

**Documents for the Leasehold Panel meeting,  
14 April 2011**

	Page No.
Minutes of the meeting of the 14 April	2
Appendix 1, Key Leaseholder meeting, 31 March 2011	16
Appendix 2, Procedure for the election of the chair to the Leasehold Panel	18
Appendix 3, Notes of the Core Group Meeting, 17 February, 2011	20
Appendix 4, Estimated Service Charge 11/12: reasons for increases	22



## Leasehold Panel

### Minutes of the meeting, 14 April 2011.

**1. Attendance:** Mrs A Goodhew (Vice Chair of the Leasehold Panel), Miss M Merrick, Mr Erdal Zincirkiran, Ms Odette Lewis, Miss Barbara Charlery, Mr Martin Laheen, Ms Millie Mboizi, Mr Piers Johnson, Ms Belinda Batten, Mr Michael Ruggins, Mr R Towerzey, Ms Sue Brown, Ms Rita Batzias, Ms L Parris, Ms A Breckova (Leasehold Board Member) and Ms Lynne Zilkha (16).

**Apologies:** Ian Lush, Nesan Thevanesan, Head of Home Ownership, Peter Gilbert, Mary Rawitzer.

**Chair:** Mrs Anne Goodhew chaired the meeting.

**Officers:** Mr Peter Purdie, Head of Estate Services, Mr Peter Maddison, Deputy Director Property Management, Mr Michael Bester, Major Works Lead Officer and Mr Bruce Nicholas, Leasehold Project Officer who took the minutes.

**2. Report on the planned operation of the new waste management contract with Veolia, commencing April 2011**– Peter Purdie, Head of Estate Service.

Mr Purdie began by noting that Haringey Council had just appointed a new contractor replacing the previous one, Haringey Enterprise. Initially 10 companies had expressed an interest but this had been reduced through the tendering process to two, from whom Veolia Environmental Services had been chosen. It would now be responsible (as from the 18 April) for the Council's waste management services. He explained that he would be covering the following topics:

- a) Overview of Veolia Environmental Services
- b) Veolia in Haringey
- c) Key Service Enhancements.

**Overview of Veolia Environmental Services.** Veolia is an extremely large company he said, being the foremost with respect to waste services in the UK. It has about 12,000 employees throughout the country and a fleet of over 5,000 vehicles. It works with nearly 130 local authorities providing refuse, recycling, street cleaning, landscapes and

disposal contracts. It serves over 75,000 commercial and industrial customers and operates 46 treatment and disposal facilities.

**Veolia's Municipal Division.** Haringey joins a number of other boroughs throughout the London area, including: Camden, Brent, Westminster, Tower Hamlets, Southwark, Lambeth, Bromley, Croydon, Kingston-upon-Thames, Richmond upon Thames and the landscaping work in Ealing.

**Veolia in Haringey.** Mr Purdie said that Veolia has the capacity and the policies which make it an excellent partner with Haringey Council to assist in implementing the Council's objectives. Veolia is very well placed to do this since it has particular strengths in the following areas:

- Sustainability through innovation
- The Partnership Framework Model of working – Haringey has negotiated a partnership working relationship rather than the traditional client-contractor agreement. This means:
  - A common goal – it facilitates establishing and working towards common objectives
  - Transparency and openness – it fosters mutual openness on financial issues, costs and profits, and so on.
  - Shared responsibility – sharing the risks and the responsibilities to ensure good quality services
  - Continuous improvement – underlying it all there is a commitment to continually improving services through the working relationship between the two sides.
- Engagement with the local community – Veolia has a very strong commitment to engaging with the residents, tenants and leaseholders throughout the Borough.

### **Key Service Enhancements.**

Environmental benefits. Veolia is very committed to environmentally sustainable policies:

- Carbon reduction
  - Eco-friendly new vehicles with a mix of diesel and electric fleet
  - Current proposed policies will lead to a reduction of fleet emissions of 40 per cent
- Increase in recycling – high priority of the contract:
  - Achieve and sustain 40 per cent recycling by 2015 (target)
  - Reuse and recycling of bulky items which currently are often destroyed
  - Recycling for commercial customers. They also often do not do as much as they could, so there will be a drive to increase their contribution.

