Chalk Farm Housing Group

Minutes of Management Committee - Wednesday 18th May 2016

Present

Neil Davies, Sue Board, Henry Hall, Eunice Nunes dos Santos

Councillor Alison Kelly

Apologies

Kathleen Hirrell, Elizabeth Arimoro, Val Ikansander, Juan Blacio

In attendance

Chris Nsiah, Kim Thompson (LBC), David Barns (LBC), Liz Wheatley, Bridget Giles, Natalie Parris and Rima Salahie (Camden Kill the Housing Bill), Peter Simonson (Minutes)

Item	Report
Correspondence	None

Minutes from: 20th April 2016 Reported as accurate

- Alison said that the committee needed to get better at noting actions and allocating who should take them forward.
- Henry said that that the committee did not have enough people to take forward actions and there was an assumption that the Estate Manager would take on the tasks noted.

ACTION: Committee to report back on action points at subsequent meetings.

Matters Arising:

Solar Panels – David Barns London Borough of Camden Sustainability Team

David reported on the move toward sustainable energy production. From 2005 there was a hope from central government that carbon emissions would be reduced by 40% by 2020 through energy efficiency, use of renewable energy and better insulation. Part of this involved the use of photo voltaic (PV) solar panels. PV panels produce electricity, there are other types of panels that heat water but the UK climate is not appropriate for this. London has the lowest level of PV roll out in the UK and it is part of the new Mayor's and central government's strategy to improve on this. Solar panels can only convert 15-16% of energy into electricity. Electricity generated by panels can be 1) used onsite to generate electricity 2) feed electricity

into the national grid. Onsite use saves on bills and electricity fed into the grid creates an income from central government. Camden is looking at rolling out solar panels onto housing estates and they have identified 10 estates as possible locations for solar panels. Panels can be placed on flat roofs and angled to capture most sunlight or placed on tilted south facing roofs. If onsite solar panels are used they would be best used in buildings that are occupied during the day such as community centres, it would not benefit residents as they would be out during the time the electricity is generated. On blocks the only direct beneficiaries would be residents closest to the roof. However, you could also direct the electricity to power communal area lighting and lifts. The price paid for solar produced energy fluctuates and is currently low unless sites were pre-registered at a previous higher feeding tariff. Currently the benefits for each person were minimal although the move toward using solar panels is environmentally positive. There are groups looking for areas on which to place solar panels e.g. Power Up North London. However, they are only looking for sites where there would be high onsite usage. The scheme that LBC would like to introduce would need to benefit the community as a whole not just those living closest to the panels. Currently CFHG properties would not be appropriate for photo voltaic solar panel installation CFHG and LBC will keep in touch.

Housing Act 2016

Liz Wheatley, Bridget Giles, Natalie Parris and Rima Salahie from Camden Kill the Housing Bill campaign met with the committee to highlight the implications of the Bill which has now been passed into law and is due to be introduced in 2017. Rima was concerned that people on the estate hadn't responded to the campaign. Neil and Henry stated that they had both been on recent marches and had highlighted the issue to residents. The Housing Act has a number of elements that will affect security of tenure and the social mix of Camden and London as a whole. These include fixed term tenancies, pay to stay and the forced sale of higher value void properties, in Camden this is set at £260,000 which would only buy a bedsit in Camden and Liz stated that 30/40% of voids in Camden would be of higher value so that the available social housing stock would be depleted. Those receiving housing benefit and/or universal credit will be particularly badly hit. Particulars about how the act will affect housing in London and what can be done to campaign against it can be found on the campaign's website. Alison stated that after the recent leadership election in Camden Sarah Hayward had taken on the strategic lead for housing and Pat Callaghan was the councillor with a housing remit. The committee expressed support for the campaign and newsletters will be distributed to residents. They will also publicise the national march on Saturday 18th June 2016. There is now an urgent need for a community response as the bill has now become law.

Resources:

https://killthehousingbill.wordpress.com/

https://www.facebook.com/Kill-the-Housing-Bill-secure-homes-for-all-1535565046764103/

ACTION: Committee to support the campaign and Chris to distribute campaign newsletter to residents.

