



Minutes of Annual General Meeting – 8 November 2021

Present:

Committee : Andrew Wright (Treasurer), John Hodgkins (Secretary), Martin Winham, Yvonne Berns, Howard Dodgson, Russ Moran, Paul Hope

Members : David Roebuck, Elaine Henry, Ann Lea & David Lumb, John Lancaster, Martyn Kenna, Paul Stables, Amanda Wright. Adam Cooper and Peter Lawson also attended from apfm Ltd.

Apologies:

Imran Chouglay, Brian and Maria Cammack, Oliver Quarmby, Edward Gulc and Freddie Coupe.

1 Welcome and introductions

JCH welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. In the absence of the Chair (Imran Chouglay, who was unwell) it was agreed that the Nominations for Committee and Election of Officers would be brought forward to Item 3.

2 Chair's Report for 2020/21

JCH outlined the content of the Chair's report, which can be found in full on the website at <https://hebblewharf.files.wordpress.com/2021/11/hwroa-chair-report-2021-1.pdf>

Discussion on items in the Chair's report took place and is recorded against the relevant agenda item.

3 Election of Committee and Officers

In the Chair's report, IC expressed his thanks to committee members for their support during his term as Chair. Imran had indicated he would be standing down as Chair following the AGM but would be willing to remain on the committee. All other committee members present were willing to continue for the coming year.

JCH invited further members to put their names forward for committee membership; David Roebuck and Elaine Henry expressed an interest in joining committee and were duly welcomed.

The existing committee put forward nominations en bloc for Officers for the coming year, which (in the absence of any further nominations) were agreed. The new committee is therefore:

Officers:

Martin Winham (Chair) (MW)
Howard Dodgson (Vice Chair) (HD)
Andrew Wright (Treasurer) (AW)
John Hodgkins (Secretary) (JCH)

Committee Members:

Yvonne Berns (YB)
Russ Moran (RM)
Paul Hope (PH)
Imran Chouglay (IC)
David Roebuck (DR)
Elaine Henry (EH)

Co-opted Honorary Member

At the conclusion of this Item, Martin Winham took the chair and thanked the committee for their support.

4 Treasurer's Report

AW reported that the balance in the bank account was currently £288.89. Recent changes in membership mean that 35 leaseholders are now paid-up members, representing ownership of 40 out of the 58 apartments (69%).

AW proposed that the membership fee be waived for a further year as spending by the Association had been minimal and the bank balance had increased from last year. This was agreed.

5 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 12 November 2020

Minutes of the last AGM had been posted on the website and there were no items raised, other than those on the Agenda.

6 Block Finance – Service Charge Accounts

JCH confirmed that Plymouth Block Management had agreed the request for quarterly accounts to be issued and that the accounts for the second quarter (Q2) had been received earlier in the afternoon. It had been hoped to circulate a summary at the meeting, but there were some accounting queries that needed to be resolved before this could happen. It was expected that those queries could be resolved in time for the Q2 financial summary to be circulated with these minutes.

An update on the balances in the Reserve Account as at 5th November was provided, with the Reserve Fund balance standing at £150,229.74 – of which £118,325.35 is payments made against the recent Section 20 Demand (from a total of £149,298.96) The amounts currently outstanding are £9,203.39 from Grey GR properties and £21,770.22 from other leaseholders. PBM has assured us that they have instigated recovery proceedings against corporate leaseholders who have not paid.

At the end of Q2 the cash at bank was £6,089.37 in the Service Charge Account and £30,993.09 in the Reserve Account – down from £51,660 at the end of Q1. Committee is awaiting confirmation of what these funds have been spent on, for inclusion in the Q2 Financial Summary.

7 Updates from Managing Agent – Plymouth Block Management (PBM)

7.1 Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) – A full FRA had been carried out in June 2021 by Jensen Hughes, covering the common parts of the residential block (including flat entrance doors, external walls and balconies) and basement car park/plant rooms. The FRA did not include any inspection of Cladding. Overall, it is considered that the risk to life from fire at Building is MODERATE and their report documents a series of actions to be taken by the Managing Agent within pre-determined timescales in order to reduce fire risk to an acceptable level. Those actions include improvements to signage, emergency procedures and more comprehensive checks on fire doors throughout the building and the adequacy of fire compartmentalisation within the riser cupboards.

Concern was expressed that despite prompting from the Association, few of these measures had been actioned by the Managing Agent. There was also a disparity between the FRA Report and the EWS1 Inspection in regard to insulation material above the car park, which needed resolution.

7.2 External Wall Survey (EWS1) – A comprehensive inspection of the external wall construction (and insulation materials) was carried out in July 2021 by HS Roofclad Ltd who subsequently commissioned a full Fire Review from Tri Fire Ltd. In September. The report from Tri Fire Ltd was sent to the Managing Agent in October and highlighted a number of measures that would be required to be taken in order to achieve a satisfactory EWS1 Certification.

In the light of government statements suggesting that a more proportionate approach should be taken to buildings under 18m high, the Managing Agent had asked Bill Ossitt (Building Consultant) to advise on whether alternative measures could be proposed to Tri Fire in order to deliver a satisfactory EWS1 certification (or equivalent) with lower disruption and cost. Proposals are understood to have been sent to Tri Fire Ltd for consideration.