Environmental enhancement through Engagement (of the local community):

- The importance of Engagement
  - Neighbourhoods, schools and communities
  - Increase in understanding of roles in minimising the impact on the environment – cleaner, greener and less waste
  - Encourage involvement through targeted communications, events and liaison groups
  - Recruitment of Environment Champions (locally based in the community, who want to promote these ideas)
- Monitoring Residents' Perceptions – what residents think of the service
  - Locally and borough wide
  - Help understand and influence people's behaviour and engage proactively to increase their awareness of environmental issues.

### **Key Service Enhancements**

- Branding
- Street cleansing improvements
- Refuse and recycling enhancements
- Fly-tipping.

**Bespoke branding.** Mr Purdie said in future the staff will wear aubergine outfits with high visibility jackets. The logos of Veolia and Haringey Council will be displayed on the vehicles and on the street cleaning equipment, etc and included on the work wear worn by the employees.

**Street cleansing – the Village Approach.** In contrast to the previous contractor, Veolia will organise their service on a neighbourhood basis. The borough will be divided up into eight 'villages'. This will include Muswell Hill (north) and Muswell Hill (south), Crouch End, Wood Green, Harringay-St Ann's, Northumberland Park-White Hart Lane, West Green-Bruce Grove and Tottenham-Seven Sisters. Each of these will have a local manager, who will manage the waste, the recycling and the street sweeping in their area.

There will be a lot more contact between local residents and the local managers to address any issues that arise. In the past staff arrived in a vehicle at an estate to carry out various cleaning tasks. In future the same person will arrive on the estate with a hand pushed cart to carry out sweeping and pick up the litter, so they will become known to the residents. Mr Purdie explained that the village approach would comprise the following elements:

- Manual sweeping/ambassadors

- All streets and estates will be swept on average twice a week. If this turns out not to be enough, then Veolia will have to increase the frequency
- Monday to Saturday shift pattern (replacing the previous Monday to Friday arrangements). Bank holidays will also be covered
- Satellite depots – for each of the eight neighbourhoods, where staff will be based.
- Significant carbon dioxide reductions will be achieved in comparison (because of the reductions in the distances that most staff will have to travel before they start work)
- Introduction of multi-purpose vehicles to deal with mechanical sweeping and pavement gritting in winter
- Dog mess to be cleared within 24 hours of being reported – this is in response to feedback from a very large survey carried out by Haringey Council of residents' opinions on the service.

#### **Refuse and recycling enhancements:**

- Year 1 (all properties):
  - No refuse and recycling service changes in 2011
  - Introduction of free bulky waste collections for recyclable and reusable items
- Year 2 (street properties):
  - Recycling serviced weekly in new 240 litre bins or sacks (issued four times a year)
  - Residual refuse collected fortnightly in 240 litre bins or sacks issued four times a year
- The new service will offer residents in street properties an increase in the total capacity of the service with an emphasis on recycling
- Weekly kerbside collection of mixed organics in caddies and reusable sacks will continue
- Housing estates' refuse and recycling services will remain the same with a streamlining of the available containers
- Flats above shops – collections will remain the same.

#### **Fly-tipping**

Mr Purdie informed the Panel that Veolia recognises that this issue constitutes an important area for improvement:

- Two-year strategy to reduce fly-tipping by concentrating on specific challenges in Haringey, including:
  - Transience – areas where it is known that there is a rapid turnover of residents (areas of short let properties)
  - Flats above shops
  - HMOs (houses in multiple occupation)
  - Communicating to those who have little or no English.

- Responsible for maintaining high cleanliness levels on the streets and 'taking control of the streets'
- Work with Haringey Council and other partners
- Put processes and strategies in place to reduce fly-tipping incidents by 20 percent in the first two years.

The new contract with Veolia would start on Monday the 18 April he said. There would be local meetings of Estate Services staff with the neighbourhood teams for people to get to know each other. There would be two full time participation and education officers plus a manager to encourage residents in estates to recycle more. If residents can be encouraged to recycle more it should be possible to streamline the number of waste refuse containers on Haringey Council's estates to make the estates look smarter. The same phone number would continue to be used for the service: 020 8885 7700. The frequency of sweeping on estates would be twice weekly.

There were a number of questions from the Panel. Ms Batzias said some of the recycling bins had letter box apertures which made it difficult to place bags of recyclable items in them. Mr Purdie agreed this could be a problem and said he felt it needed to be carefully considered at each location. It was unfortunate that the containers could be open to abuse with people putting large amounts of general household waste in them if they were too accessible. Mrs Goodhew commented that access to them was rather difficult for young children.

