

Cressingham Gardens Estate Steering Group Meeting

Venue: Room 125 – Lambeth Town Hall Hall

Time: 7pm – 9pm

Minutes of the meeting – 7 July 2015

Present:

Name	Organisation
Cllr Mary Atkins - Chair (MA)	Ward Member, Tulse Hill Ward
Cllr Marcia Cameron (MC)	Ward Member, Tulse Hill Ward
Fatima Elmoudden (FE)	Resident Rep. (Freeholder)
Gerlinde Gniewosz (GG)	Resident Rep. (Leaseholder)
Nicholas Greaves (NG)	Resident Rep. (Tenant)
Chin Eng Ong (CO)	Resident Rep. (Tenant)
Julian Hart (JH),	Capital Programme Manager, LBL
Pauline Foster (PF)	Housing Development Manager, LBL
Andrew Jacques(AJ)	Area Asset Manager, LBL
Edward Ogundele (EO)	Independent Resident Advisor, Strategic Urban Futures (StUF)

Apologies: Bashir Miah – Housing Projects Officer, LBL

1. Minutes of Last Meeting - 16 June 2015

1.1 It was noted the minutes of the previous meeting were not circulated to the team prior to the meeting. GG asked for this issue to be recorded as a complaint. The Chair (MA) agreed it was unacceptable not to have been sent the minutes in a timely manner.

Action: Minutes of meetings are to be sent out in a timely manner

1.2 The minutes of the last meeting were distributed at the meeting. The Chair (MA) gave members of the meeting time to read the minutes before taking matters arising from the previous meeting.

2. Matter Arising/Actions

- 2.1 GG thought that it was unreasonable for the last meeting to have made the decision for the local Ward Councillors to Chair meetings in the future, while all the local residents were not at the meeting. It was discussed that this was a matter for continued deliberation as part of the discussion around Terms of Reference.
- 2.2 GG expressed concern about the quality of the minutes, where references were made to paragraphs in previous minutes, without spelling out the details of what had previously been said.
- 2.3 GG did not agree that residents have been given the opportunity to respond to the revised Key Guarantees prior to the Cabinet meeting. JH pointed out this meeting was scheduled specifically to discuss the Cabinet report. JH pointed out that revisions to the Key Guarantees had been discussed on several occasions at previous meetings.
- 2.4 JH suggested the code of conduct and terms of reference is discussed at the next meeting. This is to ensure the meeting is given more time to discuss the Cabinet paper, which will be presented at Cabinet next week, - 13.7.15.

Action:

A more detailed document on Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct to be drafted and then discussed at next meeting.

- 2.5 Having missed the previous meeting, GG asked JH to explain the masterplan process again. JH explained the masterplan process to the meeting again, including the process to develop masterplan objectives for the project over the next few months.
- 2.6 It was highlighted that there is a need for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). There was a discussion on developing a specific FAQ for leaseholders and freeholders. EO asked for freeholders to be dealt with separately as they have specific issues.

Action:

Generic FAQs to be developed.

Note:

FAQs have been produced and are now on the Council's website.

- 2.7 GG asked about response to her previously issued Leaseholder Questions. JH responded that he was in the process of completing these and acknowledged that it had taken sometime to compose the answers.

Action:

To complete answers to Leaseholder Questions and provide these prior to or at the next Steering Group meeting.

- 2.7 The Chair requested that communication generally is discussed at the next meeting to ensure clear and precise communication is developed to address all tenures concerns.

Action:

Communication issues to be discussed at next meeting

3. Housing Management feedback

- 3.1 AJ reported to the meeting on the weather tight works to Cressingham Gardens Estate. The Section 20 consultation period is due to end in approximately 2 weeks time.
- 3.2 There was a discussion between AJ and GG on the Section 20 consultation period end date. It would appear some residents had not received the original Section 20 notice. To rectify this matter Lambeth's Homeowners team has sent the notice to the residents that were originally excluded, therefore the consultation period has been extended for those leaseholders. GG asked AJ if the extension of the period includes all residents. AJ was unclear on this point.

Action:

AJ to advise residents of the Section 20 consultation end date

3.3 AJ advised the weather tight works will commence on site in September 2015. FG expressed her concerns about the implications for freeholders. She is of the opinion that freeholders will not have to contribute to the cost of the weather tight works. AJ advised that freeholders' contracts vary so he is not in the position to give an overall response about freeholders. Individual freeholders will be dealt with in accordance to their freehold contract.

