



Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations

Bells Gardens Community Centre,
19 Buller Close, London,
SE15 6UJ

Campaigning for Housing Rights and Council Homes

Minutes of SGTO Group Meeting

Held on Wednesday 22nd September 2021, by online ZOOM

Staff: Margaret Onwuta, Amanda Carey, Ahmed Kabba, Rita Edmond, Jack Lewis, Silvia Rahim

Present: 21

1. Welcome and Introductions:

Cris welcomed everyone to the group meeting.

No apologies recorded.

Guest speakers

Cathy Deplessis – Director, Southwark Pensioners Centre and Chair, Southwark Older People's Network.

Martin Kovaks – Programmes and Investigations Manager, Communities, Southwark Council.

2. TRAs Support for Older People on their Estates

Cris outlined that the SGTO is seeking to build connections, strengthen relationships and improve the health and wellbeing of older people by working in partnership with the Older People's Network and Southwark Pensioners Centre.

Cathy saw this work as involving a wide array of organisations. Last year, the Southwark Pensioners Centre worked with the Older People's Network and COPSINS. Southwark Pensioners Centre operated a drop-in service before the Pandemic, or visitors could make an appointment. Now, visits are appointment-only. Recently, they have been getting visitors whose cases are very urgent.

Cathy and Margaret have been working on a project proposal inspired by last year's Connected at Christmas Project. Southwark Pensioners' Centre successfully bid for funding and got food parcels out to elderly residents. Cathy is keen to work with TRAs and to help them obtain a small pot of money that they could use to distribute food. Within Southwark Pensioners' Centre, there have

been discussions about how the Centre can work with TRAs to help them deliver activities. Cathy realised that a high proportion of council tenants are older people. They have struggled in the Pandemic, particularly in relation to accessing services and activities. The Centre are looking to create a resource where guidance could be provided to TRAs to help them put on events for older people. Support could also be provided to help TRAs write grant applications for such events.

Cathy has spoken to TRAs (including Canada TRA and Kingswood TRA) and knows there is demand for this type of support. Cathy suggested a working group for this project, where residents could contribute to how this project is formed. Cathy and Margaret have developed a survey to help work out how this could take shape.

Cris asked whether the group support the idea. The group supports the idea. Cris stresses the need for urgency to get this project up and running before Christmas.

Actions agreed

Action: Cathy to send Cris a statement on the Southwark Pensioners' Centre's current service arrangements, for circulation to the membership.

Action: Those present to promote the survey within their own Estates and TRAs.

Action: Margaret to collect feedback from the group on how accessible the survey is.

3. Minutes of Group Meeting held on 28th July 2021

3.1. The Minutes were agreed as a true record (motion proposed by Jennifer Quinton-Chelley, seconded by Beverley Graham).

3.2. Main topic for this meeting was the reopening of halls.

Margaret confirmed that at the last meeting, members requested a template for safeguarding forms, but she is still chasing Ian Brinley up and has not yet received a response.

Cris said that many TRAs are trying to reopen their halls. She mentioned that her TRA's hall has had all the relevant checks done and is open. The biggest item on their reopening checklist was checking the safety of the water. Cris's TRA announced their opening date and Ian Brinley supported it. They are doing Tae-Kwondo, Pilates and a baby music group, but the TRA are following strict rules. The limit of 120 people has been cut by two-thirds, and the hall is not currently opening for parties. When they do, the TRA will make it clear that the events will not allow alcohol.

Alison mentions that for Rockingham TRA it has been a struggle as before COVID-19 it was managed by the Council, but now the Council expect the TRA to take it over. The TRA is struggling to gain clarification on what actions they need to take.

June said that for the Brandon 2 TRA they are reopening the hall but only for small community events.

Amanda Carey explained that at Bells Gardens, the SGTO is following the advice of the Council that alcohol not be allowed at events. Bookings are going ahead, including for a naming ceremony and a birthday party, but numbers are limited. Amanda went on to outline the forms Ian Brinley said he would provide, but we have not yet received:

- Generic Hall Risk Assessment.
- Generic Checklist.
- Generic Hire Agreement.
- Step-by-step guide for TRAs reopening halls.

