

## One City Homes and Communities Board

<b>Date/time</b>	11:00-13:00, Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2022	
<b>Location</b>	The Bordeaux Room, City Hall	
<b>Co-chairs</b>	Oona Goldsworthy, Cllr Tom Renhard	
<b>Meeting Attendees:</b>		
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Oona Goldsworthy (Brunel Care), Judith Brown (BOPF), Rose Whitehorn (ACORN), Paul Hassan (ACH), Rachael Sherratt (JLL), Stacy Yelland (Eastside Community Trust), Richard Harris (City of Bristol College), Dom Wood (1625Independent People), Suzanne Rolt (Quartet), Penny Germon (BCC), Steve Dale (Bristol Community Land Trust), Jonathan Bower (WBD), Sarah O'Leary (Missing Link), Anna Klimczak (Brighter Places),	
<b>Observers</b>	Octavia Clouston (City Office), Deeanne Klein (BCC), Allan MacLeod (City Office), David Tudgey (BACCC), Florence Okowa (UWE), Levi Woolf (UOB), Valentina Garcia Delgado (Bristol Innovation Group), Clare Bryant (BCC)	
<b>Invitees</b>		
<b>Apologies</b>	Tom Renhard (BCC), Cathy Provenzano (Bristol Association of Lettings and Property Management), Jonathan Lee (inHope), Donald Graham (BCC), Jeremy Sweetland (Festival of Housing), Kathryn Pennington (Vistry Partnerships), Robert Kerse (University of Bristol), Alex Raikes (SARI), Laura Welti (BDEF)	
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	
<b>1) Welcome and Introductions</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Chairs welcomed Board Members and took attendance.</li> <li>OG noted the external environment and its implications for Homes and for Board members: the developer market, renting, rent, mortgage rates etc - there has been seismic change and the context is constantly changing</li> <li>OG read the apologies.</li> </ul>		
<b>2) Task and Finish Group Update</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RS introduced herself and gave an update on the net zero task and finish group:</li> <li>RS flagged that the Council is doing work with Lendology on zero or low interest loans for net zero – the group learned that information on energy rates is very disparate and piecemeal and needs to be consolidated so it would be valuable to get a page in the One City Newsletter that combines existing knowledge about loans and savings etc.</li> <li>DT stated that the BACCC working with Eastside Trust has been part of the Heat pump ready project which is looking at heat loss using thermo-imaging to appropriately size heat pumps - they're also working with Eastside Trust on a project looking into resilience centres in the communities they are working with</li> <li>DT flagged that the BACCC is Launching a crowdfund for those in crisis due to energy bills and, when the newsletter goes out, it would be good to reach organisations that have resource they could contribute to that fund. They have a small fund from the energy savings trust to distribute emergency DIY materials.</li> </ul>		RS to send the number for the

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RS flagged the existence of the free Advice line for the centre for sustainable energy where Bristol citizens can go for further information.</li> <li>• JB asked for that number – RS agreed to circulate it with board members via the City Office.</li> <li>• DT flagged that the advice line is inundated and raised that the BACCC have developed energy helpdesk training so that frontline staff can get some training about what they can do.</li> <li>• DK flagged that information going out has to be kept up to date constantly as the national context is changing everyday</li> <li>• RS summarised the actions from the group and stated that DK was going to go away and talk to someone about comms and create a page on the website to loop in with other recommendations – DK agreed and reiterated the need for one source of information.</li> <li>• OG invited AC to come in about the decarbonisation fund - AC received a grant from WECA to treat properties, their challenge is that there is only one supplier that can do the work and the grant will only cover half of the cost – there’s no supply chain to utilise – DT agreed and flagged that this is a national issue.</li> <li>• RH added that there is an issue with funding for practical skills and the national certification of awards – awarding bodies generally wait to see if pilots are successful before they will award funding which becomes a vicious cycle.</li> <li>• RS agreed and suggested that they need to show that they understand the need for proactive actions for the future. E.g. T&amp;T need to be aware of the weaknesses in their funding programme.</li> <li>• DT flagged that only the larger bodies go for the accreditation needed to become suppliers and that Devon Local Authority funded this accreditation as a way of investing in green infrastructure.</li> </ul> <p>DK gave an update on the Task and Finish Group’s progress (see paper 1)</p> <p>Race and Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DK reminded board members that the task and finish group’s focus was to look at the outcomes from the Race and Housing conference and the core aim is strategic change on delivering race and housing goals in social housing in the city</li> <li>• DK stated that the group met on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August and 9<sup>th</sup> of September and 29<sup>th</sup> of September to finish going through the action plan from the conference in September and they’re looking at a wider city equality, race and housing conference for 2023</li> <li>• PH added that the event will be on the 20<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> of February next year for a half or three quarter day with a focus on senior leaders, leadership exec and board. They are looking at harassment and race equality and shifting that to a positive conversation about how to erase harassment.</li> <li>• PH flagged that they are also launching the social housing anti racism pledge.</li> </ul> <p>DAHA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DK flagged that the DAHA task and finish group is aiming for all housing associations to have a DAHA accreditation and are working with Bristol’s legal sectors to achieve this. They’ve launched the group but it’s in its infancy. The Chair specialists are in public health but the work is currently temporarily on hold because the group is waiting for approval from the Homes and Landlord Services team as they do not currently have capacity to lead the work.</li> </ul>	<p>free Advice line for the centre for sustainable energy to the City Office for distribution.</p>
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- DK flagged that Bristol is one of the few local authorities that has retained its housing stock which affects their approach on this as other close local authorities that have signed up to the DAHA have not retained their housing stock.

