

WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMPANY
COMMITTEE MEETING
8.00 PM ON MONDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2009
MINUTES

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

Minute taker: Emma Thompson

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Peter Higgins and Chris Attwater.

2. Private Business

None reported.

3. Approval of minutes from Meeting 16 (24/11/09)

The minutes of the meeting were approved.

4. Matters arising

Meeting 12

4.1 Path on wildlife corridor (and meeting 16)– developer's offer accepted and managing agent to respond to developer accordingly. *Ongoing GSC*

4.2 Garden bin article in Waterways World *Closed*

Action: director to issue draft through chair before distribution to Waterways World editor.

4.3 Lake water quality (and meeting 15/16). The testing had been completed and the results appeared to be within required norms. *Closed*

4.4 PTSC minutes of meeting *Ongoing*

4.5 Timescales for revision of WMC welcome pack and Good *Ongoing*

Neighbours Guide (meeting 14). First draft completed.

Action: directors to review and identify what should be incorporated in the guide and decide whether it should be identified as a 2009 priority. It was also noted that the Peverel Welcome Pack needed significant re-drafting to take into account the changes in management which had occurred since the establishment of the development.

Meeting 14

4.6 OCHA garden maintenance *Ongoing*

Meeting 15

4.7 Discuss implications of mortice lock consultation with developer *Closed*

Action: director, in view of the limited feedback from the Waterways World article, to write a second article reporting that the lack of response meant that those with problems would need to take the matter up privately with Berkeley Homes.

4.8 Timetable and criteria for review of managing agents and Identification of performance measures by MARS after AGM. *Ongoing WMC*

Action: directors to consider whether it should be considered a priority for 2009.

Meeting 16

4.9 Lift work to be reviewed six months after completion. *Ongoing ABSC*

It was reported that the new lift contractor had identified a number of problems with the lift construction which it had discussed with the developer. The developer was due to rectify the points raised at no charge to the management company.

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| 4.10 | Chair of GEM to be invited to meet Chair of WMC
It was considered inappropriate to invite the Chair prior to confirmation of the changes in the committee make-up subsequent to the AGM. | <i>Ongoing</i> |
| 4.11 | Request Oxford City Council to provide Waterways tree survey paperwork. | <i>Closed</i> |
| 4.12 | Managing agents to draft letter on trees to developer for review by Chair. | <i>Ongoing</i> |
| 4.13 | Write article on culverts for next Waterways World
Action: director to issue draft through chair before distribution to Waterways World editor. | <i>Closed</i> |
| 4.14 | Updating of the landscape management plan.
It was noted that nobody had come forward to undertake this task for no or little cost to the management company. It was recognised that this remained an issue and that a watching brief would be retained to identify a suitable person who might be able to complete the task. | <i>Closed</i> |

5. Election of Officers (chairman, secretary, treasurer/financial director)

- 5.1 The out-going Chair was thanked for their contribution in progressing the role of the WMC which had a much better understanding of how to manage the estate and its managing agents.
- 5.2 MT confirmed his willingness to act as Chairman to the Management Committee. There were no other candidates. MT was duly elected Chair.
- 5.3 The committee then considered all the positions required to run the management company and to agree roles accordingly
- 5.4 The Chair took over responsibility for arranging meetings and overseeing the issue of minutes. In the absence of any other responsibilities specific to the post of Secretary it was agreed that the position of Secretary to the Management Committee be suspended.
- 5.5 No appointments were made to the Managing Agents Review Sub-committee (MARS). Given the other responsibilities of the management committee, the decision still needs to be taken whether a formal review should be undertaken in 2009. Meanwhile, the current managing agent remains under continual informal review. The GSC and ABSC will automatically be monitoring the managing agent and its suppliers and the TSC can examine selected issues.

6. New committee member

A member had expressed an interest at the WMC AGM in participating on the committee and had been invited to attend the meeting. No response had been received from them.

7. Report from Community Room Subcommittee

- 7.1 It was noted that further correspondence had been made with OCHA/Shout! about the strategy and with the City Council over the planning status of the room but no responses had been received to date.
- 7.2 An email had been received from the managing agent concerning legal work undertaken on the draft lease. It had been agreed with the managing agent that the management company would only have to contribute 50% of the total costs incurred, and this too might be waived. Following receipt of an invoice from the solicitors, the managing agent was now seeking a contribution from the Management Company toward the costs incurred to date; about £200. A response had been issued to the managing agent informing that because the solicitors had undertaken work without instruction and had not pursued items which they had been explicitly asked to do, the Management Company would not contribute anything..

7.3 The committee expressed their gratitude for the work undertaken during the year and for the paper prepared for consideration at the AGM.