Actions agreed

- **Action:** Margaret to circulate template forms once she receives these from Ian Brinley.
- **Action:** SGTO to support Rockingham TRA in getting information on reopening from Ian Brinley.

3.3 Cris reported that the agreement at the July meeting for Nick to compile a letter highlighting issues for Cris to forward to Cllr. Cryan has been actioned.

4. SGTO New Homes Network

Jack presented on the New Homes Network.

He explained that the Network was started by his predecessor, Rhiannon, but that he is taking the project forward. One of its purposes is to enhance the engagement of residents in the planning process, particularly with regards to infill and rooftop developments in Southwark's estates. At the previous meeting, the Network's members were trying to establish the Network's role in terms of whether the Network would take a stance on new homes developments, or whether it would be more of an information-sharing and training resource instead. It was also discussed how the Network, and the SGTO, might work with the Yes 2 Fair Redevelopment campaign.

Jack said that at the last meeting, it was agreed that both the New Homes Network and the Yes 2 Fair Redevelopment Campaign were keen to ensure that residents were involved meaningfully in the planning process. Within both groups, there is a concern that the Council have ignored resident views on infill and rooftop developments. Both groups are in favour of making the Council more transparent in its dealings with residents.

Jack also talked about how the New Homes Network are trying to create a Terms of Reference for themselves, based on the previous meeting's discussions and a document circulated by a member of the Network, Nick, (Chair of Southampton Way TRA). These terms of reference outline the support the Network can provide to external campaigns. Once these terms of reference are amended by the Network members, they will be disseminated to the wider SGTO membership for approval.

The Terms of Reference currently proposes to use the Network as a space for the sharing of information and documents between TRAs, and as a training resource. The Network is currently working with Planning Aid for London to create a training programme for residents who want to

influence the planning process on their estates. The training is about how residents can cite material concerns and use the planning system to get heard by the Council.

The Network is also an impartial forum for debate and discussion, where members can decide how they want to work together. In order to make the Network more accessible, Jack has created a Google Drive for the sharing of information and documents and is about to set up a WhatsApp Group for the Network. Members of the Network are also being encouraged to copy the SGTO into email correspondence with the Council, to allow the SGTO to monitor the quality of responses received from the Council.

Jennifer mentioned that the Network would be arranging a meeting with Planning Aid for London to discuss the training programme. Jack clarified the timings of this meeting.

Jack mentioned that Planning Aid for London had created a document to outline the content of the training. However, the meeting with Planning Aid for London would be for members to attend and agree on practical aspects of the training, such as whether or not it would be in-person. The content of the training had already been agreed at a previous Network meeting.

Jennifer stressed the need to conduct the training soon, considering that so many estates are currently going into planning for rooftop and infill developments. Slippers Place has already gone into planning, and the Council are bringing forward the planning applications for several estates so that the decision does not 'linger' soon before the Council elections in May 2022, and so that people struggle to challenge the decision. Normally you have 21 days to query a planning application before it goes in. If the Council do put estates into planning just before Christmas, many Council staff will not be present to monitor responses, due to the Christmas holidays. The Council are also withholding information in order to rush rooftop developments through. One of the committee members on the Clifton TRA is a planning lawyer, who wrote an eight-page report on how Southwark Council are breaking the law on how they have conducted consultation. But the Council are not listening to him or the rest of the TRA. The Council are avoiding meeting with the TRA. The TRA are also not able to get a meeting with Michael Scorer or Stephanie Cryan. In Rotherhithe Ward, two blocks of flats slated for rooftop developments (on Chilton Grove) were covered in scaffolding and tarpaulin for two and a half years. Some residents on the Clifton Estate have been asked to be moved into a hotel for the duration of rooftop home construction. If they are not moved, people with underlying health conditions would have to breathe in dust from construction work. Residents are not prepared to live through such conditions.

