

**WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMPANY**  
**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NO.28**  
**7.45 PM ON WEDNESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2010**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Miles Thompson (Chairman), Mirielle Levy, Louise Robertson, Paula Reynolds, Nick Robinson, Raquel Stremme, Derek Summers, Peter Higgins, Nicholas Orme.

**In attendance:** Rebecca Hill (Managing Agent)

**Minute taker:** Emma Thompson

**1. Apologies**

Richard Dorey (WRA).

**2. Private Business**

None.

**3. Approval of minutes from meeting 27 (14/07/10)**

The minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record subject to the removal of an 's' from Rebecca 'Hills'.

**4. Matters arising**

4.1 The minute taker reported that she had again followed up with the WRA webmaster but still no action had been taken. They kindly agreed to pursue the matter again – *open*.

4.2 The Managing Agent confirmed that there was nothing in the Memorandum & Articles which would preclude the WMC from appointing a previous director to undertake the role of Committee Secretary. As determined by Clause 3, sub-clause 3.1.2, the Management Committee had the authority to appoint staff as it saw fit to administer the estate. The Chairman confirmed that the individual had been contacted and had re-affirmed their willingness to undertake the role (item 4.2).

**RESOLVED**

To implement the necessary arrangements in order to delegate activity to the Committee Secretary.

4.3 Two directors commented that they remained unable to access Google documents, the shared area for directors of the Management Committee (item 4.3).

**RESOLVED**

Chairman to provide guidance to directors concerned.

- 4.4 The director who was taking over the responsibilities of Treasurer had notified other Committee members, WRA Chair, OM and Critchleys of this change in responsibility (item 6) – *closed*
- 4.5 OM Property Management had contacted Critchleys accountants to confirm the timetable of production of the management accounts – *closed*.
- 4.6 OM Property Management confirmed that they had written a letter of refusal to the resident who had made an application to build on a neighbour's roof space (item 8.7.1) – *closed*.
- 4.7 OM Property also reported that it had written a response to the correspondent enquiring about the possible installation of CCTV (item 8.7.2), had engaged a cheaper contractor to repair emergency lighting (item 8.9.1) and had referred the issues of remedial works to lifts and the costing of the cartaker role to the ABSC (item 8.9.2) – *closed*.
- 4.8 The Director for Complaints had replied to those residents who had raised concern at the poor state of planting in Lark Hill – *closed*.
- 4.9 Subsequent to the decision made by the GSC concerning the maintenance of the wildlife corridor adjacent to Bainton Road, the police had advised that the current defensive planting of brambles was the best deterrent against disruptive behaviour adjacent to those properties along Bainton Road. As a result, it had been decided to retain the status quo – *closed*. It was noted that funds that would have been spent on that area could now be directed for maintenance across other parts of the development.
- 5. New Directors**
- 5.1 The Chairman reported that since the last WMC meeting he had received four expressions of interest from residents to become directors. Three had completed statements for review by the Committee. The fourth person remained interested but the Chairman had been unable to discuss the role with them any further.
- 5.2 Two individuals from the same property had expressed a desire to become directors of the Management Committee. OM Property Management confirmed that whilst both could become directors they would have to share a vote at the Committee and AGM.

## **RESOLVED**

WMC agreed to co-opt Richard and Sally Doyle subject to them being appraised of the one vote rule and agreeing to this restriction. [Post meeting note: they have subsequently confirmed they understand the voting restriction and are both happy still to become directors – OM to send them relevant forms]

Nicholas Orme was also co-opted on the basis that this would give him sufficient opportunity to find out what the role entailed before considering whether to resubmit his name for endorsement at the AGM, next March.

## **6. Health and Safety**

- 6.1 The Chairman had still to forward the details from the Health & Safety Report produced for 2009/10 to OM Property Management in order to confirm that all actions had taken place (item 5.5) – *open*.
- 6.2 The tree adjacent to the boundary with the Waterways development in Lark Hill which had previously caused damage within the estate had been felled and no longer remained a hazard (item 5.2) – *closed*.
- 6.3 OM Property Management had issued a letter to residents urging vigilance and which cautioned leaving windows open on the ground floor. This had been distributed to residents on 27<sup>th</sup> July – *closed*.
- 6.4 No other health and safety matters were reported.

## **7. Update from Managing Agent**

- 7.1 Subsequent to the Committee's discussion concerning the request to consider the installation of CCTV, a further letter had been received reporting the theft of bicycle parts and calling again for the installation of CCTV. The Committee agreed that CCTV was not a proportionate approach or practical response to the level of crime within the development.

### **RESOLVED**

OM Property Management to draft a letter and send to the Chairman for approval before issue to the complainant. (Post meeting note: further liaison with OM and Minute Taker has established that Chair's intention on this was not clearly expressed at the meeting and that it had been understood by OM that the instruction was to copy the letter to the Chair, which has been done.)

## **8 Items from WRA**

- 8.1 The Lead Director of External Affairs confirmed that a communiqué had been issued to OCHA stating the WMC's disappointment at not being consulted on the change to the Rackham Place signage – *closed*.
- 8.2 A fire safety article had been prepared for inclusion in Waterways World – *closed*.
- 8.3 At the last meeting of the WRA concern had been expressed by a canal resident that the waste contractors, Biffa, had been finding it difficult to gain access to the bin store situated on the canal. It remained unclear what obstruction within Complins Close was generating the problem as the contractors responsible for removing the domestic waste from the Close were not having similar issues. Biffa would have to come on site and explain their concerns if the situation was to be resolved.