Net Zero

- DK advocated for having a planning document that contains all the information they have, and looking for additional funding routes, training routes and innovation ideas. The Group has considered the Newsletter and a page on the One City Website with a mini communication strategy to help deliver the website.

City Office Updates:

- AM flagged that the City Office will be refreshing the One City Plan and will be presenting recommendations from various groups to this board for their comment on the work timelines. The city office will be working with the board on the content for the next 2 years. The exact dates are yet to be decided but the board will know as soon as there is more information.
- DK flagged that they have already hit the aim of the core theme which is to deliver 5,500 licensing agreements to the private rented sector.
- The other core themes were review of the allocations policy which has been on hold because of the pandemic – it is currently out for public consultation closing on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October – they will then build the case for change to put together by mid-November, they’ve had over 1,500 fully completed forms and over 700 partially completed. The policy will then go through governance pathways, senior leadership and to cabinet which should be around the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 2023.
- OG suggested that RW and DW link up to discuss the potential ramifications of this for renters.
- PH suggested that the presence of the private rented sector needs to be re-investigated and emphasised.
- DT suggested that there needs to be a focus on income so that an appropriate affordable rent can be confirmed.
- RW asked if the end goal of licensing is to have a compulsory landlord register to make sure that landlords are adhering to the law and to their obligations – DK confirmed that if landlords are licensed they are accredited.
- RW answered that it’s one thing to be handed a license and another thing to enforce that.

**3) Bristol Innovation Group Intern Presentation – Valentina Garcia Delgado (VGD)**

- OG introduced VGD to give her report:
- VGD apologised for not being able to join in person and introduced her presentation on migrant integration into communities
- VGD flagged that there is a need to bridge between settled and new communities and to remember that integration is a two-way process that asks existing communities to play a role in welcoming new communities.
- VGD shared her slide deck (see paper 2)
- Housing that is further away from the centre lessens access to integration measures.
- Providing services to everyone (locals and migrants) helps to mitigate the negative perception of migrants who move to a new space while encouraging collaboration between communities

