

Overview of CMO Residents' Meeting 13th October 2021

Please see below the slides that were presented at the Residents' meeting on Wednesday 13th October 2021 and an overview of the discussion held.

Appointment of Resident Director

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- The first resident director appointment is made by the Board as per The Articles (subsequent appointments made by Members at an AGM)
- All directors represent residents and hold a defined legal responsibility to the CMO (ie. to safeguard its interests)
- Residents are invited to comment on how best to involve existing residents in the appointment process
- Propose that appointment is made by the end of the Financial Year
- Process must be legal, transparent and meaningful



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Appointment of First Resident Director – Proposed Recruitment Process

- Recruitment pack published
- Interested individuals invited to a briefing session
- Applications submitted
- Applicants shortlisted by Board
- A group of residents participate with board members in a mock exercise with shortlisted candidates and provide feedback against a scoring matrix
- Residents put forward questions for the interview panel to ask
- Appointment Board (directors) interview candidates and make final decision based on all elements of the process



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Outcome from meeting:

General agreement was given to the above proposal, details will be more clearly defined and circulated to residents. We will start the process in January 2022.

Community Grants Fund Update

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- Meeting with residents and community stakeholders held on 30th September
- Secured £5k funding for first year
- Further resident engagement and input welcome
 - Criteria of grant
 - Volunteers to be part of Grants Panel
 - Terms of reference for Grants Panel
- Next Steps
 - Further residents meeting
 - Agree final terms
 - Create Grants Fund Pack and promotional literature
 - Go live January 2022



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Outcome from meeting:

General agreement was given for the approach to moving this forward. It was agreed the CMO will work with the attendees of the first meeting to move this on for a January 2022 launch, although this date could be brought forward if details have been finalised earlier. All residents are invited to contact us if they would be interested in being part of this process.

Community Action Update

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- Completion of the 'Welcome to Here' Project
 - Partnership with Ashford Borough Council
 - Working with the Repair Café at Singleton Environment Centre, the Primary School & residents
 - Link to the opening of the primary school
- Commissioning a community delivery organisation to provide some projects spring/summer next year
- Community Room – funding secured & looking at venues
- Footpath Improvements
- Resident's Christmas/Holiday Event



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Compliance Certificate Update

Compliance Certificate Update

- Progress has been made with some Barratt plots
- Challenges with Hodson plots
- Progress with Jarvis plots in train
- Next Steps
 - Continue to work with respective lawyers as quickly as possible to resolve remaining concerns
 - Request residents continue to pressure their conveyancer to provide accurate information to Knights
 - CMO will provide certificates as quickly as possible once information is accurate and complete



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Discussion:

About 30 certificates have now been issued on Barratt's plots, with discussion continuing with Hodson that have resulted in their solicitors making changes to mitigate the occurrence of future errors. Jarvis plots do not seem to be caught up in the same substantial issues at this early stage and outstanding paperwork is being chased through conveyancers.

It was discussed that the amount of genuine questions residents have regarding the detail of the RCDs underlines the importance that they are presented with the correct paperwork during the conveyancing process. The checking of this documentation before a Compliance Certificate is issued ensures this has happened, otherwise it needs to be rectified before a Compliance Certificate is issued.

The CMO are working to resolve the backlog as quickly as possible, please email hello@cmo.org.uk with any questions. However, your conveyancer should be your first port of call.

Community & Land Asset Adoption

Community & Land Asset Adoption

- CMO drafted a policy and adoption procedure which is being consulted on with developers and Local Planning Authority
- A meeting with Hodson has been requested to discuss managing assets under licence
- Handover of Jarvis lake expected late 2021/early 2022
- BDW formal adoption process to start early 2022
- CMO bound by legal agreements as to when management and maintenance can take place
- Quality of assets when handed over is important to safeguard RCD income and costs to residents in the long term



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Discussion:

The drafted adoption policy will need to be amended dependent upon the outcome of discussions with Hodson regarding taking on land under licence. CMO have requested a meeting on site with Hodson to further discussion regarding land to be maintained by the CMO.

