

# BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

## CENTRAL AREA HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL

2.00pm 29 JULY 2014

LEACH COURT (ENTER PREMISES VIA CALLING NUMBER 38)

### MINUTES

**Present:** Councillors Bowden (Chair)

**Voting Representatives:** Jason Williams (Hereford Court), Carl Boardman (Warwick Mount), Theresa Mackay (Highcroft Lodge), Barry Kingston (Hampshire Court), Jean Davis (Leach Court), Charles Penrose (Sloane Court), Andy Tuck (Essex Place), Ann Ewings (Mount Pleasant), Alison Gray (Clarendon & Ellen)

**Non-Voting Delegates:** G Hoseley (Sloane Court), Janet Rapson (Leach Court)

**Officers:** Ododo Dafe (Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement), Rachel Chasseaud (Head of Tenancy Services), Sharon Terry (Resident Involvement Officer), Becky Purnell (Resident Involvement Manager), Keely McDonald (Resident Involvement Officer), Diane Hughes (Performance & Improvement Manager), Miriam Gee (Performance & Improvement Officer), Glyn Huelin (Partnering Business Manager), Sharon Davies (Project Manager), John Peel Democratic Services Officer)

**Guests:**

#### 1 APOLOGIES

1.1. Apologies were received from Councillor Randall, Linda King and Beryl Snelling.

#### 2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 April be approved and signed as the correct record.

#### 3 CHANGES TO AREA PANELS

3.1 The Panel considered a report that outlined the implications of the changes for resident involvement of the recent changes to Area Panels agreed by Policy & Resources Committee in May 2014.

3.2 Alison Gray stated that the West Area had agreed to a trial period of a year and asked whether this would be the case.

3.3 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement stated that this was not a factor in the decision taken by Policy & Resources Committee but a review could be considered in a year if it was clear the changes were ineffective.

- 3.4 Ann Ewings stated that the Area Panels had made it clear at their meetings that they wanted HMCSC to continue yet the proposals had still gone ahead. Ann stated that this decision had made her question the real value of input from Area Panels.
- 3.5 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement stated that the Members who ultimately decided upon the issues were mindful of the comments made by Area Panels but the issue was multi-faceted and couldn't consider that view alone.
- 3.6 Charles Penrose noted that Councillor Bowden was the Chair for the Central Area but was not a member of Housing Committee. Charles asked how the comments from Area Panels to Housing Committee would work on that basis.
- 3.7 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement clarified that the issue of Area Panel Chairs also being members of Housing Committee had arisen after the initial decision had been made but would be looked at for the 2015/16 period. Tenant representative input would also be reflected in the engagement section of reports presented to Housing Committee.
- 3.8 Charles Penrose stated that he was of the view that the removal of HMCSC had also removed the direct tenant representative link to council policy making.
- 3.9 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement stated that the changes were intended to strengthen methods of involvement and that residents could still make direct representations to committee meetings through petitions, Deputations or written questions.
- 3.10 Alison Gray asked if the EDB Quick Bid process would remain the same and noted her concern that associations may lose money outstanding on EDB projects when they moved areas.
- 3.11 The Resident Involvement Manager confirmed that the Quick Bid process would remain unchanged. The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement stated that associations would now be requested for EDB projects that could be completed in the financial year as in accordance with the recommendation from the council's financial department and their concerns about proper financial arrangements.
- 3.12 Alison Gray stated that Clarendon & Ellen had instigated a long-running EDB project that was still ongoing and she was deeply concerned that would be lost if the options were removed.
- 3.13 The Partnering Business Manager stated that this item would be on the agenda for the EDB Panel meeting to be held the next day. The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement added that a report on the matter would be presented to the Panel at a future meeting.
- 3.14 Ann Ewings stated that she was disappointed by the number of representatives present at the meeting and was concerned that the 2,000 person mailing list referenced at page 11 of the report would conflict with the work of tenant representatives.

- 3.15 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement stated the work and efforts of representatives was commended however, the method of inclusion using formal meetings did not suit all and those that couldn't do so still had the right to be consulted on and input into the way the service was delivered. Furthermore, the results of wider representation would always be presented to representatives.
- 3.16 Andy Tuck asked if the specialist citywide groups would become members of the Panel under the new format.
- 3.17 The Head of Income, Involvement & Improvement clarified that this would be an issue for the start and finish task group to look at and it would be presented for their consideration.
- 3.18 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

#### **4 ANNUAL REPORT 2014**

- 4.1 The Panel were presented with the draft Annual Report 2014 for comment and feedback on the content and layout.
- 4.2 Alison Gray asked if the report could be presented in A3 as that method had worked successfully for the TDN.
- 4.3 The Performance & Improvement Manager clarified that copies in A3, braille, audio and large font would all be available on request.
- 4.4 Theresa Mackay stated that residents in Highcroft Lodge would find it helpful if there was a clearer demonstration that their views had been taken into account.
- 4.5 The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement stated that Housing would seek to demonstrate that resident's views had been taken into account and acted upon as well as providing an update on specific work conducted at Highcroft Lodge.
- 4.6 Andy Tuck agreed that a clear indication of consideration of feedback would be useful and may ultimately encourage involvement.
- 4.7 Alison Gray suggested the report use clearer language and avoid acronyms.
- 4.8 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

