

TRA Committee meeting 7-9 pm Pullens Centre 13th November 2023 – Minutes

Draft 21 Nov 2023. Minutes prepared by DA MH.

Attendees

Committee Members:

K W, NP, D A (sec), V B (Tres.), M H (Chair) TS (VC), MS, KE

Apologies: IH, MK, JH, SH

Other Residents: A L / S H

1. Meeting minutes and agenda approval

- agenda for this meeting was approved
- Minutes of the SGM Oct 2023 were approved
- Committee meeting minutes for Sept 2023 were approved with one amendment agreed to remove the referral to the pavement width on Penton Place as all pavements vary and trees restrict accessibility in some places

2. Treasurer report

A finance report was circulated for the meeting. VB reported on current finances with on 9 Nov 2023 £7,032 unrestricted and £600 restricted (Coronation Grant) funding available. Financial position is good but we continue to support the Pullens Centre upgrade (equipment / decoration / licenses).

3. Pullens Open Studios support

All participants were in favour of supporting the Open Studios events as a matter of goodwill and recognising the Yards and their work as part of the Pullens Character.

The committee agreed a one off donation of £500 to the December Open Studios event.

Comments included the following:

- The organisers should try (with us on the TRA) to make the event more attractive and focused also on the local community
- The programme should reflect more the very diverse community of residents at the Pullens in terms of gender and cultural backgrounds
- The TRA needs to remain accountable in the way that we spend public funds which are intended for the benefit of the community. While we agreed a donation this time and we see a community benefit we will need in the future a much stronger case being made for what the funds are being sought and will be spent on.

4. Pullens Centre / community engagement

What options exist to make better use of the Pullens Centre to generate unrestricted income ?

Main sources of income for the PTRA include

- Hall hire
- Film companies' location fees
- The Southwark Grant are based on approx.. £5 per flat Per Annum.

AP: present at the next meeting a fuller report on spending for the Pullens Centre against the originally agreed outline budget

- How do we market the Centre as a resource to potentially increase the income of the Pullens Centre?
- Do we look at the nearby Drapers Hall's methodology as a direction for expanding this?

Pullens Centre income is unrestricted, so there is a benefit in trying to generate income while maintaining it as a space for the community

How does the TRA support community events?

Isolation during the pandemic has created many challenges. Volunteer groups such as the TRA can help to build broader engagement. Key points in the discussion included

- Show visible achievements so that the TRA is seen as effective and active
- Think long term, be patient in community involvement initiatives
- Find the right tone for communications, focus on the residents as the audience not on the TRA as an organisation as such
- Hold small frequent meetings on issues that are of community interest, maybe convened just by one or two Ctee members
- Topical presentations, and thematic meetings on interest subjects i.e. Solar panels, Not every topic will fly
- Important to build a community-driven agenda, increase local people's use of The Centre.

AP: invite Richard Galpin, of Pembroke House, richard.galpin@pembrokehouse.org.uk with lots of community organising experience

5. Waste management issues

A cleaner greener safer grant application was submitted, proposing a better system and overall improvements to bins, address fly-tipping, identification of specific areas to improve waste management and more. Councillor Natasha Ennin followed up with

with MH and TS. Council technical teams have apparently also already provided her with some feedback.

A decision on this funding would be made in spring 2024. Potentially a phased development was mooted by the Councillor if no other funding can be obtained. If we are successful more consultation with residents and highways and waste mgt team at the Council will be necessary to design final solutions. Thanks to Tom for leading this initiative.

6. FUNDRAISING

5.1. Coronation Grant

The restricted coronation grant needs to be used this year (until April 2024 latest) in line with the purpose of the fund to do something for the / with the community to celebrate the coronation of Charles III.

No firm decision has been made but two ideas are being discussed

- Tree/shrub planting in the Pullens Gardens to celebrate King Charles' long standing commitment to environmental sustainability (VB/TS), DA suggests an option as an ELM TREE, is there an organization that plants disease resistant species?
- A community event (KW), more details required

AP: make a decision on what to spend the grant on soonest. If we cannot spend the funds we will need to return them!

5.b. General approach

The CGS and also the neighbourhood fund application were very rushed processes in the end, even if built on longer standing ideas, and finalisation involved a small set of people to get them over the line.

Concerns were raised about finding more inclusive and longer term ways of engaging people. Ideas discussed involved creating small groups to focus on specific issues such as waste, community engagement, anti-social behaviour / drug use / safety and security, repairs, etc.

AP: people should think about their interests and put themselves forward to decide at least some initial allocations in December

7. MAJOR WORKS INVOICES

Service charge accounts are beginning to be updated for leaseholders including the final bills for the major works 2016/17. Paper copies have not yet been received.

Some residents have approached the Chair about what to do, whether the bills were legal so long after the event, how to pay, what we can expect in terms of transparency and itemisation, and what the role of the TRA might be in all this.

The Committee had a long discussion including about options to challenge major works bills through the leaseholder tribunal, and the narrow criteria that apply to such challenges. It was agreed that

- The Committee should / can be a place where people affected can share their challenges and questions, enabling the Cttee to gain an overview of common issues
- The Cttee should call a meeting with leaseholders (although open to all TRA members) and invite guest speakers who can help create a good information base
- The TRA could assist in an advisory role about where to obtain information, and options for challenges etc., but could not itself be involved in legal cases for / with individual residents

8. Tenant Management Organisation (TMO)

We started a discussion about a potential TMO, but need to continue this discussion including with people who have gone through the process in real life

What are the PROS and CONS of Pullens Estate evolving into a TMO?
Are there different types of TMO? And what are their specific criteria.

AP: explore the topic (VB/NP?) and bring the issue to a wider meeting with good information resources

/ends...