

WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMPANY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NO 43

7.30 pm, Monday 11 March 2013

Present: Miles Thompson (Chairman), Sally Duncan, Ann Hall, Nicholas Orme, Paula Reynolds, Louise Robertson, Raquel Stremme, Mary Tovey.

Minute taker: Emma Thompson

1. Apologies

1.1 Nick Robinson, Richard Dorey, Rebecca Hill.

2. Private Business

2.1 None.

3. Minutes

3.1 Approval of the minutes from meeting 42 (28/01/13)

The minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record, subject to some paragraph re-numbering.

4. Matters arising from the minutes from meeting 42

4.1 It was agreed that the matter relating to the owner of a vehicle who persistently parked on yellow lines under the archway in Complins Close would be carried forward due to the absence of the Managing Agent to provide an update.

RESOLVED

4.2 Managing Agent to supply progress report at next meeting.

5 Health and Safety

5.1 Nothing to report.

6. Updates from Managing Agent

6.1 Following a request for CCTV in Clearwater Place as a result of persistent vandalism in the area, OM had contacted the police to establish the level of criminal activity within this part of the development. No reports had been made by residents including the individual making the request for CCTV.

RESOLVED

6.2 GSC to review the decision taken previously on CCTV at its meeting in May to ensure consistency in response and that the conclusion previously made would still be appropriate.

7 Waterways Residents' Association CIC

- 7.1 It was reported that notice of the WMC AGM had been submitted for inclusion in the next edition of Waterways World which was due for publication.

8 Report on the objectives of the year

8.1 Publish minutes of meetings

- 8.1.1 A director reported that they had searched on the term 'minutes' and whilst all the documentation had appeared on the website, the director had been unable to open the documents to view them.

RESOLVED

- 8.1.2 Remaining directors to check content of website and let Chairman know of any errors, including any shortcomings in the hypertext links.

- 8.2 Promote awareness and understanding amongst members of the Company and residents on the Waterways of the purpose of the WMC and of how to report maintenance issues and when necessary to complain – no update required.**

- 8.3 Managing Agent review – the minutes from 12 February 2013 had been circulated to directors and the development of a specification and scoring criteria was progressing.**

8.4 To produce a plan of action to resolve maintenance issues relating to the Frenchay Road culvert and the wildlife corridor watercourse

- 8.4.1 It was noted that there is a delay between rail fall events and the level in the lake rising; and subsequently in the pump coming into action. There was a discussion about whether this was due to water filtering through from surrounding ground and / or to water being piped into the lake from Woodstock Road, as had previously been understood to be the case. However, Thames Water had reported verbally that there are no pipes feeding the lake. It was noted that the Company does not possess detailed and comprehensive plans of the drainage network connections into and out of the Waterways. A previous request to the City Council revealed that their records are incomplete. It was suggested Berkeley Homes or their drainage consultants would still have information they collected for the development of the site.

- 8.4.2 Events over recent months had highlighted the complex nature of the drainage system across the development. Temporary and costly measures had been necessary to manage flood risk. A better long term approach to managing the maintenance and risk issues is needed. It was felt we should look to utilise the support and expertise available from Oxfordshire County Council (as the relevant body for managing flood risk arising from surface water drainage), to establish a suitable solution to the recent flooding and to forward to them the paperwork confirming clearance as far as the headfall behind Ryder Close.

- 8.4.3 The material we had removed from the culvert west of the canal had to be treated as contaminated material. It is not clear if this contamination comes from sources within the Waterways or is being received from public drains for which Thames Water are responsible. Testing of water quality along different sections of the water channel in the wildlife corridor, before and after the known 'Phoebe Court' connection with the Thames Water network, may establish the source of contamination. The cost of such testing is not known.
- 8.4.4 The Oxford Conservation Volunteers would be working to clear the section of the wildlife corridor between the second to last footbridge down to the Trap Grounds. Members and residents are to be encouraged to turn out to help, for which a health and safety briefing would be necessary; work will start at 8.45 am on 11th August.

RESOLVED

- 8.4.5 Carried forward from last meeting: Managing Agent to confirm decision to use of £7,500 from reserves toward cost of planned works has been implemented, or if not then to confirm when this would take effect.
- 8.4.6 Director write to Berkeley Homes to obtain original site drawings showing drainage in and out of Waterways.
- 8.4.7 Gardening Sub-committee to work with OM and Oxfordshire County Council, to develop a long term solution to provide better management of surface water drainage through the Waterways.
- 8.4.8 OM to obtain quotes for water testing and to report to the next meeting of the Management Committee; and to liaise as necessary with the members of the Gardening sub-committee.
- 8.4.9 Ideas to promote participation to be considered at future Management Committee meetings.

8.5 To prepare a plan of action to prepare for the replacement of lift machinery in the apartment blocks

- 8.5.1 The ABSC had conducted an audit of all the apartment blocks to establish which manufacturers had provided equipment for each block. It had been established that information provided by Berkeley Homes was inaccurate. The Committee was working with the Treasurer to establish the reserve fund requirement.
- 8.5.2 It was also noted that tenders for the lift contracts had been sought and would be assessed shortly.