Miss Merrick referred to the fact that the collection vehicles were often extremely smelly. Mr Purdie said this was a difficult problem, but the increase in the separate collection of food waste (for recycling) would help to reduce it. In addition special bags were available for food waste which helped to keep down the smell. Miss Merrick felt that street cleaners were often rather selective. Mr Purdie responded that Veolia's policy was to carry out more sweeping (rather than litter picking) which would help to address this issue. In answer to a question from Mr Johnson, Mr Purdie said that this would not have implications for additional costs since Veolia had agreed the contract on the combined basis of cost and quality and that this had been a part of the original tender requirements.

Mr Johnson raised the question of how the quality of the service would be monitored, the type of targets that would be used and how it would be judged whether they had been met. Mr Purdie responded that in addition to the targets for recycling, monitoring would be carried out in accordance with the national standard for street cleanliness – NI195 (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs). This includes gradings for the amount of dirt, litter, fly posting and graffiti. Haringey Council would be undertaking independent monitoring of the

standards of the services provided and Veolia would have to increase the frequency of their sweeping if they were not achieving the necessary gradings. Mr Purdie confirmed that the results of the monitoring would be open to the public. He was optimistic that Veolia would perform very well since they had a good track record in other boroughs.

Mr Zincirkiran complained that bin areas could become a dumping ground for rubbish. Mr Purdie said that it was proposed to review the number of bins on all estates with a view to making them less attractive for people to use them for fly-tipping. Veolia has been asked to review the number and location of the bins on each estate and produce an action plan after 6 months to reduce the number – with the emphasis on making them less visible and accessible to the general public. This coupled with an increase in recycling should result in an overall improvement in the situation he said.

In response to a further question Mr Purdie said that Veolia had agreed it is a key objective to improve the amount of recycling on housing estates – increasing awareness of its importance would be a key objective of its education policy (knocking on doors, leafleting in different languages and so on). Answering a question from Mr Laheen Mr Purdie said that the service would be timed to remove the litter resulting from football matches.

Mr Ruggins said that the targets for street cleansing should be generally known to residents. Mr Purdie said it would not be a problem to provide some information on this subject – he would consider how best this information could be summarised. Mrs Goodhew asked if Mr Purdie would be prepared to return to the Panel to provide a report back. Mr Purdie agreed to do so in about six months. He concluded his remarks by pointing out that the new contract would be cheaper for everyone, despite the fact that there were some considerable enhancements.

**3. The revised Decent Homes Funding and the likely impact on future works. Answers to questions about the costs of installing new aerials, removing unauthorised satellite dishes and the cost of the asbestos removal policy** – Peter Maddison, Deputy Director Property Management

Mr Maddison informed the Panel that the total level of funding had been severely cut – from the original £98 million to an amount of about £70 million. He said this was obviously very bad news. On the other hand it should be noted that the Borough of Haringey had been one of those receiving the highest allocations in country. He said that a comprehensive review would have to be carried out as to how the

programme should be amended in light of the reduced funding. The whole matter would be going to the Cabinet of the Council to consider the revised scope of works, the current year priorities and for them to agree on the criteria for choosing the contractors.

Mr Maddison explained that up until the present the policy had been to undertake work to the whole building – the exterior fabric and the interiors of tenants' flats. From now on it was likely the Council would adopt a policy of focusing more on making the buildings wind and weather tight and addressing any health and safety issues. The funding for the next two years represented firm allocations he said but the funding for the subsequent two years was only indicative and so not guaranteed.

Following consideration of the overall strategy by the Cabinet, it would then be necessary to talk to residents about the implementation. He explained that the Asset Management Panel would be involved in these discussions. Resident Board Members and Panel Chairs would be invited to attend the next meeting in May.

Ms Batten asked if residents were entitled to see the report to the Cabinet. Mr Maddison replied that it would be discussed at the Asset Panel meeting in May. Once the Cabinet had decided the priorities, information from the surveyors' reports commissioned by Homes for Haringey would help to determine the broad details of the scope of the works. However these reports were mainly for overall planning purposes since no details of any proposed works could be decided until input had been received from the contractors about the cost of works, etc.

Residents would then be consulted about the proposed works. It should be possible to engage in section 20 consultation soon after this he said. In answer to a question he emphasised that the survey information is technically complex. It only provides a general assessment of the condition of the main parts of each building and it does not invariably determine the final decisions as to the works to be carried out. It was very important to provide meaningful information to residents as soon as it became available and he was very concerned to ensure this happened.

