

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

4.00pm 11 MARCH 2020

HOVE TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBER

MINUTES

Present: Councillors: Williams (Chair) Gibson (Opposition Spokesperson), Mears (Group Spokesperson), Atkinson, Fowler, Heley, Osborne, Robins and Littman

PART ONE

56 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

a) Declaration of Substitutes:

1. Councillor Littman substituted for Councillor Hugh-Jones
2. Councillor Robins substituted for Councillor Brennan

b) Declarations of Interest:

1. There were none.

c) Exclusion of Press and Public - To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

1. The press and public were not excluded from the meeting as there was no Part Two items.

57 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

57.1 With the following amendment the minutes were accepted as a record of the meeting.

Paragraph 45.5: 'Councillor Mary Mears stated that inflation should not be included in the HRA budget *in relation to the Youth Service. Inflation of 5k had been removed in the previous year and should not appear in this report*'.

58 CHAIRS COMMUNICATIONS

58.1 Homeless & Rough Sleeper Strategy

Alleviating homeless and rough sleeping is a key part of our Housing Committee Work Plan.

We have recently completed our public consultation to inform our final draft Homeless & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020-2025 which we will be considering at Housing Committee on 29 April.

I would like to thank those who contributed to a significant city-wide consultation response which has been invaluable to informing our development of the strategy.

In total 164 people attended group sessions, 721 individuals and 23 organisations responded to an online portal

This included a consultation on the first draft of the strategy and consultation aimed specifically at private rented sector landlords to which 386 responded.

The draft strategy:

- Identifies the key homelessness and rough sleeping issues in Brighton and Hove and action which will be taken to address these;
- Provides evidence to support related funding opportunities and collaborative working to meet a range of shared citywide priorities;
- Reflects the national approach, supported during citywide consultation, focusing on Prevention, Intervention and Sustainability.

Our final draft Homeless & Rough Sleeper Strategy will also embed the aspirations of the Homeless Bill of Rights.

Future Repairs & Maintenance to Council Housing Stock.

Later in this meeting we will consider an update report on our programme to bring in house customer service, quality assurance, responsive repairs and empty property refurbishments to council housing stock.

We have had really good positive engagement from the c 140 Mears colleagues due to transfer to the council as we have been undertaking our one to one meetings with each transferring staff member.

Mears managers are also proactively supporting this transition and are positive about moving over to council employment and the opportunities we have to develop and improve our service to residents.

From our meetings with Mears colleagues over the formal measures letter to all transferring staff, we have been able to identify and share some really positive benefits of moving into council employment, improve our service to residents and address some areas of concern.

Through our comprehensive early engagement with Mears colleagues and listening to staff and unions we are planning to implement:

- Voluntary Living Wage for all employees, including 13 staff who are positively affected as we have found that this is not currently in place;
- The opportunity for all transferring staff to take advantage of the Local Government Pension Scheme, including life assurance;
- Parking Permits available for operatives when completing works to our council homes. This will enable them to offer a better service to our residents by avoiding having to keep topping up parking payments or parking inappropriately.
- Improved ICT hand-held devices to deliver more responsive customer service.
- Weekly payroll.
- Access to the positive benefits of our staff People Promise.

As part of our work on social value and community wealth building we will be continuing our commitment to deliver 1 apprenticeship per £1million of expenditure across the housing repairs and maintenance service.

In the first year, we are looking to secure 10 apprentice plumbers as well as ensuring that existing apprentices can continue their learning when they transfer to the council. We will also be recruiting a Workforce Development Manager whose role will be to deliver the social value elements of the Programme, including engagement with local communities.

Coronavirus

As you will be aware the country is preparing for an increase of people being infected with Covid 19.

The council are also making preparations in readiness.

We are working closely with our colleagues in Health, Public Health and across the council to co-ordinate work to ensure we are able to continue to deliver essential services to our residents.

Some aspects of this are already covered by our business continuity plans, including preparations should we have a number of staff who are off sick, and where staff may have to work from home.

We are currently reviewing and refining these plans to ensure we are ready to mitigate future risks.

We are also considering our essential services and planning for accommodation and services to be available for any of our vulnerable people who may need to self-isolate, for example: homeless people; rough sleepers; those in temporary accommodation; travellers; and those in seniors housing.

Whilst there are challenges, we are rapidly developing processes so that we are ready to respond as necessary.

