

## Cressingham Garden Estate - Resident Engagement Panel (REP)

**Venue: High Trees Community Development Trust, 220 Upper Tulse Hill Road**

**Time: 7pm-9pm**

**Minutes of the meeting: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June 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)
Andy Plant (AP)	Resident Rep (Tenant)
Tom Keene (TK)	Resident Rep (Leaseholder)
Neil Vokes (NV)	Assistant Director Housing Regeneration, LBL
Maurice Soden (MS)	Capital Programme Manager, LBL
Abbas Raza (AR)	Local Dialogue, community engagement
Karl Lewis (KL)	Local Dialogue, community engagement

### **Apologies:**

Cllr Marcia Cameron (MC)	Ward Member, Tulse Hill Ward
Andrew Jacques (AJ)	Repairs Coordinator, Housing Management, LBL
Julian Hart (JH)	Capital Programme Manager, LBL
Anna Allan (AA)	Housing Projects Officer, LBL

### **1.0 Welcome and Introductions.**

- 1.1 TK asked if he could record the meeting. MA agreed as long as it was not given to any third party and that if anyone was uncomfortable with being recorded to voice this concern.
- 1.2 MA welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

### **2.0 Minutes of Previous Meeting.**

- 2.1 MA asked if there were any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting. None were noted.

### **3.0 Matters Arising from Previous Meeting.**

- 3.1 MA then went on to look at the Action Log for items that were not on the agenda.
- 3.2 TK Asked for clarity regarding management of FAQs. AR advised work was continuing on this to ensure all questions were answered and to check for duplications. He noted that Paul Simpson was working on how questions could be presented on the website including automatic inclusion of dates for when edits were made.
- 3.3 MA asked if Gerlinde had worked on item 28 around the Leaseholder Advisory Service. This was not known and is to be confirmed by TK.  
**ACTION: TK.**
- 3.4 TK requested an update on the Key Guarantees consultation. MA advised that this was on the agenda.
- 3.5 MA noted that item 34, which is about a Temporary Accommodation Statement still needed to be actioned. **ACTION: EO and AA**
- 3.6 AR noted that item 38 - the first newsletter - is being worked on and will include a myth buster section. **ACTION: AR to ensure this is the case**
- 3.7 MA asked if there were any other matters arising from the Action Log. There were none.

#### **4.0 Housing Management / Leaseholder s20 Updates.**

- 4.1 NV advised that AJ was not able to attend but had provided an update, and gave an update from s20, noting that waterproofing will be commencing on the 20<sup>th</sup> June and will take 30 weeks. A letter would be sent to residents shortly and the old Laundry Room would be used as a site office. MA requested that members of the committee received a copy of the letter. **This was agreed. ACTION AJ.** TK emphasised that communicating the programme for weather tight repairs was important, and highlighted that previous experience included workers showing up with no prior warning and being rude to residents. He noted that a proper introduction would be required. AP stated that Paul Webb advised residents would be able to go to the site office at any time to make complaints about work or find out more. **NV confirmed this is the purpose of the site office.** MA noted it would be useful if information about the works could also be placed in the Noticeboards on the Estate. EO said it was also essential that there is an 0800 number for the works. **ACTION AJ.**
- 4.2 TK advised many leaseholders had received estimated bills where charges had been quadrupled and that this appeared to be across more than just on the Cressingham Estate. MA requested for this to be sent over to her as she already had casework around this issue.
- 4.3 TK noted that the reissued s20 notices for the changes in weather proof specifications have not been received by all leaseholders. MA asked TK to talk to her about this directly.

