



Minutes of the meeting held with Aster at The Hourglass, Devizes at 10am on 25th  
January 2018

Present for Aster; Beth Jerrard, Penny Teather, Hannah Enderby  
For DPVA: Simon Evans, Lisa Penington, Peter Benns, Robin Mitchell  
For ISS: Sam Stevens.

Apologies: Sally Rhodes, Norma Humphreys, Dick Powney and Neil Geraghty.

- 1. Gardening Contract for 2018/21** Sam Stevens attended for this item on behalf of ISS in order to clarify some points on their proposal and for DPVA to outline extra duties. It was noted that the tender process is not yet complete and Aster will be sending out details shortly. The totals on the grass cutting were amended as the price for extra cuts had to be removed. The Extra Duties were discussed and agreed with the proviso that, if appointed, ISS would be instructed by Aster in agreement with recommendations from DPVA. The Grass cutting/Gardening contract will run for three to five years with costs renegotiated in line with RPI after three years
- 2. Accounts for 15/16 and 16/17.** One issue remains to be resolved for 15/16, the removal of the £940 for legal fees. **PT** demonstrated that the £940 has been credited to leaseholders' individual accounts although this does not yet show on the main accounts. The Team was handed details of 2016/17 and these will be finalised in the next week or so and sent to auditors. There followed a long discussion about Service Charges in general and it was agreed that DPVA would have a chance to view the draft before it goes for audit as they have, in the past, pick up on some anomalies. Playgrounds, in future will have monthly inspections and the annual cost will be in the region of £700 before any repairs are carried out. ***(Following the meeting it was established that, in fact, an insurance condition is that the playground must be inspected weekly by the Estates Team and subject to a technical inspection twice annually by the insurers, accounting for the increased costs.)*** It was agreed that Aster would consult with DPVA before any decisions are made on repair/replacement of equipment. Aster confirmed that the 15% management charge on service charges would not be charged on Sinking Funds, Insurance or Ground Rent. There would be a possible £17,500 (approx) refund on the year but the time scale for audit cannot be confirmed at present.
- 3. Service Charges for 2018/19.** **BJ** hoped to be able to circulate a draft for charges for 18/19 in the next week or so.
- 4. Sinking Fund Balance.** Before deduction of the external redecorations have been debited the total is £286,071. **SE** queried why the full amount allowed by the FTT should be charged when it appears, subject to projected works, that the fund will be fully in funds with over £100,000 remaining in the bank before the 18/19 contribution. These will be assessed over the next week and **BJ** will share conclusions with DPVA shortly.

5. **Windows and doors.** The lease terms were discussed at some length and it was decided that DPVA would seek a view from Lease-Advice or a local solicitor specifically to see if clause 5.11 could be used to allow Aster to repair windows before painting rather than a lengthy procedure of survey and instruction to repair which could result in delay to the painting contract.
6. **Car Parking Spaces** - It was suggested that to avoid expensive variations to the lease the six leaseholders spaces in Lower Wyatt could be marked with 'R' for residents in the hope of making it clear they were designated spaces. (Following the meeting it was agreed that RES would be better, meaning Resident or Reserved.) It was noted that dog walkers and others used our car parks, especially Lower Wyatt. **PB** produced a politely worded leaflet which we could use to try and educate people.
7. **Planned Maintenance**
- **Gutter cleaning/repairs** - ongoing. Brackets have to be ordered. Estimate not available yet.
  - **PB** noted that a bird is getting into roof space of a Bowes House (number notified to Aster).
  - **Lightning conductor repairs** - still no date for repair
  - **Incorrect door/window at a General Needs House** - Will be replaced
  - **Tree survey.** Not done yet and no cost estimate as yet. Possibly ISS could reduce overhanging branches of tree at Bowes.
  - **Report on maintenance/replacement of TV system** - This refers to the possible replacement of the box in Tower that distributes Freeview. Aster to liaise with Leppards
  - **Stonework** - will be assessed. It was believed there are no significant defects
  - **Paths** - Wyatt flag stones still outstanding.
  - Tree root near 14 Wyatt needs removing from the tarmac path.
7. **Roof Repair at Wyatt Court update.** It seems that the roof repairs will not be an insurance claim but are maintenance. Insurance may cover consequential damage. Three repairs needed on two adjoining houses. Roofs were overhauled and replacements done 20 years ago. Repair envisaged next week. Aster will liaise with leaseholder about putting in a hatch. **HE** will send photos of defects on both roofs.
8. **Use of Bins by Fly-tippers** Thurnham seems to be the worst Court for this. Dog walkers also use them for their bags but little we can do. It was agreed it is a matter of education and some discussions on line in Devizes Issue might help.
9. **Signs.** **PB** produced a list of signs after a walk-around with the contractor:
- No entry signs on some posts to be replaced with 45cm size.
  - Replace pair of arrow signs by bin store at Lower Wyatt.
  - New sign on lamp post 18 Cooke Court 'Slow down - Children'.
  - Remove remaining seven sign 'Bs' and replace in position shown on plan with six new sign 'As' and three existing sign 'As' by Elm, Speer and the orchard.
  - Move existing sign A by Orchard onto post from stolen sign B and remove post.
  - Remove 2 sign 'Cs' by Elm and cedar.
  - Remove PRIVATE ROAD sign on Ashford land to other side of Thomas Wyatt Road at Entrance by Elm and possibly reposition existing sign A.
  - Replace missing one way sign at entrance to Cooke Court to ensure outgoing traffic turns right only.

- Proposal for the directional sign by Elm Court with multiple 'Cts" removed and replaced by 'Court'. It was agreed the directional sign should be reflective for night time recognition.
- All signs to be fixed with sheer bolts to avoid theft.
- It was agreed that PB would accompany the contractors during installation to make sure the signs are correctly positioned.
- Estimated total cost £1,071.94 inc VAT.

#### **10.Any Other Business**

- **SE** mentioned the hundreds of daffodils bulbs planted by volunteers last autumn which are now starting to appear.
- No result heard yet from requests to Ashford Homes to mow the Meadow. WCC and Enforcement Officer are on the case.
- **BJ** asked for confirmation the Bank Statement had arrived. Confirmed.

***There being no other business the meeting closed at 12.30pm.***