#### **5 HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT ~ QUARTER 4 AND END OF YEAR 2013/14**

- 5.1 The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement presented a report that covered Housing Management Performance during Quarter 4 and end of the 2013/14 financial year. The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement stated that the table provided figures and a RAG rating system against key performance indicators adding that the intention of the report was to provide Area Panels with information on Housing services performance and, as with previous versions of the report, comments and feedback on its presentation was welcomed to improve future versions.
- 5.2 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

## 6 MODEL CONSTITUTION

6.1 The Panel considered a report that presented questions to representatives on the Model Constitution following consideration by elected members at HMCSC.

6.2 Representatives agreed the following points:

- To add clarification that sheltered schemes have four meetings per year with the Scheme Manager
- It was suggested that 'area of benefit' be changed to 'resident association area'
- That the feedback from freeholders and leaseholders is welcomed but those groups not be entitled to formal voting rights at Area Panel
- That quorum for AGM's be set at local level by associations
- That two weeks notice is provided to association members and the Resident Involvement Team for meetings to consider proposed changes to an association's constitution.
- That requests for a Special General Meeting should give "a clear reason" to hold the meeting
- That if an Area Panel representative or Deputy from an association fails to attend three Area Panel meetings without giving their apologies, the association is written to requesting that a replacement be elected at the next meeting.

6.3 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

## 7 PROCUREMENT OF GAS SERVICING, MAINTENANCE AND INSTALLATIONS CONTRACT

7.1 The Panel considered a report that engaged representatives on the tendering of a new gas servicing, maintenance and installation contract. The current contract expires on 30 September 2015.

7.2 Charles Penrose stated that had previously been an agreement that sheltered schemes would be provided with 'hospital packs' in cases of emergency. Charles noted that this had not continued and requested that it be a mandatory requirement of the new contract.

7.3 The Partnering Project Manager stated that she would ensure this provision was included.

7.4 Andy Tuck asked if the council's value for money program would have an impact on the tender process and ultimately the service received.

7.5 The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement stated that the authority would not choose a provider just because they were the least expensive and would seek to get the best service possible.

7.6 Andy Tuck stated that the council properly monitored the work and standards of any new contractors.

7.7 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

**8 HOUSING ESTATES DEVELOPMENT BUDGET**

8.1 The Panel considered a report that provided information on the Estate Development Budget (EDB) process following a request from the Panel in the April 2014 round of meetings. The report detailed two changes- the deadline for submission of bids from associations would be earlier and projects would be have to achievable within one year in order to deliver them in the financial year.

8.2 Charles Penrose stated that he had experienced problems with the rules for certain bids that had ultimately been refused by the Project Team, in this case installation of CCTV and he was still not clear about those rules.

8.3 The Resident Involvement Manager stated that she would send the policy document to Charles and apologised as it was clear the bid should not have reached the Area Panel.

8.4 Alison Gray stated that she did not believe projects should be financed within one year and that associations should be able to set aside money to complete an entire project in one go rather than have to complete them in stages.

8.5 Andy Tuck enquired as to the consultation conducted ahead of the changes.

8.6 The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement stated that the council's finance team had advised had been clear that the current system of stockpiling money from successful bids for work in the future was not in accordance with proper accounting procedures or financial regulation. Where associations submitted bids for large pieces of work, consideration would be given to whether it was more suitable to be a planned maintenance job.

8.7 Andy Tuck stated that he felt the EDB process was an issue the Tenant Scrutiny Panel should look at.

8.8 Ann Ewings stated that she felt the process had been made much more complicated.

8.9 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

**9 ITEMS FROM TENANT ONLY MEETING**

9.1 **RESOLVED-** That the responses provided to the issues raised from the Tenant Only meeting be noted.

**10 CITY WIDE REPORTS**

10.1 **RESOLVED-** That the reports and minutes of the various Citywide groups be noted.

**11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 11.1 Charles Penrose stated that he had received a letter dated 19 June on the 21 July for a meeting about the Pride festival and associated road closures. Charles stated his concerns that residents would not be able to access key items in that period and may be intimidated by stewards.
- 11.2 The Chair explained that the Police had advised the council that they deemed the festival unsafe under the existing arrangements and did not feel they could manage the area safely. Residents in the area and periphery would be provided wristband access to the area free of charge.
- 11.3 Alison Gray stated that she had recently attended the 'Getting the Message Out There' course at the Trafford Centre and highly recommended the course to other representatives.
- 11.4 Ann Ewings stated that she had recently been advised that Mears charged £5 to fit new bulbs into lights which she did not find acceptable, particularly for the elderly.
- 11.5 The Resident Involvement Manger stated that £5 was below the retail price of energy efficient bulbs and included installation.

The meeting concluded at 5.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of