

LUXBOROUGH TOWER

Luxborough Tower Residents Association

Draft Minutes General Meeting

30 04 19 18.15, Luxborough Tower meeting room

1. Apologies and requests for AOB.

Josephina Becci, Ingrid Beekhuizen, Richard Beekhuizen, Alison Dow, Paul Foster, Denise Hines, Andrew Hughes, Jill Gatum, Jennifer Grimshaw, Steve Jones, Phylcia Jones, Mike Kostyn, Michael King, Michael Kriteaman, Sara Mackay, Alex Reid, Sandra Romito, Anthony Styant, Maxine Tabak, Sharon Tash, Brian Tash, Zara Tempest, Nick Vinson & Victoria Wahed.

Attending from Westminster City Council; Ruth Aboagye, Krupa Pindolia, Jayne Stretton from Leasehold Billing Team, Jonathan Cooper and Gavin Ridgwell from Major Works.

2. Approval of minutes of last LTRA committee meeting 18 12 2018

A request was made by WCC to amend removing 'which comes at the end' from Section 20 notices. Then the minutes were approved

3. Major works update from WCC

Mike Kostyn introduced the item explaining from LTRA and residents side, the heating and window replacement items were critical items, major expenses and we were not in agreement with WCC over them. In terms of response Jane Stretton said the recent bills that had arrived were forecast bills. WCC said they have come up with a client brief, 18 months ago a notice was sent out, their new long term partner United Living was appointed and a client brief started. Their commitment was to produce a feasibility study and a condition survey report, this is the first stage, based on a condition survey. After these early planning stages, WCC handover to their contractor, who produce designs. They acknowledge there has been some reservations about the scope of works from residents. They are accumulating the letters and emails received by residents and will be forwarding to the council member of housing, Andrew Smith.

From the LTRA and resident side, we explained we are not accepting the bill, which was 5.3 million and leaped up to 6.5 million (those present from WCC were unable to explain the difference and actually seemed unaware of the totals). For residents this undermines confidence in the process, those residents present were unanimous in objecting to paying upfront, a full current liability upfront payment, on a program that is not agreed, that was 30 percent higher than the most recent estimate. It was felt this was giving WCC a cash flow benefit on the back of leaseholders and showed a total lack of duty of care.

The LTRA is in agreement that essential works should be done, and there was a clear appetite amongst residents to contest what is essential and the legal bases for that. The word upgrade was used by WCC during the meeting, and it was pointed out that within the terms of the leases only valid and essential repairs may be carried out, providing condition surveys can provide due reason. Improvements and upgrades are not essential and not welcome.

Jennifer Grimshaw challenged Jane Stretton on why did the lien option of payments for Major Works get removed or was not offered.

4. Agree a major works response from LTRA.

At this point in the meeting all WCC were requested to leave the meeting. Nick Vinson explained how a group of 10 leaseholders had challenged WCC concerning overcharging of heating and that as a result of hiring the services of a specialist lawyer Andrew Darwin, leaseholders have already received credits to the value of £228,351.05 on recent service charge bills and we will receive in October interest of around £16,019.02. In addition WCC have met the cost of the legal fees of £4815.00 which includes VAT and £15.00 for disbursements. Jennifer Grimshaws long term efforts to recoup this money, and get a metre installed were acknowledged and the residents thanked her.

With regard to the huge amounts of money involved in the major works program, and our general disagreement over the legal basis and necessity of the heating and window replacement in particular we agreed to use some of the LTRA funds to hire a lawyer up to £4500 pounds including vat. 2 quotes would be required. Mike Kostyn to follow up. In addition we would request legal text for leaseholders to use in order to reply to WCC most recent Major Works demands.

Leaseholders not on the committee were invited to join an email group by emailing the secretary to keep abreast of Major Works.

5. Playspace development project update from WCC meeting 28 01 19

Nick Vinson updated the meeting on the new planning application, as WCC had taken advice from planners that a local amenity on the ground floor would be essential to get planning approval. This has caused the recent delays.

6. Anti-social behaviour, serious incident and CWH follow up

Regarding the recent series of ASB to residents by another resident which included assault, the residents were unhappy and dissatisfied that WCC suggested the resident in question make an apology and was merely given a warning. It was noted that no tolerance to ASB was meant to be the policy.

8. Treasurer's Report.

Andrew Hughes reported that we have £8974.00 in the bank, and are about to get another £500 for the access granted to the University crane access. And that we now have Professional indemnity insurance.

9. Standing orders

The changes to the standing orders were agreed.

10. Any other business.

As we were without heating in October for 10 days, we would like a refund. Committee to follow up

10. Next meetings

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