

WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMPANY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NO.36
7.30 PM ON MONDAY 30 JANUARY 2012

MINUTES

Present: Miles Thompson (Chairman), Mireille Levy, Sally and Richard Doyle, Derek Summers, Raquel Stremme, Nicholas Orme.

In attendance: Rebecca Hill (Managing Agent)

Minute taker: Emma Thompson

1. Apologies

Louise Robertson, Martin French, Nick Robinson, Paula Reynolds, Richard Dorey (WRA).

2. Private Business

None.

3. Approval of minutes from meeting 35 (21/11/11)

The minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record.

4. Matters arising

4.1 None. All included as substantive items on the agenda.

5. Health and Safety

5.1 It was reported that OM was still to meet with the local fire officer to determine a suitable solution to the parking of a mobility scooter within the communal part of 2-32 Elizabeth Jennings Way.

RESOLVED

That the Apartment Block Sub Committee should seek a resolution with the owner.

6. Update from Managing Agent

6.1 Despite notifying a resident that the placement of a bin adjacent to hedging was obstructing remedial planting, no progress could be made to rectify the damage to vegetation until the resident concerned co-operated.

RESOLVED

That the Gardening SubCommittee monitor the situation and, when possible, complete the planting.

- 6.2 It was noted that no further communication had been received from the new owner of the house by the lake regarding their desire to purchase some additional land.

RESOLVED

That the Gardening SubCommittee should be delegated to liaise with OM concerning the legal position regarding the ownership of the land if any further correspondence was received.

- 6.3 The planning permission for an additional property to be built adjacent to 26 Stone Meadow had been reviewed by the Chair. In addition, the owner's solicitors had confirmed that planning consent was in place and works had commenced. The trees which were the subject of the request for removal remained in situ. OM reported that the buyer had confirmed that they would be willing to replace the poplars at their expense. Whilst the estate's gardeners had not recommended their removal it was not inconceivable that the construction process would damage the root system of the nearby trees which would result in the WMC incurring costs at a later date to replace them. The practical solution was to accept the offer from the buyer to replace the trees with planting of the WMC's choice.

RESOLVED

That the Gardening SubCommittee should be delegated to enter into an agreement with the developer of the new house to replace the trees with a planting scheme of the GSC's choosing.

- 6.4 The OM Consents Department had informed the owner of 49 Stone Meadow that there was no objection to the proposal for a single story extension to the rear of the property, subject to the necessary Council approval being obtained and neighbour consultation undertaken.

7 Items from WRA

- 7.1 Members of the Residents' Association and the WMC had met with the local city councillor concerning the use of the community room on the development. It had been agreed that a sensible way forward would be to establish a Community Interest Company (CIC) or social enterprise to complete the necessary legal requirements and seek volunteers to undertake the booking arrangements. It was noted that the WRA may seek funding from the WMC to undertake this task.
- 7.2 The WMC was notified that a firm of solicitors had agreed to review the lease and give their opinion but further details would be required in the absence of the director who had negotiated these arrangements.

8 Subcommittee round-up

8.1 Treasurer

- 8.1.1 An estimate for the forthcoming year's service charge would need to be confirmed before the end of April. One item which could have a significant impact on some apartment block residents was the need to increase the current lift maintenance

reserve fund. It had been established that the current cost to replace a lift was circa £60,000. The lifts were now 10 years' old and as more time passes then spare parts will become increasingly difficult to source. Typically, lifts had an average life span of 20 years for this reason. It was considered essential that the contingency fund should be increased but further consideration should be given to the options available to secure the higher contribution. For example, contributions could be collected on an escalation basis.

RESOLVED

The Chair to mention the item in their report to the AGM to warn residents that charges would be introduced from 2013.

That the Apartment Block SubCommittee should review the options for introducing the higher rate of reserve fund contribution and report back to the WMC at a future meeting.

- 8.1.2 A resident had enquired whether a line could be introduced in the management accounts highlighting the payments made to the WRA. Given that the level of payment was so low it was felt that this could start a precedent of requests which could lead to lengthy accounts. A better solution was to include mention of the payment in the covering letter to the accounts, particularly as the payment had been ratified by members at an AGM.

RESOLVED

That the Chair should reply to the resident stating that a statement would be included in the covering letter to the accounts.

8.2 Apartment Block Subcommittee

- 8.2.1 Nothing to report.

8.3 Garden Subcommittee

- 8.3.1 Culvert

Following a threat to make a formal complaint, the County Council had finally replied to OM regarding the culvert. However, it remained unclear whether the Council understood where the culvert was located as they had inferred that the drainage ditch was not silted and did not require any works. OM had photographic evidence which would be sent to the Council with an invitation to inspect the asset on site.

RESOLVED

OM to write to the Council asking them to view the culvert on site, to determine what action should be taken.

- 8.3.2 Resurfacing of parking and manoeuvring areas on west side of Cox's Ground

Having conducted a review of the entire estate, it had been established that around 200 properties had the same surface conditions for their parking. The surfacing in

Cox's Ground was no worse than elsewhere and remained an aesthetic issue rather than one of health and safety. The WMC would not be using funds to resurface the spaces at this time.

RESOLVED

OM to notify the residents of the WMC's decision and provide a draft of the letter for the Chair to review before issue.

8.4 Parking and Traffic Subcommittee

- 8.4.1 No impact had been reported on private parking areas as a result of the introduction of parking restrictions on the development.

8.5 Feedback

- 8.5.1 Nothing to report.

9 Letting of contracts

The Apartment Block SubCommittee had taken the view to put the contracts for the cleaning, window cleaning and fire maintenance contracts to tender as it was felt that, in the current climate, the WMC should ensure it was receiving value for money.

The Gardening SubCommittee had taken the view that the landscape gardeners would be re-tendered in 2013 and that a 3% increase in contract fees was acceptable for 2012-2013, given the rate of inflation.

RESOLVED

To accept the recommendations made by the SubCommittees on the contracts for the cleaning, window cleaning, fire maintenance and gardening.

10 AGM Subcommittee

- 10.1 It was confirmed that the next AGM would take place at St Margaret's Institute on 6th March at 7.30 pm. A draft agenda and Chair's Report had been circulated for comment. The latter would be re-drafted in light of a number of observations made during the meeting.

- 10.2 Those present were reminded that a number of directors were up for re-election. The Treasurer reported that they would not be standing for re-election and that they would ensure an appropriate handover with a fellow director of the WMC. Another director also said that they would not be standing again. The WMC thanked both of them for their commitment.

RESOLVED

Chair to write to directors wishing to stand for election to remind them what action needed to be taken.

Chair to make necessary alterations to their report to the AGM.

9 AOB

- 9.1 It was reported that the Secretary had resigned due to work commitments. It was felt that a replacement would not be necessary at the current time.
- 9.2 A dinner should be held at the Anchor at a date to be agreed after the AGM to thank all the directors who had served during the year and to welcome any new directors.

10 Date of next meeting

- 10.1 Monday, 19 March, Anchor, 7.30 pm