## **5.0 Project Update.**

- 5.1 NV ran through the draft programme that has been set out on the estate. He advised the next step will be looking at appointing a Development Management Team to support them on the next stage, which will include master planning. The draft programme sees the tender process commencing on 22<sup>nd</sup> June and it will last for three weeks.
- 5.2 NV noted that resident's feedback on the preferred development partner would be beneficial, as on the 3 previously redeveloped estates the developer that was picked by residents ended up as the winner of the tender.
- Residents will be able to influence the appointment process through a Public exhibition in the beginning of August, a series of interviews with a resident's panel throughout August through an evaluation panel.
  - Scores will then be collated and included as part of the recommendation process. This would also include financial valuation, quality of the design, experience of this type of project and knowledge of the area. An internal process and then a procurement process will then follow this.
  - The result will then be released online around the 24<sup>th</sup> September.

NV noted that on other estates, resident engagement has been seen a positive aspect for both the council and residents. AP raised concerns about letters arriving on time if they are sent second class. TK asked what percentage of the final outcome resident scores would count for and the cost that the bids would be. NV the contract is worth several million pounds.

- 5.3 EO stated that there would be a gap between training for residents and interviews taking place, and suggested the two be closer together.
- 5.4 MA asked how many representatives of the estate would be on the panel. NV advised there was not currently a number. AR added that they would be representative of the estate tenures. TK asked how residents would be selected, and whether it would be via the Tenants and Residents Association (TRA). EO highlighted that on all other estates membership has been drawn from trained members of the REP. TK objected to this being the model for Cressingham.
- 5.5 MA stated that if members of the REP were used, it would not be representative, especially for women. TK stated that the panel should be appointed in consultation with residents and the TRA as they are representative of the estate. This was contested by other members of

the REP. **Action NV to see how representatives were selected on other estates.**

- 5.6 MA asked whether the process was at any risk of slipping. NV said that what has been put forward is realistic and had worked on other estates so far. So measures such as the scoring system at exhibitions are tried and tested.
- 5.7 NV stressed that the current Key Guarantees are still in place but the wrap-up (programme level) consultation will soon be taking place to look in more detail around issues such as homeowner offer. He noted that the consultation would last for six weeks and consults on each of the estates, but that no start date has yet been set. TK noted that he was frustrated that dates had been set three times but not met, and asked whether TPAS will be involved in this process. **NV suggested that this could be looked into but was not currently part of the process. ACTION NV**
- 5.8 MA asked how the consultation would take place. NV stated that consultation will take place on an estate-by-estate basis, and it would not be an email only consultation, rather there would be events and other ways for residents participate.
- 5.9 TK asked how the new estate regeneration programme would change to incorporate the 30 recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee. NV responded that most of their recommendations were to do with the consultation process so little will change, and that the Cabinet Report will produce an action plan.

## **6.0 Independent Resident Advisor & Resident Reps Feedback.**

- 6.1 GS provided the freeholder update which included the questions from other freeholders.
- 6.2 GS raised the issue of Freeholders receiving charges they shouldn't be paying as freeholders. MA stated she would add this to her casework around this issue. **ACTION MA.**
- 6.3 GS also explained that some residents were confused as to whether which tenure they owned.
- 6.4 EO requested clarification that s20 works were not included.
- 6.5 TK clarified for MA that the Freeholder bills are estimated and not actual.
- 6.6 GS asked if the next set of Key Guarantees to be consulted on would recognise the differences between Leaseholders and Freeholders and if a distinct policy for Freeholders had been developed. MA advised that this was point 40 on the Action Log. NV noted that this was linked to the Key Guarantees consultation and being considered.
- 6.7 GS asked what category freeholders are in for service charges, and if there would be a freeholder plot within the redevelopment as Lib Peck

