

Minutes of Hughenden Court (Hastings) RTM Co Ltd held at 11am on 5 March 2022 at the former St Mark's Church Hall

RTM company members present

Steven Collinson, Vickie Richardson, Rod Stapley, Howard Seaton, Alan Scott, Linda Scott, Alex Hardy, David Bean, Lesley Dennis, Tim Miller and Steven Deaville. Also present Katja Seaton and Jeannie Long.

1.	<p><u>Welcome and introduction</u></p> <p>Steve Collinson (Company Secretary) welcomed everyone to the meeting and all those present introduced themselves in turn. Reference was made to the new ownership of the former St Mark's Church and that they were very kindly allowing us to continue using the hall for meetings.</p>
2.	<p><u>Apologies for absence</u></p> <p>Received from the following RTM company members – Tony Oak and Simon Payne and also from Alison Oak.</p>
3.	<p><u>Minutes of last meeting held 30 November 2019</u></p> <p>These were agreed as a correct record.</p>
4.	<p><u>Matter arising</u></p> <p>After some progress was made using Edge Rope Access unfortunately they became unreliable, were not carrying out previously agreed work and charging a day rate but not carrying out a full day's work, so it was decided not to use them again.</p> <p>Nearly all lighting has now been upgraded; the only remaining fluorescent lights are in the foyer and outside the lifts on floors 1 and 4. As these are working ok they will not be replaced for the time being.</p> <p>Corridor redecoration was completed on floors 1 and 2 as agreed but as the costs were becoming prohibitive, all further work has been completed by a number of current and former residents on a voluntary basis.</p>
5.	<p><u>Election of directors and company secretary</u></p> <p>The following were elected as directors - Steven Collinson, Tim Miller, Tony Oak, Linda Scott, Howard Seaton and Katja Seaton and Steven Collinson was reappointed to act as company secretary.</p> <p>Both Barry Foster and Rod Stapley resigned; we would like to thank them for their</p>

	<p>work over the years as RTM directors.</p> <p>It was agreed, so avoiding a lot of admin work, that the 3 new directors would be not be added as signatories to the bank account. As 2 signatures are required for all transactions the 3 continuing directors should be sufficient.</p>
6.	<p><u>RTM accounts 2020/21</u></p> <p>The accounts were approved by the meeting. These can now be submitted to Companies House by our accountant.</p>
7.	<p><u>RTM budget 2021/22</u></p> <p>A revised budget for 2021/22 (due to the large increase in legal costs) was circulated and after a great deal of discussion the meeting agreed to adopt option 1 of the 2 proposals circulated. The reason for this revised budget is to flag up to potential buyers, when we receive leasehold enquires from solicitors, that there is a potential service charge deficit this year; if we don't we could face a challenge at the First-Tier Tribunal. This <b><u>DOES NOT</u></b> mean that leaseholders need to make up this deficit from their service charge payments.</p>
8.	<p><u>Annual report</u></p> <p>This was circulated prior to the meeting.</p>
9.	<p><u>Service charges, water rates and RTM finances</u></p> <p>It was agreed to increase service charges in 2022/23 to compensate for any reduced maintenance expenditure in 2021/22 due to the slightly difficult financial position of the RTM – this financial year priority will be given to health and safety issues and emergency work that can't be put off.</p> <p>It is also likely that the monthly water rates payments will need to increase from October 2022 to reflect increased standing charges and unit consumption rates.</p> <p>When the RTM took over direct responsibility for managing Hughenden Court we inherited a debt of around £16k of unpaid service charges and water rates – this has now been reduced to around £2k.</p>
10.	<p><u>RTM sinking fund</u></p> <p>As there is no provision in our leases to collect sinking fund payments this has been put on hold. The monies collected from leaseholders is being kept in a separate bank account and those who paid have had their contributions set against this years' service charges. If we decided to reconsider establishing a sinking fund legal advice would need to be sought.</p>

11.	<p><u>Priorities for work going forward</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quotes are being obtained to start repointing the ground and 1<sup>st</sup> floor south and west facing elevations.</li> <li>• Some additional emergency lighting is required in the car park as highlighted at our last fire safety assessment.</li> <li>• Another rope access company have been contacted – they’re locally based (in Hughenden Road). Initially they will be asked to carry out a survey of the inaccessible wall adjacent to Hughenden Place which couldn’t be surveyed by Tim Cook.</li> <li>• No further progress has been made regarding carpet replacement – the estimated cost will be around £6500-£7000 per floor based on quotes received. To avoid going through a section 20 consultation only 1 floor could be done per year.</li> <li>• To repoint the remaining exterior a section 20 consultation would be needed. Repointing costs around £50 per square metre. We are currently unaware how much scaffolding would cost as previous quotes received do not show this a separate cost.</li> </ul>
12.	<p><u>Lease issues</u></p> <p>The directors made it clear to the meeting that from now on the RTM will be insisting that a licence to sublet <b>MUST</b> be obtained before a flat is rented out and that there has to be at least a 30 day gap between tenancies as the RTM has to consult with Vectis (our landlord) as required by the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002. The requirement to get a licence is clearly set out in either clause 3 (16) or 4.16 depending on your lease.</p>
13.	<p><u>Using an external managing agent</u></p> <p>(This was suggested as an item for discussion but after the AGM agenda had already been circulated)</p> <p>This has to be considered carefully after previous bad experiences and the impact this would have on service charges and our ability to then fund other work. We have received some suggestions as to who might be suitable but no decision has been made.</p> <p>In the meantime all leaseholders must work co-operatively with the RTM to avoid this becoming a necessity especially around the issue of subletting previously discussed in item 12.</p>

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 1pm.