

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: WEST HOVE & PORTSLADE AREA

2.00pm 6 JANUARY 2021

VIRTUAL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Allcock, O'Quinn, Pissaridou

Representatives: Muriel Briault, Alison Gray, Graham Dawes, Roy Crowhurst, Ann Tizzard, Ann Packham, Claire Johnson,

Officers: Diane Coe, Ododo Dafe, Rob Keelan, Sam Warren, Alice Curtis, Tom Matthews, Eddie Wilson

18 APOLOGIES

18.1 There were none.

19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

19.1 The wording of point 8.3 was amended for clarity.

20 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

20.1 The Chair addressed the panel and gave the following communications:

"We would like to acknowledge the feedback that residents and staff took time to give us about the last round of Area Panels.

There are challenges with using the internet particularly with software, different devices and networks. I recognise that this can make the meeting more complicated to follow and we hope that these issues can be gradually resolved.

We also know that online meetings can be difficult for some and the community engagement team are working with residents to support as many people as possible to access them.

It was very useful to learn how people felt about having a large single online meeting and you can be reassured the feedback, both negative and positive, will be used to help improve the way meetings are organised in the future.

I would like to remind everyone that the Area Panels are for future planning and issues that affect everyone, they are not the forum to raise individual issues, or repairs that have not been dealt with. If you do have an individual issue that is stuck in the

system, please do speak to your Community Engagement Officer who will be able to put you in touch with the right service or person.”

21 WEST AREA PANEL AGENDA

Review of Previous Actions

- 21.1 The Housing Manager referred to an update provided at the previous meeting and stated that no housing officer update had yet been prepared.
- 21.2 The Head of Housing Income, Supply & Customer Service offered to look in to a report conducted in to MEARS, it was stated that a response would be forwarded to residents.
- 21.3 The Head of Housing Repairs & Improvement offered to provide a full response and to bring additional information to the next meeting.
- 21.4 A resident sought all information on all outstanding Clarendon and Ellen bids.
- 21.5 The Community Engagement Manager stated that the underspend was due to be reallocated and there would be a second round of main bids due to this underspend.
- 21.6 A resident requested more information in future, it was noted that there were areas of information that had not previously been covered but that were being included.
- 21.7 The Head of Housing Repairs & Improvement clarified that information regarding the maintenance schedule was necessary.
- 21.8 A resident expressed concern with regard to the works planned many years in advance.
- 21.9 The Housing Manager clarified that EDB was always about resident priorities which may not always be in line with the planned maintenance priorities. It was further noted that scope for planned maintenance issues had to also come through EDB.
- 21.10 The Community Engagement Manager clarified that an Aerials update was to be provided at the next meeting by the Head of Housing Repairs and Improvement.

Responses to Residents Questions

- 21.11 Item 1 – Area Panel Process
- 21.12 **AGREED** – that the response was satisfactory.
- 21.13 Item 2 – Upkeep of Estates and Maintenance of Green Areas
- 21.14 A resident noted that due to a lack of garden maintenance, housing estates in general started to look scruffy and unkempt.
- 21.15 An officer offered to retrieve dates for grass cutting and maintenance from the City Park team. A one-off task and finish groups was proposed.

21.16 **AGREED** – that the response was noted and a one off task and finish group be set.

21.17 Item 3 – Review of Council Policy on Anti-Social Behaviour

21.18 Residents had the following enquiries, statements and concerns:

- A resident gave examples of being able to hear noise from a neighbours' residence.
- A resident requested a meeting to clarify the specifics of this issue.
- A resident reasserted that noise had always been major issue.

21.19 An officer stated that BHCC took a victim centred approach and clarified how BHCC dealt with cases of ASB.

21.20 **AGREED** – that the response was satisfactory and that officers set up an hour to talk with people about this.

21.21 2 Star West Item – West Items Raised in November

21.22 **AGREED** – That the response was satisfactory.

21.23 3 Star Central Item – Maintenance and Installation of External Security Doors in Blocks of Flat

21.24 **AGREED** – That the response was satisfactory.

21.25 3 Star Central Item – Improving Communication about Covid-19

21.26 **AGREED** – That the response was satisfactory.

