

LAG Summit Minutes – 28.01.23 – DRAFT

1. In attendance

Council Staff:

Cllr Siriol Hugh-Jones, Geoff Gage, Hannah Barker, Janine Gosling, Martin Reid, Rachel Sharpe, Sabina Karabasic, Sam Warren, Theresa Youngman & Simon Plotkin.

Leaseholders:

A Gef Dini, Alec Paterson, Andree Gobeil, Angela Amaro, Angela Goodman, Angela Paterson, Bahous Benanchour, Ben Frost, Ben Parrish, Ben Remi, Bianca Hopkins, Carole Bell, Charlotte Rogers, Christine, Dave Croydon, David Drewett, David Finlay, David Wood, Deborah Clow, Derek Peacock, E. Sarah Carter, Edith Little, Elliot Sayer, Emma Owens, Gee Soon Harris, Guziel Walton, Henshaw, J. Willis, Jackie Fawzy Abda, Jane Eleini, Jennings, Jim Hornsby, Julian Moore, Karen O’Leary, Karen Wood, Keith Marston, L. Ferguson, Ludmilla, M. K, Mairi Mitchel, Maris Underhill, Mark Norris, Mary Kaye, Michael Barry, Muriel Briault, Nora Haines, Oswalde C, O’Bell, Pat Stonier, Paul Baddeley, Pete Earl, Polly Bramhall, R. Willis, Rebecca Wilson, Rose Orr, Rosemary Goodchild, Rosemary Johnson (Chair), Rosemary Wood, Ruth Henshaw, S Cumming-Rogers, S Jerram, Simon Crane, Steve Court, Steve Gibbon, Susan Lydon, Wendy Horsfield & Wendy Stuart.

2. Apologies

Apologies from - Helen Angel, Marilyn Davies, Lee Catt

3. Welcome and Introductions

- 3.1 Rosemary (co-chair) – welcomed everyone for the first face to face get together in 3 years and gave context of what a ‘Leaseholder’ is and what the meetings are for.
- 3.2 Cllr Siriol (co-chair) introduction: Co-chair of housing committee, Preston Park ward, Central area panel chair. She then ran through the agenda for the day.
- 3.3 Introductions from: LAG Committee (Keith Marston), Rachel Sharpe (Executive Director - Housing Neighbourhoods & Communities) and Sam Warren (Community Engagement Team Manager).

4. Housing and Budget Update

Martin Reid presentation titled ‘Housing Revenue Account 2023/24 Budget Setting’ where he discussed the budget setting proposals.

Question & Answers

4.1 Q: What is the 'other' income (for £400,000) in pie chart?

A: Services provided – will give break down in the break

4.2 Q: What does 'utility costs' include, is it energy and heating? Also, is there a record of the gains from putting in insulation as opposed to houses without?

A: Utility Costs regard communal boilers, communal heating, gas and electrics. In terms of the gains record – it has been hard to find a way to measure and present any gains, but there are plans for developing technology to try and quantify this. However, there is a comparison breakdown available (which is currently looking at increases) of energy performance rating. They are hoping to get this block by block.

4.3 Q: 80/90% of income comes from rent, which won't be going up with inflation, but service charges will go with inflation. Wont this create a hole between income and spend?

A: Yes, there is an investment gap – this will be covered by borrowing. The government were suggesting capping rent at 3% increase, they have now agreed upon 7% which is a much better option and means there will be slightly less of a gap then first assumed. Future years will depend on the government – they may continue cap or change etc.

4.4 The leaseholder understands the pressures that the council are under, and also understands that leaseholders have become the subject of national news with some being suspect to charges up to £75,00. So, they had 3 questions.

4.4.1 Q: Are there any circumstances when councils bare the cost and leaseholders don't?

A: Councils don't bare the cost, its either tenants or leaseholders, as it's not the council's money. The council do try to recover costs, so it doesn't burden anyone too hard.