Members expressed concern at the lack of information being provided to leaseholders by PBM and asked for an online meeting for leaseholders with PBM to be expedited.

- 7.3 Section 20 works to address Rainwater Ingress into the building** – During 2021, the Managing Agent followed the required procedure (*Section 20, Landlord & Tenant Act 1985*) to levy a charge on leaseholders for repairs to the fabric of the building to address water ingress to apartments at the western end of the block.

Demands were issued on 21 June to cover the cost of remedial works which are due to be carried out by apfm Ltd (main contractor for maintenance to Hebble Wharf). PBM had agreed that work could proceed once at least £100,000 of the £149,299 had been paid, with any outstanding balance on completion being met from Reserves until all demands had been paid. Agreement to proceed was given by the Managing Agent in late Summer, but works have yet to start and there is a lack of clarity over the implications of the EWS1 report over choice of materials for reinstating the external cladding.

Members expressed concern that temporary remedial measures recommended by apfm Ltd had yet to be approved by PBM. This was considered a high priority given the impact on the leaseholder and the potential for further damage to be caused. There is also concern that materials costs are rising steeply and labour in short supply.

Members asked for this to be actioned by the Managing Agent as soon as possible in order to prevent further damage over the winter to the fabric of the apartments.

- 7.4 Garage Door Replacement** – After a protracted insurance negotiation, agreement was given to the replacement of the garage door following damage caused by a delivery vehicle striking the door in June 2021. The insurer has given approval for a new door, runners and motor to be installed and the steel frame has now been constructed. Final elements are expected shortly and installation will then start. It was understood that the insurer will cover the cost of 49 remote entry fobs (one per apartment) and that additional fobs will need to be made available for purchase by residents.

Secretary to liaise with PBM and apfm over the process for issuing entry fobs

- 7.5 Block Maintenance Plan** – Following the schedule of maintenance works identified by Bill Ossitt (Building Consultant) in early 2021, The Association had proposed to PBM that, as far as possible, the backlog in maintenance works should be funded from Reserves and had recommended an increase in Service Charges from 1 April to provide for £33,000 to be paid into Reserves annually to cover these costs. A schedule proposing a prioritisation of works within the available funding was submitted by the Association to the Managing Agent in July 2021, from which it was anticipated that a Programme of Works would be compiled. The schedule was updated and re-submitted to PBM in early August to reflect works that had been specified by Jensen Hughes to meet the requirements of the Fire Risk Assessment.

Members expressed their concern at the lack of responsiveness of the Managing Agent in reaching agreement on a programme of works or initiating works associated with the FRA within the required timescales.

8 Any other Business

- 8.1 Estate Management** – Members expressed their concern at the deterioration of the appearance of areas around Hebble Wharf, citing site fencing, damaged barriers outside Navigation Warehouse, uncontrolled parking and inadequacy of controls being exercised by Security Staff around the Vaccination Centre. There was also wider concern at the delays in bringing the canal bridge back into operation.

Committee was asked to arrange a site meeting with the Estate Manager (and caretaker, if appropriate) to address these concerns and establish a forum through which communication with other Estate users can take place. Committee members supported this initiative.

- 8.2 Soil Stacks** – It was noted that a blockage to least one soil stack had addressed recently and another leaseholder was reporting that pipes from her apartment were no longer draining effectively following the clearance of the first blockage.

Leaseholder was asked to submit a report to the Managing Agent for further investigation.

- 8.3 Emergency Procedures** - Members expressed concern that there were conflicting views over whether Hebble Wharf should be regarded as a 'Stay Put' building in the event of a fire alarm, or whether a fire alarm activation should lead to the building being evacuated. The FRA highlighted the need for improved guidance to residents and options to designate a Place of Safety within the Estate had been progressed with the Estate Manager.

Committee was asked to press the Managing Agent for definitive advice to be obtained from an appropriately qualified Fire Officer on whether residents should 'stay put' or evacuate the building in the event of a fire alarm activation.

- 8.4 Entrance lobby roof** - Concern was expressed about the ongoing damage being caused in the entrance lobby by water ingress through the flat roof. This is the first area seen by prospective buyers or tenants on entering the building and it is now in a very poor state.

Committee asked for this to be addressed as a matter of priority and asked Adam to prepare estimates for submission to PBM.

- 8.5 Managing Agent** – Strong concerns were expressed by members at a perceived lack of responsiveness on the part of the Managing Agent across a number of areas. Members feel that the block is not being well managed and that in particular there is a lack of urgency in dealing with issues that affect the health and safety of residents. Members urged the Committee to explore ways in which the management of the block could be improved and have asked for the block freeholder to be made aware of their concerns. The range of options for block management was discussed and the Committee was asked to investigate how future management could be improved.

Committee was instructed to raise members' concerns with the Managing Agent and with the block freeholder at the earliest opportunity, recognising the need to ensure continuity and progression of works in progress.

- 8.6 Service Charge Accounts : Year end balances** – JCH reported that debits and credits against the 2020/21 Accounts had been posted to Resident, and that bills and credit notes were due to be issued – despite the fact that overall, leaseholders will be in credit. This process is required to comply with the terms of the Headlease.

Confirmation now received from PBM that invoices and credit notes will be issued and processed simultaneously with Service Charge Invoices for the next quarter.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at approximately 9.15 pm.