ASHWORTH MANSIONS LIMITED

MINUTES of the Residents General Meeting of the Company, held on Monday 24 June 2018, at 7.00pm at Paddington Sports Club, Castellain Road, London, W9 1HQ

Attendees: As per the attendance list

Chair: Martin Clements (MC)

In attendance: David Thomas, Ashworth Mansions Caretaker (DT)
Alex Kingcome, KFH, Managing Agent (AK)

The meeting opened at 7.15pm

1. **Budgets**

AK explained to the meeting that the service charges were made up of two elements: the service charge which covered day-to-ay expenditure; and the reserve contribution which was a payment towards a 'savings pot' to cover the costs of upcoming major projects and works, such as cyclical redecoration.

The Board had been working hard to ensure that the day-to-day service charge contribution remained tightly controlled; the most recent budget (Year End 28 September 2019) had seen a reduction in insurance, electricity and pest control costs by a change of contracts and overall the service charge budget had decreased by 2%.

A Fire Risk Assessment undertaken in 2018 had identified several areas of improvement at Ashworth Mansions. In light of this, as per the circular issued on 12 October 2018, the Directors had implemented an increase of the Reserve Contribution from £175,000.00 to £500,000.00 for Year End 28 September 2019 to cover the costs of these proposed works. In order to ease the financial pressure this increase may cause for owners, it was agreed that this additional levy would be taken in the Quarter 2 (28 December 2018) and Quarter 4 (28 June 2019) demands.

Moving forward, it was important for owners to bear in mind that due to the nature of the upcoming scheduled works (detailed further below) and the style and nature of the mansion buildings, these projects were anticipated to be costly, and further levies in respect of these works would definitely be required. In the meantime, however, the Board would continue to control the day-to-day service charge budget as tightly as possible.

MC reiterated that several years ago, a survey of lessees was carried out to see if there was a preference for these additional costs to be raised by way of independent levies only, or by a continued increase of the reserve fund contribution annually. The feedback had been that a combination of both methods would be preferred and this is therefore how the Board would continue to collect the additional contributions.

2. Major Works

KW advised that he was a Chartered Architect by profession and had been overseeing the major works at Ashworth Mansions, in conjunction with Stiles Harold Williams Surveyors (SHW), Waterfield Odam Associates and Lucking & Clark Engineers.

KW reported that whilst Ashworth Mansions did currently hold reserves, there were elements of the works already carried out that had taken longer than originally anticipated and funds would soon be depleted.

2.1 Vault & Bridge Works

KW informed the meeting that, as previously reported, several years ago the bridges over the vaults on both sides of the estate had been identified to be failing. Significant work was required to replace these bridges. However, the electrical intake and gas mains to each building are located under each bridge and this therefore required the rerouting of the utilities before the works were able to be carried out. KW advised that, although largely now complete on the Grantully side, these preliminary works had been tediously extended for reasons beyond our control.

Future works were to include the improved resurfacing of all bridges and, along with the rebuilding itself, this going to cost in excess of £400,000.00. The resurfacing would include removing the existing tiles and replacing with a Victorian style tiles. Leaseholders would be consulted on this nearer to the time.

The next planning meeting was scheduled for 05 July and a programme and schedule of works would be issued to all leaseholders when available.

GL (F66) queried what impact the remaining vault/bridge work would have on the lower ground floor flats. KW advised that scaffolding would be a requirement and as a result the lower flats would have their light restricted. After the July meeting, there would be a clearer indication and the flats affected in this respect would be contacted. The contractors would also be asked for proposals to safeguard against any damage/dirt to the building and on how they plan to address access/security implications.

2.2 Front Entrance Doors

KW advised that as part of the Capital Expenditure Plan, the communal block entrance doors would be upgraded. It had been intended to delay this work until the bridge and vault repairs had been completed, however there had been increasing number of alignment issues, due to the doors' age and attending to these would help improve security. It was noted however that this would not prevent ongoing 'user' issues, where doors were often held open or not shut properly.

KW anticipated that these upgrades would likely be carried out in spring 2020.