Jack explained that he spoke with Planning aid for London, who stated that they want to conduct training for residents in mid or late October at the earliest. But he is aware that this will miss some of the planning deadlines for individual estates. The New Homes Network is also looking into recruiting a structural engineer to survey estates, and Jack has been trying to improve communications between members of the Network.

Jennifer stressed the need for the Network to have a document library.

Tanya said how shocked she is by the photos of rooftop development Jennifer has circulated to the group. She is amazed at how the Council can allow residents to live on a building site for such a long period of time. Tanya stressed that Yes 2 Fair Redevelopment is not against housing

development per se, but they want it developed fairly. There is nothing fair about being underneath a building site for two years or having a children's playground taken away. Progress has been made on the campaign, such as the Council backing down on their proposal to build on top of eight blocks on the Kingswood Estate, but there remain problematic proposals for that estate.

On the Kingston Estate the planning process has begun for new homes. The consultation deadline for that is the 6th October. People on the Kingston Estate do not support the construction of homes on their greenspace. The Council were going to take the planning application for Slippers Place to planning committee without even having a site visit. That was pushed back by resident and local councillor opposition. There will now be a site visit, with the site going to planning committee in October. 28 rooftop developments and over 50 planned developments on estates are taking place. This will cause huge disruption for residents. No one in SGTO could disagree with Yes 2 Fair Redevelopment's eight demands, but the question is what method you use to address these demands.

Tanya hopes that people can be sufficiently open-minded to work with both Yes 2 Fair Redevelopment and the SGTO New Homes Network. Yes 2 Fair Redevelopment's last protest made the front page of the South London press. The last meeting was visited by a lawyer who is interested in helping the campaign. Yes 2 Fair Redevelopment is developing a website with events and media coverage.

Yes 2 Fair Redevelopment are planning a protest for the 24th November, to coincide with the Council Assembly. The protest will begin in Rotherhithe and end at the Council Offices on Tooley Street. Council Assemblies do not occur often – the last one was in July. This means opportunities to communicate with all councillors together are limited. We welcome any estates facing unwelcome development to join this protest. Tanya mentioned how we need to be mindful of the pre-planning stage of applications, as well as later consultations. That first stage is also not being conducted fairly. Comments have been ignored and the Council have not reached out to residents sufficiently. Many people were not aware of the development proposed for Peckham Green. Yes 2 Fair Redevelopment is happy to support any campaigner opposing unfair development on their estates.

Cris said that the SGTO and Yes 2 Fair Redevelopment need to work together. The SGTO need to put together consultation documents, stating the requirements the Council must adhere to. We need to get this together before the Council Assembly meeting.

Cris went on to say that the SGTO represents some TRAs who are happy with development on their estates, but these estates have their own problems. Cris cited Buchan Estate, where building work has been delayed and is still incomplete after two years.

Cris said that she believes that the SGTO can play a positive role, including joining Yes 2 Fair Redevelopment at the protest on 24th November. Some protestors may carry slightly different banners to Yes 2 Fair Redevelopment, but this does not matter. Cris mentioned that the whole membership needs to be consulted on these actions. Another New Homes Network meeting

should be called soon. The SGTO needs to be clear about its role because it also works with estates who do want development.

Sam V thanked Jennifer for posting the pictures of Chilton Grove. She said that on the Gaywood Estate, the TRA tried to engage with the Council to ensure residents got a positive outcome from rooftop homes. The TRA acted in good faith, but they are hesitating about development now. A project group was set up on the estate – their meetings are sparse. Planning Aid for London training took place on the estate, but it didn't really make much difference. Different residents have different reasons to oppose rooftop developments. Some leaseholders are concerned about the amount they will be billed for major works. Residents received a letter about the intention to not only do the rooftop development, but also major works, which would mean leaseholders would get billed a lot. Sam asks what we should do as a group to get the Council to listen to residents. Sam suggests we could try and engage more with Stephanie Cryan as soon as we can – we could get a list of questions together for her. We want to be able to hit officials with the commitments they have given us.

