

**MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
FEDERATION OF PRIVATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS LTD  
Held on Wednesday 11 May 2011 at the El Alamein, Victory Services Club,  
63-79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF**

**Present: FPRA Committee Members:** Robert Smytherman (Chairman), Michael Derome (Hon Treasurer), Muriel Guest-Smith, Philippa Turner, Malcolm Wolpert, Robert Levene, Legal Adviser - Nick Roberts  
Hon Consultants - Nic Shulman and Chiara Gorodesky.

**In Attendance:** Jacqui Abbott and Diane Caira.

**1 Apologies for Absence:** Richard Williams, Stephen Guy, Martin Coleraine, Andrew Pridell, Leigh Shapiro, Ann Elson, Martin Redman, Yashmin Mistry and Shula Rich.

**2. To approve Minutes of the Meeting held 16 February 2011 and note the minutes of EGM held on the same evening.** These were approved and authorized for printing.

**3. Chairman's Report.** MW and BS were invited to a governmental meeting to discuss the 'Big Society' and how FPRA can help to get the message out. Information to be added to Directgov housing page.

BS elected to join board of British Parking Association

New Guidance for Fire Regulations. BS and NR to liaise to formalise a response before deadline.

Green Deal. BS met Joanne Brookes who is writing a thesis on the subject and has a background in environmental health. BS would like to invite JB to advise members with questions relating to energy efficiency. Admin office to send Newsletter and information.

Committee congratulated Bob on considerable efforts.

**4. Stephen Guy's update.** The website is updated regularly and suggested that committee look at the site on a regular basis. SG will be away for three weeks, but will make updates if urgent.

Committee requested a report on the number of hits.

**5. Treasurer's Report.** MD thanked RL and the office for preparing figures. Reminder letters to be sent with the next newsletter. RL reported the many problems we have had with NatWest and the formal complaint which has now been made. As a result, NatWest has agreed to back interest; bank charges and compensation.

MD has suggested we stay with NatWest for the current account, but move the deposit account to Scottish Widows paying 1.85% compared to NatWest 0.35%. BS and MD signed paperwork for the transfer, along with additional forms for telephone banking. (Internet banking is not available for FPRA at this time.)

**6. Report and account for financial year ending 31 March 2011.**

MGS asked why insurance has increased; RL explained it decreased the previous year because we changed insurers, but is now back to a normal rate which is still competitive within the market. Income down due to non-renewals. Will refer the decision regarding auditing the accounts for another year and a figure would be useful for the AGM to show the extra costs required for this. Website cost includes hosting; licensing; email account. MGS suggested including the number of hits on the website for the next AGM. Hopefully, the inclusion of the FPRA website to Directgov website, will increase this figure. More than 50% of new members say they found us through the website. FPRA now has a Twitter account.

PT commented that the Report and Accounts reflect how important it is to increase new members. Out of the 399 renewed members, only 24 paid by BACS. Only three new members from CARLEX.

## **7. Campaign Issues.**

**a. S20.** – Possible Law Commission review.

**b. Energy efficiency and green agenda.** - See BS report.

**c. Disability issues.** The Code of Practice dealing with common parts is being drawn up and BS has asked that FPRA be involved.

**d. Disclosure of insurance commission.** – RL to follow up FSA 5 January 2011 letter.

**e. Safety of lessees' money.** - RL to follow up FSA 5 January 2011 letter

**f. Making Commonhold work** – Agreed to remove from list for the present.

**g. Improving legislation.** - Possible Law Commission review.

**h. Improving operation of LVTs.** – Awaiting merger with other tribunals.

**i. Car clamping.** – See BS report.

**j. End exit fees from Retirement Homes.** – Nothing to report.

**k. Fire Safety Campaign** – See BS report.

**8. Updated list of contacts** – new version attached.

## **9. Update from Admin Office –**

**a.** Proposed change to bank account; close Nationwide account. Open Scottish Widows account. It was resolved that an account with Scottish Widows Bank be opened in accordance with the information and application form presented to the meeting and signed by BS, RL, MD and to be signed by SG.

**b.** As of 11 May 2011, membership stood at 399 paid. Total membership at the end of March 2011 was 535, suggesting we have about 140 members who have not yet renewed. The difference in numbers is new members.

**c.** We have 6 members questions outstanding. We had one member write to complain, for which RL responded. RL read-out a thank you letter from a member too.

**d.** Following comments at the EGM, RL asked what other information the Committee required. JA confirmed the new process of sending advisers copies of members' application forms, leases etc. where possible.