- has previously suggested could happen. NV advised that the potential for a freeholder plot could be determined at the masterplanning stage.
- 6.8 NG requested information around whether new properties for sale will be Leasehold or Freehold. NV advised that they would be Leasehold, but an option to carve a piece of land for freehold is again dependent on masterplanning.
- 6.9 GS raised a concern that the valuations supplied by the District Valuer was giving were lower than other properties on the market. NV reiterated that this is a process of negotiation that would happen moving forward. MA asked whether the council could recommend potential surveyors for residents. MS said they could not recommend as this would not be legal, however they can provide a list of local RICS accredited surveyors to residents and residents would be able to select one or another.
- 6.10 GS asked about the stages of valuation, as the Council's surveyor advised that he usually is the third valuer. MS explained that he (the surveyor) may have been referring to the role that the District Valuer Service (DVS) plays in Valuation Tribunals. The Council is using the DVS as an independent valuation surveyor.
- 6.11 GS asked why there was such a big gap in the prices offered in the open market and the ones offered by the surveyors. MS noted this is a technical valuation, not an assessment for marketing properties, and once the surveyors build up knowledge about local sales they would be able to generate a closer valuation. The valuers must be registered with the Royal Institute of (RICS) and must use their valuation method. He added that any information about the open market prices quoted could be useful, but that it is sales that are most important. MA also commented that values depended on the condition of the properties. GS offered to share information he has collected on property values with Council; MS said that this would be useful. **ACTION GS**
- 6.12 The Council will provide more detailed information on the leasehold/freehold acquisition process, where a resident wishes to sell their property and move away from the estate or where a non-resident leaseholder/freeholder wishes to sell their property.
- 6.13 To assist homeowners EO is doing work on criteria that can effect the value of properties so homeowners understand how value will be determined.
- 6.14 TK advised that some residents received Section 20 notices with errors, specifically sections that had been repeated and miscalculated.
- 6.15 TK also stated that some residents strongly objected to statements, made by MA at the Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committee. MA advised that this was a matter for outside this meeting and should be

discussed directly with her. TK mentioned that he had not received a response to his complaint to MA regarding this.

- 6.16 TK presented a petition with 170 signatures calling for the REP to be disbanded and a new one formed by elections as he does not believe that the REP is representative or democratic, and did not take into account votes given at an earlier TRA AGM. He noted that a letter regarding these issues had been sent to Pauline Foster in December but there had been no response. MA stated that there had been no date on the letter. TK said it was around the 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. AR agreed that this was broadly correct.
- 6.17 TK asked why the meeting was not held at the Rotunda as this was difficult for some residents attending the meeting. MA noted that the venue is preferred as it is a more neutral venue for the meeting. EO added that there was an issue with a Yoga class taking place at The Rotunda on Monday evenings. AP commented that the paths made it challenging for him to get to the meeting. GS advised that he did not mind either location. MA suggested that meetings be alternated between the venues. **This matter has not yet been resolved.**
- 6.18 TK asked why minutes were not taken at Borough Wide Independent Advisor meetings. NV advised that these meetings were informal and no minutes were taken as the discussion focussed on best practice. TK stated he felt there was a conflict of interest and wanted to know what the meetings were about due to levels of anxiety and mistrust with the council. EO reiterated that the meeting only discussed ideas of best practice and protocols, and no individual cases were raised. EO stated this has been explained to TK on previous occasions.
- 6.19 TK asked why empty void properties were not being used as short term lets. MA advised that AA and EO are preparing an update on how the voids will be used and this will be communicated to residents in the near future. **ACTION EO and AA**
- 6.20 TK asked for an update on policies to protect the Elderly, the Young and govern Repairs. MA advised they were on the Issues Tracker and will be developed as the process continues.
- 6.21 EO noted that his weekly drop in session had about 50 people attend and he has identified some with specific needs. He noted that they are liaising with the Decanting team in order to ensure these people are cared for especially if they decide to leave London or enter sheltered accommodation.
- 6.22 TK asked what the milestones for considered early, mid and late purchases. MS clarified that these terms relate to the process timetable so for example, late stage sales may not start until after some residents have moved and building works have started. Note: Early buybacks are described as such because residents have

expressed a desire to sell their property prior to regeneration taking place.

**7.0 AOB**

7.1 No other business was raised.

**Details of the Next Meeting:**

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2016

7pm – 9pm

The Scout Hut Behind High Trees Community Development Trust