

HARINGEY LEASEHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT HARINGEY CIVIC CENTRE, HIGH ROAD, N22 ON MONDAY 2 DECEMBER 2013

Present

Sue Brown (SB) (chair), Nick Martin-Clark (NMC) (Secretary), Ann Gibson (AG) (Treasurer), Rita Batzias (RB) (Committee Member), Peter Gilbert (PG) and Charlie Howard (CH).

Chair and Secretary

As SB was unwell, NMC was elected Chair for the meeting and PG was asked to take the minutes.

Co-options

Peter Gilbert (proposed Rita Batzias, seconded Sue Brown) and Charlie Howard (proposed Sue Brown, seconded Peter Gilbert) were each co-opted nem con to the Committee.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Kate Worley (KW) and Phil Hettiarachi (PH).

Report from the IT Sub-Group

NMC reported that the IT Sub-Group had met twice since the meeting of the Committee on 2 November. He said that CH had been very helpful and was willing to host the HLA web-site. It was hoped that HLA would be able to make substantial savings and that substantial improvements could be made, including establishing an interactive forum.

CH demonstrated how it might be possible for Committee members to log on to a specific web page, on which the menu could be tweaked as appropriate. For example, the HLA's subscribers could be sorted into categories, details of meetings could be posted, and a financial summary could be included.

NMC added that the Committee would need to consider whether to set up just one forum, on which multiple topics could be followed, or several topic-specific forums. He added that the HLA database would need to be reviewed so that it could be manipulated to obtain the information that HLA required at any time.

CH said that he would need to have 1 to 1 sessions with Committee members to find out what HLA required from the database and web-site. NMC also suggested that

he email the other Committee members and arrange a separate brainstorm session with CH.

SB and the Committee members summarised what HLA did and indicated items that could be included on the web-site. CH said that, under the code of practice for the website, members could report to the administrator whether anything inappropriate had been posted. AG said that the Committee was responsible for the content of the website and she was concerned about the work of monitoring that nothing inappropriate was posted on it. SB said that the website should be checked regularly anyway and that inappropriate content would be removed.

AG said that the website should include membership details, including not only leaseholders names and addresses but also correspondence addresses for non-resident leaseholders.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

NMC said that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2013 were not available.

The minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 2 November 2013 were circulated and approved as an accurate record, subject to a correction of the spelling of the surname of Michael Bester from HfH.

Matters Arising, including outstanding action points

NMC was still to give SB the addresses of Vincent Square leaseholders.

PH had been asked to attend a meeting of Ferry Lane Action Group (FLAG) on Monday 2 December.

SB was still to send Astrid Kjellberg-Olsen (AK-O) the minutes of the Committee's meeting with her.

SB said that she had heard on the grapevine that CABx would no longer be funded and that she would write to find out if this was so. **Action point: SB to write to find out if CABx funding was to cease.**

AG said that she needed to meet NMC to agree a summary of the HLA's ongoing costs. NMC itemised them as accountancy fees (£244), the fee HLA paid to the website host, the cost of the newsletter, the dedicated phone line and post box, and printing costs that HfH deducted from the grant that was payable to HLA. AG said that she now had this year's bank statements, including the most recent one that had been missing. **Action point: NM to continue to seek to obtain the bank statements for 2012.**

NMC said that the new bank mandate and signatories had now been received by the bank.

SB said that she had met Sue Hunter of HFH about the new office for HLA. **Action point: KW and PH would look at the protocols for the new office separately.**

Terms of Reference for IT Sub-group

The draft terms of reference for the IT Sub-group, which SB had circulated with the agenda for the meeting, were agreed nem con.

Terms of Reference for Service Charge Sub-group

The draft terms of reference for the Service Charge Sub-group, which SB had circulated with the agenda for the meeting, were agreed nem con.

Financial Report

AG said that she would do a full written report later. Meanwhile, she itemised orally the following receipts and payments:

	£
Bank balance at start of f/y	790
Grant from HfH (net)*	540
Subscriptions	2500
Unidentified income	150
Sub-total	3980
Less accountants' fees	240
Less sub refunded	20
Balance	3720

Action: AG to check whether unidentified income was a donation to HLA

*AG said that although the grant to HLA for the financial year ending 31 March 2014 had been £730, HfH had offset expenses amounting to £190.