9. Sub Committee news round up

9.1 Finance Sub-Committee

- 9.1.2 The WMC was asked to review the bids submitted by firms seeking to be our auditors for the accounts, and to recommend an appointment to the forthcoming Annual General Meeting. Consideration was given to price and to the quality of service of the current provider, whose bid was competitive albeit not the cheapest.

[Paragraph redacted to remove information about value of bids, on grounds of commercial sensitivity]

RESOLVED

- 9.1.3 Treasurer to advise current provider that Management Committee would be recommending its nomination as auditor to members for approval at the AGM on 23 April, on the basis of the terms offered in their recent bid.

9.2 Apartment Block Sub-Committee

- 9.2.1 The Residents' Handbook requires updating due to changes in the recycling arrangements for apartment blocks and to reflect the change in status of the Waterways Residents' Association. OM were thanked for their offer to undertake the print-run at their cost. A 'proof' should be checked before the main run.
- 9.2.2 Other sections of the Handbook that require updating include references to the standard lease, including the need for the WMC to approve internal structural alterations as well as external visual alterations. This raised the question of whether OM was responding to enquiries that should be being brought to the attention of the directors. Concern was also expressed as to whether other residents within a block were being notified of the changes being proposed and whether directors wanted owners to notify other residents of works.
- 9.2.3 It was reported that the City Council had given notice that in future if residents had more waste going to landfill than to recycling then they would be charged collectively via the Council Tax. OM was proactively working with the County Council to upgrade the current bins within apartment block stores, which is a requirement under the City Council changes.
- 9.2.4 It had come to the attention of the Committee that short-term lets were being made available within the development, which is against the terms of apartment leasehold agreements. Those letting agents involved had been notified of the breach of condition and they had been asked to notify the leaseholders to cease such activity.

RESOLVED

- 9.2.5 OM to report to next ABSC meeting on procedure they are following when approached for consent to be given to works to demised and non-demised areas (internal and external works) to apartment blocks, for instance, what classes of work were being granted without referral to the directors and what criteria were being used to judge whether to give consent. ABSC then to consider whether this raises issues that need to be considered at Management Committee. Wording for the Residents' Handbook to be updated accordingly in light of conclusion of consideration of what OM report.

9.3 Gardening Sub-Committee

- 9.3.1 In respect of unplanned works to the culvert in the wildlife corridor, the remaining section of the culvert under the link to Bainton Road had been cleared. Therefore, if any problems continue to occur it is likely to be due to a problem in either or both the

section of pipework from the headfall (to the rear of Ryder Close) to the siphon, or in the siphon itself. The final report was awaited from Metro Rod. It was noted a grill had yet to be placed over the entry to the headfall behind Ryder Close, to prevent foreign bodies blocking the pipework. It was noted the channel behind Ryder Close would benefit from being cleared to ensure water flow in this section does not become a problem.

- 9.3.2 Two additional grit bins had been requested, one of which would be paid for by the WMC and one by Green Square. It was recommended that the bins be green to blend in with the surrounding area, rather than yellow.
- 9.3.3 A resident had complained about the decision regarding the closure of the gate between Lark Hill and Elizabeth Jennings Way. A draft response was tabled for consideration and a few suggested amendments were proposed.

RESOLVED

- 9.3.4 Managing Agent to report at next meeting on response from Thames Water concerning investigation of the final section of the culvert, east of the canal (carry forward from last meeting).
- 9.3.5 OM to arrange for Metro Rod to install a grill to the headfall behind Ryder Close.
- 9.3.6 OM to arrange for Evergreen to clear (dig out) water channel behind Ryder Close.
- 9.3.7 OM to ensure new bins are green.
- 9.3.8 Director to amend letter and pass to Chair for checking and onward delivery via OM to resident.

9.4 Feedback

- 9.4.1 A complaint had been received concerning the condition and quality of planting around the Waterways. The Committee considered the points being made. The Committee concluded it is very satisfied with the condition of the planting around the Waterways.

RESOLVED

- 9.4.2 Director to advise resident accordingly.

9.5 Annual General Meeting – 23 April 2013

- 9.5.1 It was reported that the notice of the meeting would be issued on 22nd March 2013 with a draft agenda. AGMSC to ensure owners of multiple properties would be contacted after the distribution of the notice to encourage them to attend the meeting.
- 9.5.2 Those directors who had been co-opted the previous year or were due to end their current two-year term of service were reminded that they must stand for election at the AGM, by completing and submitting the recently circulated nomination form.

10 Roles and Responsibilities post AGM

- 10.1 There was a brief discussion about how responsibilities might be reallocated but no clear expression of interest for appointment as a new Chair. Directors were asked to give further consideration to how the roles and responsibilities managed through the management committee could be arranged, after the AGM, when the current Chairman would step down.

11 Any other business

- 11.1 It was noted that Berkeley Homes still owned the estate. Owners in the Aristotle Lane estate had been in a similar situation and had bought the land for a nominal sum. It was proposed that this should be included in next year's objectives.

12 Date of next meeting

Monday, 13 May 2013.