

Pullens Tenants and Residents Association (TRA) Annual General Meeting 2023

26/04/2023, PULLENS CENTRE, 184 CRAMPTON STREET, SE17 3AE

MINUTES, DRAFT 1 MH 27/04/23, ADOPTED 2 (EDITED TO REMOVE NON-TRA-OFFICER FULL NAMES) MS 18/05/23.

Meeting opens at 19:00

Apologies: Nick Puschman, acting Chair of the TRA

Vincent Brown, Treasurer, is present

26 Participants, of which 23 eligible to vote as TRA members. A full participants' list is held by the TRA Cttee but will not be disclosed for reasons of data protection.

Part I: Formal AGM

SV, Chair of the Gaywood Estate, Walworth, welcomes everyone, and introduces the meeting, the first Pullens TRA AGM since 2019, and the need for holding it to formally elect officers and a new committee. Shares some notes on the importance of a TRA and its key role in liaising with Council officers on issues such as repairs/maintenance, major works, streetscape.

Mentions key contacts

- Marie Osborne: Communal Repairs Officer
- Keith Wilson: Housing Manager

Recommends maintaining an active electronic forum, such as email lists, blog or whatsapp group. Mentions the existence of the SGTO (Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations) whatsapp group and invites new cttee to join it as a good source of information. Contact Sam if interested.

Introduces Rubeena Amanullah, Southwark Council Residents Liaison Officer who will chair the formal AGM

Rubeena Amanullah formally chairs formal proceedings.

1.1 Presentation of Accounts

Vincent Brown, Pullens TRA Treasurer presents the 2020/21 and 2021/202 accounts and the current state of finances in 2023. The financial year for the TRA runs from 1 June to 31 May, which is a bit unusual, but means that the accounts for 2023 will be concluded only in about 6 weeks.

Overall the current (26/04/2023) financial position of the TRA is healthy, with a balance of £7,838 at bank and £20.51 in petty cash. Main income sources include the operating grant from Council (dependant on a formal AGM and elected Committee being in place), revenues from hiring out the Pullens Centre, and occasional income from film projects as the Estate is occasionally in demand.

Main expenditures include operating costs (utilities), insurance, and support for various community projects.

Funds currently held are essentially unrestricted.

Anticipated expenditure for the current and coming financial period might include support to kick start community activities after the lockdowns and maintenance for amenities. Ideally, for larger projects, also dedicated grant funding will be sought externally.

Rubeena mentions that the operating grant from the Council depends on the number of residents and / or flats and when reserves of a TRA are too high might not be afforded to them. That threshold was however still significantly higher than the current funds held by the Pullens TRA.

The Q&A session brings up queries about the income from film productions (does the TRA get a fair share?) and other income sources.

Adoption of the accounts moved by Dylan Atkins, seconded by JH. Adopted unanimously.

1.2 Appointment of Auditors / Reviewers for the accounts

Currently accounts are reviewed by the SGTO. Treasurer proposes that SGTO is appointed also for the next financial year accounts as reviewers.

Vincent Brown moves the proposal to appoint SGTO as account reviewers. Michael Hammer seconds. No objections. SGTO appointed as account reviewers for the next financial period.

1.3 Election of Officers and Committee members

Rubeena introduces the basic idea of TRA as part of the participation structure in Southwark. Mentions different fora such as tenants forum and leaseholder forum and conferences. Describes some key topics for the committee in terms of income generation around filming income, borough grants, 'get involved grants', and 'cleaner, greener, safer grants'.

Suggests that it is important for each TRA and committee to find its own useful rhythm of meeting. At least 6 committee meetings are recommended per year, and it is useful to share schedules of TRA and committee meetings with council officers several weeks ahead to ensure they can attend if needed.

Main role of Committee and officers is to run the affairs of the TRA between AGMs and maintain key relationships with Council and others. Mentions that training for officers is available from Council.

Outlines main roles

- Chair: main external representative and facilitates how the TRA works
- Vice Chair: assists Chair and deputises
- Treasurer: looks after finances, banking and accounts
- Secretary: ensures proper documentation (minutes, records) and communication with residents

Clarifies that all officers are individually elected by the TRA.

Call for nominations

- AL nominates Michael Hammer for Chair, MK seconds, unanimously elected
- Tom Scutt volunteers as Vice Chair, JH seconds, unanimously elected
- Vincent Brown nominated by MK as Treasurer, AL and SH second, unanimously elected
- Dylan Atkins volunteers as Secretary, MK seconds, unanimously elected.

AGM also elects unanimously the following additional committee members

- IH
- MK
- KE
- JH
- KW
- DC
- NP (acceptance tbc as not present)
- MS (acceptance tbc as not present)
- GT (Pullens Centre main key holder, acceptance tbc as not present)

Rubeena documents the election outcome and closes the formal AGM proceedings at 20 30.

