

PLOT-OWNERS' HALF YEARLY GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Dominique Florin Chair, Rob Schoenbeck Vice Chair, Peter Jacobs Trustee & Treasurer, Martin Narraway Trustee, Peter Wesley Trustee, George Donaldson Secretary, Robert Morgan, Li Weinreich, Rosie Durant, Daniel Virgili Estate Accountant, Barbara Wheatley Estate Manager, + 28 residents representing 24 Plots.

Apologies:

Venue: Holly Lodge Estate Community Centre

Time: 20.00 Wednesday 21st November 2018

The order of the agenda was altered slightly in order to accommodate a fuller discussion.

1. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 25 April 2018 were approved with 2 amendments:

6.i HLEC should investigate 3rd party funding & management of EV charging points.

7. Post meeting MN did make an apology to SMCg.

The minutes were duly signed.

2. Matters arising from the minutes. Electric vehicle charging points and Security were dealt with as separate items later in the meeting.

3. Review and plans.

3.i. Chair's Statement. The Chair elaborated on her statement, which can be found in full on the website at <http://hle.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018%20half%20yearly%20Chair%27s%20statement.pdf>

The basis of our funding from LBC was changed a few years ago and is now paid on our expenditure rather than our income. A question was raised about what formula is used. It was explained that there isn't a fixed formula and that our annual invoices to them show in detail how the sum invoiced has been arrived at, which is about 46% of our expenditure.

The Chair explained that we cannot borrow funds from the bank, so we have to have a sufficient contingency on deposit in order to address any unexpected occurrences.

Justyn Trenner asked whether we had made a formal financial risk assessment for unexpected major events, as is now good practice for similar organisations. The answer was not as yet, but HLEC will explore.

The Chair moved on to report briefly on security, before elaborating later in the meeting, and highlighted all the initiatives implemented by HLEC so far. She noted that the debate on security patrols has been quite polarising and several companies were approached to look at surveying the residents. It was decided by HLEC that a qualitative forum would be arranged with a group of representative residents, but due to lack of response the forum was cancelled. The Security Liaison Group continues to explore a way forward.

The EV charging project was reported as ongoing. MN has made several applications for grant funding and a planning application is being made. No decisions will be made without coming back to residents. It was suggested that a liaison group be set up to look at EV charging and parking issues, similar to the Security Liaison Committee.

Plot Owners' engagement. It was acknowledged that HLEC only meets formally with Plot Owners twice a year and although there is a great deal of informal communication there may be a need for other approaches. It was put forward that, along with liaison groups to look at more complex issues such as security and EV charging, HLEC might hold surgeries periodically. There may be other options and HLEC would be happy to hear any other suggestions.

Community engagement – after summarising this section of her report DF asked Barbara Smith, Chair of the Community Centre, to say a few words on their latest news.

The Community Centre is now classed as a Tenants and Residents' Association hall which means that as a TRA Hall they are no longer liable to pay rent to Camden, thus saving a good sum of much needed funds.

The CC is now a sub-committee of the TRA but remains a separate entity in all but name and continues to be a registered charity.

The range of classes being held is expanding and now includes yoga, telescope making and using, pilates for cancer recoverers, qi gong and zumba.

The Luncheon Club has gone from strength to strength and continues to open on Mondays to provide a 3-course meal for £3.50. They regularly get 30-40 visitors and is open to anybody. Participants can often take home bread and cakes donated by Gail's. Lunch Club also opens on a Friday now for a fish and chip lunch run by the Highgate Newtown Community Centre. There is one paid member of staff, being the cook, who is funded by regular donations from HLE residents. Christmas lunch planned for 17th December received a donation of £250 from Noble House.

£6850 has been given by the Community Investment Levy Fund, recommended by the Neighbourhood Forum, and this will be used to start a new film club and to provide new tables and chairs.

A round of applause was made to Barbara to acknowledge all her hard work with the community.

The Chair completed her report by thanking all the grounds staff, the Estate Manager, the Estate Accountant and the Committee members who all give freely and extensively of their time. A special thanks were given to Peter Wesley who stood down as Chair earlier this year after 6 years of thoughtful, generous and committed involvement. He remains on the HLEC.

3.ii. Accounts and the Estate Maintenance Fund.

Peter Jacobs, the treasurer reported briefly that we underspent last year and this year, with a comparable budget, we overspent, largely to fund the new hut. We have offset this by not doing so many smaller projects. Income has been as expected and the forecast reserves are at £577k. This is needed to cover any unforeseen expenditures such as any major incident or the event that LBC do not pay their contribution. EMF payments have been good. Next year's budget is set at £343k against last year's budget of £339k, so basically stable. Staff salaries increased by CPI of 2.7%.

It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the EMF should remain at £600 for the coming year.

Proposed by Tom Harris. Seconded by Pippa Rothenberg who asked for a round of applause for all the hard work done by Peter and Daniel. It was also noted by a resident that we get very good value for money.

EV Charging

It was suggested that a residents' liaison group be set up to explore this project. If anyone would like to be involved, please give your names to BW or MN.

TfL have commissioned an EV study which is a very useful document to inform our project. The report can be found on our website. This includes analysis of different options for EV charging, including communal solutions and individual ones.

HLEC was asked to clarify how the EV charging survey responses could be validated as not including multiple responses from the same resident. The reply was that it could not be guaranteed that all responses were honest, but most people gave their addresses, and all gave the road in which they live and there has been no reason to believe that there was any deceit.

The capital cost of installing any chargers is not included in the budgeting as it will ultimately be self-funding and as LBC pay 46% of any expenditure it would be unfair to include this cost and have them pay towards it.

The project is intended to be self-funding and a question was raised about when the costs will be recouped. This will obviously depend upon usage and the charge set for electricity, but MN will update his original costings once a final plan has been agreed.

Security

A lengthy and impassioned discussion ensued. The question of conducting a survey of residents around security interventions was discussed. Some were in favour, but it was also pointed out that simplifying this nuanced issue into a simple survey was challenging and potentially expensive, and security on the Estate is more than just security patrols. Comments from the floor also made the point that the issue had been extensively and indeed sufficiently addressed already, particularly at the St Anne's meeting.

The Security Liaison Committee is active in looking at all the options and thanks were made to RS for his hard work in this area.

The reasons behind the HLEC not allowing a group of residents to employ a private security firm were clarified, being that it is not appropriate for a group of residents to independently organise such an action.

It was noted that Anti-Social Behaviour continues on the Estate on occasion, especially at the top of Hillway, but HLEC should be the body that decides any actions taken.

4. AOB.

- Question raised about resurfacing the footpath & crossover outside HW018 which is in poor condition and has been raised by tree roots. MN & BW agreed they would take a look.
- Request for barriers or cones to be placed at top of Hillway on New Year's Eve. Residents gather there to watch the fireworks and cars coming through can be quite dangerous. BW will arrange with the staff.
- A point was made that there should be an easier way for residents to make their voices heard during the year, in between Plot-Owners' meetings, by the HLEC other than calling a Special General Meeting or holding Committee elections. There are channels already in existence that have worked well so far, but HLEC will look at other possibilities such as surgeries & liaison groups on more complicated issues etc. The HLEC members continue to be contactable via email, addresses to be found on the website, or via post sent to the Estate office.

Meeting closed 21.50