8. Financial update

8.1 It was discussed whether, given the current economic climate, the Company needs to revise its procedure for dealing with those who fail to pay their service charges on time. It was agreed to not make any changes to the current procedures and that all late payment should continue to be chased.

9. Complaints portfolio

9.1 Two items were drawn to the attention of the committee:

- i) A complaint about the Company's approach to late payment of service charge.
As per the decision above (8.1), it was agreed that the managing agents should continue to follow the due process in order to secure the funds owing.
- ii) A complaint about parking at the west end of Lark Hill.
A number of directors, including the Complaints Portfolio holder, had an interest in this item. The complaint will therefore be referred to the GSC to resolve.

9.2 It was noted that an escalation procedure was required so that complaints were dealt with by the appropriate bodies. (See priorities 2009).

10. Report from Apartment Block subcommittee

10.1 In response to the resolution passed at the WMC AGM on the aerial upgrade within a number of apartment blocks, it was reported that the committee would be assessing the likely cost per block for the necessary works. Owners would be notified of the investment required during the consultation period to those blocks concerned.

10.2 It was noted that a number of apartment owners had been charged ground rent twice following the sale of the freehold by the developer. The situation had been rectified and the managing agent had been asked to issue invoices for ground rent and service charge separately. The ABSC would monitor the situation.

11. Report from Gardening subcommittee

11.1 A comprehensive tree survey had been received from the Council in response to the request under the Freedom of Information Act.

Action: It was agreed the GSC in conjunction with the chair would review the information to determine whether any further discussion should take place with the developer over the maintenance costs incurred during 2008.

11.2 A letter had been received from Kidsunlimited asking the WMC for permission to erect temporary advertising for a period of 24 months. The chair declared a conflict of interest and abstained from any further involvement on the matter.

11.3 The committee believed allowing a sign could set a precedent for the future and whilst there was a degree of empathy for the nursery, which the committee wanted to see succeed, the reasoning for the signage in attracting passing custom did not seem justified. It was felt that anyone looking for a nursery was more likely to find them through either word-of-mouth or the yellow pages.

11.4 A vote was taken and the motion to allow the temporary advertising was denied with 4 against the advertising and 2 in favour of it.

Action: the managing agent to be instructed to write back to Kidsunlimited stating the WMC's refusal to allow the advertising.

12. Report from parking and traffic subcommittee

12.1 It was noted that the developer had passed to the County Council a certificate of completion of works. This meant Elizabeth Jennings Way, part of Stone Meadow and Lark Hill would be adopted within the next few months.

12.2 The on-line consultation was now closed. It had highlighted three major concerns – the need to make official, and complete, the double yellow lines at the entrance to the development, the preference to put double yellow lines on the canal bridge on Elizabeth Jennings Way and the need to improve the traffic calming measures.

12.3 A summary of the email responses had been sent to the County Highway Authority who would be using these to inform plans for the estate alongside a resident consultation exercise.

Action 1: WRA AGM minutes which also formed part of the consultation to be forwarded to the County Highway Authority.

Action 2: Issue letter to the developer (cc County Highway Authority) about the noise and ineffectiveness of speed bumps.

Action 3: Issue letter to Council asking for a 20 mph speed restriction on arterial roads within the development.

13. Health and safety issues

None reported.

14. WRA matters

14.1 It was noted that the funding ceiling had been set at the AGM at £1,200 and the WRA would now need to make a request for the amount required for 2009.

15. OCHA matters

None reported.

16. Maintenance update

16.1 **Action: managing agents to forward copies of issues to the chair prior to future meetings.**

17. Preparation for AGM

- 17.1 Those responsible for the organisation were thanked for their hard work. It was suggested that the quorum should be reduced to avoid the need to hold a second meeting as a result of a low turnout. The number would have to be sufficient to out-vote the committee which meant that the minimum number would have to be 25. Time constraints meant that the item was deferred to the next meeting.
- 17.2 In the meantime, it was agreed that further work would be required to encourage owners to attend the AGM in 2009 which should take place in late November.

18. Priorities for 2009

- 18.1 Further discussion would be required at the next meeting. A number of items had been highlighted throughout the previous discussion including MARS, welcome pack and good neighbour guide and complaints escalation.
Action: directors to consider other items and notify chair prior to next meeting.

19. Date of next meeting

- 19.1 It was agreed that the committee should meet on the second Wednesday of every other month at the Anchor. Future dates would be:

11th March
13th May
8th July
9th September
11th November (pre-AGM)
Late November - AGM
9th December (post-AGM)

Items to be discussed at the next meeting include:

- i. Priorities for 2009 – including MARS, welcome pack and good neighbour guide, complaints escalation
- ii. Marking of parking bays
- iii. AGM quorum