

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

WEST HOVE & PORTSLADE AREA HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL

2.00pm 23 SEPTEMBER 2014

MURIEL HOUSE

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Pissaridou (Chair) and Barnett

Representatives: Julie Fosberry (Ingram Crescent), Roy Crowhurst (Woods House), June Baker (Valley Road), Muriel Briault (North Portslade), Christine Holden (Muriel House), Ann Tizzard (Knoll)

Non-Voting Delegates: Neil Tideswell (Ingram Crescent), Chief Black Bear (Ingram Crescent), Vic Dodd (Ingram Crescent), Joe Macrae (North Portslade), Jill Isaacs (Muriel House), Mary Moore (Muriel House), Pat Weller (Knoll), Cecil Bateson (Muriel House)

Officers: Becky Purnell (Resident Involvement Manager), Brett Wells (Health & Safety Manager), John Peel (Democratic Services Officer), Ododo Dafe (Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement), James Cryer (Partnering Manager- Mears), Pat Liddell (Resident Involvement Officer)

Guests:

12 APOLOGIES

12.1 Apologies were received from Councillors Cobb, Janio and Peltzer-Dunn, Nick Lewry and Jean Carter.

13 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

13.1 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 31 July 2014 be approved and signed as the correct record.

13.2 The Panel representatives relayed the recent passing of Tina Urquhart and requested that this sad loss and Tina's dedication as a tenant representative be recorded.

14 ELECTIONS / STRENGTHENING AREA PANELS

14.1 Following elections conducted via anonymous electronic voting, representatives for the West area were elected to the following groups:

Involvement & Empowerment Group

Representative: Julie Fosberry

Deputy: Neil Tideswell, Christine Hilton

Business & Value for Money

Representative: Vic Dodd

Home Group

Deputy: Christine Hilton

Neighbourhood & Community

Representative: Neil Tideswell

Tenancy Group

Deputy: Vic Dodd

Area Panel Deputy Chair

Roy Crowhurst

Area Panel Task & Finish Group

Neil Tideswell

15 TENANCY POLICY 2014

- 15.1 The Panel considered a report that outlined the draft Tenancy Policy 2014 and request feedback and comments on the draft document.
- 15.2 Councillor Barnett stated that she was aware of many tenants who had not received a tenancy visit in the past three years. Furthermore, Councillor Barnett asked how visits could confirm that the occupier was the person listed as the resident and if tenancy photos were taken to confirm any unauthorised modifications.
- 15.3 The Performance & Improvement Officer clarified that tenancy visits had begun three years ago, was ongoing and that there had been a prioritisation of potentially vulnerable residents. The Performance & Improvement Officer added that any policy to take photographs would have to be consulted on with residents and was a matter under consideration. Furthermore, any tenants were required to provide identification as part of their application which was kept on file electronically.
- 15.4 Pat Weller asked if the council had an obligation to re-house those not eligible under succession rights.
- 15.5 The Performance & Improvement Officer answered that the council were sensitive to the individual circumstances of all tenants and undertook a Housing Needs Assessment in succession cases. Where that demonstrated a need, the council would assist in re-housing a tenant.
- 15.6 Pat Weller stated that she was disappointed that reports of housing fraud appeared not to have been followed up.
- 15.7 The Performance & Improvement Officer stated that it was complicated to provide feedback on this issue as it might impact on upon any investigation. The Performance & improvement Officer added that any investigation that led to conviction was reported widely.

- 15.8 Pat Weller clarified that she was concerned that there was no acknowledgement to emails reporting fraud were acknowledged.
- 15.9 The Performance & Improvement Officer stated that she would follow this issue up.
- 15.10 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

16 PERFORMANCE REPORT Q1 2014/15

- 16.1 The Head of Income, Inclusion & Improvement presented a report that covered Housing Management Performance during Quarter 1 of the 2014/15 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.
- 16.2 Roy Crowhurst asked why there had been a significant increase in cancelled repair jobs.
- 16.3 The Partnering Manager, Mears clarified that the majority of cancelled repair jobs were due to a change in the time of the appointment on behalf of the tenant. He added that the reasons were analysed by the Core Group and Partnership Group and there was no cost implication in cancellation.
- 16.4 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

17 SPRINKLERS HIGH RISE BLOCKS

- 17.1 The Panel considered a report that provided information on pilots for the retro fitting of sprinkler systems in high rise buildings. The pilots had been commissioned in response to a Rule 43 letters from the coroner's office and conducted with East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service.
- 17.2 **RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

18 ITEMS FROM TENANT ONLY MEETING

- 18.1 (Item 2- Scaffolding at Woods House) Julie Fosberry stated that there had been significant problems at Ingram Crescent where scaffolding had been put up for 5 weeks and no work carried out.
- 18.2 The Partnering Manager, Mears clarified that Mears were currently reviewing their contracts and procedures in this area. HE added that they were also examining the possibility of penalty charges for scaffolding left up longer than agreed.

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

19 COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY (FOR INFORMATION)

19.1 **RESOLVED-** That the Panel notes the information provided regarding CIC's.

20 CITY WIDE REPORTS

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

The meeting concluded at 3.30pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of