

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: NORTH AREA

7.00pm 29 NOVEMBER 2018

MOULSECOOMB HUB

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Yates (Co-Chair)

Representatives: Jenny Simmonds (Coldean Independent), Heather Hayes (Coldean Independent), Peter O'Connor (Bates Estate Area Rep), Terrence Hill (Bates Estate Deputy Area Rep), Justine Harris (Head of Tenancy Services)

Officers: Simon Whitwell (SHINE FIC), Hilary Edgar (Housing Services Operations Manager), Theresa Youngman (Contract Compliance Manager), Hannah Barker (Resident Involvement Officer)

46 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

47 APOLOGIES

47.1 Apologies were received by Councillor Mo Marsh, Councillor Anne Meadows and Eddie Wilson (Mears General Manager).

48 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

48.1 Councillor Yates (Chair) addressed the panel and stated the following:

“At the recent citywide conference, residents expressed an interest in learning more about recycling. In response to this, we would like to offer residents the opportunity to visit the material recovery facility at Hollingdean. Please let Hannah Barker, Resident Involvement Officer, know if you are interested. There are lots of steps in the building, so please bear that in mind when deciding whether this is something you would like to do.”

49 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

49.1 Correction to EDB on agenda items 32.2 and 32.3.

49.2 Correction of spelling to “managed” on Page 8.

50 ROUND ROBIN

50.1 Residents made the following comments:

- EDB results of a pathway including surplus fences as safety measures for children were shown

- Concerns were raised regarding the lack of hand rails at properties of disabled tenants
- Issues regarding window replacement schedules were highlighted

50.2 Officers responded to resident's comments with the following:

- Stated that they would be willing to write to separate household tenants
- Mears' contract was coming to an end and an effort to complete front entrance programs was underway
- There was a focus on doors in high rise buildings and work on this was currently in the pipeline.

51 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME

51.1 (West Area Item 2 – EDB Underspend)

51.2 A resident noted that it was speculated that due to social dynamics, spending was different across all areas.

51.3 An officer stated that the underspend may be a result of spending too little.

51.4 **RESOLVED** – That the panel agreed to note the report.

52 SHINE PROJECT UPDATE

52.1 An officer gave brief overview and stated the following:

- Energy efficiency and fuel poverty work was being carried out in tenant's homes.
- Volunteers at Shine project were currently being trained and could possibly be involved with tenant advice in future.
- It was confirmed that electric power was 4 times more expensive than gas and as a result added to very high bills.

52.2 Residents had the following comments, statements and enquiries:

- It was noted that many properties were old and damp and that BHCC were reluctant to provide sufficient appliances such as radiators.
- Different methods of resolving issues regarding condensation were requested.
- Panel members were encouraged to attend TRA meetings.

52.3 Officers responded to resident's statements, enquiries and comments:

- An officer stated that damp could appear similar to condensation and provided various points of information to delineate difference and methods that could be employed to help counter this.
- It was confirmed that this project was part of the Interreg program funded by the EU.
- BESCO was on behalf of the Shine project
- Bulbs would be provided for free

52.4 The Chair noted that in future it might be useful to provide information regarding gas and electrical heating.

52.5 **RESOLVED** – that the panel noted the report.

53 DISCUSSION ON FUTURE GUESTS TO NORTH AREA HOUSING PANEL

53.1 Residents enquired if the following people could be brought to future meetings:

- A new field officer
- An MP to discuss government housing legislation
- Arboriculturalist
- Robert Walker of City Parks

54 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET

54.1 Hilary Edgar, Housing Service Operations Manager, gave a brief overview of the Environmental Improvement Budget, and stated the following:

- This was supported by the Housing and New Homes Committee, with a full report coming to January Committee.
- A full report was to be ready for the January meeting.

54.2 Residents had the following comments, statements and enquiries:

- Concerns were expressed regarding Councillor comments in relation to fast tracking for deliverance at the previous Housing and New Homes Committee meeting.
- It was noted that the proposal was for the communal environment not graffiti or clearing mess across the City.

54.3 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed the report.

55 HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT

55.1 Hilary Edgar gave a brief overview of the Housing Management Performance Report. It was stated that this was being presented in a way that was more transparent and that the full report was being brought to the Housing and New Homes Committee in January.

55.2 Residents had the following statements, concerns and enquiries:

- A league style presentation was proposed.
- It was noted that there was an issue regarding letters arriving as a result of changeovers which had negative effect on residents.
- It was enquired if Universal Credit was being rolled out by postcode.

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

- It was confirmed that there was an ongoing issue in relation to the role out of Universal Credit, it was noted that 40% of tenants in arrears were on Universal Credit.
- It was further noted that the impact of Universal Credit was in the performance report.

55.4 The Chair confirmed that Universal Credit was being rolled out by postcode.

55.5 **RESOLVED** – that the panel note the report.

56 CITY WIDE REPORTS

56.1 A resident confirmed that a new senior leaseholder liaison officer would be available for engagement.

56.2 **RESOLVED** – that the panel agreed to note the reports.

57 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

57.1 A resident had the following enquiries and statements:

- More promotion was necessary for Estate Development Budget meetings due to a lack of engagement.
- A clarification of the Council Tax rises was sought.

57.2 An officer stated that they would be willing to attend the next Estate Development Budget meeting.

57.3 The Chair confirmed that 3% Council Tax increase had already occurred due to the Social Care Precept however this was not available now. It was noted that BHCC would only be looking for an increase of 2.99% not 5.99%.

58 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

58.1 The next meeting will be 21 February 2019.

The meeting concluded at 20:35.

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of