59 CALL OVER

59.1 All agenda items were called for discussion.

60 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

(a) Petitions - None

(b) Written Questions

1. Barry Hughes

There is a consensus amongst parties (councillors, activists and agencies) that it is desirable to have a drop-in hub where the homeless and those at risk of street sleeping could call in without referral. This hub would be a secure and immediate source of comfort and support. We believe the Pavilion Place is a suitable council-owned venue, has this been investigated?

Chair's Response

Thank you for your question.

63 -62 Old Steine and 3 Palace Place, Brighton are corporately owned by the council.

Teams from Corporate estates and Housing are jointly exploring options for the future use of this building to make best use of the asset(s).

This will include potential for housing and mixed-use developments in line with key priorities within the Corporate Plan.

This work is on-going and is focused particularly on supporting the delivery of the Housing Committee Work Plan, the emerging Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy and increasing the supply of new homes in the central area of the city.

Options for the use of 63 -62 Old Steine and 3 Palace Place will come forward for consideration to a future Housing and Policy & Resources Committees.

Do you have a supplementary question?

We are aware of discussions. Thank you for the response.

2. Charles Harrison

At Housing Committee on 15th January 2020 I asked for data indicating the costs of operating night shelters and was given a total cost for 2018 / 19 of £150,160 and was told that a "full breakdown of 2018 / 19 costs" would be circulated. With regard to my supplementary regard the lack of properties for short-term accommodation I was told, "the Council will collate a response and write to the enquirer."

I have not seen any written response to my question or supplementary and should be grateful for an indication as to when this response might be expected.

Chair's Response

Thank you for your question.

Please accept officer apologies that this information was not circulated earlier.

We have a completed a detailed spreadsheet we can share with you and other interested parties providing a breakdown of the costs of providing SWEP 2018/2019.

There is no additional breakdown for the costs of the Winter Night shelter provided by BHT during this period. This was a contracted service funded at a total cost of £110,000.

The minutes of the Housing Committee meeting of 15 January don't currently appear to record a note of any supplementary question.

We have different sources of 'short-term accommodation' having recently reported to Housing Committee and Policy & Resources Committee on:

- Procurement of council owned short-term temporary accommodation, and;
- Procurement of Short Term and Emergency Temporary Accommodation.

Officers would be happy to meet with you to understand the source of your question related to *lack of properties for short-term accommodation* in order that we can provide and circulate a full response.

Do you have a supplementary question?

Thanks for the response. I am happy to work with officers or councillors to achieve solution.

Chair's response:

A meeting will be arranged.

3. John Hadman

What are the Council's plans to make sure that the probable Covid19 epidemic does not interrupt SWEP and other services critical to the health and wellbeing of rough sleepers and the homeless?

Chair's Response

Thank you for your question.

We are working closely with colleagues in Health and Public Health and our commissioned providers to ensure that we are able to establish effective risk mitigation and business continuity plans to ensure that we are able to continue to deliver essential services for people who are homeless and rough sleeping. This includes joint planning on the provision of staffing, accommodation and essential services including food and healthcare for people who may have to self-isolate.

Do you have a supplementary question?

None.

4. David Thomas

Currently council residents have a range of methods of calling in a repair – telephone, email or web form. For many the favoured method is email and tenants were assured that the current email address (containing a Mears suffix) would be changed to a council email address. We have now been advised that a decision has been made to remove this option and we would request that this decision is reversed and that the email reporting of repairs remains after 1st April.

Chair's Response

Thank you for your question.

The council is committed to ensuring that all our customers have a good experience when they interact with our services.

In order to improve our service, we have reviewed the ways residents can report repairs.

Repairs reported via email often do not contain all of the information required for the Customer Service Advisor to correctly diagnose the repair first time.

This leads to further emails being sent back and forth, which delays the scheduling of the job and is frustrating for the resident.

In light of this, our review of the ways we can improve reporting of repairs includes the replacement of the unstructured email option with encouragement for residents to report repairs online via the webform on the council's website.

The webform prompts residents to complete certain fields which ensures we get all the information required in the first instance. We believe this saves time and offers a better more responsive service to residents.

The webform design is based on the principles established by the Government Digital Service and aligns with the councils Customer Experience Strategy.

The vast majority of repairs reported via telephone. It is estimated that less than 5% of repairs are currently reported via email.

We will continue to communicate via email to residents where this is indicated as their preferred method of contact.

Do you have a supplementary question?

Thank you for the response. Council staff are working with tenants to support them; however, the web form is clunky and there are no options to save a copy for personal records and no job number is given. When redesigning the service will tenants have a reduced way of contacting the council?

