

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

ADULT SOCIAL CARE & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.00PM 3 SEPTEMBER 2009

COMMITTEE ROOM 1, BRIGHTON TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Meadows (Chairman); Wrighton (Deputy Chairman), Allen, Barnett, Janio, Pidgeon, Wells and Randall

Co-opted Members:

PART ONE

15. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

15A. Declarations of Substitutes

15.1 Councillor Bill Randall announced that he was attending as substitute for Councillor Keith Taylor

15B. Declarations of Interest

15.2 Councillor Geoff Wells and Councillor Bill Randall announced that they sat on the Local Development Vehicle (LDV) and might therefore have to declare a personal interest if the LDV was discussed.

15C. Declarations of Party Whip

15.3 There were none.

15D. Exclusion of Press and Public

15.4 In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 100I (1) of the said Act.

15.5 RESOLVED – That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

16. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 16.1 It was noted that, at the last ASCHOSC meeting, members had resolved to invite a representative of NHS Brighton & Hove to the next committee meeting to answer questions relating to the commissioning of mental health services and the future use of the Nevill Hospital site. No NHS Brighton & Hove officer had in fact been invited to attend the September 03 meeting, and members agreed that this should be arranged for a future date (October 2009).
- 16.2 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2009 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

17. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 17.1 The Chair noted that an article critical of aspects of the council's housing allocation policy had appeared recently in a local publication, and that she was concerned by the accusations made, which she felt merited a full investigation.
- 17.2 The Chair asked the Director of Adult Social Care and Housing for an update on the progress of the recommendations of the ad hoc panel on students in the community, and was told that the panel report had been considered by the Strategic Housing Partnership, with most recommendations incorporated into the forthcoming student housing strategy.
- 17.3 There was some uncertainty concerning when Cabinet would formally consider the ad hoc panel recommendations (as distinct from considering the completed Student Housing Strategy), and the Director of Adult Social Care and Housing offered to establish when this matter would be considered.
- 17.4 The Chair and the Deputy Chair expressed their dissatisfaction with the time taken for Cabinet to consider the ad hoc panel recommendations in this instance.
- 17.5 The Chair informed members that Brighton & Hove had been successful in obtaining national funding to pilot some aspects of dementia care, and congratulated all those involved in the bidding.

18. PUBLIC QUESTIONS, LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS AND NOTICES OF MOTION

- 18.1 There were none.

**19. MEMBER TRAINING SESSION ON THE NEW PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT
FRAMEWORK**

- 19.1 The training session was introduced by Philip Letchfield, Interim Head of Adult Social Care and Performance.
- 19.2 Members asked questions on subjects including relations with the Brighton & Hove Local Involvement Network, relations with city Carers, and public access to inspection reports.

20. PERFORMANCE REPORTS FROM ADULT SOCIAL CARE & FROM HOUSING

20.1 The Interim Head of Adult Social Care (ASC) and Performance explained that, although ASC performance had been scheduled for discussion at this meeting, it in fact made more sense to address the issue at a later date, as the Care Quality Commission is still in the process of assessing much of the relevant performance data.

20.2 Nick Hibberd, Assistant Director, Housing Management, answered questions on Housing Management performance. These included questions relating to the council's door replacement programme; the shift from measuring process to measuring outcomes in terms of Housing Management performance (e.g. assessing tenant satisfaction with repairs rather than just recording how quickly a repair was made); liaison with ASC and health partners when supporting vulnerable tenants; and the rate of non-compliance with gas safety checks.

20.3 Members congratulated Mr Hibberd, and John Austin-Locke (the report author) on the improved performance of Housing Management and on the clear and comprehensive report placed before the committee.

20.4 RESOLVED – That the recommendations be agreed.

21. UPDATE ON GREEN PAPER ON FUNDING SOCIAL CARE

21.1 This item was introduced by Joy Hollister, Director of Adult Social Care and Housing.

21.2 Members stressed how important it was for local people to be involved in these discussions about the future funding of social care and asked the Director of Adult Social Care and Housing to do all she could to ensure that city residents were made aware of the Green Paper and given an opportunity to participate in the debate.

21.2 Members did not wish to submit their opinions as an Overview & Scrutiny committee, preferring to respond to the Green Paper via their political groups or via a formal Council response (it was not clear whether such a response was planned).

21.3 RESOLVED – That the report be noted and a further report prepared for the next ASCHOSC meeting, providing details of developments regarding the Green Paper.

22. DISCUSSION PAPER ON PROPOSED FINANCIAL INCLUSION POLICY

22.1 This item was introduced by Nick Hibberd, Assistant Director, Housing Management.

22.2 Members welcomed the efforts made by the council to support people at risk of financial exclusion. Members were particularly pleased with initiatives to incentivise tenants to pay their rent on time, with 'financial health-checks' and with a scheme to advise tenants about 'doorstep' lenders (and in some instances to help people renegotiate loans with these lenders).

22.3 RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

23. PROGRESS REPORT ON REABLEMENT SCHEME

23.1 Karin Divall, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care, presented this item.

23.2 Members were informed that people who had undergone re-ablement would have their needs assessed annually. People who developed other difficulties could report these problems via the city's Access Point.

23.3 Ann Hagan, General Manager, ASC, told members that there were longstanding issues in running evening care services due to difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff willing to work these hours. The city commissioners were working to solve this problem.

23.4 RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

24. LEARNING DISABILITY PARTNERSHIP BOARD ACTION PLAN

24.1 This item was introduced by Diana Bernhardt, Head of Supported Housing.

24.2 In answer to questions concerning the planned Learning Disability (LD) Register, members were told that the register would be voluntary and would seek to list current and potential service users (including people who had a LD but who might not achieve the eligibility threshold for receiving support). Negotiation was ongoing regarding which local partner should host the register.

24.3 The Chair stated that she believed the Learning Disability Partnership Board should be commended for its recent work.

24.4 RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

25. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO CABINET OR THE RELEVANT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

25.1 There were none.

26. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO COUNCIL

26.1 There were none.

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of