Estate Waste and Recycling

- Chris had a walk around the estate with Debora Byrne and Mark Hunt, the Senior Area Monitoring Officer (SAMO). There was a disagreement between Debora and Mike about whether the bin stores could accommodate dustbins. Debora thought they could after taking measurements whilst Mike disagreed. Debora's main concern with recycling and the viability of converting the bin chutes.
- Chris stated that further education was needed and Eunice noted there was some confusion over whether broken glass could be recycled. Alison said that as such there was a lot of work for the Estate Manager to do.
- Henry called for a recruitment campaign for active committee and subcommittee members however there is small pool of residents who are willing to sit on CFHG committees.
- Alison mentioned the cost of consultants to work on CFHG's business plan which she believed CFHG could do.
- Henry thought this was going off at a tangent and that we have to deal with what we've got. The priority was engagement and issues such as vandalism.
- Eunice stated that the CCTV camera's had been vandalised at the weekend.
- Kim said that the committee should look at co-opting residents for working groups on specific issues.
- Alison had had a conversation with a resident's wife who would try and get her husband to come to meetings.
- Henry mentioned that there are residents who appear to be very concerned with recycling but they don't make it to meetings often enough.
- Alison that recycling could save £1000's that could be reinvested in the estate.

- Neil suggested a recruitment campaign and Chris suggested having a general meeting about recycling and to invite Debora from LBC.
- Kim said that Debora Byrne had done enough and that the committee needs to engage residents.
- There was an issue whether to have a general meeting in the play area or in the office.
- Henry suggested not having a meeting but trying other ways of engaging residents. There is a low turnout at general meetings and usually the same people that attend committee meetings.
- Alison asked Neil to contact the resident concerned with recycling and try to get him to participate more often.

ACTION: Neil to talk to resident about recycling.

Global Street Art

- Alison stated that emails sent to her about getting permission to paint on party walls needed to have action points so that she could take the issue forward.
- Chris said he is still awaiting a response from LBC.

ACTION: Chris to email Alison again with added action points.

Letterboxes to be replaced by Camden

- Neil stated that if tenants are vulnerable or disabled that CFHG should mend the letterboxes, if not it was up to the resident.
- Chris claimed that the upkeep of letterboxes was LBC's responsibility although LBC's position was that it is the residents.
- Alison said that if push came to shove LBC would do them.
- Kim said that LBC should be contacted stating the letterbox installation was not fit for purpose and that they should rethink. However, she doesn't have the power to push/shove.
- Henry thought that letterboxes would be considered a low category repair.

- Alison said a strongly worded email should be sent to the repairs manager. She also would like to know how many letterboxes were left to repair after spring cleaning, once she receives this from Chris she will pursue with LBC.
- Kim said that this should include the age and benefit status of the residents who needed their letterboxes mending.

ACTION: Chris to provide an update of number of letterboxes that need repairing along with age & benefit status to Alison. Alison to write to Camden.

Business Plan

- Alison asked if Ian Beever and Bec Yusuf, who presented the business plan at the last committee, had been contracted.
- Henry said that they hadn't. The quote for the business plan was £1,400 and the Summer Fete £4,500.
- Alison was shocked at the cost and Kim said that the business plan and organising the summer fete should be the responsibility of the committee and CFHG staff.
- Neil added that CFHG shouldn't pay for a fun day.
- Kim said that a TMO business plan toolkit exists that CFHG should have.
- Neil suggested that Ash, the Assistant Manager, should have responsibility for the business plan.
- Kim said the committee should meet to discuss this and that perhaps 3-4 people could work on the business plan with the majority of the work taken on by the Estate Manager.
- Henry added that because the committee was inquorate the matter couldn't be voted on.
- Alison asked that a recommendation be made that Ian/Bec's plans should not be used.
- Henry noted that Ian had worked on a business plan 3 years ago.
- Kim then said that the committee should just go through the existing business plan and update.
- Henry reiterated the problem of getting people to take on tasks and Eunice said that approximately 50% of residents hadn't responded to the fun day questionnaire.

- Alison expressed frustration that the committee was still talking about items such as fire safety that had been brought up 2 years ago.
- Neil said that a questionnaire will be incorporated into the newsletter and this will feed into the business plan. He'll also look at the questions that had been previously asked.
- Henry said that the committee knows what needs to be implemented but that some items which are not a priority get put on the back burner. For example, letterboxes get superseded by vandalism.

ACTION: Neil to look at new ways of recruiting members/Neil & Chris to add questionnaire to the next newsletter. Alison & committee to work on a business plan.

Fun Day

- Henry said he was still trying to get residents to take part.
- Kim said that Francis at Abbey Road should be contacted regarding face painters and the hiring of a bouncy castle.

ACTION: Chris to contact Francis at Abbey Road.