Chair's response

It is not intended that the service will be reduced. The Chair and officers are happy to meet and discuss the matter and the ability to email the council will be continued if it is needed.

5. Dave Croydon

The council has recently used the i360 for the Housing Chief Executive officer interview sessions. This included food and other hospitality.

How much was paid to the i360?

Chair's Response

Thank you for your question.

The use of the venue was free of charge.

We paid a half day delegate rate for food and refreshments at a total cost of £481.60 excluding VAT (£577.92 including VAT).

Do you have a supplementary question?

None.

6. Caroline Dooley

The Welsh School of Architecture have designed a standard 3-bedroomed house which produces more energy than it consumes. It cost £125,000 to build and every £100 spent on electricity will be balanced by £175 in energy exported back to the national grid over the course of a year. Professor Jones of the Welsh school of Architecture says:

"Our intention is to demonstrate that you can build this sort of house at a cost comparable to standard house construction and using off the shelf technology.

And there's no reason why we can't build every building like this. It is important we do this at a price that people, local authorities and house builders can afford."

Is Brighton and Hove planning to build houses and buildings like this, if not why not, and are we stipulating to contractors and Housing Associations that new structures be built to high environmental standards like this considering the urgency that we need to lower our carbon emissions?

Chair's Response

Thank you for your question.

Our Housing Committee Work plan to 2023 prioritises, achieving carbon reductions and sustainability in housing and includes the following actions:

- Develop an action plan to set out how we will work collaboratively to ensure housing contributes to making the city carbon neutral by 2030;
- Review the energy efficiency and provision on all new developments

Our commitment to work towards the delivery of net zero carbon homes includes our recently established Member Working Group to look at how we can achieve these standards in the housing we build.

The council is keen to learn for others and to deliver homes that are highly sustainable, value for money and make wonderful places to live.

The Welsh School of Architecture example looks very interesting and we will review what lessons can be applied to our New Homes for Neighbourhoods programme from this and share with the working group.

The council is already using some of these technologies, for example our most recent project at Buckley Close deployed a similar panel system as used in the Welsh example.

We are also looking at incorporating similar ground source heating system into our Victoria Road project.

We have specific constraints and pressures in Brighton & Hove that may mean the Welsh School of Architecture model may not be wholly applicable in the city. These include:

- Land values and the need to maximise use of scarce land supply, including options for flatted developments rather than houses to reflect our land and cost constraints and need to maximise the number of new homes that can be delivered on an individual site;

- Topographical other land constraints;
- Design and planning constraints in the City, including conservation areas and being adjacent to the National Park;
- Managing pressures of higher than average build cost inflation in the city and shortages of skills and labour;
- Our commitment to high specification homes, including a high number of wheelchair accessible homes, that the council will retain and manage for decades.

Building fabric and energy efficiency measures are the most effective way to reduce energy demands, CO₂ emissions and costs for occupant of new buildings.

Our currently adopted City Plan Part 1 sets an energy performance target for new homes of a minimum 19% reduction on carbon emissions on top of the Building Regulations requirements. At the time of adoption this went further than many local authorities were able to set.

The role of the emerging City Plan Part 2 is to support the delivery of reduced carbon emissions by:

- Extending the 19% improvement in the dwelling carbon emission rate to all development not just new residential development.
- Encouraging new development to achieve greater reductions in CO₂ emissions through the use of passive design, fabric standards, energy efficiency measures and low and zero carbon technologies in specific locations in the city.
- Seeking higher minimum EPC ratings than current government targets to increase the energy performance of the existing stock of residential and non-residential development.
- Supporting district heat and community heating schemes.

Do you have a supplementary question?

None.

(c) Deputations - None

61 ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS

- a) Petitions – None**
- b) Written Questions**

Question from Councillor Amy Heley

After attending the Trans awareness training session last month, it was brought to my attention that there is currently no specialist provision in Brighton and Hove for LGBTQIA+ people who become homeless. Many LGBTQIA+ people experience specific trauma that cannot be catered for by our current temporary, emergency or supported accommodation.

What are we currently doing as a council to ensure that the specific needs of the LGBTQIA+ community are met when it comes to housing and homelessness, and what more can be done?

Many thanks

Cllr. Amy Heley

Chair's Response

Thank you for your question.

Our new Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy has been under consultation and development. The final draft is due to be considered at Housing Committee in April.

