

Haringey Leaseholders' Association Committee Meeting Held on Friday 5th of November 2010 at 92 Gloucester Rd, N17

In attendance

Committee

Sue Brown (Chair) (SB)
Delsie Grandson (DG)
Rita Batzias (RB)
Peter Gilbert (PG)
Nick Martin-Clark (NMC)

Others

Lee Lawrence, leaseholder (LL)
Lloyd Grandson, relative (LG)

The meeting was opened by Sue Brown at 20:15

After the introductions had been made LL explained that he had started to try and get to the bottom of some problems that his mother, a pensioner on the Broadwater Farm estate, had been having. He was getting in touch with anyone who might be able to help and had come across the HLA on the internet. SB said that it might be possible for the HLA to put him in touch with other people in his mother's block. He could also go early to a leasehold panel and hope to buttonhole someone from HfH who might be able to help.

1. Minutes of previous meetings

SB took the minutes of 17.09.2010. On accuracy LG explained that it was his brother Leo who had been at the meeting not him. SB said there were no matters arising that hadn't been addressed since. PG said anything outstanding would be dealt with anyway. SB said that the letters calling for resignation had been sent but not answered. The call for mediation had been similarly ignored. The minutes were agreed unanimously.

SB asked if there were any points of accuracy on the minutes of 11.10.2010. None were raised. SB said that it had been a long, 3-hour, meeting. DG said she hadn't been able to sleep afterwards. NMC said he had never seen DG so upset and annoyed as during that meeting. On matters arising SB said that HfH had gone ahead with their 'investigation' despite the HLA's objections. SB said that was why she wanted to start the campaign to keep the HLA independent. SB said she didn't understand how the troublemakers could imagine that leaseholders would want HfH to step in and organise the HLA. It was ridiculous. SB distributed the text proposed for the website.

SB said she had been in touch with Anton because she had written to Mike Jones, Chair of the HfH Board, asking that Alena declare an interest if she was involved in any discussion about the HLA. Mike Jones' answer had been disappointing but Anton had been helpful. Anton had been in Berlin but is hoping to mediate on his return. NMC said that HfH's report was supposed to be going to the board on 1st of December and that the HLA should demonstrate before the meeting. That way Alena's contribution would be taken with a pinch of salt even if she didn't disqualify herself. PG said we didn't know how Alena got her database for the leaflet she sent out. PG said he had sent an email on 12th November and offered to forward it to SB. PG said he had had no reply. SB said her email to Alena had not been answered either. SB said that the HLA suspected that Alena had used the HLA's database for her leaflet, thus gaining an unfair advantage over PG and winning the election, but that this couldn't be proven.

NMC said that it might be a good idea to complain to the ICO about Alena's leaflet. PG said he would make the complaint if NMC could tell him who to write to. RB said that we couldn't do a demonstration attacking a particular individual. SB said we could have slogans about keeping the HLA independent. SB said we should do a demonstration if we can get the support. PG said he was away on December 1st. DG said it could be mentioned in the mail-out.

SB said XXXX's suspension letter had been sent out so she was now suspended. There were no further matters arising so the minutes were voted on and agreed unanimously.

Action point: NMC to give PG the address of the ICO.

2. Data protection

SB said that if the committee agreed with the letter it could go out on Monday. NMC made copies of the version of the solicitor's letter that he had amended and handed them out. The committee approved the amended version unanimously. NMC said the main effect of the letter would be that XXXX would realise we can still use our bank account. SB said that XXXX had phoned the bank up and told them that we were being investigated so the bank had frozen our account. NMC said that Chris Waters, our lawyer, had then sent him an email saying that his cheque had been returned. SB said that NMC had then gone to the bank and the account was now unfrozen. SB had written a letter signed also by NMC. NMC said that at one point he was being told that the account would only be unfrozen if HfH wrote to the bank saying that the investigation had cleared the HLA. This was ridiculous. NMC said that the policy also needed to be updated as there was no membership secretary any more. NMC said that the database should no longer be given to the Treasurer. SB said there should be two copies for safety reasons. NMC said that now it had been flagged up as an issue the committee would try and update it by email in order to get something in place for the GM. SB said there should be two copies and that the committee should agree who kept them. This was agreed.

Action point: NMC to ask Bolt Burdon to send the letter.

Action point: SB to propose an updated version of the Data Protection Policy.