SB took the Chair.

The Committee agreed nem con to reimburse expenses totalling £1800 to NMC.

NMC resumed the Chair.

AG noted that SB had incurred £330 expenses on behalf of HLA. She added that she would provide a detailed spreadsheet setting out the costs of HLA's campaign.

Meeting with Cllr Alan Strickland

The Committee considered, and agreed nem con, the draft agenda that SB had circulated for the meeting with Cllr Alan Strickland. SB said that Cllr Strickland had seemed to listen very well when he had met her Residents Association. His PA had asked her for a list of topics for his meeting with the Committee.

RB said that she would be unable to attend.

AG said that HLA had not agreed a position on whether the payment terms for sub-letting leaseholders who had works carried out should be the same as the terms for leaseholders who were not sub-letting. She said that for sub-letters to be granted the same terms would be unfair as they were able to claim tax relief on some of their expenses. She asked if HLA knew how many leaseholders sub-let their property and how many lived in their leased property.

SB said that most sub-letters sub-let one property and did so to earn a little additional income. She gave the example of one sub-letter who could afford to pay £150 a month towards the cost of works and whom HfH proposed to charge £250 a month. NMC added that there were a number of sub-letters who would be caused hardship. CH said that a number of sub-letters did so in order to pay their mortgage. SB asked why a leaseholder should be forced to sell his or her property in order to pay for the cost of works.

NMC said that sub-letting leaseholders were discriminated against by virtue of not being eligible to vote in elections to the HfH Board, as well as by being given less favourable terms by HfH than leaseholders who did not sub-let. He added that HfH had been supposed to facilitate the Right to Buy when the new provisions allowing this had been introduced. He asked why sub-letting leaseholders should be hit with the result that HfH did not treat all leaseholders equally.

SB said that these conditions were dictated by Haringey Council.

NMC suggested that, while not putting forward a particular view as representing HLA's position, Committee members could see what Cllr Strickland said when these points were put to him.

HLA Office

NMC said that the arrangements for HLA's office were being considered in a separate working group. SB added that as HLA needed to sign off an agreement with HfH by Christmas the Committee needed to discuss the draft urgently. NMC said that, as the current meeting would have to end by 9, Committee members should hold an ad hoc meeting immediately after the meeting with Cllr Strickland finished before SB forwarded the Committee's views to Sue Hunter of HfH.

Complaints

The Committee considered a draft to Catherine O'Reilly of the London Borough of Haringey of a complaint against HfH's decision not to deal with the unethical actions of the officer who acted in a discriminatory way against the HLA and caused the derecognition that the HLA was trying to appeal against and HfH to resist investigation. NMC explained that, if HLA won the argument that the complaint had been made in time, HLA would be able to pursue it. SB said that HLA wanted an officer other than Joe Boake to deal with issues relating to the Association. He had recommended in his report to the Board that HLA should be granted only provisional recognition, on grounds that had been mistaken, and had not discussed the report with HLA before arranging for it to be included in the papers that had been sent to the Board. Also, the period for which provisional recognition had been suggested did not accord with the criteria laid down for representative organisations to be granted recognition by HfH. However, HfH had ignored HLA's repeated requests for somebody else in the Resident Involvement Team to liaise with HLA. At meetings with Sharon Morgan and Eamon McGoldrick, the HLA Committee had repeated that there were substantive grounds for complaint and that HfH should recognise what de-recognition had cost HLA in financial terms. In reply to CH, NMC said that the complaint had been put on the HLA web-site.

The Committee agreed by 4 votes to 1 that the complaint as drafted should be sent to Catherine O'Reilly.

The Committee considered a further complaint, this time in relation to HfH's funding of the mailing of Haringey Leaseholders' Campaign Group's (HLCG's) initial communication to leaseholders about its inaugural meeting in February 2011. AG said that the wording of the complaint should be re-drafted to make it clear that HfH had not actually made a direct grant of money to HLCG, but had borne the costs of HLCG's mailing. It was agreed nem con that, subject to the wording of the complaint being amended accordingly, HLA should proceed with the complaint.

The meeting closed at this point as it was now after 9pm, when meetings at the Civic Centre had to end.