Our Strategy is looking to reflect an emphasis on accountability and transparency for the delivery services across the city to everyone who is affected by homelessness.

This will of course encompass all our communities of interest, including the LGBTQIA community.

In preparing our new Strategy we have:

- Undertaken a comprehensive review of homelessness, including on the drivers of homelessness in the city;
- Prepared a consultation feedback report, including feedback from LGBT organisations, this will be a public document.
- Met with the Equip Trans Sub-Group Meeting, who have made a written submission on the issues facing the TNBI community.
- Completing an Equality Impact Assessment, including all those with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act.

We are proposing a Homelessness Reduction Board and delivery group which will take all necessary steps to be inclusive and listen to all communities.

A key function of the Board is to form an annual action plan for approval by Housing Committee with proposed work that is required based on the evidence collated and priorities agreed.

We have acknowledged that some issues will be looked at now.

We are going meet with Equip Trans Sub-Group Meeting representatives in order to take this work forward.

We would also welcome setting up wider meeting with the LGBTQIA community.

Do you have a supplementary question?

None.

c) Letters

From Councilor Siriol Hugh-Jones

Dear Geoff Raw,

I am submitting the following letter under Council Procedure Rule 23.3 to be included on the agenda for the Housing Committee meeting of 11th March 2020.

The Council recently carried out a spot survey of windows in council blocks. Given that participation in the survey appears to have depended on who happened to be at home at the time, how is the Council able to decide precisely which windows need replacing? And given that many of these windows are relatively new, what arrangements are there to compensate leaseholders who have paid for windows that are either faulty in their design or were not fitted properly or, as has been suggested to me, relied for their proper installation on further cladding work being carried out which has not been done. How many blocks in total have made complaints about their windows? Given the recent concern about repairs requests not being properly logged where items were within their warranty period, is the Council confident that all such complaints have now been properly logged?

Also, is the Council able to give an assurance that all current major projects or scheduled maintenance work (including any remedial work needed in respect of shoddy windows/roof repairs) will have been completed and signed off by the end of March? Where it cannot provide such assurance, please provide details of the outstanding projects/scheduled maintenance/remedial work and indicate when they are expected to be completed and signed off.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Siriol Hugh-Jones

Chair's Response

Dear Councillor Hugh-Jones

Thank you for your letter.

We undertake many window replacements across the whole of our stock as part of our programmes of work and receive some call backs for issues that may arise.

We are taking any concerns raised by leaseholders and residents around window installation seriously.

In order that we can gain a more complete understanding of any issues arising we have appointed external surveyors to proactively undertake a sample survey review focused on windows installed in our housing stock. In particular, some of the high-rise blocks identified in emails from Leaseholder Action Group.

Whilst we do recognise that residents have concerns around the installation of windows, we are also working with our contractors to look in detail at the issues residents have experienced and carry out any rectification works that are necessary.

The inspections of windows we are undertaking will be helpful in identifying any wider concerns.

In addition, contractors are visiting a number of the residents who have raised concerns around their windows to identify any defects and carry out rectification actions.

At this stage we are identifying whether there is a problem across the installations or not.

Hence, we have taken the approach of an initial sample survey of properties in the blocks rather than surveying each property at this stage. Therefore, we did not advise every resident but chose to undertake this on an availability at the time of visit basis.

We placed posters at the blocks we intended to survey to advise residents of our intentions.

We will also arrange visits for any residents that are experiencing issues in order to complete any repairs needed.

Once the inspections have been completed, and we have met with the contractors that are attending properties where residents have raised concerns, I will be happy to share the outcomes and any actions that may be required with residents and members.

As we have previously advised, the contractor responsible for undertaking the window works will remain responsible for any defects and we will make sure any issues are rectified.

This sample survey is in addition to our wider stock condition survey being undertaken to inform our future programmes of planned and major works across our council housing stock, including planned window works.

We are closely monitoring all work streams currently being delivered by Mears.

There are a small number of major projects that will extend beyond the end of March. For major projects to refurbish existing blocks any extensions beyond the end of March are likely to be for short periods of time whilst projects are completed and signed off.

There are other Hidden Homes projects that will continue through to completion later in 2020.

We are finalising details of these projects as we approach financial year end and will share more information once we have reviewed all schemes at financial close down.

Any defects or remedial works that are required following council quality checks will remain the responsibility of the appropriate contractor and the council will monitor this closely.

Please let me now if you would like any further information at this time.

