

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: EAST AREA**

**2.00pm 10 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**WHITEHAWK HUB, MEETING ROOM, WHITEHAWK RD, BN2 5FL**

**MINUTES**

**Councillors:** Williams (Co-Chair), Fishleigh

**Officers:** Sam Nolan (Community Engagement Manager), Tom Trigwell (Community Engagement Administrator), Emma Gilbert (Tenancy Services Operations Manager), Justine Harris (Head of Tenancy Services), Mikila Beck (Interim Head of Repairs), Melissa Francis (Head of Environmental Services), Hemangi Sharma (Community Engagement Officer), Stephanie Mooney (Community Engagement Officer), Martin Reid (Director of Homes and Investment), Marie Button (Democratic Services Officer)

**Residents:** Chris El Shabba (Co-Chair), Dee Simpson, David Powell, Janet Gearing, Ben D'Montigny, Val Steadman, Anne Glow

**Press:** Sarah Booker-Lewis

**1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES**

1.1 Apologies were received from Harry Williams and Councillor Allen.

**2 SEASIDE HOMES TRUSTEE NOMINATION**

2.1 The Chair introduced the item and shared their experience of their time on the Seaside Homes Board.

2.2 Officers agreed this could be raised at the tenant celebration day coming up on Saturday and Sam Nolan advised that the details could be put on social media.

2.3 Ben D'Montigny advised they could put details in the Bristol Estate WhatsApp Group.

**3 MINUTES & ACTIONS OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**MINUTES**

3.1 Janet Gearing advised that they were not down as having attended the previous meeting.

3.2 **RESOLVED:** That subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 June 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

3.3 Anne Glow and the Chair raised that regarding item 5.5 in the previous minutes, there are still residents who do not know how to test the newly installed Co2 detectors.

- 3.4 Mikila Beck advised they would bring instructions on how to test the detectors to panel and would arrange for someone to visit the Chair to give guidance.

### **ACTIONS**

- 3.5 Stephanie Mooney and Janet Gearing confirmed that action EA4 regarding the query on whether quick-bids can be used for a newsletter was completed prior to the meeting.
- 3.6 Justine Harris confirmed the presentation on bulk waste removal would be coming to the next meeting.

## **4 HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 - 2025/26**

- 4.1 Justine Harris and Mikila Beck presented the report on Housing Performance.
- 4.2 Justine Harris and Emma Gilbert advised they would prepare a briefing to go out in newsletters regarding the range of support available from Tenancy Services. Justine also confirmed they have leaflets available and will have a stand at the tenant celebration day.
- 4.3 Residents, councillors and officers discussed removal of carpeting and gripper rods in council properties and funding available for replacement of flooring.
- 4.4 In response to Janet Gearing's suggestion, Mikila Beck advised that they could trial asking for a tenant's preference regarding gripper rod removal when a property is viewed.
- 4.5 In response to Justine Harris' ask for ideas about presenting the information for this item, Ben D'Montigny suggested line graphs with trend lines could be useful.
- 4.6 Residents, councillors and officers discussed the use of Community Protection Notices and Community Protection Warnings as early intervention tools in cases of anti-social behaviour.
- 4.7 Justine Harris advised that Jan Dowdell has been giving a presentation on anti-social behaviour which they could bring to the next panel.

## **5 HEALTH & SAFETY COMPLIANCE UPDATE**

- 5.1 Martin Reid presented the report on Health & Safety Compliance.
- 5.2 The Chair raised that an electrician had said work will be taking place in Robert Lodge so they can see that work is going on.
- 5.3 Mikila Beck stated that all properties which haven't had electrical testing have been written to and they can use the formal no access proves if tenants refuse.
- 5.4 Martin Reid advised that there will be a full report on their progress with electrical checking and raised that when they do the checks, they are also finding other issues they can address.

5.5 Emma Gilbert confirmed that the repairs team to refer vulnerable residents to tenancy services where needed.

5.6 Martin Reid confirmed that regarding fire safety, the installation of fire doors is imminent and residents will be notified when theirs are due to be fitted and other retrofit work is projected for April.

## **6 LPS BLOCK UPDATE**

6.1 Councillor Williams introduced the item and gave an update on the cabinet decision to regenerate the site over three to five years and the upcoming work around rehoming affected tenants.

6.2 Officers spoke about the local lettings plan and city-wide consultation that would be taking place. Emma Gilbert confirmed that the draft report and results of the consultation should go to cabinet in March.

6.3 Residents, Councillors and Officers discussed the opportunity to redesign the area and support being provided for residents who will be relocating.

6.4 In response to Janet Gearing's questions regarding where the redevelopment would start and which areas are affected, officers confirmed St James' House would be first, followed by Nettleton, Dudeney and then Whitehawk where five blocks are affected.

6.5 In response to Ben D'Montigny's question, Councillor Williams confirmed there would be community spaces within the redevelopment of north Whitehawk.