Ms Batten raised the question as to how scaffolding costs were determined, for instance in the case of window replacement. Mr Maddison said that it was accepted that scaffolding was expensive – its use was kept to the minimum and it was generally used to carry out a number of different types of work, but the reduced funding would almost certainly affect this approach. So over the longer term the Council would probably have to do more repair work than would be preferable.

Ms Batten asked as to the sort of criteria that would determine the necessity for roof replacement work. Mr Maddison said that it was impossible to generalise. Obviously an assessment had to be made to ascertain whether it was most economic to continue to repair or to undertake its replacement. Ms Batten asked to know what would happen if the contractor failed to meet the required standard for a certain piece of work. Mr Maddison said that they would have to make good at their own expense.

Ms Zilkha said that she had obtained a copy of one of the surveys. She had only received it after 3 months and it had been subject to a lot of deletions of apparently confidential information. She felt that this was an area that would be covered by the Freedom of Information Act. Leaseholders should be more involved than at present in these matters.

Mr Maddison responded that he was always happy to enter into a dialogue about such matters. There was a variety of different types of survey information, a lot of which would not be very meaningful to residents. Where meaningful information about proposed future work was available he agreed that it should be made available as soon as possible.

Mr Maddison explained it would not be possible to consult residents on the basis of the general surveys. These were concerned mainly with the overall condition of the stock rather than the actual details of the work required. They were carried out to assist in overall policy planning purposes. However when proposals had been drawn up for a building, it was then necessary to engage in consultation with the residents, who would have an opportunity to raise any issues they thought were relevant. It was much more appropriate to consult at this stage he said than at the general planning stage. He would review the current position to see whether some additional information could be placed more speedily in the public domain.

In answer to a question from Ms Zilkha he said it was important to consider how the process took place. In the first place the surveyors do a visual inspection. This is then followed up by a detailed survey largely undertaken by the contractors once the scaffolding has been put up. However if a roof was in pretty good condition, without any serious leakage then it would not be very likely that scaffolding would be necessary. In some cases it was necessary to put up scaffolding in order to ascertain the condition of the roof, but only if there was no alternative. Ms Zilkha said that 40 per cent of the bill could be taken up by the cost of the scaffolding.

In answer to a question from Ms Zilkha, Mr Maddison said it should be possible to provide some information on the rates, though he did not

believe there were uniform rates that could be applied to scaffolding. It was important to note that Haringey had been very successful in driving down scaffolding costs. Working through a consortium in partnership with the boroughs of Newham and Hackney they had achieved some very good results in driving down supply chain costs.

With regard to choosing contractors for major works, up until now Haringey had worked with four contractors. However there would not be enough work for four contractors in future, so it had been agreed with them there would be a mini competition to select one or two of them for this year's programme. This would take place under the terms of the original partnering agreement he said (made in 2007). It was expected that further cost reductions could be agreed as part of this process. The question was raised as to when the section 20 notices would be issued with respect to the current year. Mr Maddison replied it would be in the next couple of months

He then turned to the subject of the removal of unauthorised satellite dishes, which he explained did not form a direct part of his operational responsibility. This was taking place during the installation of the new integrated reception systems (IRS), Mr Maddison said that the issues relating to the removal of unauthorised dishes installed by residents would be dealt with mainly through the Tenancy Management Teams. The IRS was required in order to upgrade existing systems to digital in preparation for the ending of analogue broadcasts in 2012.

The type of digital system for each block was being decided on the basis of consultation with the residents (they have a choice out of two options). Haringey's policy was for the removal of all unauthorised dishes when the new system was installed (since none of them had been authorised) but there would be no charges made to residents for this. Mr Bester said that in the case of new unauthorised dishes in future, there would be a charge to the residents who had put them up.

Ms Zilkha raised the question as to whether there could be a charge to the block for the removal of unauthorised dishes. Mr Bester confirmed that a charge could be made under the terms of the lease if the responsible person could not be identified. Ms Breckova said that she believed that such a charge was not justifiable under the lease.

Ms Batzias asked whether the whole system would be replaced by a new IRS in each building and Mr Maddison confirmed that it would be. In answer to a question he advised that in relation to the two options available to residents, the system with the higher specification would probably be in the region of about 10 percent more expensive, but it was difficult to generalise since the cost varied in accordance with the nature

of each block. He pointed out that the cost of the higher option would be capped at £400 for all leaseholders.

