



Leni Jones <contact@guardiansofthearches.org.uk>

GOTA/TFL Meeting

contact <contact@guardiansofthearches.org.uk>

Wed, May 5, 2021 at 2:51 PM

To: PaulRogers1@tfl.gov.uk

Co: [REDACTED]

Hi both

Jamie - on copy for your information following the recent letter to your department. Paul and I have had two very informative and productive meetings. I can confirm from our perspective Guardians of the Arches feels confident with an honest and transparent approach, we can continue to work together to support an equitable relationship with London Underground. We do feel strongly that some urgent steps are required to remedy some of the issues that have arisen and that there must be consistent and fair treatment of all tenants within the TFL estate so areas of divergence from strategy or differentials in approach need to be fully understood and rectified.

I attach a full note of our meeting in respect of the broader issues and summarise actions and requests made as follows:

1. An urgent message is sent to ALL tenants informing them of what support options are available, the process for application and provision of third party independent advice. PR committed to doing this within a week (pending approval from Snr Management).
2. A checklist is developed for surveyors and tenants to ensure that key points of communication are not missed during covid support and lease event discussions. This could be used as part of the sign off process to remind the surveyor of what must be covered and enable the tenant to ask any questions, so both tenant and surveyor would sign it off.
3. A workshop is arranged for tenants to meet with Paul and members of his team, perhaps supported by an impartial facilitator, for Paul to present the covid support package and other areas of investment being made into the estate and give tenants the forum to raise their questions and explain their challenges - Paul suggested we use a system that can support anonymous questions to try and capture engagement which would be great.
4. All communication that was sent out is reviewed for any points of learning especially in relation to demands for arrears and letters in relation to lease events as tenants describe feeling under duress, so perhaps there might be a problem with tone in these comms.
5. An urgent review is done of the communication process flow with each department within Tfl that impacts in-station businesses. To explain with an example - A tenant consents to relocation to a new unit on the promise of greater footfall and superior condition only to find a few weeks after opening, there are works within the station which has funnelled all their footfall away from their unit or that some lines have stopped running there. The surveyor may have been totally unaware of these planned works and the tenant is left feeling betrayed. This is a very common story and requires some careful thought to remedy as a priority. Its impossible to build trust and partnership if all parties are not fully equipped with the required information. The landlord must be held to account for not proactively ensuring that lease events of any nature do not unfairly detriment the trading or profitability of the business in occupation. This happens when we have multiple stakeholders of landlord, developers and tenants however as one single operation, it really shouldn't happen and could be resolved in a single policy across the entire estate.
6. A footfall count and map designed to check relative footfall to each unit/area as tenants have felt misled to as whole station figures are always quoted when the tenant knows full well they might have received a fifth of that count. There is further stress and anxiety towards the additional exits created through the development of cross rail as the general feeling is that this will again dilute the passing trade even more but footfall figure en mass will still be quoted by surveyors for maximum effect for rent maximisation.
7. FD provides copies of policies and strategies for all commercial property management alongside a full explanation of why the difference in approach.
8. Forced openings by Tfl - A message is sent out in writing to every tenant that was asked to open during this period and a fast track way of evidencing any trading losses is provided to ensure this process does not cause any further inconvenience or cost to the tenant. Any financial data shared by the tenant with the landlord is only used for this purpose and subsequently destroyed following completion of this application, that the tenant is informed in writing when this is done.

9. Please can TfL share with us all policies and strategies in place in respect of customer service for in-station tenants in respect of all aspects of their tenancy. Please can there be an urgent and careful review of all tenant/landlord 'touch points' to enable a better understanding of the customer journey and identify how and why the principles as described by Paul in operating with careful consideration and commercial awareness have failed so badly resulting in a culture of fear.
10. Tenants would like a policy and commitment to be in place along with the process of management to ensure full consultation in respect of any future plans for their locations, they wish to be involved in TfL in-station strategies and to contribute productively to the growth and profitability of TfL in partnership. SME Tenants believe they can contribute significantly to the development and sustainability of TfL but are side-lined in this process to the detriment of all concerned.
11. Tenants would also like to understand why TfL have not offered turnover deals to their SMEs from June last year?

In addition to the list above, and in order to work equitably to rebuild relationships we request the following clarity to support us in understanding tenant needs and landlord priorities across the in-station retail estate.

Please can we ask for the provision of the following information:

1. How many occupied units?
2. How many leases/tenants?
3. How many vacant?
4. How many new lettings since March 2020?
5. How many outstanding/unresolved rent reviews until end 2021?
6. How many units unfit for occupancy?
7. How many property managers?
8. How many are SMEs/Independent?
9. Total rent arrears for SME portion of estate?
10. What is the policy/strategy for the end of the Moratorium?
11. Copies of all existing covid support, rental and letting policies?

Thank you

Kind regards

Leni Jones
Managing Director

For and on behalf of
Guardians of the Arches Limited
www.guardiansofthearches.org.uk
#ArchesUnited

CONTACT US:

Telephone enquiries are by appointment only.

To schedule a call with a Guardians of the Arches Director or Tenant Advisor please email Contact@guardiansofthearches.org.uk or text 07957633869.

Office Hours:

Monday & Tuesday: 09:30 - 15:00

Wednesday: 0930 - 15:00 (**NO TELEPHONE APPOINTMENTS**)

Friday: 09:30 - 12:00

URGENT ASSISTANCE?

Text or WhatsApp: 07957633869

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Meeting Notes - GOTA-TFL 300421.docx

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