## **7 PROPOSED POCKET-PARK AT BRISTOL ESTATE DISCUSSION**

7.1 Councillor Williams and Ben D'Montigny introduced the item and gave an update on the proposed pocket-park.

7.2 Ben D'Montigny discussed the results of the green survey carried out, which asked what residents want in their green spaces, and accessing funding.

7.3 In response to a question from the Chair regarding safety, Ben D'Montigny discussed accessibility, lighting, use of handrails, seating and accessible planters.

7.4 Stephanie Mooney advised that the results of the survey would be collated into a report.

## **8 EIB DISCUSSION ON OLD BIN STORES & PEOPLE'S LAUNDRETTE**

8.1 Stephanie Mooney gave an update following the Environmental Improvement Board, advising that old bin stores would need to be fully checked for fire safety and the laundrette is delayed due to the laundry review.

8.2 Stephanie Mooney discussed the activities proposed for the space, including mindfulness and yoga classes.

- 8.3 In response to the Chair's question regarding spending money on something that is going to be pulled down, Councillor Williams and officers discussed that as the timescale is three to five years, improving the conditions would be beneficial for the community.

## **9 DISREPAIRS WEBSITE & AWARENESS**

- 9.1 Mikila Beck introduced the item.
- 9.2 Mikila asked that if tenants are experiencing disrepairs, they should contact the council first and then follow the complaints process if they are not getting a response. They advised that if tenants are not satisfied with the response they do get, they can go to the ombudsman who can order compensation if needed.
- 9.3 Officers and residents discussed cases of no-win-no-fee cold callers posing as council staff contacting residents about disrepairs and leaving them with legal fees they are unable to pay.
- 9.4 Mikila Beck discussed the awareness work they have been doing around this.
- 9.5 Martin Reid advised that council staff will only cold call in an emergency and residents should always check ID and can call the council if they are worried about someone impersonating a council officer.
- 9.6 Councillor Williams asked if Mikila Beck could provide some suitable wording for Councillors and residents to distribute on WhatsApp and Facebook groups.

## **10 RESIDENT QUESTIONS, 2-STAR & 3 STAR**

- 10.1 The Chair introduced question E2.1 regarding recycling and refuse collections at Robert Lodge.
- 10.2 In response to the Chair raising that the bin stores have maggots, Justine Harris advised they would ask Estates to come and power wash it.
- 10.3 Melissa Francis discussed new in-cab technology and the improvements this should make to the service. They advised they have seen an increase in improvements and a decrease in missed collections.
- 10.4 Officers and residents discussed overused bin stores at Robert Lodge and Bristol Estate. Melissa Francis advised they have spoken to colleagues about increasing frequency of collections and new technology for reporting missed collections.
- 10.5 In response to Councillor Williams' question regarding whether there can be a single point of contact for residents with bin related issues, Melissa Francis advised they would look into this.
- 10.6 Officers and residents discussed the new food waste collections. Melissa Francis confirmed that communal bins will be in situ when the service goes live and residents will receive cards advising when their collections will be.

- 10.7 Melissa advised that collections would be on different days to refuse and recycling because food waste is collected more quickly.
- 10.8 In response to Dee Simpson's question about replacement bin liners, Melissa Francis advised that a year's worth is supplied in advance, and they would find out what happens after that.
- 10.9 In response to resident questions, Meliss Francis confirmed that the waste will be used for compost, the bins will need to left curbside for collection, the vehicles are much smaller than general waste vehicles, information will be provided about contamination and there are contingencies in place for missed collections.
- 10.10 The Chair introduced question E2.2 regarding Robert Lodge deliveries being stolen.
- 10.11 Justine Harris advised that the letters haven't gone out yet and the signs are on order.
- 10.12 Residents and officers discussed the issues and options around having parcel lockers alongside fire safety and accessibility concerns.
- 10.13 The Chair introduced question E3.1 regarding anti-social behaviour.
- 10.14 The Chair discussed an article that was printed in the Argus and raised concerns about the area being given a bad name and Robert Lodge being painted as a drug den.
- 10.15 The Chair introduced question E3.2 regarding the Estate Development Budget task and finish group.
- 10.16 Sam Nolan advised that they are working on uploading this to YourVoice as well as there being a paper form and that a draft will be taken to the EBD panel members so they can have input.

## **11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 11.1 The Chair and Sam Nolan discussed the Tenant Celebration day arranged for Saturday 13 September and asked everyone to spread awareness for it.
- 11.2 The Chair asked if a certificate or something similar could be prepared for the person who cleared the hedges at Robert Lodge so he knows his work is appreciated.
- 11.3 Dee Simpson discussed new projects in Woodingdean, including the extension of the food hub into a food bank at the catholic church and the creation of a community garden on the land alongside Drove Road to be launched on 27 September.
- 11.4 Justine Harris and Emma Gilbert answered Janet Gearing's question regarding entitlements to temporary accommodation when children are removed by social services, advising that this would be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- 11.5 Justine Harris advised they would find out if the council had got the property on Langley Crescent back following a question from Janet Gearing on the status of this.

The meeting concluded at 3.59pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of