Ms Zilkha raised a question concerning the planning regulations in relation to blocks of flats – she stated that planning permission is required for putting up satellite dishes, but she believed Homes for Haringey was not complying with this requirement. Mr Maddison said he would look into the matter and advise accordingly.

On the subject of asbestos he said that a survey was carried out to ascertain the locations of any asbestos before the work was commenced. If the asbestos was in a position where it would be affected by the work, the contractors would generally arrange for its removal. However sometimes it is more dangerous to remove it than to leave it in situ. In some cases it would be possible for it to be encapsulated in some way.

Where any work in relation to asbestos was required in the common areas of the building (such as the exterior, the structural of communal parts) leaseholders would be liable to pay towards the cost he said and this would generally be included in the estimate for the work.

#### **4. Report from the Board and the annual conference of the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) – Alena Breckova, Leasehold Board Member**

Ms Breckova began her report by noting that Mr Maddison had covered the issues discussed at the last Board meeting, which had been mainly concerned with the Decent Homes funding. With regard to the CIH conference, she reported that there had been a large number of people in attendance (generally from local authority leasehold services departments).

It must of course be noted she said that as part of the programme of workshops there had been one from Homes for Haringey' Home Ownership Team (HOT) on the subject of innovative leasehold management. This had been presented by Michael Bester, Major Works Lead Officer and Pari Kotecha, Home Sales Leader on behalf of HOT. It had caused a lot of interest and had been very well attended Ms Breckova said and she felt they had represented Haringey very well indeed. The Key Leaseholder Scheme had attracted a lot of attention and it was clear that a number of other boroughs had recently started or were planning similar schemes.

#### **5. Report from the Key Leaseholder Group – Ian Lush, Chair of the Key Leaseholder Group**

Mrs Goodhew noted that Mr Lush had sent his apologies but had submitted a written report (please see **Appendix 1**).

## **6. Procedure for the election of the new chair for the Leasehold Panel and the Panel's representative to the Core Group**

Mrs Goodhew explained that owing to the resignation of Mr Roger Kemp from the Chair and from his position as representative on the Core Group, it would be necessary to carry out elections to fill these positions. She said she knew he would be very much missed (reminding everyone to sign his farewell card) but she was sure everyone wished him the very best in his new home in Devon.

She drew attention to the attached notes explaining the main issues which Leasehold Panel Members had to be aware of. In particular she noted that:

- o The election of the Chair and the representative to the Core Group will be held at the next meeting on the 9 May
- o The new Chair will take over in June
- o A letter would shortly be sent to all Panel Members inviting nominations.
- o Anyone could put their name forward or someone else who had agreed to this.

These matters are referred to in more detail in the **Appendix 2**. Ms Batten said that Mr Lush had asked her to suggest the possibility of having a rotating chair. Mrs Goodhew said that the Panel had tried this in the past but the Panel had then opted to follow the procedure that had been set up for the election of all panel chairs.

Mr Nicholas said that there were a number of problems with the proposal for a rotating chair. In the first place the Panel had agreed the current process for the election of the Chair (and Vice Chair) and so there would have to be a further discussion on the matter if Panel Members felt they wanted to consider making amendments. Secondly there tended to be a lack of candidates for these posts, given the fact that it involved a significant commitment of time and effort for each meeting. He thought this would make it quite difficult to find enough suitable candidates to make the proposal of a rotating chair work effectively.

Mr Nicholas drew attention to the following requirements of the Chair, which he said are referred to in the Terms of Reference:

- a. The Chair should have some prior experience of chairing meetings or undertake some training

- b. The Chair must usually attend every meeting
- c. The Chair has to be available for regular discussions about the agenda and so on with the Home Ownership Team
- d. Someone should not take the chair if this might result in a possible conflict of interests.

He said it was the function of the chair to appear as neutral and 'non-aligned' as possible. Mrs Goodhew pointed out that no one can be chair of more than one panel. She asked if there had been any nominations to date and Mr Nicholas confirmed there had not been.

## **7. Reports from the Core Group and from the Scrutiny Development Group** – Anne Goodhew, Vice Chair of the Leasehold Panel

Mrs Goodhew referred Panel Members to the report which Mr Kemp had sent in relating to the last meeting which had been held on the 17 February (**Appendix 3**). This report had been mainly concerned with outlining the probable reductions in the Decent Homes funding, most of which had been subsequently confirmed and Mr Maddison had reported on this earlier that evening.

