

**Haringey Leaseholders' Association
Committee Meeting
Meeting held on Wednesday 28 May 2014 at the Civic Centre**

In attendance

Committee:

Sue Brown (Chair) (SB)
Nick Martin-Clark (Treasurer) (NMC)
Peter Gilbert (Secretary) (PG)
Charlie Howard (CH)
Grace Lungu (GL)
Stephanie Rice (SR)

Apologies from Lloyd Grandson (LG)

The meeting was opened by the Chair at 7.20pm

Welcome

The Chair welcomed members, particularly the new Committee members, to the first Committee meeting after the AGM on Saturday 26 April. She thanked them for volunteering to serve and expressed the hope that, once HLA had overcome its immediate problems and had been recognised, HLA would do positive things in representing leaseholders to Homes for Haringey (HfH).

Apologies

Apologies as shown above were noted.

Draft AGM Minutes

The draft minutes of the AGM held on Saturday 26 April 2014 were circulated and read at the meeting and, following a couple of minor amendments, were approved unanimously for posting on the HLA website and for presenting for confirmation at the 2015 AGM.

Settlement of Court case and Statement for Website

The Chair advised the Committee that the court case against HLA's former Treasurer had been resolved by mediation, and circulated to Committee members the joint public statement that HLA and HLCG had agreed to post on their respective websites. In reply to SR, the Chair confirmed that both organisations would still be in existence, and that HLA was happy to work with any organisation for the benefit of leaseholders.

The Chair added that the Judge who had been due to hear the case had been asked to agree the joint public statement and that the timing of its appearance on the websites would then be agreed.

The Committee agreed to a brief commentary, including a couple of amendments suggested by members, that would accompany the public statement on the HLA website.

Resident Scrutiny Panel Audit of the HLA

The Chair explained the process under the Resident Involvement Agreement for gaining re-recognition by HfH of the HLA after the AGM. She said that Astrid Kjellberg-Obst, HfH's Director of Operations, had advised her by email a couple of weeks previously that following the AGM a number of concerns requiring investigation and summarised in the email had been raised with HfH. The HfH Board had asked the Resident Scrutiny Panel (RSP) to undertake an audit of the HLA in respect of the allegations, in order to produce a report which would be considered by the Board when it met on 22 July and would be considering whether to re-recognise HLA.

SB continued that Catherine Hardy-Smith, Head of the Managing Director's Service and Company Secretary to HfH, had then sent her a copy of the scope of the RSP's audit. She commented that she trusted the RSP, of which she had been a member since it had first been constituted three years before, to consider the allegations fairly. She read a draft email response that she proposed to send to Catherine Hardy-Smith (copied to the Chair and Vice-chair of the RSP) and the Committee agreed with that response to the details of the scope of the audit. She added that she would be away on holiday from 2 to 10 June, which meant that she would be unable to attend the next scheduled meeting of the RSP.

GL said that she had seen how Phil Hettiarachi and Michael Ruggins had tried to disrupt the AGM and offered to be a witness on behalf of HLA.

SB commented that she could see Phil's hands all over the representations to HfH. He had seemed to be a helpful Committee member early in his membership, but seemed to misunderstand the constitution, in particular that it did not contain a requirement for a financial report to be made to each Committee meeting. The frequency of financial reports was a matter for the Committee to determine.

NMC added that Anne Gibson and Kate Worley in particular had not been convinced that it was a good idea to proceed with the court case, and the matter had been well debated at Committee meetings in the past year. It was not until December 2013 that Phil had revealed that he was a member of HLCG. It now seemed that he and his colleagues were trying to destroy HLA.

SB said that it might be a bit of a rush for the RSP to provide its report to HfH by the end of June.

CH commented that the nature of the complaint seemed to be boxing HLA in.

SB wondered whether the allegation that HLA had misused its funds by making mail-outs had been caused by the HLA's mail-outs to sub-letting leaseholders, who were in some aspects at a disadvantage, for example that they were not eligible to sit on the HfH Board or to vote in the election for a leaseholder member to the Board, even when they were Haringey residents. She recalled Phil objecting to this, although HLA had been looking after the interest of leaseholders.

Website

CH said that he had made little progress on the website. There was a problem that there was no easy identification of committee members as such when they posted items on the website. He hoped to be able to resolve this shortly.

NMC commented that a priority should be to create public fora on the website, into which leaseholders could sign.

CH said that he would need to sort out the database.

Office

NMC said that he was regularly attending the office from 10am to 1pm on Fridays, but could not make the afternoon session. (He would be unable to attend on Friday 30 May.) Very few leaseholders came in with enquiries. SB commented that we would need to publicise the office.

Any other Business – Signatures

GL and SR signed individual copies of the Data Protection Act declaration. The officers signed an up-to-date copy of the Constitution, which was handed to PG for safe-keeping.

Next Meeting

No date was set for the next Committee meeting. The Chair would consult on this either after the meeting of the RSP that would consider the allegations against HLA or after the HfH Board meeting on 22 July, whichever is appropriate.

As it was now past 9pm and the Civic Centre was closing down, the meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.