

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: CENTRAL AREA
18:00 17TH SEPTEMBER 2024
BRIGHTON TOWN HALL – COMMITTEE ROOM 1

Present:

Councillors: Mcleay (Co-Chair), Burden, Winder, Mackey

Residents: Emma Salcombe (Co-Chair), Chris Vine, Eileen Stewart, Pippin Boardman, Rosemary Johnson, Norman

Officers: Geof Gage (Head of Housing Investment & Asset Management, Keely McDonald (Senior Community Engagement Officer), Grant Ritchie (Head of Housing Repairs & Maintenance), Jane White (Business & Performance Manager), Emma Gilbert (Tenancy Services Operations Manager), John Evans (Housing Manager), Sam Nolan (Community Engagement Manager), Justine Harris (Head of Tenancy Services), Estates Services Manager (A. Johnson)

Clerk: Niall Breen – Democratic Services Officer Apprentice

Guests: Sarah Booker-Lewis LDRS

The Chair opened the meeting at 18:12.

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES & INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 There were apologies from Alan Cooke Sec. Craven Vale, Chris Vine, Linda King, Bob Thompson, Martin Cunningham, and Lee Cat from the tenancy associations. Further to this there was apologies from Ward Cllr Wilkinson.

2. MINUTES & ACTIONS OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.2 Residents raised concerns regarding the distribution of papers.

2.3 RJ raised 3.6, officers advised.

2.4 NM raised concerns regarding communications and distribution of papers relating to the laundry room review. Res Co-C ES advised residents on the process. NM raised concerns regarding the conduct of the process and requested the authority re-run the process to ensure all residents can be given a hard copy.

2.5 GG confirmed they would take it up with Craig Cotton. Action – to follow up. NM raised points regarding the accessibility and visibility of laundry facilities provided by the authority to residents.

2.6 The minutes were agreed accurate as otherwise.

2.7 ES raised concerns with CAO3. JH confirmed follow up. Not complete, ongoing.

2.8 CA7, Pippin Boardman provided clarification on the specific requirement.

2.9 CAO1, RJ raised concerns regarding the response by the authority but also clarified they were happy the situation had been resolved.

2.10 CA8, RJ raised concerns regarding the response, requested clarification on the complaints and progress, CV reps affirmed and confirmed ongoing issue. ES confirmed they had followed up to C Mclaughlin with no response from ES, resident co-chair requested a meeting with officers for CV residents. CV residents confirmed that new contractors were performing to the requirements but the old contractors did not, informing that they were. CV residents noted housing ombudsman ruled in residents favour.

2.11 RJ raised points regarding community workshop in CV. GG confirmed that the contractors had been tendered with a decision at the end of the month, giving a timeframe of mid-October for a cost window..

2.12 NM raised concerns regarding asbestos in authority properties.

2.13 ES requested an update on CA11, GG confirmed that two contractors had been contacted and would follow up with updates.

2.14 Actions agreed as otherwise

3. LARGE PANEL SYSTEM – HOUSING STRATEGY

3.1 JH provided a verbal brief of the item as per the agenda. Detailing the authority response to LPS social housing regulation building safety act and structural surveys being undertaken to ascertain if they met standards. As well as advising on the measures being taken to improve safety in the blocks. JE and GG provided further detail on inspections undertaken and the approach to ensure minimal disruption. Officers confirmed that details would follow for non-resident lease holders.

3.2 NM raised queries about whether residents would be moved from StJ House and demolished. JH confirmed that plans with a resident led approach were still underway. Officers also advised that they had not decided on whether properties would be purchased on the market rate or not. ES raised concerns regarding the approach by the authority to the situation, JH confirmed it was the authority intention to be transparent and have a resident led approach.

3.3 GG confirmed that all metrics for the approach were under consideration and any decision would be informed. JH confirmed that if leaseholders were to market their properties, then surveys would be undertaken anyway.

3.4 RJ raised points regarding non-resident leaseholders and the situations they were being put in due to the actions taken by the authority and the impact on the sales of their properties.

4. REGULATOR JUDGEMENT

4.1 JH provided a verbal brief of the item as per the agenda. This covered the response of the authority to the regulatory C3 judgement from the social housing ombudsman regarding serious failing for the consumer standard and safety standard in electrical, smoke detection, fire remediation, routine repairs, fire safety.

4.2 NM Raised concerns regarding the frequency of checking smoke alarms in authority properties, more specifically Essex Place, they also queried why those undertaking gas works cannot also undertake works on smoke alarms. GG confirmed that this should be the situation.

4.3 ES raised concerns regarding implementation for leaseholders. PB queried whether the smoke detectors incorporated CO2 detection. GG confirmed this should be adjacent to the boiler. LC raised a query regarding the areas of compliance looked at, raising further points regarding the checks being undertaken regarding HHSR, GG confirmed this was being undertaken. RJ raised concerns regarding leaseholders being asked to cover the cost of works.

5. RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT HIGHRISE STRATEGY

5.1 GG provided a verbal briefing on the item as per the agenda and advised the panel as to the progress of the development of the strategy and individual measures being taken for each block. Confirming all authority households would be receiving a pack, starting with LPS blocks. Resident led piece of work followed up by engagement meetings with residents.

6. HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT Q1 24/25

6.1 The panel agreed to move to item 7 on account of the meeting running late.

7. ELECTION OF RESIDENT CO-CHAIR

7.1 SN presided over the election of the resident co-chair, current resident co-chair ES, unanimously re-elected.

7.2 RJ raised points that the election had taken place 2 rounds ago, SN confirmed this was interim.

8. BREAK

Break taken at 19.23 – 19.32

9. BUDGET CONSULTATION UPDATE

9.1 Justine Harris provided a verbal briefing of the item as per the agenda.

10. HATE INCIDENT POLICY COLSULTATION

10.1 RJ requested accommodations regarding the papers specifically for accessibility and legibility.

10.2 JH provided a verbal briefing of the item as per the agenda. Detailing the requirement by the social housing act for the consultation to be a part of the remit of the housing services.

10.3 LC raised concerns regarding officers failing to enact policies upheld by the housing ombudsman, raising that unless officers enact the consultation the policy was worthless.

10.4 ES raised points regarding the accountability the authority put toward all residents no matter their ability. JE advised that all actions undertaken by the authority must be dealt with under the Public Sector Equality Duty to ensure that all actions undertaken will be within the law.

10.5 Residents raised concerns regarding those undertaking ASB being given secure tenancies and the strategies being undertaken to combat ASB. JE advised that the authority took a harm related approach specifically designed to de-escalate and de-risk situations of ASB to ensure they did not proliferate.

10.6 Cllr Mackey affirmed their involvement with the focus group.

11. Residents' Question's

11.1 PB & ES raised concerns that their reporting was being underreported. Requested a way to track communal repairs. Ongoing regarding blocked gutters at Warwick Mount.

12. AOB

12.1 NM raised points regarding a query of why the high-rise action group was abolished.

12.2 ES raised when the parks department were going to clean the slope to Somerset Point.

13. Community News

13.1 RJ detailed community events at Craven Vale and invited panel members.

13.2 ES detailed community events at Essex Place.

The Chair called the meeting to a close at 20:15PM.