

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

**HOUSING MANAGEMENT PANEL: CENTRAL AREA**

**2.00pm 2 FEBRUARY 2016**

**THE BARNARD CENTRE, ST JOHNS MOUNT FLATS, MOUNT PLEASANT, BRIGHTON,  
BN2 0JP**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors; Gibson (Chair), Morris.

**Representatives:** Ann Ewings, Theresa Mackey, Martin Cunningham, Barry Hughes, Tony Worsfold, Charles Penrose, Jean Davis, Jason Williams, John McPhillips, Tomm Nyhuus, John Currell.

**Officers:** Becky Purnell (Resident Involvement Manager), John Currell (Housing Asset Strategy Manager), Ododo Dafe (Head of Income Involvement & Improvement), Cliona May (Democratic Services Officer).

**Guests:** Ian Stone (Mears).

**29 APOLOGIES**

29.1 Apologies were received from Owen Spence and Carl Boardman.

**30 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

30.1 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 December 2015 be approved and signed as the correct record.

**31 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

31.1 There were none.

**32 RESIDENTS QUESTION TIME**

32.1 (Item 1 – Homing In) Barry Hughes noted that he was satisfied with the response and has spoken to the Head of Income Involvement & Improvement who had decided to discuss it in further detail at a meeting in March 2016. He noted that Homing In could be improved, made more cost efficient and distributed further.

32.2 In response to Charles Penrose, the Head of Income Involvement & Improvement explained that there would be an opportunity for further discussion on Homing In on an individual basis as it was going to be reviewed and consulted on as part of the Resident Involvement Review. It was added that residents, who do not receive Homing In, would be consulted to determine whether there was a demand to publish more.

- 32.3 The Chair proposed that it should be discussed at the next Area Housing Panel on 27 July 2016 when noting the Resident Involvement Review. The Panel agreed.
- 32.4 (Item 2 - Spacing of Resident Only meetings) Resident Involvement Manager explained to the Panel that the proposal was to reschedule the Area Housing Panel meetings held in January to March in affect from 2017. It was noted that two Area Housing Panels had agreed to the proposal. The Panel agreed to the change of dates.
- 32.5 (Item 1 - Setting start and end dates for repairs and improvements) Barry Hughes commented that from his personal experience, calling the repair helpdesk at Brighton & Hove City Council often results in the work being completed sooner. Tony Worsfold noted that he understood why repairs were delayed; however, he believed it was a reasonable request to keep residents informed and discuss a timeframe with them. Ann Ewings stated that the repairs process would run smoother if there was more communication between residents and the Repairs Team.
- 32.6 The Head of Income Involvement & Improvement thanked the residents for the feedback, apologised that the Council were not giving enough information about repairs or consulting before work takes place and she agreed to feedback to the relevant Officers.
- 32.7 (Item 2 – Scaffolding) In response to Tomm Nyhuus the Housing Asset Strategy Manager explained that Mears and Brighton & Hove City Council were in a partnership and the council audited Mears. Ian Stone, Mears representative, added that the majority of the scaffolding was erected by Mears rather than Brighton & Hove City Council. He explained that there was not an additional cost when leaving scaffolding on a property; however, Mears was working with the subcontractors to try and prevent it from happening.

### **33 DRAFT ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

- 33.1 The Housing Asset Strategy Manager introduced and highlighted that there had been consultation meetings with residents. Residents were particularly keen to prioritise investment in the exterior repair of buildings and common parts, such as decorations in stairwells and lighting, with the aim of achieving a more consistent standard across the city. It was also feedback that residents wished the general focus for investment should be mainly on improving the quality of the existing housing stock, and ensuring that all housing should be of a good standard, and well insulated, to help with fuel costs.
- 33.2 In response to Tomm Nhyuus, it was explained that a further, more detailed, report would be presented at a future Area Housing Panel.
- 33.3 In response to Barry Hughes it was clarified that there was not an active encouragement for residents to buy their property; however, the value of the freeholds would be looked at and then will enquire to see if residents were interested to buy.
- 33.4 The Housing Asset Strategy Manager explained to the Chair that there was a struggle to deliver on all lift repair projects; therefore, a lift program would be carried out and all repair jobs would be reviewed and determined whether the lift needs replacing.

