

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: CENTRAL AREA**

**14.00pm 12 DECEMBER 2023**

**BRIGHTON TOWN HALL – BARTHOLOMEW SQUARE, BN1 1JA**

**Present:**

Chair: Emma Salcombe

Councillors: Shanks

Clerk: Francis Mitchell (Democratic Services Officer)

Representatives: Alan Cooke, Christopher Vine, Pippin Boardman, Norman Williams

Officers: Martin Reid, Sam Warren, Justine Harris, Geof Gage, Grant Ritchie

Guests: Sarah Booker-Lewis (Local Democracy Reporter),

**OPEN SURGERY (DEALING WITH INDIVIDUAL ISSUES)**

13:30 – 30 Minutes

**1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES**

**5 – 10**

14:00

1.1 The Chair (Emma Salcombe) welcomed those in attendance and began the meeting.

1.2 There were no apologies received.

**2 ACTION LOG**

**11 - 12**

2.1 CA1 of previous meeting to be actioned, Geof Gage to follow up on Norman Williams' concerns regarding laundry room reviews and changes to laundry room doors and provide an update to the next area panel meeting.

2.2 Justine Harris to follow up with Chris Vine regarding camera on their estate that has had its cable cut.

2.3 Justine Harris / Grant Ritchie / Martin Reid to follow up with relevant services and update Norman Williams on the status of the individual cases that were raised at the meeting.

### **3 MINUTES**

**13 – 16**

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously agreed as accurate and were not amended.

### **4 HOUSING BUDGET REPORT**

4.1 Martin Reid delivered a presentation on this item, updating attendees on the Housing Revenue Account for 2024/25.

4.2 Norman Williams raised concerns regarding waste services. Officers informed them that two contractors were used for waste services, with one contractor focusing on tenancy services and another on repairs and maintenance. Norman further raised concerns regarding the amount of time taken to remove bulk-waste.

4.3 Chris Vine was informed that repairs and maintenance costs were included in rent for council homes.

4.4 Chris Vine was informed that the Council to has first right to buy when a property enters the market within the boundaries of the authority and that the Council had bought back over 300 homes in the last 5 years.

### **5 HOUSING PERFORMANCE Q2 REPORT**

**17 – 36**

5.1 Martin Reid delivered the report as per the item on page 17 of the agenda.

5.2 Chris Vine questioned why the repairs team cannot complete two jobs on site at one time to prevent the team having to be called out twice.

5.3 Justine Harris stated that estate inspections would be starting shortly.

5.4 Norman Williams raised concerns regarding inspectors erroneously listing lights at Essex place as fixed when they were in disrepair and stated that repairs were not completed in a timely manner.

### **6 CITYCLEAN, NEW PROCESS FOR PERSISTENT ISSUES**

6.1 Sam Warren delivered a verbal presentation on this item, providing an update on the meeting between CityClean and Community Engagement that was held to discuss solutions to issues raised by residents.

6.2 The Chair requested that chairs of residents' associations meetings were invited to speak with CityClean at future meetings.

6.3 Justine Harris stated that bulk-waste can be reported to the Estates Services Team for it to be removed within 10 days, and where the bulk-waste was creating a health and safety hazard it would be removed within 24 hours.

## **7 RESIDENT'S QUESTIONS - 2 & 3**

**37 - 62**

7.1 Regarding Question C3.1 – Repairs Online Portal. The Chair read the response to this question which can be seen on page 37 of the agenda.

7.2 Norman Williams stated that once a job number is raised, there was no way for residents to keep track of communal repairs.

7.3 The Chair stated, in response, that the system was being implemented and would be running within 18 months.

7.4 Councillor Shanks stated that it was unacceptable for the IT system implementation to take 18 months.

7.5 Martin Reid explained that it would take time to integrate multiple complex housing database systems onto one IT platform.

7.6 Chris Vine questioned whether it was possible to compile an annual statement for each property so that the housing Committee could identify major issues in housing stock.

7.7 Regarding Question C3.2 – Maintenance of Drains and Gutters. The Chair read the response to this question which can be seen on page 38 of the agenda.

7.8 Martin Reid stated that contractors had been brought in to support with planned preventative work, including a proactive gutter clearance programme.

7.9 Norman Williams stated that six months from initially reporting damaged and clogged drains at Essex Place, no work had yet been done which had led to flooding.

7.8 Regarding Question C2.1 – Delays to Community Workshop at Craven Vale. The Chair read the response to this question which can be seen on page 60 of the agenda.

7.9 Alan Cooke stated that a commitment from the Council that the proposed £80,000 was still available and was informed by Justine Harris that the final budget would be ready by February.

## **8 POSITIVE COMMUNITY NEWS**

8.1 The Chair shared that Essex Place had received two EDB grants that had increased disabled accessibility and that the area was looking more inviting.

8.2 The Chair also shared that the Essex Place community room had been fully decorated and had new flooring installed.

8.3 Alan Cooke shared that three EDB bids had been agreed for Craven Vale but stated he had not heard anything further on the matter. Alan further shared that two benches had been installed.

8.4 Alan Cooke invited attendees to the Craven Vale Christmas Party on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December at 15:00.

8.5 The Chair invited attendees to the Essex Place bingo event on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 18:00.

## **9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**62 – 76**

9.1 Chris Vine suggested a spreadsheet was created listing expenditure for repairs so that residents could see where money was spent.

9.2 Chris Vine was informed that the Council had access to 6 portable CCTV units that can be deployed in bulk-waste dumping hotspots.

9.3 Norman Williams was informed that people dumping bulk-waste had been prosecuted in instances where the licence plate could be identified.

9.4 Pippin Boardman questioned whether light pollution was considered when installing lights, particularly in carparks, and suggested that directional lighting could help prevent large levels of light pollution.

## **10 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

10.1 The items of information were noted.

The Central Area Panel concluded at 16:10PM.