Cris reaffirmed the need to urgently call a meeting of the New Homes Network meeting for the following week. Jack agreed to help Cris arrange this.

Actions agreed

Action: SGTO to create a document that outlines the Council's commitments to fair consultation, which we can use to challenge them at Council Assembly on 24th November.

Action: Jack to arrange a full meeting of the New Homes Network where action on estates about to go into planning (for infill and rooftop development) can be agreed, and where SGTO's place at a rally against the Council can be clarified.

5. Future Funding for SGTO

Cris introduced the item. Up until a few months ago, Cris believed that she would be signing a three-year contract between the SGTO and the Council, to start from September this year. The SGTO Board became concerned after not hearing about the contract for some time. They understood that the contract would be drafted in liaison with the new Tenants and Leaseholders councils. Cris said the concerns around this were based on the reality that these lines of communication are not functioning.

At a meeting with Stephanie Cryan & Kieron Williams, Cris & Chris were informed that the SGTO would receive funding for another year at the current rate (without any discussion as to whether this is an adequate level of funding). After that the SGTO would go out for competitive tendering, starting from October 2022. From then on, the SGTO would be in the hands of whoever wins that tendering process.

Cris and Chris were also promised a breakdown of what was explained – but this was not forthcoming. Neither has the Board received any communication from the Resident Involvement Team.

Cris invited Martin Kovaks, author of a report put to the Council on the SGTO's funding arrangements, to speak to the group.

Martin apologised for the mixed messages given to the SGTO. The decision to move the advice contracts – (grant funding provided to SGTO but also to the Citizens Advice Bureau) from grant to contract financing was taken in February 2020.

Full discussion of the implications of this has been stalled by COVID-19. Some believe a single-supplier negotiation might be a way of reaching a contract. The advice from the procurement team is that this is not legally feasible, because you can only restrict competition in this way if what the Council wants cannot be supplied by others in the market. Martin stated that this was not the case for the SGTO and mentioned companies such as TPAS as an example of other advice services out there.

The Departmental Contracts Review Board (DCRB) makes the decision on procurement. Stephanie Cryan wanted to ensure the SGTO had funding for the last six months of this financial year and the first six months of the next financial year. This was based on a decision made in June.

The new funding represents a cut of around 9% on previous grants. This cut was made on the assumption that we should be in a contract (as opposed to a grant) agreement now and efficiencies should have been made. Councillors voted for this cut based on their annual budget, agreed before April 2021.

From October 2022, there will be a period of several months of market testing, consultation, and discussion on the future of the SGTO, to decide what recommendations will be put to the DCRB to help it decide on the procurement route.

Formal decision on the remaining funding has not yet been made and probably will take another three to four weeks to be finalised. The SGTO can put together a bid for extra funding which will be considered, but this is unlikely to make an impact on the funding level agreed.

Cris spoke about the uniqueness of the SGTO, as the only tenants' federation left in London, and that it is not an advice service but a tenants federation, established by tenants.

Cris read out the following note she had received from Councillor Stephanie Cryan:

"I have had confirmation that for the current financial year, an additional £102,919 will be paid to cover October 2021 to March 2022, which is a total of £216,919. The budgets for 2022 and 2023 haven't been agreed yet, so we don't know what the figure for April 2022 to September 2022 would be until we've agreed next year's HRA Budget. As soon as the budget has been agreed, I will ask John [McCormack] to let you know what the amount is."

Cris registered her and the Boards disgust at the Council's decision. Cris thought that it is possible that as the Council categorises the SGTO under Environment and Leisure (rather than housing), perhaps the SGTO have not been talking to the right Councillor. Stephen Douglass has not spoken to the SGTO.

Martin said that making the legal case for the SGTO as a tenants' federation is unlikely to affect the Council's decision to put the SGTO out to tender. Martin also mentions that despite the SGTO being classed as Environment and Leisure, funding is still coming from the HRA.