4.4.2 Q: How many major works are going on now – and how many are predicted?

A: Presentation upcoming.

4.4.3 Q: Are any 'major works' subjected to complaints processes like tribunals?

A. Offered to circulate figures about tribunal complaints. We can give some figures to circulate

ACTION – 4.4.3 – Tribunal Complaints figures to be circulated via the minutes.

5. Planned and Major works – Theresa Youngman

Theresa Young presentation 'Housing Investment and Asset Management. Planned and Major Works Update' where new contract preparations, major work frameworks and upcoming planned works where discussed.

Questions and answers

5.1 Q. Will EWI repairs be paid for by tenants and leaseholders – promise of 20-year maintenance free works?

A.

5.2 Q. Are all reports (of planned works) being made available to interested party?

A. Yes, they will be made available, team to share specification before they go out.

5.3 Q. How can we find a full list of mini majors?

A. If you put in a direct request (via email) the team can send it out to you. Also talk of posting this onto LAG email discussion list.

5.4 Q. A leaseholder believes EWI has been placed on buildings and has created fire risk and a maintenance issue that wasn't there. What is the obsession and what is the alternative?

A. EWI isn't applied generally to every block – it is not a one size fits all system. Understand that there is concerns – but this cladding is not linked to Grenfell. They also have to consider external wall risks, which mean external treatment is sometimes needed.

5.5 Q. Who has fire safety certificate for the cladding in their house?

A. The team reassured that none of the cladding was linked to Grenfell. They also spoke about how they are going with fire services to look at each high rise block (all 46) making sure they are all up to date. This point is an ongoing discussion.

5.6 Q. A leaseholder expressed concerns about water coming from the corners of their flat and has reported to the council but they still haven't been out to look at their flat. Is this not considered an emergency?

A. Rosemary (chair) pointed that this was an individual issue, and that **Martin Reid would speak with this individual in the break.**

5.7 Q. What incentive do you give to get contractors to do smaller repair jobs?

A. There are plans in place for this. Additionally, they (housing staff) are tendering themselves, so it becomes direct and more transparent. They are also looking into how we can recycle and reuse more so that jobs cost less.

6. Leaseholder Payment Options – Simon Plotkin

Simon Plotkin presentation 'Leaseholder Payment Options' in which he discussed equity and maturity loans, and who to contact for help.

Questions and answers

- 6.1 Q. Within the Leaseholders handbook (page 23, payment for major works) there is talks about the council being able to set up a reserved fund or sinking fund for major works – is the council still looking into doing this?
- A. It is harder for the council to pay it back, and also causes problems if you were to move. So, unfortunately not still considering this as it doesn't work with local authority.
- 6.2 Q. What counts as 'High Cost Works', is that anything over 5k?
- A. Yes, it is for over 5k, and this is when you can use extended payment options.
- 6.3 Q. What is a defect period and how long is it?
- A. It is a period where you can notify any issues from works completed and it is 6 months.

LAG Committee Member (Keith Marston) suggested to other members to set themselves up a saving account and putting money into it for payments for future works.

BREAK

7. Formal AGM

7.1 Minutes – Minutes all agreed by the group.

7.2 Chairs report – Rosemary Johnson

- 7.2.1 It has been 4 years since last LAG AGM in person. Since then they believe there has been some mending problems with lease holder and council relations. They have also seen the end of the Mears contract, meaning there is no longer one contract doing everything.
- 7.2.2 LAG representatives have been representing leaseholders at area panels – where they can ask questions and also hear reports about housing.
- 7.2.3 The current focus issue is that of repairing or replacing, and there will be special issue meetings to discuss this (circular economy) in hope of finding ways to save move and also fight against some increased environmental concerns.
- 7.2.4 Anti-Social Behaviour is also an issue that they will touch upon in future meetings. Lee Catt has also provided an ASB Crib Sheet that gives resources to help with ASB, and he is aiming to set up a victim support group.
- 7.2.5 There was a problem with a lot of major works where the work was completed but many problems remained. The chair shared that much progress has been made on this.
- 7.2.6 The chair shared that there would be no further chargers for any further fire door upgrades.
- 7.2.7 Area Panels (AP) will be changing; due to both ward boundary charges and an internal council AP Review. All resident leaseholders should be welcomed at local AP.
- 7.2.8 Estate Development Budget (EDB) is a fund that resident associations can put bids in to, to improve their local area. These sometimes can be recharged to

