

WOODBERRY DOWN COMMUNITY ORGANISATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes

Tuesday 4th June 2024

5pm Zoom Meeting

Attendance

William Sheehy, Phil Cooke, Andrea Anderson, Leonora Williams, Adrian Essex, Jackie Myers

Visitors included

Roda Hassan, Emri Azturk

Apologies

Kalu Amogu

Section 0 - Introduction

0.1 Acceptance of minutes:

The 21st May minutes were agreed and accepted.

0.2 Action/ Matters Arising:

0.21 William explained that the barcode residents use to pay Vital bills is currently not working, and there have been no explanations provided for this issue.

0.22 Roda contacted Andy Lord regarding the Vital progress report, specifically on the accounts corrected by NHG and the drop-in session that has not had an update yet, along with the concerning final reminder notice letters residents have been receiving. There is a collective feeling that NHG was not honest with the type of letters residents will receive as, if notified at the meeting, members would have objected to a final demand letter. Roda noted that she had a response from Laura Coleman from NHG regarding the final demand letters in

which Laura stated: " We are still working on the calculations for the refunds. We have completed 90% of the data and working on calculating amounts owed per property. We hope to have this finalised within the next 8 weeks. With regards to the attached, assuming that is the update you require. As confirmed in letter circulated following our last meeting, we confirmed that credit control would not be switched off, however advised customers to ignore the reminders at this stage. This letter was reviewed by yourself and the board for approval before being issued". The Executive Committee members were not satisfied with the response and have asked it to be raised at the Liaison meeting.

ACTION: Roda will raise the concerns about the Vital demand letters at the Liaison meeting.

0.23 Roda noted MHDT contacted the Police and they are unavailable for the fun day.

ACTION: Roda will provide an update regarding the round table and SMB minutes once there is an update.

ACTION: Roda will provide an update on the DHN meeting's progress.

0.25 Adrian updated on the outcome of the Strategic Comms meeting. The group agreed to develop a Communications Strategy covering the following aspects: summer newsletters, defining roles and responsibilities of the Comms group, determining frequency, and creating E-newsletters with online updates. WDCO will be actively involved in shaping this strategy. Hackney is going to compile a newsletter following the current format and issue a call for content. Adrian suggested they need to decide on the content for the WDCO newsletter, which could include topics such as the elections and the revised constituency boundaries.

Section 1 – Major Topics

1.1 Preparation for the Liaison meeting

1.11 The Executive Committee are requesting an update regarding Block D. They are keen to see tangible progress on this matter and would appreciate detailed information on the current situation and any plans moving forward.

1.12 Members are concerned that when the town square is built and a potential library is added, these spaces may remain empty like Block D and that it will take a long time to complete. They feel this will reflect poorly on the area.

Similar concerns were also expressed about the community space in Phase 3.

1.13 The issue of the service charges actuals was also highlighted, with concern

that the NHG update has been the same for months with them claiming they are close to an update and saying that they will provide an update the following week; however, no meaningful updates are provided and no clear timeline is given for residence. Roda updated that she emailed James Glass, NHG Director of Places and Estates, to follow up on Jada's email. Roda in the email expressed disappointment that there is still no timeframe for when the information will be sent to residents. In the last NHG Board report, it was stated that NHG "have completed the review of service charge accounts for all blocks for the financial years 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23. Work to confirm balances and how any credits will be applied to resident rent accounts or to Housing Benefit/Universal Credit is underway. We will request stakeholder feedback on our communications before finals are sent. We aim to provide a timeframe on this in the next two weeks." Again, a similar update was provided at the Round Table. She highlighted that while there seems to be progress, it is imperative for NHG to outline a clear timeline for completing this exercise and disseminating the information to residents. Residents and WDCO representatives have waited for a long period of time for this vital information. She also noted that WDCO reps and the ITLA are still awaiting NHG's communications regarding the service charge actuals, which were intended to be shared with stakeholders for feedback.

ACTION: Roda will follow this up at the liaison meeting.

1.14 Adrian noted R&R recently conducted a survey on behalf of Berkeley to gather residents' preferences for the commercial units. The Executive Committee was interested to know whether this survey was shared with Hackney and NHG, and whether their residents had the opportunity to provide feedback on their preferences for the commercial spaces in Phase 3.

ACTION: Roda will email Berkeley Homes to get clarification on the methodology and timeline of the survey.

1.2 Preparation for the June Board

1.21 Roda reported that the final masterplan update will be presented at the June Board meeting.

ACTION: Roda will check with Tom to see if it is still going ahead as scheduled.

1.3 Correspondences

1.31 Jackie received an email from Hilary suggesting that WDCO should be more proactive in contacting organisations to gauge their interest in occupying the community spaces. This would allow WDCO to bring these opportunities to the community, gather feedback, and expedite the process. By doing so, they can prevent spaces from remaining empty, as has happened with Block D. This

approach would also enable WDCO to be more involved in the decision-making process regarding what is included in the area.

1.32 The Executive Committee agrees WDCO should be more proactive regarding issues and needs to closely examine how to achieve this.

1.4 WDCO elections

1.41 Adrian suggested specific roles for the Vice Chair that can be allocated to keep things moving along and to provide a point of contact for information regarding certain topics. Jackie suggested that this should be further discussed and explored by the Executive Committee.

ACTION: Adrian will bring back a proposal for Vice Chair roles.

1.42 Roda shared the leaflets with the Executive Committee, which included the new revised constituencies and images outlining the constituencies for residents to see. Each leaflet will feature different images showing directions to the voting locations. Roda mentioned that if the board elections occur during the same week as the general election, it could cause confusion. She suggested that the elections should be concluded by mid-July. The Executives were happy with the proposed dates and agreed that there should be no elections during the same week as the general election.

1.43 Roda also noted that she adjusted the number of representatives to match the new figures agreed during the last board meeting.

1.44 The ITLA will distribute the election leaflets a week before each election. Roda will order the leaflets this week, pay for them, and then invoice WDCO afterwards.

1.5 Review of the skills audit and co-optees

1.51 Adrian explains that planning law and IT had notable gaps in the skills audit. He suggests that there should be a review of the skills, and people should be co-opted based on the skills. Jackie and other members explain that there are residents who can bring their lived experience, skills learned outside of schooling and the standard education system. If people are only brought onto the board for their skills, this would prevent people from getting onto the board, and this wouldn't be ideal. Adrian suggests that the skill audit can be used to seek out particular skills, even if it is only one, and it could be used to complement others to help with issues that might arise.

1.6 AOB

1.61 Jackie noted that the resident who has had no heating for over 10 years should be considered for some form of compensation. William highlighted that while residents are being told that this issue affects only them, there are actually multiple residents suffering from the same problem.

