

Cressingham Garden Estate - Resident Engagement Panel (REP)

Venue: The High Tree Community Development Trust,

Time: 7pm – 9pm

Minutes of the meeting - Monday 11th January 2016

Present:

Cllr Mary Atkins – Chair (MA)	Ward Member, Tulse Hill Ward
Nicholas Greaves (NG)	Resident Rep. (Tenant)
Gerlinde Gniewosz(GG),	Resident Rep (Leaseholder)
Edward Ogundele (EO)	Independent Resident Advisor, Strategic Urban Future/JVM Ltd (StUF)
Fatima Elmoudden (FE)	Resident Rep. (Freeholder – attended toward the end)
George Sodoropoulos (GS)	Freeholder, substitute for Fatima Elmoudden
Jason Hepworth (Jason H)	Resident Rep. (Tenant)
Tom Keene(TK)	Resident Rep. (Leaseholder)
Julian Hart (JH)	Capital Programme Manager, LBL
Pauline Foster(PF)	Housing Development Manager, LBL
Bashir Miah (BM), minutes	Housing Project Officer, LBL
Andrew Jacques (AJ)	Repairs coordinator, Housing Management, LBL
Abbas Raza (AR)	Local Dialogue, community engagement consultancy

Apologies:

Cllr Marcia Cameron (MC)	Ward Member, Tulse Hill Ward
Sarah Coyte (SC),	Capacity Building Officer, LBL
Christine Makhlof (CM)	New Resident Rep. (Tenant)

1.0 Welcomes.

- 1.1 Chair welcomes everyone and asked panel members to introduce themselves. Officers and consultants were requested to explain their role in the project.

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting –7th Dec 2015

Minutes was accepted as a true reflection of the discussion that took place. An error in the numbering system was noted.

3.0 Matter Arising/Actions

- 3.1 AJ confirmed that the Notice board was up and keys have been issued to the residents association.
- 3.2 There was confusion about who has the keys. NG commented that he has seen posters, which have been put up on the Notice Board, so someone must have the keys.

Action : AJ to liaise with his colleague to confirm who has been issued with the keys.

- 3.3 GG queried, what had happened to the workshop that was promised as part of the s20 notices.
- 3.4 AJ suggested that a workshop was not appropriate term to use. He clarified that his team will be organising a general consultation event where all residents will be invited. Leaseholders can see someone at the event with regards to their query on the section 20 notices. Also tenants can get a better understanding about the works.
- 3.5 GG/TK commented that they received an estimate and a schedule of works with the s20 notices and they believed the estimate provided was inaccurate.
- 3.6 GG commented that further detailed information was requested from the homeownership team and they have referred them to AJ.
- 3.7 AJ highlighted that each leaseholder received a detail estimate of the work as part of their s20 notices. There was no further detailed information; it was the best estimate, which has been developed by the senior QS, based on the current schedule of works rate, etc. Leaseholders have the opportunity to give their feedback and observations as part of the s20 consultation process. The Council as part of this process will review the feedback/observations it receives from the leaseholders.
- 3.8 GG and TK commented that they were unhappy with the s20 process undertaken by the Council. They believe detailed information about the work has not been provided and they have difficulties in responding to s20 notices. They also find it unacceptable that the

consultation period was not extended, especially when it was issued during the Christmas period and the concern was highlighted at the last meeting.

- 3.9 GG requested that she would like to access the Hunter's report.
- 3.10 AJ reported that subject to the s20 consultation process, the projected date for the work to commence was end of March 2016.
- 3.11 NG highlighted the frustration some residents were having with regards to the delay in getting the meanwhile works done as some residents, particularly tenants, were suffering by living in a home that require these works.
- 3.12 Referring to item 5.2 & 5.3 of the previous minute, GG commented that it was unacceptable that the Council will not provide Independent Legal advice to the leaseholders for their particular issues. GG requested that it was to be minuted that the council was refusing to provide independent legal advice, whereas it was using tax payer money to fund its legal advice.
- 3.13 JH responded by highlighting that the Council has provided an Independent Resident Advisor (IRA) to support and advise residents on the estates. The Council encourages the residents to use the services of the independent resident advisor. And where it would be helpful with engaging with residents, the Council will include legal information in consultation documentation. However, the Council will not fund the homeowners to seek legal advice as requested to mount challenges against the Council. He added that it was right and proper that the Council seek its own legal and other advice to ensure that the Council was acting according to relevant legislation. As part of the Key Guarantees, the Council would pay for the legal and valuation costs incurred by homeowners, if they treat with the Council to enter into a property transaction (purchase of their home or the taking up of a shared equity/ownership offer).