3. Bank mandates and appointments of Acting Treasurer and Acting Secretary

SB said that NMC had picked up bank mandates for changing the signatories on the account after all these problems with XXXX. NMC explained that he was willing to be Acting Treasurer as there was a constitutional requirement for the Treasurer to be a signatory and now that XXXX had been suspended that wasn't the case. NMC was already a signatory. SB asked DG is she was willing to be a signatory on the Limited Company account. (LL made his apologies and left the meeting as he had to go to work.) DG asked what being a signatory would entail. SB said that it wouldn't entail very much as no cheques were signed on the Limited Company account. SB said that XXXX wanted the roughly £3,000 to be transferred to the association account but that that was not what the money had been given to the Limited Company for. SB asked if PG would agree to be a signatory on the association account. PG said that NMC had spoken to him earlier in the day and that he was willing to be Acting Secretary as Emeka had not turned up to any committee meetings for two years and was not fulfilling his role. SB said that Emeka had not done a single thing in his capacity as Secretary. PG said that he was prepared to be Acting Secretary if that could be done constitutionally until the AGM. PG said that might facilitate things on the other account. SB asked for a vote on NMC being Acting Treasurer and PG being Acting Secretary until the AGM. This was agreed unanimously. PG agreed that if there were another committee meeting before the AGM and Emeka turned up he would be entitled to take up his functions. NMC said that the bank would be given the minutes where all this was explained and that it was then up to them if they wanted to go ahead with the mandate. SB said PG should sign the

XXXX –the name of our former Treasurer has been removed

mandate as Acting Secretary. DG said there should have been an Acting Secretary a long time ago as she couldn't even remember what Emeka looked like. SB said she had been doing a lot of the Secretary's job. PG said he was willing to be a signatory on the association account. The mandates were filled out.

Action point: NMC to take mandates to bank.

4. General meeting

NMC said that RB's suggestion of the Wood Green Labour Club, now called the Wood Green Social Club, as a venue for the GM was very good. SB said the GM was now going to be held on 15th December. The venue was just opposite the Civic Centre so that it would be easy for people who were used to coming to the Civic Centre to find. SB said we had had an advert in the paper for people to stuff envelopes. NMC said about 60 people had replied. SB said they were going to be paid £6 an hour as that was the minimum wage. RB said she would help. NMC said he had been planning to get the mail-out done by the next Friday, the 12th of November, but that it was probably going to be better to wait another week. We had to agree the contents, get them printed, print off the labels, get the stamps, get the envelopes. SB it was too much for one week. SB said that the constitution required 14 days' notice. PG said that the notices could reasonably be going out towards the end of the week beginning the 21st. SB suggested Friday 19th. So the envelope stuffing was going to be Thursday 18th. DG asked how many people would be helping. NMC said that he thought six was a minimum and that he hoped to get it done in a day. SB asked how many pieces of paper were going to go in. NMC said that we needed something about both the GM and the AGM. SB said we didn't need full agendas just notice. It was agreed to propose two alternative dates for the AGM, the 22nd of January and the 26th of February, in the text of the letter. The GM would then decide, effectively giving the association dispensation to go outside its constitution exceptionally if it opted for the later date. The GM had authority to alter the constitution. PG pointed out that the constitution required written notice of General Meetings. NMC said that needed to be changed to give the association more flexibility and cut down on costs. SB said that the wording could be changed to 'the association will notify all members not less than 14 days beforehand'. This was agreed.

NMC asked what wording should be used for the agenda of the GM when it came to informing Lynne that her expulsion was going to be considered. SB suggested a draft agenda saying 'Items will include..' and then giving a list. SB said the campaign would be on the agenda along with constitutional changes. PG suggested 'The GM will want to update members on some of the difficulties that the Association has had since the last AGM and we shall want to put to the meeting the action which the Committee has taken'. SB suggested 'HfH campaign, constitutional changes, difficulties of last year, expulsion of member'. NMC asked if 'expulsion of member' was needed. SB 'Difficulties of last year' might be enough. PG suggested 'proposals for next steps'. There was a consensus on this.

SB asked how many pieces of paper were going to be needed. PG said 'Keep the HLA independent' should be a separate piece of paper. NMC said the covering letter would give the dates, maybe mention something about the grant, a possible service charge campaign, the demonstration. SB said we should ask the membership what they wanted us to do. PG proposed putting up a shopping-list of potential ways forward on the website and asking for feedback to get a direction for the committee in 2011. NMC said the constitutional amendments had to be listed for people. NMC said we should also tell Joe Boake. SB said that as we weren't recognised we didn't have to do anything.

NMC said he had got a quote of £160 for one-side of 5,000 sheets of A4. NMC said that was quite cheap. DG suggested envelopes with windows. DG said it was doable. NMC said he would have to use mail-merge and that it couldn't be done with an outside source. LG said NMC either had to do 5,000 labels or 5,000 letters.

5. Constitutional amendments

It was agreed that the meeting didn't have time to look at all the proposed constitutional amendments. SB said she had been through the constitution and made tracked changes. SB proposed to send that round by email.

Action point: SB to send amendments around by email.

6. Extra authority for legal expenses

NMC said that £200 + VAT was required for the solicitor to look at SB's proposed wording for the campaign and that the committee needed to approve that. SB asked if it was necessary. PG said the wording did mention 'disgruntled people' and that it was better to protect one's back. This expense was approved. SB said the text should go on the website asap.

Action point: NMC to contact lawyer for approval of text.

SB closed the meeting at 22:25.