2.3 FRA Works

KW advised that an FRA had been commissioned, which had identified several day-to-day items that posed a potential risk. These findings had been supported by a Local Government paper, and included ensuring that the internal communal parts (hallways and staircases etc.) were kept clear of items, which DT would oversee. The removal of fire extinguishers from the block was also required. It was acknowledged that this was a sensitive topic, however it was ultimately agreed that the professional advice should be followed and that the reasoning of preserving life and encouraging residents to evacuate, rather than attempt to tackle the fire, was valid.

2.31 Flat entrance doors

It was also noted that individual flat entrance doors did not comply with the current minimum standard required (a 30-minutes fire rating) and must all be replaced. SHW had been instructed to review the options to improve the integrity and compliance of the new doors, to include the letterboxes, overhead glass and the material of the doors themselves. The aesthetic of the doors and the mansions was also a key consideration and the replacement was to look as close as possible to the existing doors and door furniture.

SHW had been asked to carry out replacement works to one door and frame set for owners to view prior to replacement doors being rolled out through the estate. This would also allow the Board to carry out a check for cost and quality.

NC (F53) asked if glazing was going to be retained, KW confirmed that a fire resistant glass panel would be replaced, but again emphasised the intention to maintain the signature look of the mansions, albeit improving the look where possible.

LT (F79) queried if the upgrade of the door frames was to be included in the works. It was advised that some flats have already carried out refurbishments to the flat entrance doors. KW advised that the frame would also needed to be replaced and upgraded so as not to undermine the compliance of the door. The meeting was assured that all doors would be reviewed prior to the works and those (including the frames) that were found to be compliant would not be replaced.

2.32 Fire Alarm System

KW advised that the Board were currently liaising with fire experts to review proposed upgrades. Currently, there was no method of fire detection at Ashworth Mansions and the proposal was to install an 'interlinked' system which involved the installation of sounders in the communal hallways and sensors within individual apartments. KW noted that a Notice of Intent in respect of these works had already been issued.

Several flats had already carried out a lot of these compliance works independently to ensure their property was legally compliant. KW acknowledged that there would be some individual circumstances that would need to be taken into consideration when finalising the specification and implementing them throughout the estate.

AP (F80) felt that significant trunking would likely be required for the installation of the fire alarm and suggested that some internal decorations be carried out at the same time. KW confirmed that

any internal damage arising from the works would be made good and where necessary decorations would be carried out.

KW elaborated that the 10 year plan was detailed cyclical works, such as internal (common parts) and external decorations was reviewed and updated periodically to capture all elements and reiterated that individual flat requirements and conditions were often a consideration. For example, windows were generally a lessee responsibility, however it was common for these costs to be absorbed as part of the external decorations as there were benefits of scale for leaseholders. For those wanting to make alterations to their windows individually, they would need to contact KFH directly who would issue the proper License and advised of the established procedure.

The quality checks that were included as part of the contract were queried. KW advised that SHW was charged with the administration of the contract, including quality checks and snagging post-completion.

RM (F87) – reported last time windows and externals were carried out, the paint started flaking after 12 months. MC acknowledged that there had been some issue with the quality of work of the previous contractors. Our surveyors and the Board did our best to ensure quality, and would continue to do so.

JC (F92) advised it would be useful to have an indication of costs for personal budgeting. KW advised that the current reserve levels were sufficient to cover the costs of the remaining bridge/vault works and the fire safety works. After this expenditure, the Board would pause and review, including providing outline estimates of costs, when possible. These would at any event be significant.

3. <u>Managing Agent</u>

MBC (F53) raised concerns over the length of time between reporting issues to KFH and their resolution, and gave the example of an incident reported in January 2018 was not rectified until Oct 2018. AK advised that this was prior to her involvement at Ashworth Mansions, but was aware that the issue referred to had stalled as a result of a slow response from insurers, but acknowledged that this length of time was too long.

AK advised the meeting that she was aware of general concerns regarding KFH response time and advised there had been administrative issues within the KFH office which had since been resolved and to her knowledge communication was now being dealt with in a timely manner.

NC (F53) noted a recent leak affecting his flat and felt that AK should have attended and inspected the damage whilst on site. AK responded that there was nothing further to be gleaned by her physically inspecting the damage as she was not a contractor or building professional, and furthermore issues within the individual properties themselves are not within the remit of the Agent, but understood that residents may be re-assured by meeting with her and advised that her schedule of site visits would be circulated so that owners could book to meet with her by appointment.