Mrs Goodhew then made a report from the Scrutiny Development Group which is making the arrangements for setting up the new Resident Scrutiny Panel (RSP). This is a feature of the new arrangements which have been outlined by the Tenants Services Authority for providing a framework for relations between social landlords and their residents in future. This Panel will consist of 10 resident members (tenants and leaseholders) and it will check that Homes for Haringey is meeting the service standards laid down by the TSA and agreed with its residents.

The RSP would obviously play a key role in future she said. She then mentioned that there was an article on page 11 of the March issue of Homes Zone (the magazine for all residents). It provided a phone number for anyone interested in serving on the RSP. However unfortunately it had given an incorrect number for the number of residents serving on the RSP.

Mrs Goodhew then described the timetable of meetings for setting up the Residents Scrutiny Panel. On the 11 April there had been a meeting to discuss the broad principles, which were contained in a report from Ms Sheryl Hendrickson, Senior Resident Involvement Officer (she placed a copy on the table for anyone who was interested). On the 27 April there would be a meeting to continue planning the arrangements. On the 4 May a meeting would be held to choose the selection panel for interviewing the potential candidates and the arrangements for the 'Taster Day' on the 21 May.

All those wishing to put themselves forward as candidates for the RSP would be invited to the 'Taster Day' and would be obliged to attend, since it would provide a comprehensive explanation of how the RSP was proposed to operate. On the 24 May a meeting would be held to arrange the short listing of the candidates. The actual interviews for the candidates to sit on the RSP would be held on the 8 June.

The first meeting of the new members of the RSP was planned for the 15 June. Anyone wishing to apply would have to complete a formal application form and she also placed a copy of this on the table for Panel Members to look at if they were interested. Mrs Goodhew said she understood that Ms Brown (who was also on the Scrutiny Development Group) proposed to put her name forward and Ms Brown agreed this was the case.

#### **8. Report on the methodology of the calculation of the annual estimated service charges 2011/12 – Michael Bester, Major Works Lead Officer**

Mr Bester said that Mr Thevanesan had originally planned to attend himself to present the report (**Appendix 4**) but unfortunately family reasons had prevented him. In 2005/6, Homes for Haringey had commissioned an external consultant to review the management fee. He had identified certain housing management costs that were not being included in the Council's service charges.

Mr Bester explained that following consultation with leaseholders it was agreed that these costs had to be charged to leaseholders, but it was agreed to phase the increases in over 3 years up to 2008/9. Despite a number of service improvements the management fee has not increased since 2009/10. By including minor works in the annual actual accounts to leaseholders the Home Ownership Team has avoided additional charges to leaseholders for providing separate invoices (which would otherwise have been necessary).

Mr Bester said that the Home Ownership Team prepares the annual estimate in January each year. It takes the last available cost figures (contained in the previous actual account) and applies increases to these in line with the general level of inflation over the last 2 years. So the costs in the last actual accounts had been increased by 2.5 percent per year for two years, giving a total increase of 5 percent. Referring to the report, he went through the main heads of the annual service charge, explaining the relevant factors for the increase in each case (see appendix).

Ms Batzias raised the question of the presence of freehold houses on estates and the fact that they do not pay any service charges. Mr Bester said that although they did not pay service charges, in fact the calculation of the charges for estate cleaning and the maintenance of grounds was carried as if the houses had been charged for these items, so the leaseholders on these estates did not lose out on account of this.

Ms Zilkha asked whether it was a part of the duties of the Estate Service Officers to adjust the time switches since in her experience the communal lighting was often not adjusted to allow for the changeover to summer time. Mr Bester confirmed that this was a part of the duties of the ESOs.

Mr Ruggins raised a question regarding the increase in the actuals over the annual estimates. Mr Bester replied that for the last actual accounts issued (in 2009/10) there had been credit allowances issued to approximately two thirds of leaseholders. It was quite possible that this situation would be repeated for the next set of actuals (2010/11) which would be issued in August this year.

## **9. Minutes of the meeting of the 16 March 2011**

These were agreed as being an accurate record and there were no matters arising.

## **10. Forward agenda proposals**

Ms Zilkha referred to the subject of the administration charge of £5 (recently discontinued) in respect of leaseholders wishing to apply for landlord's permission to install their own windows and doors. This had been part of the management fee until it had been discontinued. She requested some information about this. Another issue that was raised was the question of scaffolding and the fact that on some occasions it was in place for quite a long time for no apparent reason.