Regards

Martin Reid
Assistant Director, Housing.

d) Notices of Motion – None

62 REGULATION OF SHORT TERM HOLIDAY LETS

62.1 The Committee considered the report presented by Jo Player (Head of Safer Communities).

62.2 Following a deputation to the Tourism Equalities Culture and Communities Committee on 26 September 2019, officers were tasked with producing a report outlining what action could be

taken to address large scale short term holiday lets in residential areas. A Notice of Motion was also submitted to Full Council on 19 December 2019 and considered by Tourism Equalities Culture and Communities Committee on 16 January 2020. Tourism Equalities Culture and Communities Committee agreed to the notice of motion and requested a report on Regulation of Short Term Holiday lets.

- 62.3 In light of the close alignment to the Housing Committee Work Plan action on short term holiday lets, the attached report on Regulation of Short Term Holiday Lets being considered by Tourism Equalities Culture and Communities on 5 March 2020 is also being brought to Housing Committee for members to note.
- 62.4 Councillor Martin Osborne was informed that the City Plan Part Two stated as involving the regulation of short term holiday lets is being dealt with by the Planning team. The time scales for the task force will be given to Councillor Osborne as soon as they are available.
- 62.5 It was noted that complaints need a single point of contact to increase contactability. The number of houses being used for short term lets and therefore not available for long term lets is not known. It was also noted that other authorities check out websites and take enforcement action when necessary.
- 62.6 Councillor Alan Robins noted that Sussex Police acknowledge complaints regarding short term lets and commented that some lets allow families to stay at home.
- 62.7 **Resolved:** The Housing Committee noted the content of the report attached to the agenda.

63 PROCUREMENT OF CONTRACT FOR HOUSING LIFTS INSTALLATION, SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE

- 63.1 The Committee considered the report presented by Miles Davidson (Housing Sustainability & Affordable Warmth Manager).
- 63.2 The purpose of the report is to seek approval from Housing Committee for the procurement and award of a contract for the servicing, repair, maintenance and installation of lifts across housing sites.
- 63.3 Across the housing stock there are 107 passenger lifts and approximately 140 stairlifts / mobility hoists serviced and maintained through the existing contract.
- 63.4 Councillor Mary Mears was informed that there is a list of lifts that need replacement or modernisation which is constantly under review. The repairs budget will need to be increased in order to ensure that lifts are not left out-of-action. The repair team have a daily report which is shared across the Housing teams to identify any vulnerable residents. Should it be required vulnerable residents can be relocated whilst repair works are undertaken. It was noted that the contractors do carry stocks of parts, however, some lifts are very old, and some parts are difficult to obtain. Wherever possible, skip lifts that do not visit all floors will be converted into access all floors.
- 63.5 **Resolved:** That the Housing Committee delegate authority to the Executive Director for Housing Neighbourhoods and Communities to:
 - (i) Procure and award a contract for the services described below for a term of 3 years.
 - (ii) Approve an extension(s) to the contract referred to in (i) above for a period of up to two years following the initial three year term, subject to satisfactory performance by the provider.

64 LEASEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

- 64.1 The Committee considered the report presented by Glyn Huelin (Head of Housing Repairs & Improvement).
- 64.2 The report updated the Committee on work being undertaken to improve engagement with council leaseholders and housing services to leaseholders. The report also provided an overview of how leasehold services are delivered.
- 64.3 Councillor Leo Littman was informed that disputes will be covered in a review of all stages of performance reporting, including historic disputes. Major works will be reported to the Housing Committee via the work plan.
- 64.4 Councillor David Gibson was informed that support leaseholder residents have always been included, this was the same for none residential lease holders. Martin Reid informed Councillor Gibson that some right-to-buy residents found home bills a challenge, however, only resident leaseholders would be supported. The review of interest rates was in the work plan and would be shared with Members.
- 64.5 **Resolved:** The committee noted the report.

65 FUTURE REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE TO COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK

