

DRAFT

**WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMPANY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NO 68**

7.30 pm, Thursday 18 May 2017

Present: Adrian Olsen (Chair), Tao Tao Chou, Sally Duncan, Ann Hall, Nicholas Orme, Louise Robertson, Hilary Sorensen, Raquel Stremme, Mary Tovey, Elizabeth Wheeler

In attendance: Rebecca Burt and Rachel Dolacinski, FirstPort Property Services

Minute taker: Imogen Olsen

1 Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Adrian Mourby, Paula Reynolds and Brian Shine

Two new Directors, Elizabeth (Liz) Wheeler and Catherine Whitehead, had been elected at the AGM, and the Chair welcomed Liz to the meeting.

2 Minutes

Approval of the minutes from meeting 67, 14 March 2017

2.1 The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

3 Matters arising from the minutes

3.1 GreenSquare have now erected the fence at the back of Clearwater Place. The Chair has agreed to their request to put a lock on the gate.

3.2 Two more estate agent's signs have appeared at the end of EJW. There was no response when the Chair asked one of the agents to remove its sign and both signs have now been taken down.

3.3 No progress has been reported yet on the Frenchay Road parking consultation by the county council. It was noted that parking had become worse in Stone Meadow since lines were painted in EJW. There was some discussion as to whether the committee should hold an official view regarding a possible residents' parking zone for the whole estate and put pressure on the Council to consult on such a scheme. It was agreed to wait until July, by which time the revised Frenchay Road consultation by the county council might be under way.

3.4 The Welcome to the Waterways booklet has been printed, and copies were distributed at the meeting. Thanks were extended to FirstPort for an excellent production. It was thought that the map of the estate showing who was responsible for each area would be particularly useful. It was agreed that copies would be delivered by hand around the estate and that a director would organise this. FirstPort will send copies to absent owners and advise them that there is also an electronic version.

- 3.5 A director reported that the house in Complins Close which is being used as an HMO is to be sold in October. FirstPort's legal team are currently involved in this case.
- 3.6 FirstPort reported that the case of multiple letters being sent to all members re apartment block redecoration was a simple human error. Apologies have been extended.
- 3.7 Zip Cars parking space in Complins Close: FirstPort advised that if a resident allows someone from outside the estate to park regularly in their space, we can't interfere. It was agreed not to follow up this case.

4 Review of AGM

- 4.1 It was agreed that the AGM had gone very smoothly, and congratulations and thanks were extended to the Chair. After some discussion it was agreed that in future questions/comments should be taken after each item; these would then be minuted.

Following the few comments made at the Q&A session after the AGM, it was agreed that the Chair and Sub Committee leads would continue to read out the full Chair's Report as before rather than brief notes, with questions/comments invited after each section.

5 Allocation of Directors' Responsibilities

- 5.1 These would remain as for the previous year with the following changes: a director to leave ABSC and WRACIC Link, and join Scrutiny; a director to return to ABSC and remain Treasurer; a new director to join GSC; a director to become WRACIC Link. It was suggested that the other new director might join Scrutiny.

6 Committee Objectives/Key Issues

- 6.1 A list was circulated for discussion, and agreed with an amendment to the wording of one item and the inclusion of an additional objective. The revised list will be circulated to directors and posted on the website.

7 Railway line developments

- 7.1 The city council's Planning Review Committee had overturned the West Area Planning Committee's decisions to refuse Network Rail's applications regarding the imposition of silent track and the limitation on the number of trains. As a result, the Wolvercote group led a crowdfunding appeal to raise funds for legal advice on a possible judicial review against these decisions. The WRA acted as bankers for the c £12,000 raised and thanks were extended to them for doing this. However, the legal advice obtained was that there were no grounds for a judicial review and so this part of the campaign is at an end. Nevertheless the Chair attended a meeting with the Leader of the City Council, Cllr Bob Price, with Claus Spoerel from the WRA and representatives from Wolvercote, and the main point to emerge was Cllr Price's commitment to promote with Network Rail proper monitoring of noise and vibration to gauge whether further action might be needed in the future. If nothing comes of this, we may have to pursue our own monitoring. The

Chair was thanked for all his hard work.

8 Sub-Committee news round-up

8.1 Finance

8.1.1 Budget 2017-18: FirstPort had received no queries from residents regarding the new budget, although some apartment owners had been shocked by the increase necessitated by having to pay for new roofs. This underlined the need to build up reserves in future.

8.1.2 A meeting had been set up with the new auditors Wenn Townsend for Thursday 25 May. The Chair, the Treasurer and a FirstPort representative will attend.