Ms Breckova said that it would be a good idea if there could be a talk on the Repairs Department following its recent reorganisation. She thought it would be very interesting to find out how this might affect the services to residents and to be informed of any changes to the organisational structure that had been made.

## **11. Any other business**

There was no other business. Mrs Goodhew thanked the speakers for their very interesting talks and presentations and she then closed the meeting.

## Appendix 1

### Key Leaseholder Meeting, 31 March 2011

The most recent Key Leaseholder meeting took place on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011. 11 Key Leaseholders attended the meeting.

The main points of discussion were as follows:

#### **Progress of the Key Leaseholder group**

Nick Claxton reported that 470 Feedback Questionnaires were sent to Key Leaseholders and at the time of the meeting, 47 had been returned. Of those 47, 23 expressed an interest in attending future meetings. 10 also stated that they would be willing to participate in resident monitoring.

Nick Claxton also advised the group of the type of comments received regarding the format and the information contained within the repairs reports.

#### **Update on Insurance procedures**

Paul Cox advised the group that the policy for dealing with insurance issues had been drafted and was currently awaiting formal approval from the Executive Management Team. Once approved, all frontline staff will receive training on insurance procedures before being implemented.

The focus of the policy centres on identifying repairs that have been caused by malicious damage and can be claimed under the buildings insurance policy. A policy excess of £250.00 applies to all such claims and therefore there is a need to ensure that jobs exceeding this figure are referred to the insurance department within the allotted timeframe of 30 days of the incident occurring. A police Crime Reference Number is also required and this must be obtained by a member of staff (probably the Tenancy Management Officer).

#### **Mystery Shopping scenarios**

Paul Cox advised the group that the HOT wished to initiate a mystery shopping exercise across the organisation to test staff on their knowledge of fundamental leaseholder issues.

He presented the group with a draft set of scenarios for discussion and consideration. He invited those present to submit any suggestions via email.

In view of the relatively low take up thus far with this particular aspect of the Key Leaseholder Scheme, it was agreed that a trial would take place to assess its feasibility and the impact it would have on the organisation as a whole.



## Appendix 2

### Procedure for the election of the chair to the Leasehold Panel

#### Nominations

- HOT will send a letter to all Panel Members asking them if they would like to nominate someone for the chair.
- Enclosed will be a nomination form (with the date for its return) and a return envelope.
- You can nominate yourself or someone who has agreed to be nominated.

#### The election of the chair

- The election will be held at the next meeting on Monday the 9 May and the new chair will start their role in June.
- If there is more than one nomination, a secret ballot must be held (ToR 6.1.3).

#### Requirements of the chair

- The chair must have a good understanding of the issues which are of concern to leaseholders. Thus ToR 6.1.4 states that all chairs should have had experience in chairing meetings or should undergo some training.
- The chair should be able to commit her/himself to regular attendance at meetings and to obtaining a good knowledge of the requirements and procedures.
- The chair has to be involved in regular discussions with HOT about the drawing up of the agenda, the finalisation of the draft minutes and so on.
- No one may be chair of more than one panel at a time (ToR 6.15).
- Someone should not take the chair where there is a possible conflict of interests (ToR 8). This can be financial or legal (an interest in an outside contract for instance, ToR 7a), or where the chair is appointed by another body to serve on the panel (ToR 7c) and so on.
- The chair shall only vote when voting is tied, and shall usually vote in favour of the status quo (ToR 5).

## **Code of Conduct**

Everyone should be aware of the requirements of the Code of Conduct. It provides the general rules for the conduct of meetings. The most important points:

- **Personal conduct** (Section 1) – treat everyone with respect, not make personal remarks, and so on
- **Conduct at meetings** (Section 4) – behave reasonably and politely, accept rulings from the chair, not discuss personal issues and confidential issues, for instance relating to other people)
- **Declarations of interest** (Section 2). If an issue arises where members have a personal interest or could benefit personally from a decision, they should declare their particular interest, and the meeting will then decide if they should withdraw from the discussion and/or the decision

