

HARINGEY LEASEHOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT 3 TENTERDEN ROAD, N17, ON MONDAY 16 JULY 2012

Present

Nick Martin-Clark (Treasurer) (NMC), Peter Gilbert (Secretary) (PG), Anne Gibson (Committee Member) (AG) and Kate Worley (Committee Member) (KW).

Appointment of Chair for Meeting

The members present agreed to appoint Anne Gibson as Chair for the meeting

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Sue Brown (Chair) and Rita Batzias.

Proposed New Charges

NMC advised that the proposed new charges for annual gas safety and smoke alarm checks were due to be considered at the Leasehold Panel on 17 July. It would be important to say that HLA had decided to support leaseholders who complained to the LVT that it was unreasonable for HfH to impose these requirements and to recommend Oakray as a firm that could supply a gas safety certificate. KW pointed out that having a service contract with Oakray and arranging with Oakray to supply the safety certificate were different arrangements. NMC commented that we did not know whether HfH was receiving a favour from Oakray to suggest that leaseholders could arrange with Oakray to issue the gas safety certificate. AG thought that HfH might have wanted to save leaseholders from having to find other potential contractors by suggesting that Oakray was available if leaseholders wanted to use that firm. It was agreed that HLA should oppose HfH's proposals as Parliament had not decided to make it a legal requirement for home-owners to obtain an annual gas safety certificate. This might be the subject of a campaign, with HLA supporting a leaseholder who refused to pay the new charge and was taken to court in an application to the LVT to set aside the charge.

Treasurer's Report

NMC reported that he had now had the HLA accounts checked by a qualified person, at a cost of £240. Other than that, they were the same as at the AGM. He would bring the signed accounts on 20 July, when the Committee would meet Eamon McGoldrick and Sharon Morgan of HfH. In answer to KW's concern that HLA couldn't afford to call a general meeting, NMC said that at the GM on 15 December 2010 it had been agreed that it was not necessary to post written notice to all members. HLA could notify members by email, telephone, advertising in the local Press or a notice on the website. KW said that HLA needed to encourage leaseholders to pay an annual subscription. NMC said that, at the 2008 AGM, the

membership had rejected a proposal by Simon Godfrey of HfH that there should be a two-tier membership which differentiated between members and subscribers to the Association. The Association would have lost the right to claim that it represented each and every leaseholder. KW said that if HLA regained recognition we would be able to ask HfH to include a note about the Association in the pack that it sent to new leaseholders who were taking advantage of the government's encouragement for tenants to take up the Right to Buy.

NMC added that since the AGM a lot of subscriptions had been paid by standing order on 2 May . there weren't any due in June and July. He confirmed that the limited company was a separate entity. In reply to KW, he said that the bank balance as at the AGM had been £1789.13. The main mailout cost in the year ended 31 March 2012 had been incurred on the notice that the Committee had sent in October 2011 of the General Meeting on 5 November which had included a request for signatures to the petition for a Special General Meeting of HLCG. HLA had also used a call centre to help encourage leaseholders to attend the GM.

NMC agreed to prepare a statement of income and costs from 1 April for subsequent Committee meetings.

Report on Meeting with Riz Majid of Neumans

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NMC reported that he had taken a lot of out-of-date material off the website and that we needed to post some new items. It had been necessary to include items about the recognition process and about the constitution. If we did not talk about such important matters on the website, HfH could not react positively.

NMC expressed frustration that HfH had cancelled meetings about governance and had not been in touch about HLA's application for recognition before officers had made a negative report to the Board.

In reply to AG, NMC said that he would be happy to contact members when he was back to thank them for their continued support and to ask them for their up-to-date details.

Meeting with Eamon McGoldrick (HfH Interim Director of Housing Development) and Sharon Morgan (HfH Deputy Director of Housing Development)

The meeting would take place at 5pm on Friday 20 July at Alexandra House. SB, RB, AG, PG, NMC and KW would attend, possibly with one other. PG was asked to write to HfH to enquire whether there would be a fixed time-limit, to explain that the meeting needed to clarify what HLA needed to do to be recognised, to ask for an exhaustive list of what else, if anything, HLA needed to supply, and to seek clarification on the note-taking arrangements. If the Committee members could not

resolve the issues satisfactorily, they would want to establish what HLA needed to do gain recognition in 2012. It had been disappointing not to have had an early explanation why the application for recognition was unsatisfactory so that HLA could have had the opportunity to try to put matters right.

Small Claims Action

NMC said that HLA could ask Neumanns to submit a claim in the Small Claims Court against HfH without incurring any solicitors' fee. It would cost HLA £80 to file a claim and the defendants' fees would be capped at £110. This would only be if the meeting on 20 July was fruitless and would be for reimbursement of the costs that HLA had incurred on prepaid envelopes and a licence from Royal Mail before HfH had gone back on their agreement for a suitably-worded survey to go out with notices for the 2012 AGM.

GM Expenses

In reply to KW, NMC said that the hire of a room for a new GM would cost about £40. Fortunately, under the constitution notices did not need to be sent out by post. HLA simply had to try to contact all its members, so the Committee could use a combination of email, phone calls, putting a notice on the website and one in the local Press to inform member leaseholders.

The meeting closed at 10.15 pm with a vote of thanks to KW for her hospitality.