8.2 Apartment Blocks Sub-Committee

8.2.1 FirstPort are still having difficulty in obtaining tenders for roof replacements. They have now decided to modify the usual tender process and perhaps adjust the requirements in a way that may be more acceptable to contractors, while still adhering to the requirements of section 20.

8.2.2 Carpet replacements are all proceeding as scheduled, with two blocks now complete.

8.2.3 Trial cleaning of rendering: FirstPort have obtained one quote for painting which suggests it may be as cheap to redecorate as to clean. However, we would prefer not to go down the path of regular render repainting if possible. Further quotes will be obtained for both repainting and cleaning, and then a decision reached.

8.2.4 The Asset Management Plans for apartment blocks drawn up by FirstPort contained errors. Revised versions have been prepared and are currently being checked.

8.2.5 The CCTV installations are now complete and are working well. A FirstPort representative is being trained in the software operation.

8.2.6 Problems with Airbnb lettings were discussed. FirstPort told how one owner had no idea that their apartment was being sub-let and was now trying to get out of their contract with their tenant who has been sub-letting other flats on the estate via Airbnb. There is yet another new instance of advertising short-term letting at 139 Frenchay Road and action is being taken. Constant vigilance is the answer.

8.2.7 The fridge dumped in the Clearwater Place refuse store has been taken away.

8.3 Gardening Sub-Committee

- 8.3.1 A multi-party meeting with Thames Water, Berkeley Homes and the city council re the silt build-up in the watercourse had been set up for 26 May and it was agreed that the water team should meet beforehand on Monday 22 May. A director reported that Councillor Tom Landell Mills was coming and seemed very interested in our problems. Councillor Liz Wade had promised to contact the Planning Department and ask them to send a representative.
- 8.3.2 The silt had been cleared from the balancing pond on 4 March by Lanes for Drains, who had done an excellent job, removing 24 tonnes of wet silt. It was agreed that FirstPort would request the same team for next year as they know what they are doing.
- 8.3.3 The swale-levelling work had been postponed because of heavy rain. There was some discussion of the general wetness of the grass in this area, and a director suggested that another form of drainage might be needed. It was agreed to wait and see what difference the levelling made before researching this.
- 8.3.4 It was agreed to postpone the next booking for Aquatic Solutions to clear the wildlife corridor of silt until November/December 2018.
- 8.3.5 The new planting along the wildlife corridor has been carried out and the plants are flourishing.
- 8.3.6 Police had attended a meeting with directors and Cllr Landell Mills to discuss antisocial behaviour by the lake. They had been very helpful and advised that residents who notice such behaviour should ring 101, the police non-emergency number. The police will also patrol the area more regularly, although their staffing levels have been cut. It was agreed that FirstPort would write to residents within earshot of the lake to inform them.
- 8.3.7 The canal murals had reached the next stage of the CRT Living Waterways Awards. A meeting with the judges was due to take place on Friday 19 May.
- 8.3.8 There had been another incident of fly-tipping at the end of Stone Meadow. The Chair had written to ask GreenSquare to remove the dumped sofa and they had agreed to do so. The Chair would check to see if it had gone.
- 8.3.9 A director has written to ask OCV if they could come again this autumn but had received no reply. She would now ask a member of the Watercourse Sub-Committee to back up her request.
- 8.3.10 The two bridges across the wildlife corridor had mysteriously been refurbished by Oxford City Council, presumably in error as OCC are not responsible for them. A director commented that the new non-slip surface on the southern bridge did not seem very long-lasting, and it was agreed that Evergreen would probably have to redo them next year.

8.4 Scrutiny Sub-Committee

8.4.1 New draft Management Agreement with FirstPort: response still awaited on WMC mark-up.

9 Feedback

9.1 There had been no new comments on the Feedback web page for over a year now.

10 WRACIC

10.1 WRACIC had kindly agreed to act as bankers for the railway crowdfunding exercise (7.1).

11 Managing Agent

11.1 Section 20 consultations were all proceeding according to plan. The Health and Safety review was now complete. The new dedicated email address for FirstPort had so far received 15 emails from residents.

12 Any other business

12.1 No new planning applications requiring investigation had been discovered.

It was agreed that there was no need for FirstPort to circulate the minutes of the AGM to all residents.

13 Date, time and location of future meetings

13.1 11 July, 3 October, 28 November (2017), 16 January, 13 March (2018) – all Tuesdays at 7.30 pm in the Community Room.