

Maunsel (Fourth Co-Ownership) Housing Society Ltd.
Committee Meeting held on Monday 15th April 2024 at 7.15pm @ Bay 20

Present: Robert Larkin (RL), Andy Woodford (AW), Hilary Arnold (HA), Basia Kapp (BK), Murray John (MJ), Billie Dainton (BD).

Guests: Marie Travers (MT), Steve Abbott (SA), Olivia Cox - Minute Taker by recording

1	Apologies - Jen Jeffrey (JJ), Dominique Van Roey (DVR), Russell Mulchansingh (RM), Rick Fisher (RF), Philippa Collie Cousins (PCC) Cerys Matthews (CM).	
2	Minutes of the last meeting - AW raised that the cost of the survey was previously stated to be under the threshold of £12,500, which is inaccurate once VAT is added. Survey is £10,404 plus VAT.	
3	Details of roof survey and action	MT
4	Pets in flats and shared common parts policy	
5	Replacement of items stolen and shed security	
6	Open Gardens Square	
7	Finance	
8	AOB	

3. Details of roof survey and action - The entire Square was asked whether to go ahead with the survey at the recent AGM. Upon counting responses, the decision was yes. RL raised that that the survey and the results of the survey require due diligence as he believes that some replies to the survey are ambiguous. RL was invited to share what his resistance to the survey is. RL explained that his concern is that the Square has opted for an extraordinarily expensive survey. MT explained that she initially approached eight surveyors. At a Committee meeting, it was

decided that a more forensic type of survey be done rather than a more basic one, which meant that 6 of the surveys approached were not appropriate. There were two companies deemed appropriate.

It was raised that the cost once VAT is included will mean that the chosen survey will fall under section 20. MT confirmed that if professional advice is required, this may be done given that there is fair process. HA noted that this was not treated as section 20 as it was so close to the threshold. MT clarified that section 20 sets out that when there are major works, all leaseholders have to be consulted and it takes at least 3-4 months. This allows everyone to nominate a surveying company. At each stage of the process, leaseholders have the opportunity to discuss. Because the survey is under £12,500 but still a high expense, the decision was made by the Committee to still go out to leaseholders to involve them, without it being a section 20. MT believes that due diligence was done. MT to go back to surveyors to clarify quote amount. It may be that some of the work is undertaken by Wesley Square's usual roofers, which will fall under another contract rather than all being added up, which would lower the cost. MT and MJ believe that the process has been done in a fair way, with contributions and feedback from multiple leaseholders.

Idea to go back to all leaseholders to re-affirm their responses to proposed survey. It was raised that this may bring into question the competency of the Committee.

RL is concerned that the Committee is under the impression that if you spend a larger amount of money you get a better result. MJ clarified that the surveyors that have been chosen specialise in the area needed and are scientists who analyses materials and their interactions. They know about building regulations, costs and forecasts. MJ explained that there is no point paying for a survey that doesn't give this extra detail. The extra detail is needed in order to make informed decisions going forward.

RL maintains that the "yes" column on the survey vote are ambiguous responses and undecided. MT clarified that the results have a separate tally of people who were undecided or happy to go with the majority. The "yes" column still was the clear majority.

It was suggested that MT go back to voters and ask them to confirm their decision.

HA raised that since she has been back on the Committee, there hasn't been a single vote called. The auditors require a budget and a projection / forecast. These should have been voted on. There isn't a forecast because this was waiting for the clawback figure, and also waiting to get an idea of what the service charge might increase to, depending on what the roof cost might be. AW suggested that forecast should be an RPI increase plus averaged out clawback of £22,000 per year.

Decision to go forward with a survey but to keep the cost underneath the threshold. MT to go back to surveys and explain that there is a budget constraint and ask them to quote what work they can do within that. This would mean there is no need to vote, and the Square is able to

move forward. Post meeting note : Hutton & Rostron have agree that the final invoice total will be £10167.00 plus VAT = £12200.40.

It was noted by RL that next time, voting should be anonymous.

4. Pets in flats and shared common parts policy - RL raised that he received messages from the Committee that they were happy for no. 40 to keep two cats. The policy is that tenants are not allowed to keep pets. MT clarified that the Guidelines for Wesley Square contains this ruling, but the lease does not, since that lays out regulations for leaseholders. The Guidelines are not a legal document. RL believes that the issue of pets in flats is very different from pets in houses, since the only way for a cat in a flat to get out is via the common parts. MT told the Committee that a Co-owner approached her asking for permission. Some of the Committee said yes, some said no. RL was the immediate neighbour and was not happy for there to be a pet, so the Co-owner decided not to go ahead with the permission for a pet. RL wishes as a matter of policy the first port of call should be the person who shares a staircase with the prospective pet. RL also believes it should be policy that pets are not kept in flats. Currently, pets are allowed and disallowed at the Committee's discretion.

Decision that if someone approaches the Committee for permission, the immediate neighbour will be consulted first with power of veto.

5 .Replacement of items stolen and shed security - RL explained that one of the main things stolen was the extending ladder, used by gardeners to cut back things like ivy. HA told the Committee that it is possible to hire one for a small cost from Lords, which goes just as high, and is actually safer.

It was raised that there have been a number of thefts recently, including yesterday a car.

RL reported that the gazebos were also stolen. It was noted that not all of these were paid for by the Square.

6. Open Gardens Square - MT sent round an email announcing this will be on 9th June. HA told the Committee that this will require organisation, including people on all the gates. Tickets also need to be checked. Open Squares will provide helpers, but there needs to be someone co-ordinating all this. RL noted that in previous years, DH, JM, CB and Reg provided information on the history of the Square for people. MT has already emailed telling the Square that the event is happening, and asking for volunteers. MT to send out another email closer to the time. This will be the first time the Square has participated since 2017.

RL told the Committee that Shiraz has donated a couple of plants. HA apologised but said that the garden can't use them as they are overwhelmed by Choisyas. These are available for anyone who would like them in their own gardens. HA suggested setting up a fund so that if people want to donate, they can add funds rather than contributing individual plants which can be quite difficult

to incorporate. HA suggested they could follow-up any donations with a personal thank you note saying what the money has been spent on. Agreed.

7. Finance - HA suggested to the Committee that there is a finance sub-committee rather than a treasurer. HA previously approached qualified people in the Square and there are people who would be happy to be on this sub-committee, including BL and Shiraz. HA happy to volunteer to be on the Committee to do the admin side - e.g. spreadsheets, logs. AW noted that a lot of work done this year has been to remove the necessity to have manual logging etc. AW noted that there does have to be one person to sign off the accounts ultimately. HA noted that this sub-committee would not be making decisions, they would be reporting to the Committee.