

Council

11 December 2014

Agenda Item 51

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Response to the Homelessness Scrutiny Panel's Recommendations - Extract from the Proceedings of the Housing Committee Meeting held on the 12 November 2014

Date of Meeting: 11 December 2014

Report of: Monitoring Officer

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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE***Action Required of the Council:***

To receive the item referred from the Housing Committee for information:

Recommendations:

(1) To note the report.

HOUSING COMMITTEE

4.00 pm 12 November 2014
COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Councillor Randall (Chair); Councillors Phillips (Deputy Chair), Barnett, Daniel, Meadows, Kennedy, Mears, Peltzer Dunn (Opposition Spokesperson), Rufus and Wilson (Group Spokesperson).

PART ONE**44 RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY PANEL ON HOMELESSNESS**

44.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director Environment, Development and Housing which informed Members that the Scrutiny Panel on Homelessness was set up to look at and highlight the issues of Homelessness in the City in light of increased levels of homelessness, including the number of accepted households in temporary accommodation (statutory homeless) and rising numbers of

rough sleepers. The Panel set out to look at the provision across the city, and to see if all that could be done was being carried out by services across the city.

- 44.2 The Council's Health & Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee of 4 February 2014 agreed and endorsed the Scrutiny Panel report. The Homelessness Scrutiny Panel report 2014 had 17 recommendations. The current report set out these recommendations in appendix 1 and noted the progress Housing had made against their areas. The report was presented by the Service Improvement Manager.
- 44.3 Councillor Daniel expressed disappointment that the response to the Scrutiny Panel's recommendations appeared vague and did not set dates against tasks to be completed. She mentioned recommendation 4 & 7 as examples. These recommendations related to a request for a more diverse range of supported accommodation and a request for new and refreshed BHCC housing strategies to explicitly address the housing needs of victims of domestic violence. Councillor Daniel felt that there was a need to state what new action would be taken rather than detail the work that was already being carried out. Councillor Daniel said she could note the report but felt another report should be brought back to the Committee with more detail.
- 44.4 The Chair agreed that dates and targets were required. The current report accepted most of the recommendations and detailed work in progress. The Chair agreed that there needed to be more clarity and that the Committee should receive a further report.
- 44.5 Councillor Peltzer Dunn considered that there was a need to come back with more structure and timetabled implementation. There was a need to do justice to the Scrutiny Panel and to provide a positive, rather than a passive response.
- 44.6 The Chair agreed that there needed to be a timetable. Recommendation 2 – That a senior BHCC officer should be appointed as 'homelessness services integration champion' across statutory services and other sectors – was imperative and should be adopted.
- 44.7 Councillor Mears thanked the Homelessness Team. She acknowledged that they were under pressure and carried out tremendous work. Councillor Mears referred to Recommendation 2 and said she would like to see a policy from Adult Social Care and Children's Services on homelessness (for example with regards to safeguarding). Councillor Mears mentioned that 4 years ago a contracts had been signed in relation to adult providers. This was now up for renewal. She asked if councillors would see the contracts. The Executive Director Environment, Development and Housing replied that contracts were being reviewed. Adult Social Care and Children's Services would review the contracts and some recommendations would be presented to the relevant committees. If any of the contracts related to housing they would be brought back to the Housing Committee. Decisions would be made in the light of the budget position.
- 44.8 **RESOLVED** - That the progress made against the recommendations by Housing be noted.