leaseholders – after reviewing EDB processes, suggested changes including stopping this. They are still waiting for final verdict on this.

7.2.9 Communications – LAG currently have an email and phone, and they are hoping to get a voicemail service also. They have also been circulated in Homing In, and committee members have created a Facebook page.

7.2.10 There is also discussions of setting up a meeting to organise a letter about LAG that would go out once someone becomes a council leaseholder.

7.2.11 The Chair then gave thanks to all attendees, LAG committee and reps, to Keith and Dave and to all council staff.

7.3 Terms of reference

7.3.1 LAG have a Terms of Reference (TOR) as opposed to a constitution as they are in collaboration with the council. Main changes to the TOR include ability for committee to elect a chairperson in the event there is no AGM.

7.3.2 A code of conduct that asserts you must treat members regardless of who they are or how they got their lease

7.3.3 If a leaseholder cannot look after their own flat, LAG allows a family to act on their behalf

7.3.4 ALL agree to adopt new TOR

7.4 Elections

7.4.1 Chairperson – Rosemary

7.4.2 Up to 9 committee members

- Graham Dawes
- Keith Marston
- Muriel Briault
- Jim Hornsby
- Pete Earl

7.4.3 Area panel reps

- Central – VACANT
- East – Rosemary Johnson (pending ward boundary changes)
- North – Jim Hornsby
- West – Graham Dawes and Muriel Briault

7.4.4 Service improvements groups – if interested speak to Hannah and Sam .

7.4.5 Home Group – Pete Earl

7.4.6 Involvement and empowerment – Muriel (elected)

All duly elected by Cllr Siriol Hugh-Jones

8. Home energy efficiency (presentation) & Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (presentation)

Presentations by Martin Reid and Geoffrey Gage - these questions were put together due to time constraints at the meeting.

Questions and Answers

8.1 Q. PowerPoint sites capital carbon savings, but do you include carbon costs in the figures?

A. This will be picked up and propose to share carbon costs.

8.2 Q. Leaseholder raised issue of specific case where escalation of ASB was occurring. What is escalation process if HIAS doesn't respond?

A. **Martin assures that he will speak to this specific case after the meeting.**

8.3 Q. Why is ASB left till last on the agenda when it is what most people are concerned about?

A. Martin agreed and assured that agenda will be reshuffled in the future. But also shared that there are other forums, or groups that will have more meetings to discuss ASB.

8.4 Q. Why did it take over 2 and a half months to get graffiti removed?

A. **Martin will speak to this case after AGM.**

8.5 Q. Serious problem with drug paraphernalia – who are they meant to contact about these issues?

A. They should speak to housing department if it is on housing land, and if it isn't on housing land, they should speak to the ASB team.

8.6 Q. Leaseholder states there should be a rapid response unit.

A. Rapid response element being put in place and try to alleviate the issues at play, but it is an ongoing lengthy process.

Promotion of ASB Event upcoming with Kate Hopkins – speak to Community Engagement Team for details.

9. Conclusions and Close

9.1 Co-chairs thank all attendees for coming and give thanks to council staff.

9.2 Provide contact information of LAG and other relevant officers.

Number	Action	Relevant Officer	Status
4.4.3	Tribunal Complaints figures to be circulated via the minutes.		
5.6, 8.2, 8.4	Martin Reid to follow up individual case.	Martin Reid	