### **RESOLVED**

OM Property Management to assess the state of cleanliness of the bin store to establish whether the problem remained. If there did not appear to be a problem then there would be no need to contact British Waterways.

OM Property Management reported that the right of access through Complins Close to access the bin store was still under investigation – *open*.

**9. Appointment of a new Chairman to the Management Committee**

- 9.1 The current Chairman reported that he would have to tender his resignation with effect from the end of this meeting due to increasing work commitments. He stated that he would remain a director and in particular would continue to pursue the lease for the community meeting room. He thanked the Committee for its support.
- 9.2 After considerable discussion, Louise Robertson volunteered to take on the role until the March AGM but, in order to complete this role, she would rely heavily on support from Committee members particularly because she was already heavily involved in ABSC and GSC.

**RESOLVED**

Louise Robertson was appointed to the role of Chair with effect from the end of the meeting.

**10. Maintenance of landscape areas used for informal play**

- 10.1 The Lead Director for Complaints reported that he had been in discussion with residents at Lark Hill who had concerns over the landscape areas and two opposing perspectives were clearly evident amongst residents. After a long discussion it was agreed that proposed designs should be commissioned based on the following criteria
- the area would remain safe for toddlers but would deter ball games
  - the scheme would enhance the visual amenity
  - should not include the planting of additional trees due to the poor soil conditions
  - should exclude the provision of benches
  - would involve the removal of grass and the surrounding hedge but none of the other remaining landscape planting.

OM Property Management felt that they could ask their suppliers to provide designs for no fee.

**RESOLVED**

OM Property Management to invite landscape designers to prepare a plan for the use of the area including approximate costs for implementation. Three choices would be drawn up and circulated to WMC members who would confirm whether they were happy for a consultation with residents to ensue based on the designs presented. Following the circulation of designs to residents in Lark Hill to obtain their comments, a final decision would be made by the WMC at its November meeting. It was recognised that as all residents across the development would have to pay for the final solution, the final decision should therefore remain with the WMC.

GSC members to advise Managing Agent of those plants which have failed to establish to avoid the planting of similar shrubs.

Director of Complaints to advise resident(s) of Lark Hill of the action being taken.

## **11 External Affairs**

11.1 Nothing to report.

11.2 [Post meeting note: At the July meeting an action was set for the Managing Agent to investigate the potential of raising a surcharge when properties change ownership, to cover the cost of incidental damage caused by removal companies. OM had investigated and reported back to the Chair. OM reported that there are no powers available to the WMC to impose a surcharge.]

## **12 Complaints**

12.1 OM Property Management re-affirmed that as a result of a designated account manager being put in place for the Waterways development it would be possible to provide a synopsis of email complaints – *closed*.

### **RESOLVED**

Director of Complaints to follow up to ensure this information is made available in future.

## **13 Garden SubCommittee**

13.1 Nothing to report.

## **14 Apartment SubCommittee**

14.1 Nothing to report.

## **15 Parking and Traffic SubCommittee**

15.1 No progress had been made on the adoption of the roads within the development, as reported by County Councillor. The Chair reported that officers at the County Council had reported to him that the paperwork remained with British Waterways. The company was being chased by both the Council and Berkeley Homes to resolve the matter.

### **RESOLVED**

Director to pass on British Waterways contacts so that new Chairman can draft a suitable letter of concern to put pressure on the company to progress the adoption of the roads.

## **16 Community Room SubCommittee**

16.1 OM Property Management was thanked for paying for the ongoing legal fees to progress the issue. The lease was now with the WMC lead director for checking before submission to the freeholder's solicitors.

## **17 AGM SubCommittee**

- 17.1 The Committee was advised of a new date – 22<sup>nd</sup> March – with fall back date of 6<sup>th</sup> April. St Margaret's Institute had been booked. A formal notice would be issued after Christmas. In the meantime, an article would be included in the next edition of Waterways World.

### **RESOLVED**

Chair to draft an article for inclusion in Waterways World.

## **18 AOB**

- 18.1 It was noted that the accounts would have to be agreed before the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

### **RESOLVED**

To delegate authority to the Treasurer and Chairman to approve the accounts for submission to the AGM.

- 18.2 The local city councillor had notified the Chairman of the Committee that, due to a restructuring at the City Council, a new community team had been appointed for North Oxford. They had been invited to tour the St Margaret's Ward on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October and were likely to be in the vicinity of Kids Unlimited by 2.45 pm. Anyone from the Committee who would be available at that time was welcome to introduce themselves and identify any potential issues of which the community team should be aware.

### **RESOLVED**

Chairman to forward a copy of the email received for members of the Committee to inform the city councillor if they would be available.

- 18.3 At a recent meeting of the Canalside Partnership Group, a proposal had been raised by the lead City Councillor for Jericho and Osney, to invest in some planting along the stretches of canal path which had been resurfaced. It was anticipated that volunteers would be responsible for planting and maintenance.

### **RESOLVED**

Director to prepare an article requesting volunteers to contact lead City Councillor for Jericho and Osney in the next edition of Waterways World.

- 18.4 The Committee thanked the current Chairman for his commitment to the role at the close of the meeting.

## **19 Date of next meeting**

- 19.1 Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2010, Anchor, 7.45 pm