Cris opened the floor for questions

Althea stated that when tenants agreed to have a tenants' fund, it was understood that 10p from each household's rent would be put in a pot to fund a tenant's federation and to give some money back to TRAs. Althea explained that now councillors are deciding where this money should be spent and who should get it and they are placing their own criteria on the SGTO, without consulting residents. Althea stated that she believes that Southwark Council are acting illegally and said that the SGTO should get a barrister to take the Council to court. The Council needs to win the support of council tenant and resident voters, and without their support the Council will not get elected.

Cris explained that when the tenants fund was set up, the SGTO took legal action to stop the tenants' money being handed over to pest control. The council withdrew before the case went to court. Cris agreed with Althea that legal action must be taken.

Amanda J stated that the legality of the Council's decision is unclear, and that the Council had made this decision in spite of decimating other ways for tenants to participate. Amanda asked Martin to explain what the minimum consultation requirements are for making this decision. She asked how many residents the Council had approached, and how many responses are required for the Council to conclude that they have consulted robustly.

Martin said that a two-year consultation took place leading up to the February 2020 report that changed the resident participation structure. The legality of the tenant levy was addressed within this consultation, but no evidence supporting this was presented to the Council. Without this evidence, the Council concluded that it can do what it likes with the HRA. Martin stated that this means the Council is entitled to create the Resident Participation Fund. A further consultation took place earlier this summer, involving TRAs.

Martin claimed that John McCormack came to SGTO to talk about what residents wanted from the advice contracts. But the decision will ultimately be made by a legal judgement which will decide what the procurement route will be.

Amanda J suggested that the Council's behaviour caused a conflict of interest. She claimed that while the Council claimed the SGTO did not provide a unique service, residents would disagree.

Martin claimed that the Council's legal department viewed it differently. If the law states that the Council has an obligation to open the contract to tender, it must do so, otherwise it risks being sued.

Amanda J asked whether the Council could set out what is required to demonstrate the unique nature of the SGTO's service.

Martin said that proving this uniqueness could be attempted but it would be unlikely to be successful, as it is a particular service that needs to be procured, not the uniqueness of an

organisation. If what the Council wants to buy is available on the market, and the Council could benefit from putting the contract out to competitive tender, then this will occur.

Amanda challenged Martin further, asking him how the Council can know what services they want to buy if its consultation is incomplete.

Martin confirmed the consultation is over, and the Council are happy to talk to residents and the SGTO as the Council move towards finalising a specification for the service. The Joint Tenant and Homeowner Forum provide steering on what needs to go into the contracts for the service. This Forum will monitor the contracts going forward.

Cris mentioned that Martin is the first person who has spoken honestly about the Council's intentions for the SGTO. Stephanie Cryan led Cris to believe that the Council would help the SGTO win the tendering, but when Cris challenged the legality of this approach Stephanie could not respond. Cris expressed her disappointment in the Council. Cris confirmed that the SGTO will take legal action and advice to challenge the Council's decision. She said that every argument the SGTO has put across is based on evidence from TRAs in Southwark. Cris stated that the SGTO believed much of the evidence supplied by the Council was often unsound and untrue.

Martin committed to the Council giving the SGTO all the information it needs to participate in the tendering process. Martin mentioned that the SGTO could apply for the contract by itself or in partnership with others.

This surprised Cris as the SGTO had not previously been consulted on any other aspects of the tendering decision.

Munu said that the Council's decision is not based on consultation with residents. Munu stated that the legal advice the Council had received was not independent, but from the Council's own legal team. Munu asked Martin how he can reconcile a service funded by the tenants' rent with a contract that has nothing to do with a tenants' federation. It is clear that the SGTO is not a 'service provider' but a tenants' federation. Munu asks Martin when residents were consulted.

Martin repeated that a two-year process of consultation took place, and the results of this consultation are published in the public domain.