The CMO will publish on the CMO website plans showing RCD areas.

Concern was raised by residents about parties' intentions concerning the handover of land. The CMO will continue their discussions with Hodson in order to progress the land maintenance. Multiple residents expressed that they didn't want the CMO taking over the maintenance of land that wasn't at the quality expected at cost to rent charge deed payers.

Question & Answer Session

Q: Why haven't Hodson handed over the Community Cabin?

A: Hodson have expressed concerns over safe access to the Cabin whilst the surrounding area is still a construction site. Residents advised that there were H&S professionals living on site who would be able to offer advice and will get them to make contact with the CMO. The CMO will continue to do everything they can to engage with residents in the absence of the Cabin. A compromise solution was discussed at a previous meeting between Hodson and residents where the access route would change as needed. Hodson advised that they will come up with a plan to accommodate this.

Q: Can the Cabin be moved elsewhere, even if over to the BDW side of the site?

A: There is a significant cost to moving the Cabin and also the provision of utilities to consider. Unfortunately these costs do not make moving the Cabin an option.

Q: Why is the Cabin located where it is?

A: The location of the Cabin was moved from that determined in the outline planning permission to take account that it would be located so remotely from any of the early homes. The new location was agreed between Hodson, the CMO and ABC.

Q: If Hodson are in breach, why don't the CMO have any power to obtain use of the Cabin?

A: The ability to enforce lies with the Local Planning Authority (LPA). The CMO has to go to the LPA to raise issues. The CMO have done this.

Q: The CMO has ABC representatives on the Board, why can't they communicate with staff at ABC to make things happen?

A: Those working on the CMO project have dual roles and at times there are conflicts of interest. Whilst issues and concerns can be raised, CMO staff are unable to influence Ashford BC processes.

Q: Why are residents being charged for Visitor Parking bays when the S.106 states these will be adopted by the highway authority?

A: Visitor parking bays adjoining the adopted highway will be adopted by the highway authority and not maintained by the CMO. Any visitor parking bays that do not adjoin the adopted highway will be charged for under RCD3.

Q: Developers are selling off visitor parking bays to plots. How do we know we will not be charged for them?

A: The LPA will check that all visitor parking bays on the planning application have been provided.

Q: Why are residents being charged for information relating to the status of their account with RMG?

A: If when selling a house your solicitor asks RMG for a Pre Contract Enquiries Pack there will be a charge for the provision of this. RMG will not charge you for asking the status of your rent charge account.

Q: Safe access to the Primary School has been talked about for a long time, like the Community Cabin it does not need 24 hour access. Why can't pedestrian access be given for specified times in the morning and afternoon?

A: Following previous discussions we are waiting to hear from Hodson with proposals. The offer of help from appropriately qualified residents was offered again and the CMO acknowledged they were happy to propose routes with this help to Hodson.

Q: Do the conflict of interests of board members affect their ability to represent the concerns of residents?

A: The board has a strict protocol which is in place and requires any conflicts to be disclosed and is considered and recorded at every meeting. All board Directors are duty bound to act in the best interests of the CMO, not their nominating organisations. The appointment of the Resident Director will provide another Director who is not nominated by either a local authority or developer.

Q: Why is there an argument to be had when the S.106 was written before the development started?

A: There are legal challenges currently taking place which have to work their way through the system.

Q: If the CMO have no power when it comes to enforcement relating to planning matters; how do residents raise their concerns with the planning authority?

A: The ABC Ward Member for Chilmington Green is the best conduit for feeding back concerns to the LPA. Contact can be made with Councillor Blanford via jessamy.blanford@ashford.gov.uk. The Chair of Great Chart & Singleton Parish Council offered to pass on a request for a meeting with residents to Cllr Blanford.