



Eddington Residents' Association and Portal meeting  
Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8 March 2022 at 4.30pm  
Virtual meeting held via MS Teams

**Those present**

**Eddington Residents' Association (ERA)**

Pieter Desnerck, Chair

Margreet Vogelzang, Support officer

Marcus Maier, Support officer

**Portal / University of Cambridge**

David Attridge, Operations Manager at Eddington, University Estates Division

George Martin, Facilities Manager at Eddington, University Estates Division

Irene Wong, Operations and CS Assistant, University Estates Division

**1. APOLOGIES & INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed the group. Introductions were made.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed and are on the ERA website.

**3. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

Meeting for Estate Service Charge (ESC) customers: DA stated that the review of the ESC is conducted by external agency, to check that the ESC is in line with industry best practices and that the review should be ready in April. PD asked if residents will be informed prior to approving the new budget for the upcoming year. DA assured that residents will be informed.

Incident page and information: PD stated that Pauline Haggar has forwarded the form. MV confirmed that it is put on the ERA website under the FAQ section.

Responsibilities Map: GM had spoken to Hill's senior facilities manager, but there are boundaries to be clarified and will be meeting again. **[ACTION: GM to update]**

Composting Bin: PD stated that the Council has restarted collecting green bin (food waste). GM agreed that it was temporarily suspended in December and resumed in mid-January. GM chased the Council for an update on collection service on 24 February. Council replied that the collection is resumed on a fortnightly basis, which may cause pest problem where the bins are stored for council collection. Mears are obtaining a quotation from commercial waste company as an alternative.

Cleaning of the composting bins: GM is speaking with Mears about potentially moving the storage location in order that it is near a water source so regular cleaning of the bins can take place.

**4. REPORT OF ACTIVITIES**



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ERA:

- Open Door: last week 20-25 residents attended for an informal chat at Dutch. ERA provided first round of drinks and people chatted.
- Film club: SFC schedule is quite busy, ERA is looking for a date in April.
- An application for a community grant funding (scheme by City Council) was submitted in order to support ERA activities.
- ERA submitted a grant application to celebrate the Royal Jubilee. There are several stakeholder groups within Eddington potentially interested in organising Jubilee events and Portal is invited to organise activities in partnership for the Jubilee weekend. Potential activities discussed included a family picnic and fun day.

Portal:

- A parking review has been commissioned. It is due to be completed at the end of the month and recommendations will be made. Although there is a decrease in the number of complaints in about street parking, there is a rise in complaints in other areas. For example, Sainsbury's complaints about the usage of their car park by school parents. The parking review will take a holistic approach and will address these problems.
- Rising bollards: Their use is a condition under Section 106 Planning consent. Vehicles regularly using the bollard route such as buses are programmed on the ANPR (automatic number plate reader.) Occasional vehicles such as emergency vehicles need to have the bollard lowered manually using an intercom linked to the bollard. Currently this intercom has to be staffed 7am –7pm in order to operate the bollards, which has proved a significant problem. The solution is to move the intercom to the 24hr control room of the University Security Office. Other software and hardware problems are also being resolved. The target is to get all issues resolved in April. Portal is looking at alternative solutions to the rising bollards for the long term, that would still meet S.106 requirements.
- Action plan from the Residents' Forum: Portal has been working with Mears for outstanding service jobs which should be completed by the end of the month. Portal has been investigating and analysing complaints and defect reports to understand the underlying problem. At the same time, Mears has brought in a completely new team. Portal has restructured to better manage Mears to get the works done in a reasonable timeframe. There is ongoing improvement in operational delivery.
- Update on Resident Forum: We will aim at holding another one in April when the reviews are complete to provide a clearer picture.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

- Storm Eunice



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ERA reported that residents complained that the diversion signs were causing confusion. The signage used was left on site after the storm. **[ACTION: GM to investigate and remove if needed.]**

- Defect Response Time and Complaint Procedure  
PD noted that the number of complaints has decreased but suggested to keep an eye on social media especially on the nature of complaints.  
DA clarified the channel of communication around the complaint procedure. To raise a complaint about the service please use: [portal@eddington-cambridge.co.uk](mailto:portal@eddington-cambridge.co.uk)  
To communicate about everyday issues the Helpdesk email is:  
[Portal.Helpdesk@mearsgroup.co.uk](mailto:Portal.Helpdesk@mearsgroup.co.uk)

## 6. AOB

- Retail. DA updated all that the University has appointed external consultants for the commercial team on Eddington. They are targeting to bring in 3 new shops in the next 2 years.
- MV pointed out about the shopping trolleys abandoned in communal area. Portal wished to take a soft approach. DA suggested doing weekly collection of trolleys due to fire regulation requirement. DA noted that collection and returning the trolleys incur extra estate service charge. He suggested the Accommodation service team to approach respective residents about the cost for returning the trolleys. **[ACTION: GM to identify hotspot.]**
- DA remarked that in reviewing the comments from the Resident Forum, it was discovered that the complexity of Portal structure is causing confusion for residents. As Portal is seen the single point of contact to address issues in and around Eddington, customers naturally direct their complaints to Portal rather than the respective special purpose vehicles. There is a need to interact differently to manage customer expectation, to clarify the role of Portal and FM company, and to communicate the role of Portal to residents. DA plans to bring Eddington estate operation back to the University and simplify the organisation structure. ERA offered help in communicating any updated structure back to residents.
- PD enquired about the City Council's plan for Turing Way. **[ACTION: Travel team to provide information]**

## 7. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting on 14 June 2022; 4.30pm-5.30pm.