- 33.5 In response to Tomm Nyhuus it was noted that residents have feedback that they wished to have a more consistent appearance in communal areas and that there was money in the budget to do this.
- 33.6 Theresa Mackey noted that she was pleased that there was an aim to improve the quality of repairs.
- 33.7 The Housing Asset Strategy Manager stated that the report would be taken to the Housing & New Homes Committee on 2 March 2016.
- 33.8 **RESOLVED** – That the Panel agreed to note the report.

#### **34 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

- 34.1 The Head of Income Involvement & Improvement introduced the report and explained that it was a brief report due to the despatch times of the meeting agenda. It was agreed that the residents would be informed when the full report was available on the website and hardcopies could be sent to residents who did not have internet access.
- 34.2 It was highlighted to the Panel that the problem with transferring calls in Customers Services, which had been previously noted by the Area Housing Panel, had not been resolved; however, would be by February 2016.
- 34.3 **RESOLVED** – That the Panel agreed to note the report.

#### **35 REVIEW REPORT**

- 35.1 The Resident Involvement Manager introduced and explained that the last review was three years ago. The review was carried out to broaden tenant engagement and to increase resident involvement satisfaction. It was added that residents, area panel representatives and other interested tenants, would be involved in the review and would explore all areas of resident involvement. She encouraged anyone who wished to get involved to contact her directly.
- 35.2 It was explained that there would be an update report at the Area Housing Panel meetings in July 2016 and the final report in December 2016.
- 35.3 In response to the Chair, it was explained that for improvements, the Resident Involvement Team would be working with the Performance & Improvement Team to research and review the work carried out with resident involvement. The Head of Income Involvement & Improvement added in response that they wished to review all the work completed, rather than focussing on specific areas. She expressed that they wish to involve tenants in the majority of the improvement work and will consult with tenants to ensure the service is good value for money.
- 35.4 Barry Hughes noted that he felt there was a barrier between the local Councillors and the residents since the Housing Management Consultative sub-Committee (HMCSC) was decommissioned. He noted that residents should meet with Tracy John, the Assistant Director of Housing as part of the review.
- 35.5 The Resident Involvement Manager agreed with Theresa Mackey that it would be helpful to have the development of the review in a diagrammatic form.

35.6 In response to Charles Penrose the Resident Involvement Manager explained that there would be a variety of ways informing residents of the review, these being: an article in the spring edition of Homing In; would have information on the council website; contacting residents individually; and possibly carrying out surveys over the phone.

35.7 **RESOLVED** – That the Panel agreed to note the report.

### 36 CITY WIDE REPORTS

36.1 **RESOLVED** – That the Panel agreed to note the report.

### 37 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

37.1 Ian Stone, Mears representative, agreed to report back that street lights needed fixing and a cherry picker would be hired.

37.2 Charles Penrose noted that the main doors at Sloane Court had broken and Mears had organised security to monitor the entrance. He questioned whether it would have been more cost effective to have the doors fixed over the weekend rather than wait until the following week. The Housing Asset Strategy Manager agreed to feedback to Charles Penrose.

37.3 The Chair requested feedback from the emergency sub-panel regarding the budget proposals. The following feedback was given:

- Residents were surprised by the format of the agenda.
- There was disappointment that residents were unable to see the information that was sent to the Policy & Resources Committee. The Resident Involvement Manager clarified that it was a verbatim record of what was discussed at the meeting and agreed to distribute it to all the residents who attended.
- A larger venue would have been more suitable.
- There were specific concerns raised from the residents around the EBD budget. All residents agreed that a proposal should be taken to the Policy & Resources Committee.

The meeting concluded at 4.05pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of