21.27 3 Star Central Item – Major Problems with Windows and Roofs Contract

21.28 **AGREED** – That the response was satisfactory.

21.29 North Item – Support for Elderly and Vulnerable Residents

21.30 **AGREED** – That the response was satisfactory.

21.31 East Item – Draft Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy

21.32 **AGREED** – That the response was satisfactory.

21.33 East Item – Estate Development Budget

21.34 **AGREED** – That the response was satisfactory.

21.35 East Item – Leaseholder Charges Relating to Antisocial Behaviour

21.36 **AGREED** – That the response was satisfactory.

21.37 East Item – Leaseholder Charges

21.38 **AGREED** – That the response was satisfactory.

Items for Housing Committee

Performance Report

- 21.39 An officer gave a brief overview of the performance report. Various statistics found in the report were highlighted such as the low performance figures.
- 21.40 A resident referred to the lack of routine repairs, from 91%-72%, and enquired if this was due to Covid-19
- 21.41 An officer confirmed that Covid was the reason for this and that as a result of lockdown and other measures BHCC had to leave some less urgent repairs.
- 21.42 An Officer stated that property turnaround was mostly negative, it was noted that there were no contractors in place to do major works. It was estimated that there were around 200 empty properties however staff had been trained and contracted in place able to turn around 50 properties a month. It was noted that in a few months the figure should be back down again. It was further noted that every resident had now been contacted and that responsiveness to BHCC calls was overwhelmingly positive. People had received support and as a result BHCC rent arrears had decreased. It was stated that originally issues with Universal Credit had plateaued and were looking positive.
- 21.44 **AGREED** – That the update was satisfactory.

Workplan Progress

- 21.45 The panel welcomed an update on the Housing Committee workplan progress, it was stated that there were still some issues with people being unable to move house which had an impact on repairs as well. It was further stated that the main concern was to the safety of residents and staff. It was noted that some residents did not want any works due to Covid-19.
- 21.46 **AGREED** - That the update was satisfactory.

Positive Community News

- 21.47 it was noted that the resource centre would remain available throughout the lockdown and that a lottery grant had been received to provide new print equipment.

Adult Learning Offer & HRA Grants

- 21.48 An officer gave a brief update on the Adult Learning Offer, it was noted that 2 online courses had been delivered so far, an introduction to exercise (attended by 6 people) and a course provided in partnership with MIND charity on wellbeing (attended by 10 people). It was noted that 100% of those who attended, following an evaluation survey, stated that they could cope better with problems and this course had helped with personal development, in some cases the course had inspired some to look for information on healthier diets. It was noted that the MINDS courses were due to be

heard in the evening. A gut health workshop was announced, which would be run by a professional and courses on English and family cookery were being considered to take place over the next couple of months. The process for signing up was provided. It was further stated that an advisory network was available online.

21.49 An officer further clarified that residents should Email Claire Johnson to for further details.

21.50 **AGREED** – That the update was satisfactory.

22 AREA PANEL PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 2 2020-21 V2

22.1 Please refer to Item 21.39.

23 HRA GRANT - BRIEFING PAPER

23.1 Please refer to Item 21.48.

24 WEST AREA PANEL ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

24.1 Please refer to Item 21.1

25 COMMUNITY LEARNING INFOGRAPHIC

25.1 Please refer to Item 21.48, please note that this item was merged with the HRA Grants Briefing Paper update.

26 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME

26.1 Please refer to Item 21.11

27 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

27.1 An officer sought resident's views on whether more funding was needed in the Estate Development Budget or if there was enough.

27.2 A resident state that EDB used to be .5 million which had been included up between 4 areas thus reducing this to £350,000. It was stated that an increase would be beneficial.

27.3 The Chair enquired if resident's felt that it was positive for HRA to contribute towards programs.

27.4 A resident stated that this was positive as it was still contributing to the community, it was noted that an example of a fear was of someone starting to hypothetically work in social care and requesting money from HRA for external needs.

27.5 An officer stated that money had been provided from other areas as well, it was noted that many grant applications were from Europe and Central Government.

27.6 A resident stated that there was a need for residents to be inducted in to the inner working mechanisms of BHCC as a lot of the information was confusing.

The meeting concluded at 4.34pm

SignedChair

Dated thisday of