



## Leybourne Park Residents Association

### Committee Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Notes of meeting held at 91 Ingram Close

**Present:** Ray Haffenden, Liz Simpson, Lewis Pound Howard, Gary Slinn, Rupert Keppel-Palmer,

**Apologies:** Shaz Angel, Nikki Percival, Mickey Morris

**Notes of last meeting:** Agreed

#### **Actions from last meeting:**

- **Costings for remainder of parking improvements:** Ray has requested a quotation from Paul of Skyline, and Liz has written to First Port but no response to date.
  
- **Correct allocation and numbering of parking spaces:** Liz has written to First Port but no response to date.
  
- **Annual accounts:**
  - Liz has written formal complaint about the inclusion of work that had not been carried out (Decorating) etc but no response to date other than email confirming that it had been sent to the appropriate department.
  - Rupert has looked through the breakdown of invoices etc supplied by First Port and feels that whilst some items do seem very expensive (particularly Black Sheep and KAS) it does appear to be for appropriate expenditure (excluding decorating). There should be scope in the future for appointing cheaper contractors if managing agents do change.
  - It was noted that £13000 has been spent clearing dumped items.
  
- **Recycling in Bin Stores:** Liz has passed on complaint.
  
- **Spring Bulbs:** Liz to email Trudy Dean to ask for form to request grant for cost of bulbs.

- **Litter pick:** Liz has not arranged a further litter pick currently due to time pressures. Committee noted that resident (Ian Hamilton) had posted picture of the two bags of litter he has picked up today.

### **Section 20 Internal and External Decorations**

- Liz has written to First Port requesting that they re-issue the recent communication with the correct figures and other details.
- Ray reported that Georgia has said that the work is unlikely to start before Christmas and that he thought that there might be a change in managing agents before the work began.
- However, agreed that we would not attempt to hold up the process which appears to have been followed correctly on this occasion. The general view was that the work was becoming increasingly necessary and that the internal works, not being weather dependent, could be started well before the Spring.

### **E&M Tender for replacement managing agents**

Ray had previously circulated an email from E&M informing us that they had put First Port on notice and asking if LPRA would be happy to use Rendall and Rittner. Ray reminded the Committee that he and Rupert had had two previous meetings with Rendall and Rittner and had been impressed with their approach. There was an open invitation to visit their Royal Artillery site and knock on people' door at random to get an honest view of the standard of their management. The company grew out of the founders' dissatisfaction with their own managing agents. They have a preference for using local contractors and for engaging with residents. In earlier conversations R&R had said that if E&M wished to move away from First Port then there would be a tender process which would take up to six months. We do not know whether E&M have started a tender process or how much notice will need to be given to First Port. It is believed that all existing contracts with the various maintenance companies would need to be completed prior to a new managing agent letting new contracts. R&R's belief was that the maintenance charges were unlikely to be significantly cheaper but that the standard would see visible improvements.

This aspect of the minutes needs to be kept just within the Committee until we hear officially that First Port have lost the contract. Until then (and until the end of the contract) there is an expectation that First Port should provide a good level of service.

### **Items raised by residents:**

- **Bollards/Parking:**
  - Despite concern from some residents the bollards outside 38 – 39 will be removed for safety reasons. The need to ensure free passage of emergency vehicles around the estate is a priority.

- It was agreed that Liz would write to the relevant Council to push for residents' parking in Papyrus Way as this seemed to be the most cost-effective way of providing a sufficient supply of extra parking. We understood that the response from Councils to-date had not been supportive of the idea but that we wanted this to come before a Board for Members decision.
- **Children's play equipment:**
  - Rupert had spotted that the annual inspection of the play equipment was long over due and had raised this with First Port.
  - Liz reported that she had had quite a positive response from East Malling and Larkfield Parish Council Chairman, David Thornewell, with her suggestion that the Parish Council might fund some new play equipment; with the maintenance responsibility falling to residents via the maintenance charge. He asked that we provide the Parish Council with some indicative costs so that this could be factored into the precept that will be worked on in the coming months. Liz has arranged for the son of a local Parish Councillor to research this for us.
  - There was also a suggestion that a bid for funding via Trudy Dean's Dragon Den event might be made. Liz declared a conflict of interest as she was putting in a bid for funding via the Charity she Chairs.
- **Entrance to the estate:** The Committee were pleased to see that a resident had taken on board comments from other residents and had cleared away the bicycles, toys etc from the front of their property, giving an immediate boost to the look of the estate.

### **Any other business**

#### **Christmas:**

Ray reported that Georgia has agreed that First Port will provide another Christmas tree at their expense.

Ray is going to be away from early December and so will not be able to organise a "switch on" event as per last year. It is hoped that the lights from last year which are still in the trees near the big park will work again this year with new batteries and that there is money to purchase lights for other trees. Gary is happy to look after decorations around the little park and it was agreed that Mickey would be asked to do the same for the large park.

A special meeting would be held to discuss format (if any) of Christmas celebrations as we did not want to lose the momentum from last year's event but would need to be sure that there were enough people prepared to help organise an event.

The November meeting will be at Ray's house.