4.0 Housing Management/ Leaseholder S20 update

see above, (agenda has already been discussed under matters arising)

5.0 Project Update

- 5.1 PF reported that further to discussion at the last meeting a new consultation plan was going to be launched, which will start with an exhibition on Wednesday 20th January, 2pm -8pm at Rotunda Hall.

- 5.2 GG commented that it was not a new consultation process; the council was 'resuming' the consultation. She added that a number of subgroups were established under the previous consultation programme and their activities were not concluded. These subgroups were: Wellbeing subgroup, Homeowner subgroup, Housing Management Subgroup, Test of Opinion Subgroup, Green Retrofitting Subgroup and the Financial Viability Subgroup.
- 5.3 NG commented that he was part of Wellbeing subgroup and a report was produced.
- 5.4 MA requested for clarification from JH with regards to these subgroups.
- 5.5 JH advised that the Council had reviewed what had taken place at these various sub-groups and it was clear that there were still matters that could be discussed in relation to green retrofitting and viability issues. However, it was not apparent that there were any new issues to consider in relation to the other sub-groups. The Council would make information available at the exhibitions in relation to the other sub-groups and residents would be welcome to comment.
- 5.6 GG commented that the Council did not take on board any comments or amendments suggested by residents. For example, the Test opinion survey ignored amendments suggested at the project team meeting. She would like all the workshops to be re-run again.
- 5.7 JH clarified that, whilst the Council was resuming consultation, the process being followed was going to be different. (Note – JH used the term 'scope of consultation', but meant 'consultation process'.) He confirmed that it was the Council's opinion that it was not necessary to repeat everything in the same way as the previous consultation process and had therefore only timetabled specific workshops on green retrofitting and viability; all other events would be general and provide scope for residents to discuss all relevant issues.
- 5.8 He added that he understood that GG and some other residents had been championing green retrofitting and that further work had been undertaken independently by the consultancy Sturgis and a report on the subject was largely complete. The Council will be facilitating the Green Retrofitting workshop, but will be relying on GG to share the information with the Council so that a proper analysis and useful discussion could take place. This subject matter could only be taken

into consideration by the Council if the relevant information were made available.

- 5.9 PF requested clarification from GG on when she will forward the report to the Council.
- 5.10 GG confirmed that she has the report but did not clarify when she will share with the Council.
- 5.11 NG commented that he would like to see what the Sturgis report said about the estate and Green retrofitting.
- 5.12 GG commented that she will be organising her own events, independent of the Council to share information with residents. She requested that the Council should bring its own sustainability and planning experts to the green retrofitting workshop. She suggested Susan Sheehan from the Council attend the workshop. (Note: subsequent to the REP meeting, JH has spoken to Susan Sheehan, who has now moved to another department in the Council and no longer dealing with sustainability issues.)
- 5.13 AR circulated the booklet, which will be distributed to residents and made available at the consultation event on 20th January.
- 5.14 GG and TK were unhappy that it was circulated for information only. They consider the information in the booklet to be inaccurate.
- 5.15 JH stated that it had been made clear at the last REP meeting that residents would be able to influence the process, but that the Council would decide in first instance on the content of the consultation. JH added that REP members were welcome to comment on the booklet and the Council would respond to such comments as part of the consultation process.
- 5.16 TK commented that he felt that the consultation process was too rushed and what the Council actually want to do is to redevelop the whole estate regardless of what residents want.
- 5.17 AR responded by saying that he does not feel that a month long the consultation process was short. There would be plenty of opportunity for residents to be involved and to make comments.

5.18 GG commented that there was no financial information in the booklet, particularly the HRA figures. She also queried if the booklet and other information will be available in different languages.