## Appendix 3

### NOTES OF THE CORE GROUP MEETING: 17 FEBRUARY 2011

1. The outlook for future capital funding is pretty grim for the financial year 2011/2012, while the financial year 2012/2013 is likely only to be slightly better. Following the Comprehensive Spending Review it is estimated that the grant will be half what was expected.
2. Obviously with less money available, it will no longer be possible to carry out the Decent Homes Programme as originally planned. Homes for Haringey will talk to the Council about its priorities. This will be done by reporting to the Cabinet. Cabinet will decide what non-essential work will be given priority, within the confines of the new limited budget.
3. Normally work for the coming year would be planned earlier than it will be this year. This means the planned work will commence later than usual.
4. It is likely that all non-essential work will have to be set aside, and Homes for Haringey will have to concentrate on essential work that is health and safety works or that which is required to comply with the legal requirements.
5. At present there is £5m of work that will be carried forward from this year (2010/11) to the new financial year (2011/12). In addition there will be £8m required for health and safety work. The actual full sum of the grant is likely to be in the region of £15 for the first year. Having already earmarked £13m, that means there will be about £2m for non-essential work for the whole of the borough. For the purposes of Decent Homes work, the borough is divided between the four areas, with four main contractors.
6. In light of a much tightened budget, Homes for Haringey is going to discuss the future with the four main contractors. The main concern will be with getting value for money. It is not known what the contractors will want to do in light of the changed financial position, and their ideas will be canvassed. Over the next month each contractor will be seen and the implications will be discussed.
8. Residents who have not yet been through the Decent Homes work will have expectations, but these are not now likely to be realised. Homes for Haringey will be writing a letter to all residents affected by

the reduction in funding, explaining the effects of the changed circumstances. The goal-posts have been moved. Homes for Haringey actually bid for £88m. The core work will cost £55m over the next three years. It is estimated that it will result in £15m for the first year; £20m for the second year; and £20m for the third year that is £55m in total.

7. There is a lift renewal programme and Homes for Haringey is already committed to that. Boilers will only be replaced when health and safety considerations mean that such work is absolutely necessary, that is when they are not working properly.

8. Homes for Haringey will have to manage expectations. Surveys to ascertain the repairs and maintenance requirements will continue but it will not be possible to carry out some of the work identified.

9. Residents survey forms have been standardised. They are showing 97% satisfaction. Work is going to be undertaken to analyse the complaints revealed on the forms to establish where things are going wrong in the hope they can be ironed out when future work takes place.

10. Until the end of this financial year (31 March 2011) contractors will use suppliers on the Approved List, and on the Secondary Approved List, providing that the cost of the materials does not exceed the rates set down by the Supply Chain. After that contractors may only use suppliers on the main Approved List.

11. Asbestos surveys will continue.

12. The system for recording and dealing with repairs defects has now been much improved and there is now only a problem in one area. This is a great improvement.

**Roger Kemp**

Chair of the Leasehold Panel (now retired)

17 March 2011

*[It should be noted that the government grant allocation was announced soon after this meeting – on the 17 February 2011. It was confirmed that the figures were as expected, that is as shown above.]*

## Appendix 4

### Estimated Service Charge 11/12: reasons for increases

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- Cleaning
- Lighting and electricity
- Maintaining grounds
- Concierge
- District Heating

The actual cost of these services for 09/10 was inflated by 5% (2.5% for 10/11 and 2.5% for 11/12).

- Maintaining lifts

The actual cost of the lift inspections for 09/10 was inflated by 5% (2.5% for 10/11 and 2.5% for 11/12). Fees of 14.12% were then added.

- Insurance

The Insurance section advised us to inflate the sum insured for 09/10 by 2%. The insurance premium was then calculated as:

Sum Insured @ £1.65 per £1000  
 - Long Term Agreement discount @ 5%  
 Net Premium after discount  
 + Insurance Premium Tax @ 6%  
**INSURANCE PREMIUM**

- TV Aerials
- Pest Control
- Maintaining tanks, pumps, etc

These are “reactive” costs. This means that there are no annual inspection costs, and so no element is included in the Estimated Service Charge. If costs are incurred during the year, then this is included in the Actual Service Charge.

- Controlled-Entry System

The actual cost of the controlled-entry inspections for 09/10 was inflated by 5% (2.5% for 10/11 and 2.5% for 11/12). Fees of 10.40% were then added.

- Management Fee

This was not increased from the Estimated Service Charge 10/11.

- Day-to-day Repairs

All properties are charged an advance payment for repairs (£50.00 for street properties, £100.00 for all others).

- Minor works, estate improvements

All properties on estates charged an advance payment of £100 for estate works.

- Ground rent

This amount is specified in the lease. It is £10 a year.