

Sinclair Committee Meeting

11th December 2018, 7 - 8.30pm, Gorgie Church Hall

Attendees

Sinclair Committee: Myreside:
Alex Schooling (AS - Chair) Peter Bertaut (PB)
Alan Dickson (AD)
Pamela Gidney (PG)
Niall Scott (NS)
Rosina Weightman (RW)

Apologies: Ruth Evans; Kunal Pradhan

Committee Pre-Meet 7 - 7.30pm

As welcomed everyone to the meeting.

AS/AD/PG/NS/RE considered the key points for discussion with PB - in summary, they covered:

- **Invoices** - Feedback on the invoice samples for the period through to the end of November as noted under Item 1 below.
- **Communal Electricity** - There was discussion about the position regarding the communal electricity and ongoing delay in account transfers from DCPM to Myreside resulting in no charges having been billed since before the Factoring contract changed hands in May 2017. AD noted that serial numbers and readings have been collated for all but six meters that were inaccessible which Myreside have agreed to provide. With this information, an exercise can proceed to cross-reference meter numbers with accounts/suppliers (the development being a mix of Scottish Power and SSE). In the meeting with PB there was wider discussion of the next steps as noted under Item 2 below.
- **Owner Communications** - NS confirmed the resident e-mail group will cease at the end of December with the address having been kindly hosted by a previous owner. Given the very low e-mail traffic over the last year or so, it was agreed to move forward with the Committee e-mail address and quarterly newsletters with Myreside continuing as the first point of contact for all owners about property/block specific concerns.

PB joined the meeting.

1. Sept-18-Nov-18 Invoice

- The sample invoices shared by PB on 4/12/18 were approved for issue by the Committee with the following edits incorporated (**Action - PB (14/12/18)**):
 - Incorporation of '- under insurance excess' at the end of '2 x Décor repairs in block 4 S.P & 1 x repair to 28 S.P' to confirm the £450 charge is insurance related as per previous invoices. PB also clarified the £450 was accounted for by the following - 28SP - £120 (vinyl repair); 4/11 SP - £240 for ceiling/wall repainting (AS queried this as only the ceiling was painted and PB agreed to check/confirm cost) and 4/3 SP - £180 for repainting. All the costs include VAT. (*Post-meeting note: PB advised the £240 charge referred to repainting in 4/3SP and 4/11SP work cost £180 for visits to fill the ceiling hole, prep for painting and the actual repainting*).
 - Smoke Extraction System Servicing in Blocks 30 & 32 SP - review of the apportionment to just Block B with the stairwells in Block B and J respectively, and separate itemisation of the charges by Block. PB also clarified that the costs concern a legal requirement for the six monthly servicing of the smoke alarms within the

stairwells of 30SP and 32SP. These are the only stairwells with this particular design in the development.

- The invoices will be issued to owners by the end of the week and accompanied by a December Newsletter. **Action - PB (14/12/18)**
- PB also advised there were three claims on the buildings insurance in the Sept-18 to Nov-18 invoice period, one for escape of water at 20SP and two storm damage incidents at 31SP/32SP. The claims have not yet been settled as PB is pushing back on the insurance company trying to bill the storm damage as two separate incidents. Assuming a successful outcome, the excess will total £750 (one escape of water for £500 at 20SP and storm damage at 32SP/31SP with an excess of £250). PB was thanked by the Committee for challenging the Insurance company in their execution of the policy excess.
- PB clarified the Stage 2 garden work at a cost of £245 plus VAT has been deferred to the Spring and costs for this will be included on the Mar-19 to May-19 invoice.

2. Communal Electricity Supply

- There was a lengthy discussion about the common electricity supply (stairwell, external lighting and fountains) with accounts for the suppliers (Scottish Power and SSE both supply areas of the development) still not transferred by DCPM to Myreside after over 18 months resulting in no billing of usage to owners. The issue of an invoice from Scottish Power in November direct to 32SP has helped to further escalate the matter.
- To help progress the matter the Committee undertook to gather serial numbers and readings for 23 communal meters and provided this information to Myreside in early December. PB undertook to source the meter serial numbers and readings for the five stairwells with locked doors which house the fountain operations plus also one stairwell at SP that could not be accessed. **Action - PB (12/12/18)**
- PB agreed to contact Scottish Power on 12/12/18 regarding the account transfer status and advise the Committee thereafter by COP. **Action - PB (12/12/18)**
- In the event there is no progress following contact with both suppliers, PB confirmed that formal letters of complaint could be sent under the cover of Myreside as advised by contact with Energy Ombudsman who can only engage to assist after letters have been sent with no satisfactory resolution reached after 8 weeks.
- On completion of the account transfers, PB and AD agreed to sit down to cross-check invoices against accounts and billing of the electricity between the flats and townhouses to ensure an equitable apportionment. **Action - PB/AD (TBC)**
- In the longer term, the preference is to move to one supplier, however it was agreed by all that the priority just now is for the accounts to be transferred by DCPM to Myreside and billing to commence as soon as possible for electricity going forward alongside a payment schedule agreed for the billing of historic costs. It was also noted that accounts would not be transferred from one supplier to another with debt.

