

Haringey Leaseholders' Association

Committee Meeting

Meeting held on Wednesday 17 February 2016 at Wood Green Social Club, Stuart Crescent, N22

In attendance

Committee:

Lloyd Grandson, Chair (LG)

Nick Martin-Clark, Treasurer (NMC)

Peter Gilbert, Secretary (PG)

Michael Blasebalk (MB)

Yvonne Campbell

Grace Lungu (from the beginning of the discussion on Leasehold Panel matters to the beginning of the discussion on the possible application for a Judicial Review)

The meeting was opened by the Chair at 7.15pm

Welcome

LG welcomed everybody to the meeting, in particular Michael Blasebalk, who was attending his first Committee meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were received from Sue Brown, Vice-Chair (SB), who had been unwell for several days, Lincoln Grandson, Alfred Jahn, Saida Mohamed, Ruth Ortiz and Clare Richards.

Minutes

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on Wednesday 20 January 2016, which had been circulated to Committee members, were read at the meeting and, subject to minor amendments, were approved.

Matters arising

- **Bank Account Signatory**

NMC said that he would locate the signatory form which the bank had sent him and would liaise with LG in order that the latter could be added as a signatory to HLA's bank account.

- **Facebook Account**

It was agreed that this would be deferred to the next meeting which Clare Richards, HLA Press Officer, was available to attend.

- **Housing and Planning Bill – approach to Catherine West, MP**

It was agreed that this item should be deferred until the next meeting which SB was available to attend in order to report on the matter.

- **Resident Engagement and Communication Strategy – Consultation**

NMC explained to MB that this item referred to HfH's ongoing consultation on its Resident Engagement and Communication Strategy for 2015-18, which HfH had now intimated would be completed and issued by April 2016, rather than to the meeting arranged by HfH with Jackie Dickens, a consultant from the Housing Quality Network, on 2 December 2015 which NMC and MB had both attended.

Leasehold Panel Matters

LG advised that further to the meeting of the Leasehold Panel on Wednesday 9 December 2015 he had put down a vote of no confidence in the Chair. HfH had not yet given notice of the next meeting of the Leasehold Panel and such a motion had to be submitted at least ten days before the Panel met. If the Chair replied suitably to further correspondence it would be possible to withdraw the motion.

NMC outlined for MB and YC the background to HLA's dissatisfaction with the Chair in relation to HLA's attempts to obtain information and enter into discussion about HfH's decision to withdraw the Resident Involvement Agreement.

He added that HLA had also been surprised that the Panel Chair had passed a letter from LG to Catherine Hardy-Smith (CHS) the HfH Company Secretary, to answer. The letter had been regarded as a formal complaint, which had not been LG's intention, and the reply from CHS had followed the complaint process.

It was agreed that LG should write a friendly letter to the Panel Chair suggesting a meeting.

A detailed discussion took place in which NMC explained that the original RIA had been formally agreed by leaseholder representatives and HfH representatives in 2006, soon after HfH had been created as the ALMO managing Haringey Council's properties on LBH's behalf. The original contract between LBH and HfH had referred to the precursor of the RIA. HfH had to respect the RIA and follow due process in updating it, but this had not been done.

It was agreed that how HLA followed up CHS's reply and the response from the Feedback Team to a complaint about a HfH officer on a related issue should be considered after the meeting with Tracie Evans, Chief Operating Officer of LBH, on Wednesday 24 February.

LG said that immediately after the Leasehold Panel meeting on 9 December Nesan Thevanesan of HfH had told him that, because HLA's lawyers had written to HfH on 8 December to urge that the matter of the removal of the RIA from HfH's website be included on the agenda of the Panel, the matter had been referred to HfH's legal team, who would be replying. (This was despite the fact that as HLA had not initiated a legal complaint the matter was not sub judice.)

NMC commented that HLA might also want to raise this matter with Tracie Evans.

LG added that HLA had been told by numerous leaseholders that it was very difficult to communicate with HfH, like 'coming up against a brick wall.'

Possible Follow-up Review by the Resident Scrutiny Panel

PG reported that on 9 February he had received a reply from the former Vice-Chair of the Resident Scrutiny Panel (RSP) ó who had recently been elected Chair following her predecessor's resignation ó in which she had advised him that the RSP had rejected HLA's complaint against its (now ex-) Chair. He had replied asking her whether, if HLA supplied information which the RSP had requested in 2015, the RSP would go ahead with a review of its original report to the Board of HfH following its investigation in 2014 of complaints which HfH had received against HLA. (Although the RSP said that it was independent of HfH, it seemed from the designation of her letter that HfH may have had some input into the letter.)

Possible challenge to the Renewal of LBH's Contract with HfH

Application for Judicial Review of HfH's decision to discontinue Recognition of Umbrella Groups

Arrangements for annual Review and/or Full Audit of HLA's Accounts

It was agreed to defer consideration of whether to request a full audit of HLA's accounts for 2015 until HfH advised whether this would be a pre-condition for recognition.

Application for Recognition

It was agreed to complete an application for recognition, signed by the HLA officers, for sending to HfH in the event that HfH agreed to consider an application.

Treasurer's Report

In view of the late hour, it was agreed to defer presentation of the Treasurer's Report until the next Committee meeting.

Meeting with Tracie Evans, Chief Operating Officer of Haringey Council

LG confirmed that the officers would be meeting Tracie Evans again at 5pm on Wednesday 24 February.

AGM Arrangements

NMC confirmed that arrangements had been made with Wood Green Social Club for the AGM to take place, as agreed, on Saturday 30 April 2016, starting at 10 for 10.30am.

Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next Committee meeting should be held at Wood Green Social Club on Wednesday 16 March 2016.

The meeting closed at 9.52pm