Discussion

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FO asked about private renting discrimination and flagged that it is difficult for people of colour to rent in the city and flagged VGD’s emphasis on the role of landlords in integration but the lack of emphasis on tenants who should be involved in this dialogue.</li> <li>• RW thanked VGD for her presentation and flagged that it is important to focus on immigrants wellbeing but, more importantly, the council has a duty to ensure equality within housing.</li> <li>• RW flagged the right to rent scheme which encourages discrimination in the PRS and stated that they are receiving complaints from renters who are being denied housing for being immigrants. RW advocated for blind applications to mitigate this issue.</li> <li>• PH flagged the amazing work that is being done to integrate refugees into the city. In ACH they have great case studies of landlords engaging with them and meeting the standards they are being held to while making a steady income.</li> <li>• PH raised that there are a range of other options around housing in the city outside of the HomeChoice system and suggested that he would be happy to get involved with the second part of VGD’s work.</li> <li>• DK contextualised VGD’s work and flagged that VGD will be putting together a summary report to be circulated alongside her full report.</li> <li>• VGD flagged that her full report is much more detailed.</li> <li>• DT asked if there were resource issues that were identified in the report – within the charities she talked to they needed more than financial support – they needed visibility and a platform to become more well known to garner more support for their cause.</li> </ul>	
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<p><b>4) Cost of Living</b></p>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OG introduced PG and flagged that Bristol is leading the way on work around the Cost of Living Crisis – see paper 3</li> <li>• PG flagged that her work is a One City initiative rather than a council one and that communities leading the way became a very strong way of leading this workstream.</li> <li>• PG asked board members to promote ‘CanDoBristol’ which has 29 asks on their website.</li> </ul> <p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SY flagged that they’re open 8-6 at Easton community centre open access. They’re not sure how similar to the Covid response this will be. Covid was ‘down tools on normal work’ this feels like more of a hybrid. This accelerates their existing aspirations for the centre</li> <li>• SY flagged that there is an increased pressure on the staff who are on the frontline – they need to be able to support individuals with complex needs</li> <li>• JB asked how businesses can respond and assist – a lot of businesses are doing a lot of work with their employees signposting their issues – how can we coordinate that info sharing to make it more valuable to the city</li> <li>• JB asked if this information about welcome hubs will be published in paper as they are trying to reach people who are largely not online – will they be going on Radio Bristol? – PG answered that BOPF is on the team and reiterated that all communities involved need to distribute through their networks so that the information reaches as widely as possible – JB agreed but flagged all the individuals that are not members of BOPF.</li> </ul>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DT suggested that the local papers would be willing to run a local campaign and the supermarkets could be a useful comms resource – JB agreed and stated that one of the most useful things could be a list of facts about how much each everyday action costs.</li> <li>• CB (BCC) – flagged that she collects income from social housing tenants – when they contact tenants its phone calls and door knocking and texting and email. When they speak to people they have a conversation with people about their income, debts, vulnerabilities and needs to determine whether they are getting everything they need in terms of benefits and council services. They have their own in house learning and advice service – they can issue food vouchers. There are people who owe huge amounts of money (current rent arrears are 6.8 million). There have been no evictions since 2020 and have since taken only one person to court as they try to keep people in their tenancies as much as they can – OG asked CB to circulate that CoL guidance.</li> <li>• OG flagged that some of their tenants are unable to afford social rent.</li> <li>• RW thanked CB and expressed distress over scaring individuals into not boiling the kettle and advocated for lobbying central government rather than placing responsibility on the individual.</li> <li>• RW expressed distress that welcoming spaces is not a real solution and takes pressure off of the government to create solutions.</li> <li>• PH flagged that nothing that is being proposed is mutually exclusive with lobbying government and its important to recognise that people are dealing with situations right now and can't wait for politicians to lobby for national change. PH highlighted the importance for emotional help and support for the soul through engagement, meals etc – RW agreed about the importance of community spaces but flagged that people should not feel forced to go there for warmth – there should be an independent solution to that.</li> <li>• FO stated that we are not utilising the cost breakdown of everyday services and that it should be distributed more widely from the centre for sustainable energy.</li> </ul>	<p>CB to send her team's CoL Guidance to the City Office for distribution.</p>
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### 5) Living Rent Update

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AM explained that the One City Living Rent Commission – the idea of what rent control could look like in Bristol and what the challenges are at a local and national level – this was initially intended to be a response to the renters reform white paper though that paper has been shelved due to the change in government.</li> <li>• LW gave a presentation on data findings from a large rental market aggregator. They have all the listing to 2018-2021 and their analysis reflects their working with that data. (see paper 4)</li> <li>• They've been able to match the same property as it enters the market at different times to observe the increase in rent for that property.</li> <li>• They see that the rental changes that are experienced by individuals are much higher than CPI (typical measure) – it can peak at 2-3x inflation.</li> </ul>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is also a real increase in construction of supply – at the peak of properties on the market, that number is still below the trough pre-covid.</li> <li>• All rents are increasing but cheaper rents are increasing more.</li> <li>• In some neighbourhoods lets that are marketed for students are increasing more than others. Some are consistently high. Some are only high for non-student properties. – there’s a lot that differentiates the two markets.</li> <li>• The biggest challenge from an equity angle is that the low rent listings are increasing faster than the rest of the market.</li> <li>• The properties that start expensive increase the least.</li> <li>• Income data is difficult to get but it’s really important to consider that there are 2 problems a rent affordability issue and a rent stability issue (rates of change especially at the bottom of the market, are so large)</li> </ul> <p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DW raised the issue of landlord licensing increasing rents and asked whether there is data that can link these increases to licensing – LW answered that they could break the data down by letting agency (and therefore licensed or not) – DW asked to connect after the meeting.</li> <li>• DT explained that you can do a base case for income in the lowest rents which will reveal that benefits are capped at a rate much lower than the one at which rents are rising. Asked Levi to do a case study using existing government policy.</li> <li>• JB flagged that bidding that is going on above public rents and the issue of Landlords asking for advance rent payments.</li> <li>• DW flagged that the LHA was less than 50% of the mean – it’s much smaller in London</li> <li>• RS suggested as a next step exploring what we can learn from other global cities and linking up on the global scale.</li> <li>• AM explained that the Commission had an internal evidence session last week and has an external evidence session that ACORN is invited to next week.</li> <li>• AM stated that the evidence given by ACORN in a demonstration this week will be compiled and given to the researchers.</li> </ul>	<p>City Office to link up DW with LW to discuss the data findings from Paper 4</p>
<p><b>6) AOB</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OG thanked Board Members for attending.</li> </ul>	