

Minutes of the Reconvened General Meeting of Wednesday 07 June 2023 at 6:30pm

In attendance:

Val Boxall (VB) Chairperson
Ayo Oyelami (AO)
Peter Paviour (PP)
Peter Turnbull (PT)
Sara Taylor (ST) Secretary
Chris Clutterbuck (CC) Housing Manager
Sue Devine (SD): Minute Taker

Residents:

Lourdes Prestamero (LP) - Dresden House
Jade Love (JL) – Rushlake House
Mark Rowley (MR)– Rushlake House

1.0 Welcome/Apologies

The Chair welcomed all, and there were no apologies.

2.0 Minutes of Last Meeting/Matters Arising

CC advised that the Minutes of the last meeting had expired due to the three years since the last general Meeting (GM) due to the Covid -19 pandemic.

3.0 Finance Report & Budget

CC presented the report & explained that the RMO receives an allowance of £858,980 (2023/24) from Wandsworth Council (WBC) to manage the estate on their behalf, plus interest from rent balances and bank interest. Total expenditure of £65,215 for office and administrative expenses. Office staff costs of £191,280. Committee admin costs including social events is £6,895.

The budget for tenant repairs is £138,050, which includes void costs of £65,000 (works to properties after tenant moves out,) and general repairs of £60,000.

Block repairs (ie communal lighting) is service-chargeable to all blocks on the estate.

Estate costs include the cleaners' wages, and since the cleaners were brought in-house, there is more control of the cleaning. Five cleaners are now employed including a cleaner responsible for the deep cleans. Good feedback from residents about the cleaning.

CC explained that rubbish tipping is illegal & a breach of tenancy and lease conditions. Residents are frequently advised about this and can face a £400 fine. The cleaners remove all dumped items to the collection points near Dagnall Street and this is collected by Lewis & Graves.

There was a brief discussion regarding the cleaning: LP was unaware of who her cleaner is and that some weeks the cleaning is of a good standard, and some weeks not. CC advised there is staff changeover & ST said that the cleaners are rotated but the standard should be the same. LP noted that some residents do not respect the cleaners work and CC agreed that a minority spoils the cleaning for everyone else. CC advised that residents should contact the office, for example, blocked chutes, and the matter will be addressed. CC further advised that blocked chutes are an issue

causing damage to the chutes which require costs for the internal repairs. ST said the costs are then passed on to leaseholders within the block and so it is important to report any issues. JL noted that a cleaner was on their 'phone for some time last Saturday (03.06.23) and CC advised to report such incidents to the office. The cleaners are not allowed to have their 'phones on them during the week but the two cleaners on the estate on Saturdays are allowed to have them for safety reasons.

Then total expenditure for Estate Costs is £749,678, and the surplus of £128,335 is used for future estate projects and improvements.

4.0 Report from Housing Manager

4.1 Estate Improvements since the last General Meeting

CC went through the report advising that surplus funds were used for the improvements. Upgrades are planned for the Macdonald House bicycle enclosure. Three car bays were used for the bicycle enclosure next to Dresden House. The enclosure was not service -chargeable to leaseholders, having negotiated this with WBC.

New motorbike ground anchors installed next to the Dresden House bike enclosure have not completely solved the issue of motorbikes on the estate but is a start. Staff fire- risk assessments of the communal areas are carried out every two months.

JL noted on her building report that there are no fire alarms in the communal areas. CC explained that the 'Stay-Put' policy counteracts having communal fire -alarms. At the Walden House fire the closed kitchen fire-door prevented the spread of the fire into the kitchen, and the front fire -door to the property prevented the fire from spreading throughout the block.

WBC has introduced fire-safety checks for all blocks 11 storeys or higher, which are at this stage the responsibility of the RMO. Front doors must meet fire regulations and have closers & must be checked every year. This was introduced in February 2023.

4.2 Trees

Details as per the report. Trees in Dagnall Street are an issue. ST suggested keeping a check of the trees on the greens due to the wind creating a vortex and branches falling off. CC advised that all trees are being attended to.

4.3 Window Cleaning

Details on the report. CC advised that WBC does not provide this service for their managed properties with the exception of sheltered accommodation. The high-rise blocks were done first by abseil, and the low-rise blocks are postponed until after the tree pruning has been completed. They will need to return to complete Berry House following an incident last Friday (02.06.23), where a resident pulled on their ropes. The abseilers left site & CC will write letters to the block & will attend site the next time they attend. There was very good feedback from residents. ST noted the difficulty of cleaning hi-rise windows and PP said the current windows are not easy to clean and that swivel windows (as on the Doddington) are better.

ACTION: CC TO WRITE LETTERS TO 51-70 BERRY HOUSE

4.4 Dry-Risers for High-Rise Blocks

Details are on the report. These will be installed in the tall blocks only and at the front of each block by the entrance. This comes under the remit of WBC Major Works as there is no RMO funding for this. The two tenders that went out either did not return the required number of quotes or was

incorrect in specification to satisfy the fire brigade and Thames Water so it went out to tender again. Leaseholders (LH) will be consulted via letter and a possible further consultation with residents in person. ST said that consultation is important for eg elderly residents, and it is important that residents have a say in the consultation process and are able to highlight issues with WBC staff. JL noted that she was consulted regarding the water tanks in her block. CC was unaware and advised that WBC do not always communicate with the RMO and approach residents directly. CC went on to explain about other major works ie the roof renewals and that such works are programmed-in 10 years in advance.

The RMO can delay major works. Tanks have a certain life-expectancy & their maintenance is the responsibility of WBC as the freeholder which manages the structure of the blocks and the lifts. WBC leaseholder procurement team deal with the programmed works and CC should be informed in advance of upcoming projects. There is a borough-wide contract to replace the tanks.

5.0 Report from Sub- Committees

VB reported on the upcoming Social-Team Family Fun-Day on Saturday 01 July 2023. The free event for residents only, from 12 noon to 4pm will include a BBQ music and activities such as a wall-climber, crazy -golf, football darts.

6.00 Comments from the Chairperson

There is a good turn-out at the Fun-Day and is a way of engaging residents.

7.00 Any other Business

LP commented about on-going lift issues at 23-55 Dresden House and that the lift was out of service at the weekend (3 & 4 June 2023.) This affects the elderly and those with buggies. LP contacted the Lift Section suggesting to install a new lift instead of spending money on repairs. CC advised that the lifts in the middle blocks are worse as they are exposed to the elements, condensation etc which affects the electrics. The lifts were due to be refurbished in 5 years' time, but this has been brought forward instead of the roof renewals. The drive unit in this lift was replaced & then another fault arose. For minor issues, the repair turnaround time is 2 hours. Obsolete parts have to be sourced outside the UK which takes time. There are frequent lift breakdowns as they are at the end of life. Major works, capital funding/expenditure has to be programmed in and there is a consultation period. Lifts will be out of service for 3 months when refurbished which is due 2024/25 over two phases.

CC advised that defective communal light fittings will need to be replaced with new LED fittings due to a change in the law meaning existing fluorescent style lamps cannot be purchased from 2024. The communal block electricity charge should be reduced as a result of energy efficiency.

There was no further business.

The meeting ended at 7.30 pm