

WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMPANY
COMMITTEE MEETING
8.15 PM ON MONDAY 24th NOVEMBER 2008

MINUTES

Present: Nick Sampson (Chair), Margaret Bird, Diane Crocombe, Stephen Matthews (in part), Louise Robertson, Nick Robinson, Miles Thompson.

In attendance: Chris Attwater, Peveler.

Minute taker: Emma Thompson

1. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Peter Higgins and John Lapin.

2. **Private Business**

None reported.

3. **Approval of minutes from Meeting 15 (13/10/08)**

The minutes of the meeting were approved.

4. **Matters arising**

Meeting 12

4.1 Minutes of previous meetings on website *Completed*

Action: minutes and synopsis to be uploaded on to website by WRA.

4.2 Path on wildlife corridor (and meeting 16)– BH offer accepted and managing agent to respond to developer accordingly. *Ongoing*

4.3 Lighting on wildlife corridor (long term plan due to cost) *Closed*

4.4 Garden bin article in Waterways World *Ongoing*

4.5 Lake water quality (and meeting 15/16). Testing to be complete before the end of 2008. *Ongoing*

4.6 Lift defects (subject to issue of warranty certificates) *Closed*

4.7 PTSC minutes of meeting *Ongoing*

4.8 Timescales for revision of WMC welcome pack and Good *Ongoing* Neighbours Guide (meeting 14). First draft completed.

Meeting 14

4.9 Mortice lock investigation *Closed* (article for feedback in Winter 2008 WW edition)

4.10 OCHA garden maintenance *Ongoing*

4.11 GEM (Woodstock Lodge managing agents) garden maintenance *Closed*

Meeting 15

- 4.12 Retain broken mortice lock for analysis *Ongoing*
- 4.13 Discuss implications of mortice lock consultation with developer *Ongoing*
- 4.14 Confirmation of re-election and resignation of directors *Closed*
- 4.16 Potential election requirement of co-opted members. *Closed*
- 4.17 Draft letter to accompany accounts *Closed*
- 4.18 Response to be issued on resident delegated authority *Closed*
- 4.19 Report on progress against achievements for AGM *Ongoing*
- 4.20 Timetable and criteria for review of managing agents and Identification of performance measures by MARS after AGM. *Ongoing*
- 4.21 Peverel OM Ltd confirmed as managing agent for at least *Ongoing* the next 12 months.
- 4.22 Date of AGM and revisions to nomination form. *Completed.*

Meeting 16

- 4.23 Lift work to be reviewed six months after completion. *Ongoing*
- 4.24 Chair of GEM to be invited to meet Chair of WMC *Ongoing*

5. Report from Community Room Sub-Committee

It was noted that a paper for consideration by WMC shareholders at the forthcoming AGM on 2nd December 2008 had been circulated. A response from Shout! and OCHA on the proposed strategy was awaited and there was no guarantee these organisations would reply prior to the AGM.

6. Financial Update

It was recognised that a short summary would be needed at the AGM even though a financial statement had been circulated. It was felt important that the following issues were included in the report:

- as the WMC had gained an understanding of the complexities of the site it had become apparent that a number of expenses had not been included in the original estimates and some aspects had not been clarified by the developer. For example, a larger contingency fund would be required to cover the expenses of replacing or managing trees throughout the development, particularly by the lake and on the boundaries of the development. (See also report under Gardening Sub-Committee).
- Other expenses which had not been included were the maintenance of the pump for the lake, the railings relating to apartment balconies which, according to the lease, formed part of the fabric of the building rather than the responsibility of the apartment owner and the failure of the developer to detail service charges in respect of the commercial unit and the shared accessway to Clearwater Place (See also maintenance).
- Due to the tightening economic conditions, the WMC might have to review its priorities on expenditure.

Action: directors to prepare financial report and present it at AGM.

1. **Complaints Portfolio**

Nothing to report.

The complaints portfolio holder was thanked for their work during the year and it was generally agreed that working practices between WMC and the managing agents had improved with the development of agreed ways of working and policies. The chair explicitly thanked the estates property manager, however, it was recognised that there was still scope for improvement in respect of the customer service provided by the managing agents overall.

Action: directors to discuss with managing agents how relationships could be further improved.

2. **Report from Apartment Block Sub-Committee (verbal)**

It was discussed whether the committee should work within the confines of a small works limit of £1,000+VAT over which works should be tendered. It was **agreed** that in principle the ABSC should not expect to go to competitive tender for works under the £1,000 limit, however, this would not preclude them from having the flexibility to do so if, in their judgement, it would be in the interest of Waterways owners and vice versa.

