

The Element, Newhaven, Owners Association Committee

Minutes of Zoom Meeting 7th January, 2021

Preliminaries:

- a) **Present:** Rodney Matthews (RM—Chairman), Ken Webb (KW—Secretary), Tony Barry (TB), Linda Gilroy (LG), Grant Laing (GL)
- b) **Apologies:** Martyna Adamowicz (MA) & TEF team: Simone Myburgh (SM), Marc Myburgh (MM) and Jakub Swidzinski (JS). RM pointed out that we had agreed only to invite them to attend every other meeting.

1. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 2nd December 2020 were passed as being an accurate record.

2. Matters arising *(not dealt with elsewhere)*

a) **EWS1 Certification:**

KW informed the committee that the government had set aside money to train more surveyors to be certified to be able to issue EWS1 certificates. Source: (highrisescotlandactiongroup.org) There is nothing more that TEF or TENOA can do about this matter other than to direct owners to surveyors that they know are currently certified to do so.

3. TEF report

a) **CRR Update and priorities**

KW reported that he and MA had had a virtual meeting with SM on 17th December to examine the CRR update using a very clearly set out and costed summary which had been circulated to the committee. It identified a list of tasks that TEF considered priorities for the next two years as well as projections for work and through to 2022. He and MA were satisfied with the remedial work that has been identified as top priority.

SM has since managed to set up a virtual meeting with David Bonar of F3 Surveyors at 11.00am on Thursday 14th January to check if he is satisfied with the priorities that TEF have identified or would advise amending them. KW said that SM has invited representation from the committee at that meeting. **ACTION: RM and GL agreed to attend**

Then the final CRR will form the basis of TEF's presentation to members at an EGM towards the end of March, when members will be asked to agree the fee that is set for the next two years.

GL made the point that contributions to the Red Fund need to be set at a level that is sufficient to absorb contingencies. RM pointed out that the title deeds simply oblige us to pay the factors whatever is they require for operating and maintaining the development. Setting up the Green and Red funds in the way that TEF did when they took over added clarity to the accounting. The Red Fund, for which we pay an annual fee that can be spread out over the year, is for major one-off repairs. However TEF aim to plan and budget for this carefully, of which the current planning and budgeting for work that the updated Critical Risk Report is an example. The current forward projections are until the year 2022. TEF are nervous about having too much in the fund as this may be used by owners as an excuse not to pay up.

b) **Finance report:**

SM (TEF) had circulated the finance report for committee members to scrutinise prior to the meeting. There has been a small reduction in the amount underpaid by owners owing to recouping money from the sale of a property. KW noted that, allowing for the fact that the Otis lift maintenance contract is paid quarterly, the Green fund expenditure is on bud-

get. The Red fund expenditure is slightly under budget, but that repair and maintenance work set out in the CRR will absorb this.

c) Update on current NBHC related repairs

The committee noted the fact that, since NHBC have settled the claim for communally owned parts of the development, all outstanding remedial work was included in the CRR and budgeted for in the plan as set out in TEF's summary of the report.

KW reported that a number of owners of flats facing N and NE had reported water ingress during the recent stormy weather. These are mostly in properties that already have lodged claims in with NHBC and that have yet to be settled.

TB reported that JS had asked owners to take videos of the water ingress as evidence to be sent to NHBC and asked if TEF were pursuing these claims or was it up to the owner. RM said that any water ingress that was not caused by a defect in the roof was a matter that individual owners had to take up with NHBC, but that the 10 year NHBC had now lapsed. KW pointed out that it was still up to owners to press any outstanding claim.

KW reported that water ingress has been identified as one of the priority tasks in the CRR update and a budget to tackle these has been set. This is irrespective on continuing claims made by individual owners.

d) Baltic Solutions detailed report was received.

4. Chairman's Update

RM said that he had decided to integrate a report he would have given at the AGM into his New Year letter and that he has had one or two favourable comments from members.

5. Secretary's Update

a) Membership:

KW reported that there were 249 owners and 208 voting members, one having died since our last meeting. He is still waiting to hear from one or two new owners, who have yet to apply.

b) Neighbourhood Watch WhatsApp group report

There were a few noisy parties reported around Christmas. But police were very busy at that time as well.

6. TENOA Matters

Updating Website

KW reported that he had met virtually with Tim Ball, a professional website designer he knows, to look at our website and advise us on what action we could take to improve it. He offered two options.

1. Various issues with the current site could be addressed without a significant rebuild. These included fixes to the homepage (to add news items etc) and a general rationalisation of the navigation and an improved presentation of notices and announcements. He advised KW to create these natively in Wordpress (the filebase being reserved for text heavy documents like minutes). Fee £140 - £280
2. However, he noted that the current theme set up in 2014 is now showing its age and could become unstable as WordPress continues to update. It is also visually/graphically limited and so there is plenty of scope to improve the presentation and bring it up to date. The work would involve taking a duplicate backup of the current installation and swapping out the theme. The content would also need to be reworked to ensure it is optimised for the new presentation format. Theme cost £50. Fee £490 - £700 depending on agreed specification.

GL thought that, compared with the costs of website designs that of which he is aware this was a very reasonable estimate.

The committee decided it would be wise to go for the second option and replace the theme with an updated one. Otherwise we would only be delaying the inevitable cost in a couple of years time.

ACTION: KW to ask SM if Green Fund can absorb this cost and to let Tim Ball know of our decision.

3. AOCB

Zoom account

KW reported that Zoom are offering the professional version that we use for an annual one off fee of £95 (normally costing £119). The current monthly payment of £14.39 a month, set up when we expected this only to be needed temporarily, would cost a total of £179 for the year. The committee agreed that it made sense to pay the £95 as a one off payment. **ACTION:** KW to pay £95 and ask SM for payment.

4. Date of next meeting

9th February 2021. 19.00hrs on Zoom