Action:

JH has agreed to meet with freeholders as soon as possible

Note:

Meeting took place on 21st July 2015

3.5 NG asked AJ when tenants will be advised about the works. AJ advised that tenants will be informed of the works in due course. A letter will be sent to all residents initially to advise of the works and to ascertain if there are any specific requirements that needs to be taken in to consideration whilst the work is being carried out.

4. Investing in better neighbourhoods and building the homes we need to house the people of Lambeth – Cressingham Gardens Estate, Cabinet report

4.1 GG, FG & NG were unhappy with the very little time they have been given to go through the very large report. GG felt going through the report was a pointless exercise as there is no chance of the report being amended now as it has been published on Lambeth's website. Residents also stated that it was a long and complicated report and the Council should summarise it for residents.

Action

Council to produce précis of Cabinet Report

4.2 NG asked why residents have not had the chance to vote on the proposed development as requested originally. JH responded that the Council made clear that there would be no vote. However, as a concession the Council did carry out a Test of Opinion.

4.3 GG asked JH for the viability report. GG wants to see the viability model to ascertain the assumptions made. JH responded that a Viability Report was attached to the Cabinet Report and that that was all he had authority to release at that time.

NOTE At the subsequent Cabinet Meeting it was confirmed by the Council that additional viability information would be made available. The details of this are under consideration.

4.4 JH advised the financial model will continually be amended throughout the development of the project and that relevant viability information would be released to residents at the times of Council decisions.

4.5 GG stated the 15% Council rent net gain actual means only 23 new Council rent homes. GG considered the net gain of new Council rent homes to be very poor and fell far short of the Council's own aspirations.

4.6 JH confirmed that this number was short of the Council's own aspirations and that, as set out in the Cabinet Report, as the project is progressed the Council will at each stage seek to improve on these numbers and to increase the number and proportion of homes for council rent.

4.9 FG asked JH, what is the percentage difference between the valuation of a leasehold property and a freehold property? JH advised it is generally based on the length of the lease, for example a leaseholder that has a 100-year lease is broadly similar to a freeholder. The shorter the lease the less value the property will demand.

4.10 The Chair asked what support will be available to home owners to obtain another mortgage. JH advised the Council is acutely aware of the concerns of homeowners and will put in place a strategy to work with homeowners to help them secure new mortgages or to port across mortgages, where they wish to remain living on the estate.

4.11 MC reported that tenants are concerned about giving up their secure tenancy for an assured tenancy. JH responded that, in recognition of this concern, a draft lifetime assured tenancy has been appended to the Cabinet Report and that this will now be consulted on over the next year.

- 4.14 CO asked what option is the Council proposing. JH advised the recommended option is option 5 – complete redevelopment.
- 4.17 There are 2 issues that MC has concerns about in the Cabinet report, she is very disappointed that there are only 23 new Council rent homes and that tenants are going to lose their secure tenancy. She has asked the Chair to raise these points at the Cabinet meeting as she will not be available to attend the meeting herself.
- 4.18 GG advised the meeting that it was shocking that residents found out about the Cabinet report from Cllr Matthew Bennett's twitter account and then the Lambeth Labour party website before it was published on the Lambeth website. JH conceded that this may have been the case, but queried whether this actually happened before publication of the report on the Council website.

5. Summer event

- 5.1 There was a general discussion about the event. It was agreed the event will take place – Sunday, 16.8.15.

Action:

A summer event will be organised to take place on Sunday, 16.8.15

6. Any other business

- 6.1 NG & FG reported they have continued to receive a series of allegations and insults via social media. FG reported she has had her property damaged and has installed a security alarm system for her safety. The Chair has asked JH to arrange for a strongly worded letter from Lambeth to address this situation.

Action:

EO to draft a letter and forward to JH and the Chair.

MA will consider this draft with a view to sending it out in her name to residents on the estate.

- 6.2 There was a discussion about the protocol for the public to speak at the Cabinet meeting. It was agreed PF will send the relevant information to the residents as soon as possible.

Action:

PF to forward information to residents on the protocol for residents that wish to speak at Cabinet meetings.

7. Date and venue of next meeting

- 7.1 The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 3 August 2015 at 7pm, Room 125 at Lambeth Town Hall