

Cressingham Garden Estate - Resident Engagement Panel (REP)

Venue: High Trees Community Development Trust

Time: 7pm-9pm

Minutes of the meeting: Monday 16th May 2016

Present:

Cllr Mary Atkins – Chair (MA)	Ward Member, Tulse Hill Ward
Edward Ogundele (EO)	Independent Resident Advisor, Strategic Urban Future/JVM Ltd (StUF)
George Sodoropoulos (GS)	Freeholder, substitute for Fatima Elmoudden
Nicholas Greaves (NG)	Resident Rep (Tenant)
Jason Hepworth (JHep)	Resident Rep (Tenant)
Julian Hart (JH)	Capital Programme Manager, LBL
Abbas Raza (AR)	Local Dialogue, community engagement consultancy
Anna Allan (AA) Minutes	Housing Projects Officer, LBL

Apologies:

Cllr Marcia Cameron (MC)	Ward Member, Tulse Hill Ward
Andrew Jacques (AJ)	Repairs Coordinator, Housing Management, LBL
Gerlinde Gniewosz (GG)	Resident Rep (Leaseholder)
Tom Keene (TK)	Resident Rep (Leaseholder)

1.0 Welcomes.

1.1 Chair welcomed everyone.

2.0 Terms of Reference (ToR).

2.1 AA confirmed the only change to the ToR was the addition of the comms protocol.

2.2 GS stated he didn't want to sign the ToR without legal advice. He said he understood why the protocol has been updated. He expressed frustration at having to review the document again.

2.3 EO stated there was only a minor change from the version presented in October 2015. The document only outlines standards of expected behaviour, and does not affect GS's legal rights as a freeholder.

2.4 GS explained he didn't feel it was fair to sign the ToR when he asked for his questions to be answered before the Cabinet meeting on 21st

- March and they weren't. He said he always attends the REP, causes no problems and yet when he asks for help, he doesn't get it. He said he takes this role seriously, but he was promised something that wasn't delivered, questioning the value of membership of the group.
- 2.5 GS requested information around the valuation process as he wanted to gauge what the price may be and whether improvements such as decorating properties will make a difference.
 - 2.6 EO explained that the value of every property will be different and will be affected by factors such as land and condition.
 - 2.7 JH apologised for not responding to GS's email in time and committed to respond that week, supplementing the original answer that was given to GS.
 - 2.8 MA stated that the regeneration programme had been delayed by challenges to the process and now things will start moving forward. Once a Development Management Team (DMT) is in place there will be clearer costs and valuations can then take place.
 - 2.9 GS said the process has gone on too long and people are in limbo about what they can afford. They need an idea of what is going on to plan their lives and asked that officers consider how they would feel if they were residents.
 - 2.10 MA explained that if there was another legal challenge, the process could be delayed again but the DMT procurement will start in good faith to provide certainty to residents. MA said she understood resident's frustrations and that GS's views are important and she hopes he remains a member of the REP.
 - 2.11 JH said it was valuable to have GS on the REP to explain when things are not clear and how to make them clearer. JH said the REP is the way officers can understand how tenants and homeowners on the estate feel.
 - 2.12 JH then stated that Cabinet gave officers the authority to review the REP. JH recognised that not all members agree with Option 5 (full redevelopment of the estate) but the REP need to engage with this to make sure they get the best deal for the residents they represent. JH explained the REP need to steer how regeneration happens, not if it happens. The REP is not about personal goals or situations but about being on a panel, influencing how the regeneration goes forward. An indication of this buy in is signing the ToR. JH stated that residents will only be invited to future REP meetings if they have signed the ToR. **Action All members to sign the ToR if they wish to continue to participate in the REP**
 - 2.13 GS stated that could leave only tenants on the REP.
 - 2.14 EO said he has engaged other leaseholders and freeholders who expressed an interest in joining the REP. EO continued, saying that he understood GS's frustrations. He reiterated that the ToR do not

affect resident's rights and they can still hold officers to account. EO stated that if GS wanted to represent freeholder interests, then remaining on the REP was the best course of action.

- 2.15 JH explained that GS would need to sign ToR to remain on the REP.
- 2.16 NG stated it is important that the ToR is adopted and applies equally to the residents and Lambeth Council officers and Councillors.
- 2.17 NG explained that everyone has a different communication style and members should be asked formally to contribute and this should be enshrined in item 6 of the agenda. **Action AA**

3.0 Minutes of the last meeting: 11th April 2016

- 3.1 Minutes were agreed.

4.0 Matter Arising & Actions.

- 4.1 NG pointed out that Action Log text is too small. EO recommended that Action Log is printed in A3. **Action AA**
- 4.2 AA stated that the Hunter Report CD is being delivered to the team and will be uploaded to the website. AA also confirmed that posters will be added to notice boards for future events.
- 4.3 AR explained the work Local Dialogue were doing with the website questions and answers and will update more at the next meeting.
Action AR
- 4.4 MA stated that matters around service charges will be added to the issue register, so it is addressed when the masterplanning stage starts when a more detailed answer can be given. **Action AA**
- 4.5 AR explained a known issue with the NationBuilder system which prevented website pages being indexed correctly, impacting search results. Lambeth Council has manually indexed its web pages so these should now properly appear on search sites.
- 4.6 NG asked if the Council's Cressingham email is a mailing list. AA confirmed that it is not and it is just a Council inbox.
- 4.7 AA outlined the quote from Japanese Knotweed for digging and removal in the case of demolition totalling £37,000 and the current schedule of works for treatment on the estate.
- 4.8 JH explained staff were attending Mental Health Awareness training on 17/05/16 and the Vulnerable People policy is being worked on.
- 4.9 MA said the Joint Scrutiny Committee recommended joint training with officers and REP members.
- 4.10 JH explained temporary accommodation (TA) use of CGE voids had been approved and procedural issues are being resolved before it starts.
- 4.11 NG asked for the TA timeline and could it happen next month.
- 4.12 JH confirmed that it could be within the next month and the communications around this would need to be managed.

