



Royale Dunton Court Residents Association

meeting date: 3/11/2022

Location: Royale Dunton Court Clubhouse

Start time. 20:00.

Finish time. 21:50

Present.

Chair: Gary Peckham

Secretary: Pat Stapleton

Treasurer: Sheila Hobman

Helping hands coordinator: Lynda Gould

Entertainment coordinator: Julie Raby

Diversity coordinator: Denise Rayner

Communications: James Hailes

+ One member observing.

Apologies

Pat Moore and Mick Hilton

1. The chair opened the meeting at 20:00. The chair went through Royale's responses to points members raised at our AGM on 6 October.

a) Firstly, a resolution was put to Royale that "This Association thanks Royale for clarification that the proposed entrance/exit points for the building works in the old touring caravan site will not impact on current residents. However the Association requests that more detailed plans are shared regarding the short and long term access to this site so residents can fully understand how this will work in practice?"

Royale responded to us that it was not possible to answer the question because "no confirmed development plans are finalised".

The committee discussed the matter and agreed to continue to pursue this with Basildon Council.

b) On the matter of speeding and vehicles going the wrong way up one-way streets. Royale confirmed that they will get their health and safety manager to attend the site in the coming weeks and compile a report. Royale will share this with us in due course and discuss plans that can be activated. The chair also told the committee that, to date, we haven't had a response to our own roads and street lighting report which was sent to the site office on 6 October.

c) At the AGM residents expressed concern about the future of security on site. Dunton is advertised as a safe, gated and secure community. There are no gates. There was also doubt cast over RoyaleLife's claims of 24/7 security/patrols because a member had been told recently that the patrols are not for the benefit of residents. Residents are therefore concerned that they've been sold a 'safe and secure environment' but now being told security is primarily to protect machinery on site.

In their reply, Royale only confirmed that vehicle gates will be installed at some point. The committee agreed to continue to monitor the situation.

d) At the AGM residents' asked if they were permitted to fit solar panels on their roof. Royale has responded to us that this would be permitted. Residents need to fill out a plot-works application available from the office. Residents would also need to use an approved installer and pass on Dunton's Meter Point Administration Number (also known as MPAN).

e) Residents' raised the issue of the pitch fee at the AGM and how it seemed some residents seem to pay a higher pitch fee than others on the site with a similar size plot.

Royale did respond to say they are unable to discuss individual residents' pitch fees and these are initially set at the time of purchase.

The chair added to Roayle's response by explaining that when you enter into a new agreement with a park site owner, they will set the pitch fee. If you think that initial fee is not appropriate (for example if you become aware that it is not the same as for similar pitches on your site) you can apply to a tribunal to change it. However, the law only allows people six months to apply to the tribunal.

f) At the AGM residents' expressed concern over increasing dog barking noise from a number of homes on site. The association is aware that the only dogs permitted in the park rules are registered assistance dogs which, by their very nature, wouldn't normally be left alone, so the association wondered if this is guest dogs impacting on residents. We asked Royale about this and they said that area manager Gail and her team will look into this further and feedback. The association agreed to work with Royale to minimise any noise nuisance.

2. A discussion was held about entertainment.

a) Ticket sales for the Elvis tribute night were just under 60. The committee agreed this was good news and we still have two weeks to go.

b) It was reported that the caterer for our December function had requested full payment and because tickets hadn't even gone on sale for December yet, this would nearly deplete the association's bank balance. The committee agreed to pay this invoice immediately and simultaneously work to get the Christmas party tickets on sale ASAP.

c) The committee also discussed the fact that although we've offered to help run events, the Association is expected to take all the financial risk. One of the things that's especially worried us is the fact that if the club is ever forced to close at short notice through staff illness (or any other reason) then we will be liable to pay for cancelled acts. We tried to mitigate the risk by offering Royale contingency plans but these had been rejected. The committee agreed that over the next few months we need to try and set aside a separate pot of money so that we're covered in the event of cancellations.

d) A discussion was held over the disappointment at having to abandon the plans to have a Halloween party. The chair explained that although we were aware that Kim would be on leave on the day we proposed, Royale said they were keen to keep the club open when Kim's off so we can press ahead with our plans in the hope they'd be able to recruit staff to cover Kim's absence.

Unfortunately this didn't happen so we were unable to proceed with ticket sales. James did update on social media to say we could not proceed, and the chair told members at the AGM. However, the committee acknowledged that we might not have reached everyone (some people don't use social media and weren't at the AGM). James explained that we need to encourage as many people as possible to use the website/Facebook for up-to-date news because it's really difficult to reach out to people quickly otherwise. The committee agreed that we should learn from this and in future, not advertise dates for the diary UNLESS staffing in the club was fully confirmed (although nothing can ever be guaranteed).

e) The committee discussed the launch of the Knit and Natter sessions which were being coordinated by Sheila.

f) The subject of ticket prices of events was discussed. The primary thing that determines a ticket price is the cost of the entertainment which varies greatly. The association also needs to think about ticket sales. If we commit to an act at a certain fee and can't sell enough tickets to cover this then we have to use money from our (already small) reserves. The committee agreed that when pricing events we should budget for 60 ticket sales.

g) Committee member Denise announced that she had secured a £300 donation to the residents' association from her union Unite. The committee passed on their thanks to Denise for this kind offer. James agreed to write to the union to thank them on behalf of the association.

Denise also said she was able to secure two A-boards to put outside our box office homes so that residents are clear where they can buy tickets for events.

h) The committee discussed the fact that Royale had said, any acts we hire must have their equipment PAT (portable appliance tested). James pointed out that PAT was not a legal requirement although many venues do make this a prerequisite of working in a venue.

The committee agreed that we should ensure that any acts we book have a PAT certificate to satisfy Royale's request. The committee decided it would be prudent of us to actually ask for a copy upfront so that we're not faced with a dilemma on that day if Royale staff ask for a copy and the act doesn't have it with them.

i) The chair reminded the committee that the bingo events were nothing to do with the association. When Royale agreed that we'd help with entertainment, they specifically said that the bingo should remain outside of our scope. Whilst some committee members helped with bingo it was important to acknowledge that this was in a personal capacity. We also noted that there had been requests for help buying new bingo equipment. However, as bingo is not managed by the association, bingo-regulars should be encouraged to talk to the office about this so equipment comes from their own funds. James also wanted it on record that the AKG radio microphone currently being used belonged to him and he'd lent to the bingo caller because the club's own microphone had become old and unreliable. At some stage James will need this back so it's important that the bingo team source their own equipment ASAP.

3. The chair explained to the committee how the pitch fee review works and how it's challengeable if considered unreasonable.

We discussed making sure we're prepared for the review (which we should get at the beginning of March 2023 and the committee agreed to start to make plans.

4. There were no questions from members.

5. Any other business.

a) James asked the committee to think about a mechanism to tell new residents about the work of the association and ask if they want to join us. James said that some residents had actually used the website to join directly off their own back and Julie also said that some people had asked her about joining so she visited them at their homes.

No date set for the next meeting.

Minutes taken by James Hailes because our new minutes secretary Pat Moore was unavailable.