



The Committee of Management of
Hanover Crescent Enclosure

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Committee of Management of Hanover Crescent Enclosure DRAFT 2

Thursday 17th May 2018

Opening

The Annual General Meeting of the Committee of Management of Hanover Crescent Enclosure was called to order at 19:40. In the absence of the Mayor, Neil Smith began by welcoming everyone to the meeting and introduced the chairman of the meeting, Leanne Allan.

Present

There were 17 attendees. Apologies were received from The Mayor and houses 5 and 14

Nominations for Membership of the Committee

All members of the outgoing Committee volunteered to be re-elected.

Approval of the Minutes of the last AGM

The minutes of the last AGM were approved.

Secretary's Report and Review of the last year.

John Hinchliffe presented the report, part of the published AGM pack, and summarised Committee's activities for the past year. There was one query on the condition of the trees around the one that came down in February. It was confirmed that an Arboricultural surveyor has been commissioned to do a resistograph check on the main trees in that area, and that no further problems found. The report would be placed on the Crescent website. There were no further queries.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Paul Farmer, presented the accounts, part of the published AGM pack. He said that we ended the year with a small increase in the balance of funds. He reported that despite additional expenditure as a result of the fallen elm tree, the current account balance had increased by £3k over the year. All Crescent Contributions and Infrastructure Levy payments for the year ending are now settled. As a result of the insurance claim covering most of the costs of the Phase 1 work on the boundary wall,

the Infrastructure Fund has so far been used to get planning permissions and project management for the wall repairs. For the future, we can expect our insurance premium to increase, and should also expect an invoice from the council for the emergency work they did on the large elm. The Committee expect to dispute our liability for this.

Election of the Committee

After the elapse of 15 minutes no further nominations for the committee or any objections having been received were received, the outgoing members were re-elected for the next 12 months.

GENERAL MEETING

General Business

1. Resident's events

Sian Thomas reported on events in the year. The picnic last summer was not well attended and this year we are planning to organise the usual bonfire and Xmas tree. Suggestions from residents are always welcome. There will be a 'Crescent Clean-up' event on 10th June and it is hoped enough people come along to do jobs that would otherwise not be done or would be paid for - to tidy the road and pavement and to distribute the wood chippings along the path. John Hird will circulate a flyer to all houses.

2. Trees and Garden

John Hinchliffe reported that routine maintenance of the trees would continue in the winter using the 2016 tree survey report as a basis for selecting the work to be done. Particular suggestions from residents are always welcome. There was a request to further cut back the holm oaks at the south end from hanging over the road and this will be added to the work list for next winter – subject to there being no objections from the tree conservation office.

Replanting of the area affected by the fallen elm has begun and 6 smaller trees are being planted. The flower border has been widened over the year and is being extended into the damaged area. There has been further planting along the wall, including where the repair work was done, to dissuade people from coming over the wall. The work done by the gardener progresses well but ideas from residents are always welcome.

3. Parking

Neil Smith reported that resident permits expire at the end of June and new ones will be issued before then. The Committee has been monitoring the misuse of Visitor Permits for long term parking and has so far issued two letters to residents warning that the permits will be invalidated. The Committee had considered the use of VPs for short term lets, since this means that they are in near permanent use. It was decided that since there are currently sufficient spare spaces no action was needed, but this may be reviewed if currently empty properties make use of their resident permits. The parking regulations were updated the previous year and circulated prior to the last AGM without comment.

Issues concerning the parking regulations were raised by No. 7:

- a. That a new clause: “*A resident or owner whose financial contributions to the Crescent are not fully paid up will not be issued with a Resident Permit*”, relates Contributions to parking is contentious since it appeared that the committee was in effect charging for parking, a proposal rejected at previous AGMs
- b. That the process introducing this clause was underhand, that few residents were aware of the clause and that the procedures used lacked transparency.

There was wide-ranging discussion on the way the Committee works and on how funds should be raised with comments including: the change in regulations should be confirmed by an Emergency General Meeting on this topic, that the Crescent needed some way of sanctioning non-payment of the contributions, that the Committee is elected to make decisions on behalf of residents, that the Contributions are fully voluntary and discretionary for owners, that Contributions were in fact all paid for this year, that the Committee needs to find ways to be more transparent, that the newsletter are not an adequate mechanism for consultation with residents, that the Committee needs to find ways to involve more people in discussions, that other funding options laid out at last year’s AGM needed further detail and discussion, that mechanisms for raising funds had not been fully explored.

Neil Smith apologised on behalf of the Committee for not drawing attention to this particular change to the parking regulations. It was agreed:

- a. That the parking regulations remain unchanged for this year.
- b. That the Committee will improve transparency of its decisions and seek ways to improve consultation
- c. That there will be a vote on the Parking Regulations at next year’s AGM

4. Anti-social Behaviour

Simon Hopkins reported on the issue of heroin use in the garden which against the background of a national increase. The Committee has been in touch with the council and councillors concerning this. We have received a long and thoughtful response from the MP, Caroline Lucas, as regards the prospect of official drug consumption rooms being set up. There is no concrete progress on dealing with the problem, but the Committee will continue to liaise with the Council on this.

Last year’s unofficial Pride even on the Level caused significant problems with the Crescent garden being used as a toilet. The Committee has been in touch with the Council and Pride organisers about this. There will be no official event this year, but Pride organisers are extending their security coverage to roads adjoining the Level and the Committee will continue to liaise to ensure proper toilet provision is in place. If it is thought the security provisions may be inadequate the Committee will consider providing private security for Crescent.

5. Refuse Collections

These have been unreliable. One resident’s complaint has been escalated and a response received that new, smaller vehicles were being used and that things should now improve. Meanwhile, recycling collections seem to be becoming unreliable.

6. Proposal to Reduce Contributions paid by Lodges

Chris Carter-Pegg from North Lodge summarised his rationale for a reduction in the contributions (background notes for and against were circulated with in the AGM pack). His legal advice is that the Lodges were not obliged to contribute to the upkeep of the Crescent that if the Lodges maintain for themselves that section of the wall they believe they are responsible for then the cost of wall maintenance to the Crescent is reduced and that the lodges were prepared to offer a 25% contribution.

Neil Smith said that contributions are not based on legal obligation or on value or size of properties -all of which are different in size - and that agreeing this reduction would allow others to make similar claims for reductions. Contributions are currently all paid so this is not an immediate issue. Contributions are simply based on equal shares for each 'original front door' with the lodges paying half. The Committee agreed to review options for an alternative basis for funding and encourages input from owners. The conclusions of the review to be presented to next year's AGM and any proposed change to be voted on

In a vote, the proposal to accept the reduction was rejected with only two owners voting in favour.

7. Infrastructure Projects Update

Neil Smith reported on the wall work done so far, substantially funded by the insurance claim. The Committee will try to obtain new tenders without using a surveyor before proceeding with the next Phases of the wall repairs.

8. Crescent Contributions

It was agreed that Contributions be kept at the existing level for the forthcoming year of £100 for the Crescent Contribution and £600 for the Infrastructure Levy

9. Approval of Expenditure

It was agreed that the Committee go ahead with up to £15k for Phase 2 of the wall repairs and £5k for patch repairs to the road.

Any Other Business

There was further discussion about how the Committee operates and the desire to improve participation by residents and owners and mention of whether digital platforms may be a way to achieve this.

The Chairman thanked everyone and closed the meeting.

Jh 22/5/18