MC also advised that they were aware of historic issues with KFH performance and reported that several of the Board members had been to the KFH offices to address these with KFH Directors and

that KFH's performance continued to be monitored. MC lastly asked the meeting to feedback any comments to the Board for their continued review.

4. Lease Extensions

RM introduced this item and thanked GS for his assistance.

RM summarised that the Board had agreed in principle to extend the tenure of all leases and to offer these extensions to lessees at the lowest cost possible, with a new lease. RM advised that the biggest challenge had been tax related as the Board had been advised that HMRC would levy tax regardless of what premium was charged to leaseholders.

A survey had been carried out of a sample of flats to determine the value of an extensions for a one, two and three bedroom flat, so that owners would have an indication of the value of their extensions and therefore the tax implications. RM encouraged all owners to also seek their own tax advice as the only information that would be provided by the Board would be the figures relating to the AML tax affairs. They could not make recommendations or provide tax advice to individuals.

RM invited any owners with queries to contact her directly.

The meeting raised concerns over the length of time it had taken to resolve this issue. GS advised that there had been a number of unforeseen circumstances and variables that had to be considered as a result of poor decisions made by historic Boards. The current Board were conscious not to leave the same legacy and as such wanted to ensure all elements were captured so that owners could make the most informed decision possible.

5. Security

PY advised that in 2018, four burglaries had taken place at Ashworth Mansions, compared to three in 2011. PY reported that several measures were being implemented by the Board with a view to deterring entry into the estate.

These included:

- Additional railings on the garage roofs
- Application of anti-climb paint to the pipes in the internal garden (application between upper ground and first floors only)
- Motion sensor security lighting in stair wells
- CCTV to be installed at the garden gates
- Removal of BT telephone boxes by the garages
- Reinforcing the locks to the garden gates
- Increasing the height of the railings on Biddulph Road

MC advised that in respect of the most recent burglary, the perpetrator came into the garden and climbed up the external pipework two stories. Discussion took place surrounding communal responsibly and flat owner responsibility. It was generally felt that some residents on first or second storeys could be complacent, but the meeting was reminded that these flats are still targeted and

can be easily accessed. All residents need to accept responsibility for their own security and take usual, sensible measures, such as locking windows etc.

MM (F87) queried if the anti-climb paint was to be applied to the gates. PY advised that by its nature the anti-climb paint rubs off on people's clothes and so it had been decided not to apply to the gates and lower level metal work.

6. Gardens

MC reported on behalf of JS. It was advised that the flowerbeds on Elgin Avenue side of the estate had been replanted and significant tree surgery works had been carried out to encourage regrowth. Anyone interested in the gardens was asked to contact JS directly.

GS asked why costs had increased. AK advised this was a result of the required tree surgery works.

7. Water Tanks

KW advised that the Board would soon disconnect the water tanks in the loft spaces above the blocks. It was understood that some flats still had a connection to this water supply, however it was not clear in many cases which flats still had not connected to the new water system and disconnected from the tanks. Disappointingly many owners had failed to respond to repeated requests for information.

The Board had originally wanted to obtain a schedule of flats and the water supplies they were connected to, so that the relevant owners could be informed of the tanks being shut off and supplied with appropriate advice.

However after several investigatory attendances, 53 flats had still not provided access. It had been decided that all owners would be issued with a letter providing three months' notice that the water tanks would be shut off and owners would be responsible for investigating their own water supply and making a new connection, where necessary.

KFH note: Please ensure that KFH is notified in advance of any works to be carried out as the buildings insurance policy is required to be put on notice.

8. AOB

RM (F87) queried the costs of hiring equipment for the aerial and entry phone system. It was a significant cost to the service charge budget and it was felt this could be reduced by purchasing the equipment outright. RM advised that many of the Ashworth Mansions contracts were placed a long time ago were fore a significant period, however it would be added to the agenda for discussion at the next Board meeting.

ER (F77) wanted to propose the installation of 'no smoking' in the garden areas. Discussion took place and it was agreed that this improvement the enjoyment of the garden area as a whole and this would be implemented.

Thanks was given to DT and Mustapha and the Board for their continued efforts at Ashworth Mansions.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.57pm.