5.19 NG commented on the print sizes of booklet, he requested that the Council bear in mind the people, like him, who has visual impairment and has difficulties reading small font sizes.

5.20 It was confirmed at the meeting that A4 booklet would be produced.

5.21 Action: booklets, leaflet and other information to be made available in different languages, large print and braille's upon request.- Project Team/Local Dialogue

5.22 Action: publicise the availability of booklet in different languages in the letter going out to residents. - Project Team/Local Dialogue

6.0 Independent Resident Advisor & Resident Reps Feedback

6.1 Residents REP members raised concerns and felt it was unacceptable that there was no Saturday consultation event as it could reduce ability for resident to participate in the process.

6.2 JH agreed to organise a Saturday drop in session.

6.3 Action: organise and publicise an additional Saturday drop in session – Local dialogue/project team

6.4 TK commented that he would like an independent chair for the REP.

6.5 MA responded by saying that she would be happy for this to be developed if this was the wish of resident reps. She would like the resident reps to propose a list of independent candidates who would be willing to chair the meeting. – Action resident reps.

6.6 JH also suggested that to take this forward a detailed qualification criteria should be agreed by the REP.

6.7 There were discussions about what happens to the Key Guarantee.

6.8 JH advised that key Guarantees will not be void as it was a programme level document. However, as a result of JR it was suspended on Cressingham Garden Estate. Consequently the

Council had to suspend negotiation with about 20 homeowners who were considering selling the property to the Council and 30 tenants on Band A decant status had to be cancelled.

6.9 PF commented some of these people felt very upset and let down.

6.10NG commented that people were limbo. Some people were living in an extremely difficulty condition and their only chance of moving early has been stopped.

6.11 JH added that there were further opportunities to provide further suggestion on the key guarantees until it was finalised.

6.12TK requested clarification on the deadline. JH responded by stating that it will be same time as the consultation period.

6.13EO commented that vulnerable tenants should be helped and actively engaged. Translation services facility should be provided and made available to resident who cannot understand English.

6.14GG commented that there are people who speak Portuguese, Somalian, Eritreans, Arabic and Spanish.

6.15EO/PF reported that informal session was organised with new resident REP members. This informal session was useful for reps to discuss issues with the independent resident advisor.

6.16It was agreed that further meeting/training events will be organised – Action EO/SC

6.17It was further agreed SC/EO will identifying training needs for new reps. – Action EO/SC

7.0 AOB

7.1 PF reported that new representatives to REP panel were Tom Keane, Jason Hepworth, George Sodoropoulis and Christine Makhlouf. Vicky and Pamela have withdrawn. There were still four more tenants' reps vacancies.

7.2 There was discussion about the Terms of Reference.

- 7.3 It was reported that NG and Jason H had signed the ToR. However GG, TK and some other reps have not signed the document.
- 7.4 GG stipulated that she would require independent legal advice before she can sign the document. She feels that it would limit her rights.
- 7.5 NG commented that the group started in an informal and open way. However, there have been times when he has been misquoted on the estate and in the social media, which has made his life difficult. Most important for him would be if everyone agrees and adhere to the Code of Conduct.
- 7.6 EO suggested that as the group was becoming larger it would be useful to agree to a Code of Conduct part, which he thinks would be for everyone benefit.
- 7.7 It was agreed that term of reference be reviewed further but in the meantime everyone will adhere to follow the spirit of the code of conduct.
- 7.8 PF reported that CM requested that if the date of the meeting could be changed because the TRA has booked regular Monday exercise classes at Rotunda Hall and she need to be present to provide access to the group.
- 7.9 The panel discussed and decided to keep the meeting as schedule, because it was suitable for majority of the members. It was noted that as Rotunda was not available it will now be held at High Tree Community Development Trust.
- 7.10 GG and TK will discuss with CM and see if they can arrange someone alternative to provide access to the Rotunda Hall, so she can be free to attend the meeting.
- 7.11 FE commented that she recognises that the Council will not provide specific advice to the homeowner. However, there were ways to get free advice, which she has shared with the freeholders.

Date of Next Meeting:

Monday 1st February 2016, Venue: High Tree Community Development