Part II: General discussion of issues of concern and priorities

Michael Hammer, newly elected Chair, takes over as chair of the meeting to facilitate discussions of issues of concern for residents and leaseholders.

Michael thanks Sam and Rubeena for their assistance with the AGM.

General discussions focus on the following points (in order of discussion, not necessarily of priority)

1. Fundraising
 - a) Immediate opportunity to apply for a Coronation Grant of up to £600 (deadline 27 April)
 - b) Little opportunity to organise events as short notice, but agreement to apply with a view to use funds to mark the occasion with activities in relation to sustainable environment agenda
2. Major works
 - a) Unclear when next major works might be scheduled and what they might entail
 - b) Recommendation to look at Southwark website to find out more
3. Pullens Centre
 - a) Shared interest to revive its activities such as film club and provide timely support for it
 - b) Need for some additional refurbishment and equipment investment, plan budget implications, find opportunities to fund this and, connect with Ian Brinley, Voluntary Sector Premises Policy Officer
4. Collaboration with the Pullens Yards association
 - a) Pullens have a shared history of living and working and a strong creative heritage

- b) Agreement at the SAGM that we need to build on that and find again a good collaborative basis with the different yards management groups and association
- 5. Planning applications in the neighbourhood
 - a) Continued application process in relation to 31 Amelia Street plot (old Reed employment centre) with proposals to build 7 or 8 storey flats for student accomodation. Likely to go to planning committee hearing stage, inputs still possible, application ref is 22/AP/0850, <https://planning.southwark.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=makeComment&keyVal=R87J7GKB00300>
 - b) Planning process for post office sorting office concluded but until Post Office leaves there will be no change
- 6. Pullens archives
 - a) Currently safe and in care of Southwark Council as they needed to be relocated from a TRA member's flat for space reasons
- 7. Leaseholder status, including those not living on the estate, in the TRA
 - a) Question raised about what the status was of Pullens leaseholders who do not live (anymore) on the estate
 - b) Rubeena pointed out the importance of Council consultation mechanisms such as the homeowner conference (or the tenants conference). People were by and large not aware of these and more information needs to be easier to access about them
 - c) Michael as Chair seeks inclusive approach to all relevant voices as leaseholders have, like tenants, residents and yard space occupiers generally, a legitimate interest in the evolution of the estate. Need to explore what that means in terms of involvement. Presence and participation in meetings not an issue, voting rights currently likely only for residents
- 8. Inclusive community engagement and residents communications
 - a) Suggestion to find ways to revive the Pullens Newsletter, in paper and digital
 - b) Pullens Website updating
 - c) Tenants raised particular concern about very poor and disrespectful communications towards them by the Council (Rubeena heard this and acknowledged)
 - d) Important to not solely rely on digital communications for engaging residents, paper still very important
- 9. Gas works
 - a) Lack of clarity of overall direction and scope of the works, what is happening on the different streets and how buildings including roof-spaces and potentially conservation status are affected
 - b) Residents concerned about poor communication concerning where new gas pipes are coming into flats and positioning of new gas meters
 - c) Contractors apparently very poor in terms of tidying up old pipework etc. in flats
- 10. Estate maintenance, cleaning

- a) People expressed dissatisfaction with maintenance of Pullens Gardens by Council, frequent rubbish accumulation in various places around the estate, check on collection discipline
- b) Opportunities for a clean and pleasant environment exist, Alberta Street estate an example, suggestion for a committee member to attend Alberta meetings

Additional points raised at general meeting on 13/03/2023 included:

- Final bills for previous major works, have now been shared with leaseholders, question remain around payment modalities;
- Street scape / Pocket parks;
- Estate security / anti-social behaviour and drug dealing.

Michael broadly summarised major issues to be worked on by the new committee over the next year in three main categories:

- A) Significant material issues of concern for residents including gas works, forthcoming major works, living in safety and security on the estate and ensuring a good quality environment (clean, green, safe);
- B) Communications culture, including open, inclusive and transparent communications of TRA and residents, promoting and supporting respectful communications of Southwark Council with tenants and everyone, taking an inclusive approach to different voices and stakeholders in the estate;
- C) Building a cohesive and active community, engaging residents, working with the yards association to maintain and enhance unique collective and creative heritage of the Pullens, finding ways to revitalise programme and use of the Pullens Centre, including more by residents.

Michael thanked everyone. Key next steps for Committee are to set itself up, schedule and share meeting dates and timings, look at ongoing communications and engagement with residents, and determine priorities and actions in relation to the huge in-tray of issues.

Meeting ended at 21:05.

/ends...