Munu claimed Martin is giving misleading information. Munu asked Martin specifically who was consulted. Munu said that concerns were raised by SGTO members with Kieron Williams, who said residents would be consulted on any changes the Council wanted to make to the SGTO. Munu claimed that the Council did not consult with SGTO and that the SGTO will campaign against the Council. Munu mentioned that the SGTO is not a service external to the Council, but a body made up of its own tenants, and that the Council's procurement decision cannot be reconciled with that.

Martin advised Munu to look at the February 2020 Cabinet report, which examined the consultation that took place and outlined the rationale for the SGTO to be moved onto a contract basis.

Cris stated that the SGTO has its own documentation on the process of consultation that took place, and that the SGTO will use this to examine the Council's decision.

Althea stated that the Council had already committed to funding the SGTO for three further years, and that the Council has no right to tell the tenants how their money would be spent.

Cris stated that to continue this discussion with Martin addressing our arguments and concerns was pointless, and that she would bring this item to a close.

Martin agreed with Cris, claiming that this is because his answers are based on a decision made two years previously.

Cris thanked Martin for attending the meeting.

Cris said that the first action would be for the SGTO to look at the documentation it has on the period when the Council claim they consulted, and to seek legal advice.

Margaret confirmed that the SGTO has a legal fund of around £5,000.

Cris recommended that a working group be set up to work on this issue.

Munu recommended that TRAs and the SGTO work together to campaign against the Council. He suggested that the SGTO Board write to TRAs to ask for their support in a campaign against the Council.

Jennifer pointed out that tenants funding is from the HRA, council tenant's rent, not on top of it. The Council are within their right to spend this money as they want. Jennifer mentioned how leaseholders pay for the Southwark Citizens Advice Bureau.

Cris said that the Citizens Advice Bureau is also being put out to tender.

Jennifer said that she felt that the SGTO could offer a Citizens Advice Bureau for council tenants. Jennifer said that SGTO should compare itself to TPAS, which is funded by their membership.

Cris disputed Jennifer's analysis and said that the SGTO are currently looking at alternative sources of funding. Cris said that at first, the SGTO did not have funding, and built itself up to its current state with paid staff. The tenants' federation will always exist, but it needs funding to help it be effective. Cris called for a meeting for the following week, where a strategy for challenging the Council could be discussed.

Lara mentioned that a different strategy is required. She agreed legal advice is needed, but the argument that the Council cannot use tenants' money how they want is not taking us anywhere. Lara agreed with Jennifer that rent is not separated for funding the SGTO. She suggested a legal advisor is required.

Cris thanked Lara for supporting the idea of legal advice. Lara, Althea, Munu and Chris are interested in joining Cris in a working group looking at the strategy the SGTO can use to challenge the Council.

Lara said that a lot of TRAs have not heard of SGTO. She said that the SGTO need to define what it can do to benefit all TRAs, as this will help its legal case. A letter from SGTO to TRAs will be

ignored by all the TRAs who do not know about the SGTO. Lara withdrew her offer of joining the working group and criticised Cris for not listening to opposing viewpoints.

Munu said that there are also TRAs working closely with the SGTO and those TRAs working with the SGTO had the right to be written to by the SGTO.

Cris confirmed that the letter will be sent to every TRA in Southwark. Cris stressed the need for positive thoughts, rather than criticism. Cris was concerned about the negativity aimed at the SGTO, who are supporting many tenants.

Lara mentioned that the SGTO is understaffed and needs crowd funding.

Chris mentioned that Lara could raise these concerns if she joins the working group meeting next week.

Actions agreed

Action: SGTO to gain legal advice on the Council's decision, and to take legal action against it.

Action: SGTO to examine paperwork from the time the Council claimed to have consulted tenants on the SGTO's future. This would help bolster the SGTO's claim against the Council.

Action: SGTO to establish a working group to coordinate action on how the Council's decision can be challenged. This working group to meet next week to send out a strategy to the membership. Althea, Munu and Chris are interested in taking part in the group.

Action: TRAs to promote this working group widely, via a letter from the SGTO Board.

