

HARINGEY LEASEHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT HARINGEY CIVIC CENTRE, HIGH ROAD, N22 ON THURSDAY 25 OCTOBER 2012

Present

Sue Brown (Chair) (SB), Nick Martin-Clark (Treasurer) (NMC), Peter Gilbert (Secretary) (PG), Rita Batzias (Committee Member) (RB) and Anne Gibson (Committee Member) (AG).

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Kate Worley.

Minutes

PG apologised for not having the minutes of the past few Committee meetings ready. He would email drafts via NMC for SB to consider.

Legal Action

Review of Committee meeting with Eamon McGoldrick and Sharon Morgan

SB said that at the meeting with Eamon McGoldrick and Sharon Morgan earlier that afternoon HfH had agreed to stick to the recognition criteria. They had agreed to send a letter of apology and to write to leaseholders confirming that HLA had been re-recognised. They would look at the emails in detail and respond to HLA. NMC had given them a copy of the letter in which HfH had offered at the end of 2009 to write to leaseholders suggesting a voluntary levy of £2.25 a head, from which leaseholders could opt out if they wished, to be taken as part of the main statutory charge. The HfH officers would look at this and there would be further discussion when the Committee met Nesan Thevanesan and Eamon McGoldrick on Thursday 8 November.

SB added that over the last two to three years HLA had lost a lot of money and the Committee would be prepared to negotiate on what it would consider as recompense. Neumanns had indicated that they would be prepared to take HfH to court, on a no win no fee basis, on the ground of misfeasance in a public office. Committee members did not wish to do this, but it was the Committee's duty to leaseholder members to seek compensation. At the meeting, Mr McGoldrick had said that the RIT had got too involved. The emails showed that as long ago as August 2010 the RIT had been talking to HLCG members. HfH would also look at whether the payment of £1700 to HLCG had been ultra vires. The main sticking points from the HLA viewpoint were the amount of compensation and whether HfH would deal properly with the officer concerned.

NMC suggested that HLA could not ask HfH to take disciplinary action against the officer concerned, but that the Committee did not want to have any dealings with him until HLA had received a suitable explanation and apology. HLA could discuss any offer that HfH made. NMC added that HLA could ask HfH for help with office space for an advice centre . if HfH offered an office free of charge or at a peppercorn rent, that would mean HLA had £10,000 a year to do other things. Haringey could be a model for leaseholder organisations across London. What HLA wanted was the use of a room, staffed by volunteers, with a filing cabinet. SB said that there might be a problem with paying insurance. AG added that HLA would need to be careful what advice was given as unqualified people must not give legal advice . it would be helpful if a qualified person offered advice pro bono. SB commented that HLA should consult leaseholders on whether they wanted the Association to provide an advice centre. SB commented that HLA should not withdraw the appeal against de-recognition until its complaints were entirely resolved, even if HfH admitted that de-recognition had been flawed.

Topics for discussion with Eamon McGoldrick and Nesan Thevanesan

The following list of topics for discussion with Eamon McGoldrick and Nesan Thevanesan on Thursday 8 November was agreed:

- The offer made by Homes for Haringey in late 2009 to make a grant of £10000 a year to HLA via a voluntary levy on leaseholders.
- The organisational structure and budget of the Home Ownership Team and how this fitted into the overall structure and finance of HfH.
- The annual service charge . the major issues, including those parts of the charge that are directly under the HOT and those that aren't, and how HOT can influence HfH decisions on the level of the charge.
- Details of a future programme of work and regular meetings with HfH for the HLA service charge sub-committee.
- The scope for HfH/HOT to consult leaseholders on optional elements of the service charge.
- The prioritisation of major works projects in Haringey and the effect on leaseholders.
- Referrals to the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal and LVT decisions
- The cycle of mail-outs to leaseholders.
- Updates of the HfH/HOT databases.

PG was asked to draft a letter to HfH, for SB to consider.

Website

Further to a comment by RB about out-of-date information on the internet and who might be running it, SB said she would contact Chris Graham when she was back at work as he might have put some of it up.

Date of next Committee meeting

Friday 9 November 2012 . PG was asked to book a room at the Civic Centre via HfH and confirm the arrangements to Committee members.