

Committee Meeting with Hacking & Paterson

Date: March 12, 2025 7:00 PM GMT

Participants: Craig Freeland, Dasha Chan, Hazel Hutton, James McIntyre, Lhyam Sumal, William Chan - and Lynsey Hutchinson for Hacking & Paterson

Location: Microsoft Teams

Duration: 99 mins

Overview

During the recent Owners Association Meeting, key discussions centered on contractor quotes for grounds maintenance, with bids from Gordon Shanks, DSMCG, and Route 1 being considered, while current contractors Clean Sweep and McDonald Brothers were also evaluated. Concerns were raised about delays in appointing a new contractor originally planned for April, and the handling of resident complaints was addressed, including a potential proposal to make front garden maintenance optional. Additionally, issues regarding Scott Builders' responsibilities for common areas and unfinished work were debated, alongside confusion about bin removal logistics and playground maintenance. The group agreed on the need for clear contractor specifications and better communication with residents, culminating in plans for a follow-up meeting next week to discuss contractor options and resident updates, which will then be fed back to Hacking & Paterson. Action items were assigned to various members to ensure accountability in addressing these matters.

Notes

Contractor Quotes and Changes

- Discussing quotes from Gordon Shanks, DSMCG, and Route 1 for grounds maintenance
- Clean Sweep and McDonald Brothers are current contractors
- Gordon Shanks quote: £33,120 for Phase 1, £28,680 for Phase 2
- DSMCG quote significantly higher than others
- Route 1 have been asked to re-cost as their quote was not competitive
- McDonald Brothers currently charging £17,898 for Phase 2 but this would likely need re-costed if entering into a long-term agreement
- Clean Sweep currently charging £37,552 for Phase 1
- Concerns about delay in appointing new contractor, originally planned for April
- Quotes for Phase 2 are likely higher than McDonalds Brothers due to the number of areas not previously handed over from Stewart Milne

Complaint Handling and Communication

- Discussion on complaint percentages and tracking - not currently known
- Suggestion to make front garden maintenance optional. Lynsey will discuss this with Alastair to check the Deeds are the same across both phases
- Debate on whether to keep Clean Sweep for Phase 2 - although there was concern around the quality of this work
- Issues with lack of response to complaints from Hacking and Patterson - it was explained that there has been a reduction in the contact from Brackenhill Park and there is no current backlog of complaints outstanding
- Concerns about Scott Builders and unfinished areas

Scott Builders and Development Issues

- Scott Builders have notified Hacking & Paterson of house sale, implying acceptance of factoring services
- Uncertainty remains about Scott Builders' responsibilities for common areas
- Discussion on unfinished areas and who is responsible for maintenance
- Concerns about street lighting and grit bins in unfinished areas

- H&P are currently in communication with the solicitor acting on behalf of Scott Builders and will establish further clarity and a request to meet with the Owners Association

Bin Removal and Playground Maintenance

- Confusion over bin removal quote and whether it includes making the ground good - H&P will check and confirm
- Discussion on timeline for fixing the playground area after bin removal
- Concerns about billing residents for work not yet completed

Contractor Specifications and Resident Communication

- Need for clear specifications on what work contractors are expected to do
- The quotes received from potential contractors accounts for complaints and problem areas frequently raised by owners
- Discussion on how to communicate changes to residents - either the OA can put a proposal out or H&P can write to all residents
- Debate on whether to hold a town hall meeting or use online platforms

Future Meetings and Resident Engagement

- Plan for Committee to meet next Wednesday, 19th March at 7pm to discuss contractor options
- Discussion on how to update residents and encourage more feedback
- Suggestion to have residents copy owners association on complaints to Hacking and Paterson but that they should raise issues with H&P first

Community Issues and Facebook Groups

- Discussion about residents potentially taking communal land
- Confusion over multiple Facebook groups for different phases of the development

Planning Next Steps

- Agreement to meet next week and put out an update to residents
- Discussion on calculating complaint percentages

- Consideration of organising a town hall meeting or online meeting for residents

Action Items

Lhyam Sumal

- Calculate the percentage of complaints received and compare to the 3% target
- ~~Put a message in the chat for everyone about next Wednesday's meeting~~

Lynsey Hutchinson

- ~~Check with Alistair about the possibility of making front garden maintenance optional~~
- Provide a breakdown of average costs per house per phase for each contractor quote
- Contact McDonald Brothers for an updated formal quote
- Look into getting a fourth contractor quote
- Check the original bin removal quote to clarify if it includes making the ground good
- Contact Active Playground Management about timeline for fixing the playground area
- Follow up with Scott Builders about their responsibilities and agreements

Hazel

- Check the council website for any planning permission related to residents taking communal land