**10. Memorandum and Articles of Association – NR** – reported on his review and took note of various suggestions. It was agreed that a general rewrite was not necessary or appropriate at this stage but that he would draft amendments in plenty of time for the next meeting and inclusion in the AGM notice. The EGM decision to maintain an audit was noted and it was agreed not to raise this again at the AGM. It was also noted that the original point over audit was as a result of a member's suggestion.

## **11. Dates for future meetings at Victory Services Club:**

Wednesday 21 September 2011

**AGM 9 November 2011 – Grill Room or possible use of Carisbrooke Hall to be confirmed.**

Wednesday 7 December 2011 – **Please note the change of this date.**

If you are not attending please let the office know.

## **12. Newsletter dates.** All were noted.

Issue 97 May 2011 – finalised, subject to Philippa's review with thanks to AM and Sarah

Issue 98 September 2011 – articles by 1 August 2011 (include AGM notices and accounts)

Issue 99 December 2011 – articles by 14 November 2011

Issue 100 February 2012 – Centenary Issue

## **12. Any Other Business.**

- JA to make contact with Carolina and Mark from Cuboid Media.
- Contact list to be circulated once new contacts are added.
- Phone bill has increased due to the call-back system introduced.
- RL noted that office computer is three years old and will need replacing within the next 12 months.
- Franking machine is up and running and the postage is cheaper. The machine will pay for itself within the 12 months but does involve us delivering post to the Post Office rather than the local post box.
- BS suggested that Jo Brookes be approached to be an Honorary Consultant on green issues.
- Chiara Gorodesky was welcomed as an Honorary Consultant and made useful and helpful comments about joining the FPRA.

**40<sup>th</sup> Year.** It was agreed in principle that the suggested arrangements for a self-financing celebration go ahead. All expenses will be borne by event organiser, who would receive 80% or sponsorship with 20% to cover FPRA costs.

Sky may be the main sponsor BS will approach.

Sub committee is BS, RL, SG and MW.

We still do not know if Grant Shapps is attending.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

**Date for next meeting Wednesday 21 September 2011 at 5.30pm  
Victory Services Club**

## **LIST OF EXTERNAL CONTACTS OF FPRA**

Age UK /AIMS – Annual or as required  
Association of Leasehold and Enfranchisement Practitioners – ALEP- Annual or as required  
Association of Residential Managing Agents – ARMA – Monthly or working together on consultations  
Association of Retirement Housing Managers – ARHM – Lost touch  
Brighton and Hove Leaseholders  
Campaign for the abolition of Residential Leasehold – CARL – Ad hoc contact  
London Borough of Camden (including Leasehold and Mediation sections) – Ad hoc  
Citizens Advice Bureau – CAB – Annual to update records  
College of Law/BBP/College of Estate Management/Other Universities – Annual and updates as required  
Cuboid Media – Carolina Moreno-Evangeli  
CARLEX – limit, but continue with caution  
Department of Communities and Local Government – DCLG – Monthly or per consultations  
Digital UK – Quarterly meetings  
Disability/Department of Works and Pensions – Ad hoc  
Fuel Poverty Alliance – Ad hoc  
Financial Services Authority – FSA – and Financial Services Compensation Scheme – FSCS - campaigns  
Gas Safety Council – Ad hoc  
Institute of Residential Property Managers – IRPM – information updates  
Journalists/print, radio, TV and web – continuous  
Leasehold Advisory Service – LEASE – Monthly (note: RL is non executive director)  
Land Registry – Consultations  
Liverpool Leaseholders  
Manage Your Block Event  
National Council for Voluntary Organisations – NCVO – Annual update  
News on the Block  
Property Week  
Peverel – Ad hoc  
Residential Property Tribunal Service – RPTS/LVT – Bi-annual meeting  
Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors – RICS – Ad hoc  
Department of Energy and Climate Change – campaigns and consultations  
British Property Federation BPF – Ad hoc  
Westminster City Council – Ad hoc  
Sky/Astra – Ad hoc  
British Parking Association BPA – Ad hoc  
**Advertisers in Newsletter** – As required  
Others – As required including various new contacts  
**Politicians:** DCLG: Grant Shapps, Eric Pickles, Andrew Stunnell, Greg Clark  
DECC: Chris Huhne DCMS: Jeremy Hunt, Don Foster  
Equalities: Teresa May, Lynne Featherstone, Ministry of Justice: Ken Clarke

May 2011