3. Finance/Debt

- PB advised the development debt is 10% in arrears which equates to £8k at the time of the last invoice period (end Aug-18). PB considers this a good debt status for the development with the figure spread across a small number of accounts which Myreside are in contact about with the individual owners concerned.

4. 17th September Meeting - Actions Update

a) Gardens

- PB and RW reported they had undertaken a garden walk round on the 7th December. During the walk round work was identified to cut back the perimeter garden areas on the Robertson Avenue and Stewart Terrace side of the development, trimming of some areas internal to the development and replanting to try to address the persistent use of the garden as a cut-through outside 31SP as well as at the 27SP car park area. The majority of the work falls within the cyclical garden maintenance contract with a modest cost of less than £50 for replanting activities.
- During the previous garden walk round in Sept-18 three areas (5SP, 6SP and 6SC) were identified where conifers require removal. PB advised a cost of £500 to remove all three conifers (leaving the root in place). It was agreed for this work to proceed in the Spring. **Action - PB (30/4/19)**
- PB and RW to liaise on a date for the next walk round. **Action - PB/RW (5/3/19)**

b) Fountains

- The fountains were turned off and drained in early November. During the garden walk round it was agreed that the fountain stonework will be given a brush to remove the black coating. The addition of chlorination will be made to the water in 2019 to try to manage this problem. **Action - PB (31/12/18)**

b) Rhone Cleaning

- As a result of storm damage (including some areas within Sinclair) which the roofing company has been required to prioritise, PB advised the Committee that the rhone cleaning work has been rescheduled to w/c 17th December. The work will involve a cost of approx. £25 to £30 per flat as per the quote discussed and agreed at the September meeting. PB also clarified that a number of the street lamp-post light bulbs will be replaced when the cherry picker is on site.

c) Bike Sheds

- PB updated the Committee that a battery operated light had been sourced (at approx. £17) and would be trialled in one of the bike sheds over the coming months. This follows an unsuccessful trial of a solar operated light over the summer. PB will provide a further update to the Committee at the next meeting. **Action - PB (12/3/19)**

5. Long-term Maintenance Plan.

- Further consideration of a more structured maintenance plan was deferred to the Spring with priority at present to resolve the communal electricity position. Ongoing business as usual maintenance will continue meantime, in parallel to a number of longer-term activities such as the rhone cleaning and conifer topping.

6. December Newsletter

- PG to update the draft Newsletter to capture updates noted concerning the Fountains, Garden, boilers and parking problem between 31SP and 32SP.
- PB to arrange for issue of the Newsletter alongside the invoice for the period to end Nov-18.

7. Date of Next Meeting

- The next meeting was provisionally scheduled for Tuesday 12th March 2019.
- Availability of the Church Hall to be checked by PG. **Action - PG (18/12/18)**

8. AOB

Buildings Insurance

- PB confirmed the buildings insurance policy for the period 1/12/18 to 30/11/19 will be £47,174.50 (£47,814.72 in 2018). Excess for the escape of water will remain at £500 and storm damage reduce to £100 (previously £250).
- The common areas insurance policy will be the same cost as 2018 - £4,980.80.

Boiler Repairs

- During the recent garden walk round it was observed that new boilers are being installed with the attachment of the condensate drain pipe to the down pipe which is unsightly and against the Title Deeds as they prohibit the attachment of external fixtures to common parts of the development. It was agreed that an item would be added to the Newsletter to capture this problem and advise on an internal connection arrangement.

Parking

- PB advised the Committee of a parking problem brought to the attention of Myreside which concerns vehicles parking in the open space between 32SP and 31SP. This has resulted in the blocking of vehicles parked in designated bays leading to contact by an owner with external parties for assistance in order to be able to access their car. It was agreed that as a first step, a note should be put on offending vehicles by Myreside and a reminder about appropriate parking also included in the next Newsletter.

Stairwell Cupboards

- While obtaining meter serial numbers and readings, it was observed that many communal cupboards under the stairs are being used inappropriately either for storage purposes and/or dumping of unwanted items. Similarly, a number of stairwells have prams, bikes and other items (wheelbarrow, car screenwash etc) lying around. This is counter to the Title Deeds and also creates a general untidy appearance. PB advised all cupboards and stairwells could be cleared at a cost of £300 plus VAT. Further discussion on this and management of the spaces, such as ensuring all doors are locked, to avoid further cluttering on clearing was deferred to the next meeting. **Action - All (12/3/19)**

**Sinclair Resident Committee
December 2018**