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## FSPM Report to the GRA AGM

Subject: Shoebury Garrison – GRA AGM

Date/Time: 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 7:30pm

Venue: Via Zoom video-conferencing

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### Item No. Item

Intro It's been another busy year, the start made somewhat more challenging by the restrictions imposed on us all by Covid and, over recent months, getting used to what seems to have become the new norm. We continue to work closely with the GRA, consulting with them on all major projects and attending their regular Committee meetings, albeit now via Zoom as opposed to the face-to-face meetings we were all used to attending.

Looking now at some of the key projects and areas with which we have been involved over the last 12 months:

1. **Inspections** –we have continued to maintain a program of regular inspections on the Garrison, the aim to identify repairs and housekeeping issues in the early stages and ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible. That's not to say that residents shouldn't contact us directly if they see issues affecting the communal spaces. We have also used these visits as an opportunity to meet with residents who have raised particular issues or concerns, and also to meet with and monitor the performance of contractors engaged on your behalf to ensure instructed works are being carried out to the required standard and that we are delivering value for money for those contributing towards the estate charges. We fully intend to continue this practice in 2022 and as such if you do have any issue or concerns then please contact us.
2. **Landscaping**– we are continuing to work closely with the landscapers and have undertaken regular inspections of the landscaped areas accompanied by their proprietor and, on occasion, with a representative of the GRA Committee. These visits

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are followed up with appropriate action plans and agreement of the annual re-planting programme which will include replacement of several section of box hedging.

The annual arboricultural survey has taken place and much of the recommended work to the trees for which the management company are responsible will be taking place before the undertaking of the mechanical sweeping of the unadopted roads and associated gully clearance, which are programmed for the 6th and 7<sup>th</sup> of December. As you are perhaps aware many of the Garrison trees are the subject of Preservation Orders requiring Local Authority approval before any work may be undertaken, this may well include those within certain of the private gardens on the Garrison and certainly something worth checking before undertaking work on any of your own trees.

3. **Estate Works** – Overall costs have been well controlled this year and indications are that the Estate charges will be brought in more or less in line with budget. We are looking at costs for the next 12 months and anticipate modest, inflationary increases in the main, however once again we will be reviewing reserve contributions to ensure as far as we are able that these are adequate to meet much of the future planned maintenance. One or two of the blocks have seen additional works required which has resulted in expenditure exceeding budget, however the leaseholders of those blocks have been made aware of the additional works and receive a full explanation along with any requests for additional payments.
4. **Major works projects** - Major ongoing maintenance works have involved the external redecorations and associated repairs to the conversion apartment blocks in Chapel Road and Horseshoe Crescent which has reached the stage of awaiting payment of the individual levies issued to fund the project. This will now only involve 4 of the original 6 blocks as the competitive tenders returned were disproportionate for two of the blocks and we will be contacting those lessees regarding a general review of the specification and the possibility of initialing a separate re-tendering exercise. Other projects undertaken in 2021 have included the treatment of low-level damp penetration in three of these same blocks.
5. **Shoebury Garrison Management Company Limited** – It was reported at last year's AGM that progress was being made in connection with the long-awaited transfer of

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control of Shoebury Garrison Management Company Limited to the residents. The main delay being the transfer of a number of small parcels of land to various parties and the registration of the same at Land Registry – to be fair to the developer the delay has been at the Land Registry itself, where we have seen significant delays in registration of titles during Covid.

We have quite literally, earlier today received confirmation that the transfers have finally been completed and we have been provided with various plans showing the full extent of the SGMCL's responsibility as a consequence of those transfers. Which will be reviewed during the course of the next few days. There are, I understand, a few housekeeping matters to be addressed around title restrictions, but am told having these removed is a formality.

We have, as advised last year, recruited a new board from Garrison property owners to take over from the outgoing board and held an initial discussion earlier in the year. We will now progress matters with the new board to effect the passing of the company to the residents, which I believe will also the issuing of replacement shares giving all owners equal voting rights within the Company. We will be contacting the new board members with an update and to arrange an early meeting. Further details will follow over the coming weeks and few months, I am sure.

- 6 **General** - Throughout the year we have received a good number of queries from individual residents which we have worked to deal with in a timely and, hopefully helpful fashion; such issues have included advice on neighbor disputes, noise complaints, planning issues, property sales, insurance matters as well as building repairs. Our responses have, when and where necessary, involved us communicating with external agencies including the DVLA, Land Registry, various departments of Southend Borough Council and Avant Homes, the successors to the original Garrison developers.

Parking issues once again seem to be a particular issue of concern for some residents and we would remind you all that estate covenants prohibit vehicles from obstructing the Garrison Roadways and restrict parking in all cases to private motor vehicles. The

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parking of commercial vehicles, caravans, trailers and the like is not permitted, even on private driveways.

We have in the past undertaken surveys of residents regarding the implementation of parking control schemes but these have received very mixed responses. We anticipate this becoming a key issue for the new board once appointed!

- 7 **IT Update** – One area I would wish to apologise for has been the late issuing of payment requests over the last 12 months and give a brief explanation as to the reasons for this.

At the tail end of 2019 we embarked on a major upgrade of our Property Management accounting and management software and were in the early stages of implementation when COVID struck. This effectively stalled the planned upgrade as, working remotely and with restrictions on face to face meetings, we were unable to have the necessary onsite training and technical support required. This led to significant delays in the roll out of the system. I am pleased to report that the upgrade is now back on track, with the Garrison fully integrated within the new system. This makes the issuing of payment request, payment management and client reporting a far simpler process, the benefits of which we are now starting to see.

- 8 **Closing** - That is really just a snapshot of some of the matters with which we have involved ourselves over the last 12 months. We will continue to look at other issues as and when they arise and are always happy to discuss with residents' particular areas of concern. Our brief as agents of the SGMCL is to some extent limited by virtue of the obligations set out in the various property titles and leases, however if an issue is raised concerning an area outside of our remit we will always try and direct you to the most appropriate person or organisation who can best assist.