- 65.1 The Committee considered the report presented by David Canham (Senior Programme Manager).
- 65.2 The report updated the committee on the progress of the programme to set up the future delivery of responsive repairs, empty property refurbishments, planned maintenance and improvement programmes, and major capital projects to council housing stock post April 2020.
- 65.3 Councillor Peter Atkinson was informed that the apprenticeship programme will need a larger budget to be expanded. The repairs log is being currently tested by IT and has proved successful so far. The repair call centre will be covered by Mears for the next six months and then be handed over to the Council. It was noted that local small businesses will be contracted to the authority and then used for repair works. Installations, particularly electrical, are being reviewed to ensure safety. Individual tenders will be carried out next year by procurement for major capital works. A 140 staff have been employed, those who are agency will be employed full time after 1 April 2020.
- 65.4 Councillor Mary Mears was informed that the Mears vehicle rebranding will be completed within a couple of weeks and any existing disputes will be transferred from Mears to the Council. The legal costs of which are being looked at to mitigate the impact. It was noted that the costs between agency and full time staff would not be significant before the transfer on 1 April 2020. The figures for the out-of-hours short term costings will be provided to the Councillor separately. Councillor Mears requested that a financial report be submitted to the committee for clarification of transfer costs.
- 65.5 Councillor David Gibson supported the request.
- 65.6 Councillor Alan Robins was informed that the current works are carried out by small contractors, not subcontractors and this would continue after the transfer.
- 65.7 **Resolved:** The Committee noted the progress with the programme which is outlined in the body of the report.

66 HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3 2019/20

- 66.1 The Committee considered the report presented by Ododo Dafe (Head of Income Involvement & Improvement).
- 66.2 The report updated the Committee on the housing management performance report which covered Quarter 3 of the financial year 2019/20.
- 66.3 Councillor David Gibson noted the report and was informed that the staffing of the repairs help desk had been an issue as staff were difficult to recruit knowing the contract is coming to an end. Of the staff who had been recruited some required more training than others and three vacancies needed to be filled. It is the intention that the recruitment process will be modernised, and staff will be attracted and retained from the local area. It was also noted that calls had increased by 27% and the Housing Income Management team has had a high level of staff vacancies which is impacting on the recovery of both current and former tenant arrears. The vacancies are currently being recruited to. The Councillor was informed that rental arrears increase a certain times of the year such as September, when school uniforms are required and Christmas. New staff will be able to support residents once they have been trained. Additional payments are not possible for many. The team will support the best way forward possible. It was noted that rent has not risen for the last four years.
- 66.4 Councillor Mary Mears expressed concerns regarding the quality of work and was informed that the cement coating and external painting of Lynch Court were covered under two separate contracts. The costs of each would be forwarded to the Councillor.
- 66.5 Councillor Martin Osborne was informed that the January staff vacancies have been filled and agency staff are being replaced. It was noted that staff engagement was essential and there were many ideas being considered. Having mixed team meetings to exchange ideas and increase awareness of other teams was one suggestion.
- 66.6 Glyn Huelin stated staff engagement was starting and conversations were being held.
- 66.7 Ododo Dafe noted that staff benefits have been explained to interviewees and training was being implemented across the whole housing section. Office based staff were going out to meet staff based on estates to ensure understanding of resident's issues and gain a sense of place.
- 66.8 **Resolved:** The Housing Committee noted the report.

67 WINTER SHELTER PROVISION

- 67.1 The Committee considered the report presented by Jenny Knight (Commissioning & Performance Manager).
- 67.2 The report examined the financial and resource implications for expanding winter shelter provision for rough sleepers and single homeless people.
- 67.3 Councillor Mary Mears spoke on behalf of Councillor Dee Simson and was informed the anti-social behaviour issues of rough sleepers and homeless people gathering in Bartholomew Square prior to the opening of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) centre at Brighton Town Hall were being looked into. Arriving before the 7pm opening time has been strongly discouraged. A clear message was being sent out. The Councillor was informed that there were no reports of people being turned away and any overspill are sent to other venues in supported accommodation. It was noted that the cleaning team have increased the number of members to ensure the room is cleaned in time of meetings. Next year another building will be looked into being used. It was noted that demand was exceptional at the moment.

- 67.4 Martin Reid informed the committee that any decision on a new venue will come back to the committee.
- 67.5 Councillor Amy Heley was informed that the emergency shelter had an average of 35 persons per night with the overspill locations being used most nights for around 16 persons.
- 67.6 Councillor David Gibson was informed by Martin Reid that the action plan to be presented at the April committee meeting will include information on provision for rough sleepers and homeless after the end of March.
- 67.7 Councillor David Gibson was also informed that the action plan will include costs of SWEP and these will be circulated to Members to show the overall picture. Many of the rough sleepers have no connection to the city with up to 51% coming from around the UK.
- 67.8 **Resolved:** The Committee noted the report.

68 ITEMS REFERRED FOR FULL COUNCIL

- 68.1 None.

69 PART TWO PROCEEDINGS

- 69.1 None.

The meeting concluded at 6.06pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