It was suggested that the allocation of cleaning expenditure across blocks should be undertaken using a combination of criteria relating to the total area being cleaned and the complexity and therefore time taken to clean the block. The WMC unanimously supported this approach.

It was noted that maintenance of apartment balconies were included under the common structure and had to be paid for out of the apartment block contingency fund.

It was reported that after monitoring the performance of the lift operator, Kone, it was with regret that their contract had been terminated early and another contractor had been approached to supply quarterly servicing and incorporate lift telephone monitoring. Whilst the contract value was less it was noted that, unlike the previous contract, it did not include parts.

It was noted that apartment block leases only allow the WMC to maintain communal facilities in working order and not improve them. As a result of requests for owners relating to the functionality of aerials and satellite equipment it was agreed in principle that the communal aerials and satellite equipment could be upgraded and that a resolution should be put forward at the AGM as follows:

That the WMC should canvas each block and so long as at least 50% of those that register a preference agree to the proposed improvement, the works can proceed.

Action1: director to provide Chair with the low points of 2008 for inclusion in a paper for submission at the AGM.

Action 2: director to draft paper for AGM on issue concerning aerial and satellite equipment upgrade.

3. **Report from Gardening Sub-Committee (verbal)**

It was noted that the total cost of undertaking remedial work on trees around the development could come to £15,000 this financial year. It was recognised that due to health and safety reasons the work had to be carried out but that some action should be taken to establish whether the costs to Waterways owners could be reduced by establishing whether the developer had failed to manage the trees whilst it remained their responsibility.

Action 1: directors to draft letter requesting the Council to provide the tree survey which would have been necessary as part of the planning conditions and provide said information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

Action 2: managing agents to draft suitable letter for issue to Berkeley Homes for review by Chair.

Action 3: directors to monitor and notify GSC of any blocked culverts to avoid the potential for flooding on the development.

Action 4: director to include an article in the next edition of Waterways World on culverts.

Action 5: directors to advise GSC if they know of anyone who would be willing to update the landscape management plan for no fee, which had originally been prepared by the Environment Agency.

4. Report from Parking and Traffic Sub-Committee (verbal)

It was noted that a number of responses had been received to the consultation which indicated that the hot spots on the development were the entrance to Elizabeth Jennings Way and the canal bridge. It was reported that the local police had also taken action by advising owners who had parked their cars in dangerous areas that it was contrary to the highway code.

5. Health & Safety

A poor response had been received to the mortice lock article despite the WMC being aware of several serious instances being reported to them verbally.

Action: directors to encourage individuals on the third phase to submit the problems in writing.

6. WRA Matters

It was reported that the WRA would be asking the WMC to consider funding part of its operating costs again. The WMC felt that it had been a good use of funds with the WRA providing a communications service for the WMC. It was agreed that the request for funding should be received sympathetically. It was noted that only requests exceeding the previously agreed limit of £400 would require formal approval at the AGM.

The WRA had already advised the Secretary for the AGM that a paper would be presented. Unfortunately the Treasurer had since suffered a serious technology failure and, whilst a paper could not be guaranteed, the Treasurer would be in attendance to provide a verbal report to the WMC at the AGM.

7. OCHA Matters

None reported.

8. Maintenance update

Whilst the list remained long a significant number had been resolved or completed. A paper was received on the proposals to secure contributions from the commercial block owners and OCHA for the upkeep of Clearwater Place as users and residents currently have the right to use the access road from Elizabeth Jennings Way but did not pay towards its maintenance.

It was **agreed** that a schedule should be added for OCHA for the sum of £300 which would be index-linked and that the commercial block and its parking spaces should be added to schedules 1 and 3 accordingly.

Action: managing agent to update schedules and discuss any particular issues of concern relating to wider maintenance with directors outside the meeting.

9. Report from AGM Sub-Committee (verbal report)

It was reported that the agenda would be finalised after 29th November when it would also be known how many would be voting by proxy.

Action1: directors to discuss practicalities relating to the use of voting slips and confirm arrangements with managing agents.

Action 2: directors to arrive at venue from 7.30 pm onwards to assist with the room set up.

Action 3: directors to encourage shareholders to nominate themselves for committee.

10. Date of next meeting

No date was suggested but it would be after the AGM. Potential items for discussion would include:

- a. Designating the roles of Chair, Treasurer and Secretary
- b. Discussion on whether parking bays should be marked.

Glossary:

ABSC Apartment Block Sub Committee
AGMSC Annual General Meeting Sub Committee
CRSC Community Room Sub Committee
GSC Gardening Sub Committee
OCHA Oxford Citizens' Housing Association
PTSC Parking and Traffic Sub Committee
MARSC Managing Agent Review Sub Committee
WRA Waterways Residents' Association