentation of areas

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

7 ESTATE DEVELOPMENT BUDGET 2019/20

7.1 Hilary Edgar, Housing Service Operations Manager, gave a brief overview of the current status of the Estate Development Budget, she highlighted the aims, financial stats and the economic reality of the budget. She outlined the brief series of events leading to the recommendations and noted the upcoming set up of both a task and finish group and of updating Service Improvement Groups.

7.2 Residents had the following concerns, enquiries and statements:

- There was a request for a deputy for the Service Home Group
- Concerns were expressed regarding BHCC parking for free
- Residents queried the reason for the diminishing budget when rent was being increased

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

- It was clarified that rents did increase every year however they had decreased by 1% in previous years
- It was further clarified that HR were reducing in line with reducing rent
- BHCC could only spend HRA on residents and not other things, HRA couldn't be used to subsidise other areas of the Council
- It was clarified that the Estate Development Budget was partially decreasing due to fixing existing homes and maintenance and was used to invest in more housing as it was the most secure form of renting homes in any area
- It was emphasised that Council housing rents were still cheaper than private rent

7.4 The Chair clarified that the Estate Development Budget related to the Council rents was not Council tax. She further enquired if chain link fencing could be made part of a wider review on options for fencing.

7.5 **RESOLVED** – That the recommendations be agreed.

8 UPDATE ON HOUSING IT PROCUREMENT

8.1 Ododo Dafe gave a brief overview of the update of Housing IT Procurement report gave a brief overview of the report to the New Homes Committee and gave background information on the report. It was noted that the current contract was due to expire on the 30th November, it was further noted that new technology would be implemented to help move away from the permit system she noted that some residents would be invited to help scrutinise the new IT system.

8.2 Residents had the following concerns, enquiries and statements:

- In reference to the agreed budget of £3.2 million, a resident enquired if this was for the physical system or for the research
- A resident enquired if the budget included the cost of the project team and whether they were internal or external
- A resident further enquired what the length of time on new contracts be

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

- Of the £1.2 million budget, half of this was for the software, the other half was for research, procurement and implementation
- It was hoped that the project team would consist of BHCC staff however the contract was for 18 months roles over 12 months could not just be restricted to BHCC staff, as a result roles would then be made open
- The new system was anticipated to last for around 8 years however a review could begin 5 years after implementation

8.4 **RESOLVED** – that the report was agreed.

9 RESIDENTS' QUESTION TIME

9.1 (Item 2 – Estate Inspections)

9.2 Residents had the following enquiries, concerns and statements:

- Estate inspections were not useful as it was revealed that no action had been taken
- Residents requested clarification of the new field officer's role
- It was emphasised that a better line of communication between BHCC and residents was of high importance

9.3 Officers had the following response to residents' concerns, enquiries and statements:

- Officers stated that the role of field officers were still being defined, resident's feedback and suggestions were welcomed
- It was clarified that the results following estate inspections would not be fed back to residents as they were private
- Officers clarified that providing information without breaching resident's confidentiality was an important distinction that had to be adhered to strictly and at all times

9.4 The Chair stated that residents of North ward should be included in future discussions.

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

10 ANNUAL REPORT

10.1 Ododo Dafe, Head of Income, Involvement and Improvement gave a brief overview of the Annual Report and highlighted information regarding the budget and to support tenants get involved with BHCC as a landlord. She noted that future reports would mirror the style of a magazine and welcomed any feedback regarding readability and content.

10.2 **AGREED** – that the report was noted.

11 PROCUREMENT OF NEW PARKING ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT FOR HOUSING LAND

11.1 Hilary Edgar gave a brief overview of the report gave a brief overview of the report to the New Homes Committee and gave background information on the report. It was noted that the current contract was due to expire on the 30th November, it was further noted that new technology would be implemented to help move away from the permit system.

11.2 Residents enquired if the procurement of housing land was different to procurement on highways and parks

11.3 Officers confirmed that the procurements were different and that this was just for housing land.

11.4 **RESOLVED** – that the report was noted.

12 PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 12.1 Ododo Dafe gave a brief overview of the Performance Report. She noted that it followed the identical template of the previous report and that this report was comprised of easily accessible information rather than a complicated report. Information drawn from previous years was given to cross reference and highlight how BHCC compared with other organisations. It was noted that a report regarding Legionella and Asbestos was included along with information on properties that have been empty for 6 weeks or more and the amount of rent that was lost as a result.
- 12.2 Residents noted that this quarter was worse than the last quarter.
- 12.3 Officers agreed that the previous quarter was marginally better
- 12.4 The Chair stated that the report would be discussed in detail at the next Housing and New Homes Committee.
- 12.5 **AGREED** – that the report was noted.

13 CITY WIDE REPORTS

- 13.1 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed all the reports.

14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 13.1 The date of the next meeting is 6 September 2018.

15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The meeting concluded at 21:00pm.

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