Budget

- There was some confusion among committee members about what was being recorded in the budget.
- Kim said that the actual reserve figures appeared to be incorrect.
- Alison was confused by the figures and said that the budget needed to be looked at so that the committee understood what was being talked about.
- Chris stated that the figures were just bank balance statements that the committee asked to be recorded.
- Kim thought that the problem arose due to the bookkeeper using Sage software and converting this to Excel for the committee's use. She asked that Bernie send Chris the Sage printouts.
- Alison further asked if the budget had been distributed to residents

ACTION: Chris to get Sage printouts and distribute to committee members.

Shed and Container Removal

- Alison asked if about the removal of the pram sheds and container.
- Chris asked the rent team for a list of people who rented sheds but was supplied with only the numbers of the sheds rented not who by. He has a list of void and tenanted sheds but no indication of who rents what. There are approximately 100 tenanted sheds and 50 voids.
- Alison asked if the person who owns the container has been identified.
- Chris has identified the owner who is currently in hospital.
- Alison also asked about the Fire Safety Report.
- Chris hasn't received this.

ACTION: Chris to contact rent team and ask for a list of residents who rented sheds. Once this is received Chris will contact residents. Chris to chase Fire Safety Report.

Health and Safety

- Alison said that there was a serious trip hazard on the estate and that nothing had been done in 2 weeks. She asked how the committee can ensure that these issues are taken seriously.
- Chris said that he had put tape on it but that the operative wasn't available to fix it.
- Henry said that such issues should be tackled immediately or within 24 hours.

ACTION: Chris to speak to operatives about reporting urgent repairs.

Estate Parking

- Henry stated that actions regarding parking that was brought up in the previous meeting should have been reported on prior to the current meeting. Cars were still parked illegally and dumped and this was affecting refuse collection and deliveries to the estate.
- Alison had met someone not a resident who said the estate provided safe, free parking.

- Henry said that barriers should be used as these provide a more permanent measure than enforcement which won't stop other people parking illegally.
- Kim said that enforcement had been used at St Pancras Court and had worked as contractors can get DVLA details within 28 days and if someone refuses to pay they can be taken to court where the fine doubles after 28 days and is then referred to a bailiff.
- Alison noted that the £300 cost was miniscule given CFHG's reserves.

- Henry stated that innocent people get caught by parking enforcement and that it causes grief and animosity. Tickets won't stop people illegally parking.
- Kim said that the cost of barriers was £16,000 against £300 for enforcement.
- Chris said that there was a minimum contract of 1 year for enforcement. CFHG wouldn't get CIL money for barriers due to the size of reserves.
- Kim further stated that deliveries would be affected by barriers.
- Henry said drivers would be notified to come to the office, with enforcement delivery drivers would be ticketed.
- Kim suggested that CFHG implement enforcement and if this doesn't have the desired effect to then put up barriers.
- Alison suggested 4 proposals: 1) Do nothing 2) Barriers 3) Enforcement 4) Barriers and enforcement.
- Kim asked that Chris contact an enforcement company and ask if there is a length of time for unloading, how much control CFHG would have over the terms of enforcement and if CGHG can get fines rescinded.
- Henry said that this needed to go to residents.
- Neil said that asking residents would mean more delay there should be strong recommendations that we go for enforcement.
- Henry said that this should be put to residents in the newsletter with a timeline for a response.

ACTION: Chris to contact a parking enforcement company and check whether terms are negotiable and also to put proposals in the next newsletter.

AOB

Rubbish on Walkways

- Alison asked if disabled residents were being looked after and whether we know who vulnerable residents are so that we can remove rubbish.
- Chris said that residents leave stuff outside that isn't to be removed. Residents are told that they can contact CFHG if they need help. Chris said staff knock on doors and ask residents if they need help in removing items.
- Alison said that caretakers should visit vulnerable residents.

ACTION: Chris to ensure that CFHG staff check on vulnerable residents.

Outstanding Issues

Office Report

Due to lack of time the office report was not discussed.

Speed Bumps

Chris to report back at next meeting.

Barbecue Pit

Neil to report back at next meeting.

Savills, Leverton & Sons

Chris and Henry to report back at next meeting.

Underwriting of Pension Scheme

Kim to report back at next meeting.

Next Meeting 15th June 7pm-9.30pm

Signed: _____
Eunice Nunes dos Santos - Secretary

Signed: _____
Henry Hall - Chair of the Committee