
Highland Court (Woodford) Limited

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING –MINUTES

DATE AND TIME: Wednesday 14 October 2020 at 7.00pm by Zoom.

<i>Attendees</i>		
Clinton Hunt (26)	CH	<i>Not present but mentioned</i>
Jean Clavey (35)	JC	Harwood Hutton - HH
Daniele Hammond (33)	DH	Gary Calder - GC
Julian Hazeldine (16)	JH	
Brian Ray (27)	BR	<i>Apologies</i>
Mr and Mrs T Smith (31)	TS	Tony Rich (19)
Neil Blacklock (17)	NB	J Wilkerson (18)

Minutes

1. TO REVIEW and, if thought fit, approve the accounts for the year ended 30th June 2019. BR had raised a query over the wall reserve (£30,000) and it was noted that since the accounts were drawn up the wall had been completed and this money spent. TS raised the difficulty he experienced in knowing the financial position that Highland Court was currently in, because of the time lag. CH understood this difficulty and apologized for the delay in holding the AGM which had been scheduled for much earlier in the year but had had to be delayed because of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. At present Highland Court had approximately £10,000 in an interest-bearing reserve account, £15,000 in the current account and £8,000 in the client account with Harwood Hutton.
Accounts for the year 2018/19 were approved by all.

 2. TO CONSIDER, and if thought fit, re-appoint Harwood Hutton as accountants to the company until next AGM.
Harwood Hutton was reappointed.

 3. TO VIEW a presentation by the Directors. CH gave the presentation which covered:
 - **Key Achievements for the Year –**
Improvements to Highland Court's Grounds
GC had continued to make improvements to the gardens and in consultation with the directors was converting some of the lawned areas to wildflower meadow. BR asked why the front lawn had been identified as this would be less wildlife friendly due to its proximity to the road. CH explained that it was an area that would not generally be walked across and was ideal for insects especially as we were aware that there were already a large number of solitary bees nesting there. Other areas would be identified, particularly where grass was in poor condition, but it would be a long-term project as there is a lot of work involved. BR suggested that a bird table should also be obtained so that birds could feed out of the way of the cats. He and CH would have a look around the garden together.
Security Gates
After continuing problems with the gates, the directors had decided to make the change from the individual, we had used for maintenance, to a well-regarded company, Beta Security. This would mean that we could be certain of a quicker response as they would be on site within one working day. The gates were upgraded and would in future be inspected biannually. If problems arose please let the directors know so that they can make the call-out.
Lighting
The streetlights in the grounds had stopped working. Remediating this had been a challenge as it was no longer possible to obtain the bulbs and, with modern health and safety concerns, it was necessary to get an experienced electrician with a cherry picker to work at this height. The improvements made meant that the grounds around the buildings and car park were now much brighter and work had also been carried out on the lighting in the bin sheds.
Clearing the Storeroom
Virtually all the cycles had eventually been labelled by their owners so that only two had had to be disposed of. This had allowed the storeroom to be tidied providing much more room for GC and the garden equipment.
Treatment of Japanese Knotweed
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The work by Japanese Knotweed Ltd was continuing and was guaranteed. Full information can be found on the web site. GC has fenced off the area.

The Highland Court Website (<https://www.highland-court-limited.co.uk/>) has been retained and updated. This is the place to go to view documents and find other information. The Facebook page is still in use and should be used for social events. It was hoped that updates on the garden by GC would be added. TS asked if the website was for tenants as well as owners and CH confirmed that this was the case, as there was useful information for everyone.

Half-Yearly Newsletter was produced.

Covid-19 Support Group

A WhatsApp group was set up during the lockdown to enable all residents to keep in touch so that help could be offered/requested as necessary. This would probably be useful again, if restrictions became more stringent over the winter, and anyone wishing to join should contact the directors.

- **Moving Forward**

Replacement of Intercom

A number of flats are experiencing difficulties with the intercom. We currently have an old daisy-chain system, with faults in one flat having a knock-on effect and meaning access is needed to all those effected. We are also relying on the same engineer that we previously used for the security gates which causes delays. It is felt that replacement must now take priority and quotes have been sort. It is hoped that we could use Beta Security for the work as using a single company for these inter-related areas would be beneficial; they have quoted £9,999. This is slightly above the level where a Section 20 process would be needed, and it was uncertain if we could get a lower quote that would allow the work to go ahead more quickly.

Decorating

Cleaning of paintwork and some decorating had been carried out two years ago, but we would look at what would be needed in future at next year's AGM, which was planned for earlier in the year. Consideration would also be given to getting the UPVC window frames cleaned.

Priorities previously agreed at 2019 AGM

Phase 1 (2020/21) -

(a) Cavity wall insulation – it had been decided not to proceed with this as several owners were concerned over the advisability of undertaking this type of work.

(b) New paths were still urgently needed but funds were not currently available, although Short & Sons had done some work on the path at the front of the building. Short & Sons had quoted £38,290 for replacement of all the paths but this figure would not be current by the time the work could be undertaken.

Phase 2 (2021/22) -

(a) Paving of Washing Line Area.

(b) Provision of Bike Shelter on hard standing.

Revised Priorities agreed at 2020 AGM

Phase 1 (2020/21) –

Replacement of Intercom.

Phase 2 (2021/22 or later)

(a) Resurfacing of paths.

(b) Decorating/major clean.

(c) Paving of washing line area.

(d) Provision of bike shelter on hard standing.

The revised priorities were agreed.

- 4 TO RECEIVE the resignations of the present directors. TO CONSIDER and if thought fit, re-elect those officers offering themselves for re-election for the ensuing year and to consider the election of additional directors for the ensuing year.

The re-appointment of CH, DH, JC, and TR was agreed.

The directors would welcome assistance from other owners, and anyone interested in becoming a director or offering other assistance should contact them.

- 5 TO CONSIDER the projected balances and proposed maintenance contribution increase for the year commencing 24 June 2021 to £120 per month (£,1440 per annum). CH reassured owners that every penny received in maintenance charges went towards the upkeep of Highland Court. Unfortunately, over the years, maintenance charges had not kept up with inflation and were now much lower than needed, especially as Highland Court was aging. It had been hoped that there could be an increase from June 2020, but this had not been possible due to the pandemic. Most of the maintenance charges received went on regular payments ie grounds, cleaning, electricity, insurance, windows, minor repairs etc, consequently it took a long time to build up sufficient reserves for major projects.

An increase in the maintenance charge to £120 per month from 24 June 2021 was unanimously agreed.

- 6 Any other business:

(a) Insurance

BR suggested that the insurance should be reviewed before next year's renewal to see if it would be possible to reduce the cost. This was agreed.

(b) Blocked Drains

BR had noticed certain drains that were blocked. He would show CH during their viewing of the grounds.

(c) Fire Safety

TS asked how many flats had now had the required work carried out to their doors to meet the necessary fire safety standards. There were no up-to-date figures, but it was noted that several flats had had to cancel plans due to the lockdown. This would be looked at prior to next year's AGM.

(d) BR thanked the directors for their work during the year and for arranging the AGM.

The meeting finished at 7.50pm.