Action: SGTO to release a press release on this subject.

6. Notice of SGTO Annual General Meeting

Cris introduced a proposal from the SGTO Executive Committee:

To hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) in October or early November. The Annual Report will be presented along with the Audited Accounts, both for adoption by the membership.

That elections will take place separately, on the fourth Wednesday of March 2022. This is because TRAs have experienced difficulties during Lockdown, including struggling to hold committee meetings. The SGTO and Southwark Tenants and Residents Officers are supporting TRAs to get back on track. Some TRAs will not be in a position to make nominations. The present Board is bringing the SGTO to the stage where they can apply for funding from sources other than Southwark Council. The present Board want to see this work completed before handing over to a new Board.

Cris confirmed that she will not be standing for the position of Chair in March. Cris asked if those in attendance could agree on the above proposal. If agreement is reached, notice of the AGM can

go out to the membership. Cris proposed that the AGM be held on the second week of November. An Annual Report be put together before then.

Amanda J asked whether notice will be given to members, who may wish to stand for Board positions.

Cris confirmed that every Board position stands down before an election – some will seek re-election, some will not. Cris stressed that even if she did re-stand, the Chair position could still be contested by other members seeking election.

Amanda Johansson said that it is reasonable that the elections are being postponed due to the current search for funding, but not on the grounds of COVID-19 inhibiting the functioning of TRAs, as it is possible, we will face another Lockdown in the winter anyway.

Rita asked to clarify whether this would mean two AGMs take place.

Cris responded that the official AGM would be to present finances, and on the fourth Wednesday of March, we would have elections.

Amanda J asked whether the Executive Committee could share some of the information they have on funding to the membership.

Cris clarified this would be part of the annual report, available to members.

Lara asked whether it would make sense to have both the presentation of finances and the elections in March.

Cris said that because it had been such a long time since members had had a chance to review SGTO finances, it might be a good idea to present these as soon as possible.

Lara mentioned that it is possible to present the finances at a normal SGTO group meeting. She suggested that the March 2022 meeting be designated the AGM.

Cris said she would check what the advice would be from Margaret about this, and then feedback to the membership.

Cris asks for objections, but none came forward.

Actions agreed

Action: Cris to send out notice of AGM to membership.

Action: Cris ask Margaret, as Company Secretary, to seek advice from the Charities Commission to report back to the membership.

7. Any Other Business

7.1. All-Party Parliamentary Group for Council Housing

Tanya mentioned that Defend Council Housing Southwark are working with a group of MPs in the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Council Housing. It is calling for an evidence giving session in Parliament on 25th October and is seeking contributions from tenants, housing campaigners, trade unions, and potentially any group campaigning on council housing.

Tanya asked for the SGTO to make a written and verbal contribution in the meeting itself. Tanya suggests that herself, Jack and Cris meet to help coordinate which issues could be raised. The SGTO and Defend Council Housing could also liaise with other groups making contributions, to reduce the chance of repetition. Tanya said that there are so many issues the SGTO could potentially take forward – disrepair, district heating, rooftop development, green space, demolition, and others. Tanya mentioned that Cris is happy to speak, but the meeting itself is open to all.

Actions agreed

Action: Tanya, Cris and Jack to meet to discuss the SGTO's contribution to this meeting.

Action: Tanya to find out whether the meeting has an option for online attendance.

7.2. London Legal Walk

Jack mentioned that him, Cris and her dog Robbie are taking part in the London Legal Walk, a 10 kilometre walk through Central London to raise money for the SGTO. The money would be spent on providing winter care packages for vulnerable elderly people in Southwark and to renew the equipment the SGTO hires out to TRAs.

Actions agreed

Action: Jack to circulate fundraising link for the London Legal Walk to the membership.

Cris thanked everyone for coming, and thanked Barry Duckett for accepting the invitation to attend. Cris assured all present that the arrangements for the AGM would not break constitution rules.

Meeting Closed: 9.15pm

Date of next meeting: 27th October 2021