



Minutes of General Meeting

3rd October 2007: 7.30pm Council Chambers City Hall

1. Welcome and Introduction

Present:

- i. **Leaseholders & leaseholder representatives** (62)
- ii. **NLA Committee:** Pauline Walton, Carol Nichols, Lorna Kirk, Ken & Vera Pepperell, Nick Turner, Ian Docking, Richard Essex
- iii. **Executive Member for Housing:** Julia Westmacott
- iv. **Chair, Norwich Residents' Forum (NRF):** Geoff Lowe

Appoint new NLA Secretary

- i. Carol Nichols was appointed the new Secretary (Proposed: Bruce Hoskins, Seconded: Maureen Dease)
- ii. PW thanked Rose King for all her hard work
- iii. All attendees signed in
- iv. The meeting was conducted in presentation style (available on the website)

Introduction

NLA was founded in 2005 and despite many calls from leaseholders for a more confrontational approach the committee has adopted a conciliatory style as favoured by the council. However, it now believes the conciliatory approach has failed and the committee is now prepared to be more robust in order to show that we cannot be ignored.

2. Apologies from Committee Members: Rose King

3. Minutes of meeting 27th Jun 07: approved (Proposed: LK, Seconded: VP)

Matters arising from the Minutes – **Digital Switchover (changes to TV in 2011)**

- i. A show of hands was taken and no one present had understood the consultation document
- ii. PW explained that tenant/leaseholder representatives had not been involved in the project until too late (for the contractor selection process)
- iii. NLA is working with NRF and Citywide Board representatives to focus the project on end user needs and value for money
- iv. NLA will keep fighting until we are heard
- v. A petition was introduced which all members signed and took away for further circulation

4. Main Topic: Management Fees – Presentation from PW

- a. NLA has argued for years that a Leasehold Management Fee cannot be charged under the lease
- b. PW thanked Charlie Ringwood for alerting us to the published intention of Norwich City Council to raise the fee from £40 to £150
- c. A leaseholder has won the case at Leasehold Valuation Tribunal, which proves that we were right. Officer Paul Sutton has refused to inform NLA, despite a direct request for information.
- d. Norwich City Council gave a written statement to all those present stating:
 - i. It is appealing the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal's decision
 - ii. It will continue to charge the fee because it still believes it is lawful
 - iii. The public announcement of an increase in the charge was premature
- e. NLA will continue to fight and will support the contesting leaseholder as far as possible
- f. NLA has written to the appeal judge at the Lands Tribunal
- g. Whatever the outcome, NLA will seek to work with the council to ensure that charges are reasonable

Norwich Leaseholders' Association

representing residential leaseholders to Norwich City Council

strength in numbers

www.the-nla.org.uk



- h. Those present signed an individual objection to the Leasehold Management Fee and took away more to circulate.
- i. NLA does not recommend non-payment of the Management Fee but leaseholders should register an objection with the Home Ownership Team

5. NLA Communication Proposals

- a. Subscription Objectives
 - i. To achieve unfettered independence (ie no interference from the council)
 - ii. To pay for communication print and postage costs
 - iii. To build a fund for supporting individuals (potential £50k per annum if all leaseholders subscribe)
- b. Methods of Communication: Newsletter, phone, face-to-face, website
- c. All leaseholders will receive a newsletter and will have access to the website, but NLA will ensure that only subscribers receive personal assistance

6. Financial Report

Accounts, Funding and Subscriptions

- i. NT presented the Accounts and moneys are still outstanding from the council
- ii. NLA committee members are unpaid volunteers
- iii. An effective NLA should save leaseholders money each year
- iv. Digital Switchover project is outside this agreement and NLA wants the same level of involvement

7. Any Other Business

Flytipping – raised by request from Julie Westmacott

- a. JW is taking this up with Chris Cox
- b. PW explained that the issue is part of a wider concern about how estates are represented in the Housing Revenue Account
- c. NLA sees this as one of its key concerns over unfair charges

8. Date of Next Meetings – AGM 5th March 2008