4.13 EO said the use of the voids should be sensitively communicated.

Action AA/EO

4.14 JH said TA tenants moving into voids would need to be briefed on the regeneration programme so that they understand what will take place on the site.

4.15 MA agreed that it was important to let estate residents know about the TA use.

5.0 Housing Management/ Leaseholder s20 Updates.

5.1 AA read out update from AJ in his absence. Mears have trialled the gutter lining system on Pinnacle's office and it has been approved and comes with a 10 years guarantee. The solution for the walkways is also been trialled to see if the falls can be altered so that water runs away from the buildings. This trial is happening this week. Morrisons will also start the overhauling windows. Leaseholders of 8 blocks have received amended notices which means commencement of their works will be deferred for a month – it will not delay the project and will hopefully not affect the duration. Morrisons will be liaising with residents to initially sequence the work and on day-to-day matters going forward – with involvement of the Hunters and the Central Area Housing Office.

5.2 NG stated that the major repairs letters were not hand delivered properly as caretakers do not know estate numbering as well as postal workers. NG/AR suggested all future letters are sent through post or written with individual addresses on the envelopes so no one is missed. NG requested a response from AJ as to why there were issues with the delivery. **Action AJ**

5.3 MA requested that all letters sent by AJ relating to housing management to be forwarded to REP for their oversight. **Action AJ**

6.0 Project Update.

6.1 AA introduced the Development Management Team (DMT) timeline and draft tender letter and explained she would send out to the REP for review. **Action AA**

6.2 JH further explained the role of the DMT and that a letter will be sent to the 4 original tenderers asking them to refresh their bids. JH also explained that it would be beneficial to have the REP prepared and trained for interviews with bidders.

6.3 EO said other estates learnt a lot from the DMT interview process and that the training sessions worked well as it gave people a chance to ask questions that matter.

6.4 JH explained that 1 councillor, 2 tenants, 1 leaseholder, 1 freeholder and 3 Council officers will sit on the interview panel and anyone can attend training if they want to be involved.

- 6.5 NG asked how to represent the views of residents and it was suggested using EO's drop in to canvas the views of residents.
- 6.6 MA said a diverse panel is needed to reflect the different circumstances of estate residents, for example those with families.
- 6.7 JH recommended a ToR for the interview panel. **Action AA/JH**
- 6.8 AR suggested that REP's details are directly publicised so residents can contact them to join training and raise questions. AR also recommended that EO attend TRA to discuss and publicise interview training.
- 6.9 JH stated that officers are looking at ways to reengage with the CGE community.
- 6.10 NG said that people need certainty and until the judicial review deadline has passed, people would hesitate to engage with the Council. NG also stated that the term masterplanning needs to be explained making it more meaningful to residents.
- 6.11 EO said there are inaccuracies regarding regeneration across the estate and these should be addressed.
- 6.12 JH stated that a newsletter will be sent with myth busters to give residents the facts. **Action AA**
- 6.13 AA outlined the design principles event and asked how we engage more people with the REP.
- 6.14 NG said people are unlikely to engage with the Council until DMT is in place.

7.0 Independent Resident Advisor & Resident Reps Feedback.

- 7.1 EO stated that his drop in last month was a success, people were frustrated with the pace of progress but positive and keen to move on. EO has 3 residents attending REP training on 19/5/16 and will continue his drop-ins every Wednesday 3pm-8pm till the end of September.
- 7.2 GS asked if robust freeholder policy had been developed, accounting for the differences between leaseholders and freeholders.
- 7.3 JH explained that there is not a significant difference between freeholders and leaseholders at this stage of the process, but can put together a statement for freeholders. **Action JH/AA**
- 7.4 NG asked if garden size and proximity to the park was taken into account in valuations.
- 7.5 JH explained that properties will be valued in line with a market valuation of other homes. This would take into account if the property had its own garden.
- 7.6 JH also stated that the Council will instruct a valuer based on their degree of recognition and understanding of the market place. This will be the district surveyors, who are professional and have a limited commercial interest in the value of a property so will give fair advice.

The Council will pay for Leaseholder and Freeholder's own valuations and that negotiations would then take place to reach an agreed value for each property.

- 7.7 EO recommended that a workshop should be held with a valuer to answer resident questions. **Action AA**
- 7.8 NG asked if valuations are affected by a property's internal condition as people aren't redecorating due to regeneration.
- 7.9 JH explained a valuation will happen as through regeneration isn't taking place so they will take into account decoration and internal fittings.
- 7.10 AR stated that a summary of what is considered during the property valuation should be produced so leaseholders and freeholders better understand what will affect the valuation of their property. **Action AA**
- 7.11 GS asked if the Council ever disagree with their own valuer.
- 7.12 JH stated that the Council will employ a valuer as an expert to value a group of properties and would question any anomalies, should they arise. JH said that in the first instance, the Council will follow the valuer's decision.

8.0 AOB

- 8.1 NG requested that the windows are shut at the next meeting to reduce noise disruption. NG suggested a fan is used instead.

Date of Next Meeting:

Monday 6th June 2016