

WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMPANY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NO 44

7.30 pm, Monday 13 May 2013

Present: Miles Thompson (Chair items 1-4), Louise Robertson (Chair item 5 onwards) Tao Tao Chou, Sally Duncan, Adrian Olsen, Imogen Olsen, Nicholas Orme, Raquel Stremme, Mary Tovey.

In attendance: Rebecca Hill

Minute taker: Emma Thompson

1. Welcome and apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed the new directors and invited everyone to introduce themselves.
- 1.2 Apologies were received from Anne Hall, Richard Dorey, Paula Reynolds, Lynda Williams.

2. Private Business

- 2.1 None.

3. Minutes

3.1 Approval of the minutes from meeting 43 (11/03/13)

The minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record, subject to an amendment to the amount of reserves quoted in paragraph 8.4.5.

4. Appointment of new directors

- 4.1 Nominations were received from three new directors who were duly co-opted on to the WMC by the members.

RESOLVED

That Lynda Williams and Adrian and Imogen Olsen be co-opted on to the WMC until the next AGM.

That OM circulate the appropriate forms to new members for submission to Companies House.

5. Appointment of Responsibilities 2013-14

- 5.1 A matrix of Committee member responsibilities was circulated to determine the appropriate allocation of directors to respective roles based on skills, experience and preferences.

- 5.2 A discussion ensued on the respective roles of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary and their respective tasks to determine how the WMC would operate over the forthcoming 12 months in order to make the role of Chair more manageable.
- 5.3 It was agreed that the out-going Chair would undertake routine maintenance tasks, that the new Chair would be responsible for leading meetings, communicating outcomes, motivating directors and acting as a point of contact for the managing agent and that meeting co-ordination would be the joint responsibility of the Treasurer and Chair.
- 5.4 Based on this separation of duties, Louise Robertson agreed to stand as Chair, which was unanimously confirmed by those present. Nicholas Orme agreed to stand in as a substitute for meetings, where necessary.
- 5.5 It was recommended that any directors wishing to propose an item for a meeting should submit a briefing paper to the Chair two weeks in advance of the scheduled meeting in order to give fellow directors adequate notice. All directors would be encouraged to participate in the preparation of, and reporting at, the AGM, which had a set timetable for the submission of documentation.
- 5.6 For continuity, it was agreed that the director responsible for feedback should continue in that role but would be supported by another director. The current WRA CIC link directors would stay the same. The Treasurer would be supported by a Deputy Treasurer. The AGMSC would be increased by one director and a further director agreed to provide support, but not actively be a member of the Committee, when required.
- 5.7 Those directors currently on the Scrutiny Committee, which focused on developing and monitoring the scope of the Managing Agent and identifying new issues across the development, would continue but a number of directors expressed an interest in attending the next meeting to determine whether they might like to join the Committee. It was confirmed that whilst information had been sourced from the Association of Managing Agents on key performance indicators, there was limited performance management of the sector and that the Scrutiny Committee was effectively developing such measures.
- 5.8 The newly elected Chair would relinquish their position on the ABSC but two new directors would join the Committee. Until the next meeting of the Committee when the Chair would be appointed, it was agreed that another director would act as the point of contact for the managing agent.
- 5.9 The GSC proved popular with all the new directors who would join existing directors on the Committee. One director resigned preferring to focus their time on the ABSC. In the meantime, two directors agreed to be the focal point of contact.

RESOLVED

That a revised matrix be circulated detailing the new responsibilities.

That the new directors should be provided with access to, and guidance on, the operation of the WMC Google docs account.

That, once confirmed by the respective Committees, the lead directors for ABSC and GSC should be notified to the out-going Chair, OM and directors with responsibility for feedback.

That Louise Robertson is appointed to the role of Chairman of the WMC.

The newly elected Chair took over the proceedings.

6. Setting of objectives for 2013 to 2014 for WMC Management Committee

- 6.1 It was agreed that it was important to retain objectives for the year but, having reviewed the objectives set for 2012-13, it was identified that all the objectives with the exception of the one relating to the culvert had been achieved. Following an issue raised at the last meeting of the WMC it was agreed that a second objective should be included on the transfer of the freehold from Berkeley Homes to the WMC. The developer had confirmed that the matter would be progressed within the next three months.

RESOLVED

That the objectives for 2012-13 should read as follows:

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

To secure the transfer of the freehold land of the Waterways development from Berkeley Homes to the WMC.

That the objectives would be a standing item on the WMC agenda and would be reviewed during the course of the year.

7. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

- 7.1 Directors were reminded that any owner wishing to raise a matter at the AGM had to table the item in advance of the meeting. Whilst the WMC wanted to encourage an informal Q&A session after the closure of proceedings, it was preferable that such items were contained to matters discussed during the AGM. This would avoid directors having to field questions which might require them to remember the audit trail or include topics which could involve a director who had given their apologies for the meeting.
- 7.2 New directors commented on the low numbers in attendance at the meeting and were informed that multiple owners had been targeted specifically to increase footfall and that the meeting date had been moved to the Spring to encourage attendance. Numbers had in fact improved upon previous years.

RESOLVED

To approve for publication on the Waterways website and the 'Your Property Online' portal the draft minutes from the AGM held on 23 April 2013, subject to the amendment of the date and their formal approval at the next AGM.

That the draft minutes of the 2012 AGM on the website and portal be replaced with the minutes approved at the 2013 AGM.

That the AGMSC review the process relating to the informal Q&A when planning the next AGM.

That the next edition of Waterways World include an article on 'Your Property Online' and how to gain access to the service to encourage residents to make payments on-line, rate contractors, sign up for email alerts and view the accounts.

8. Matters arising from the minutes from meeting 43

- 8.1 It was reported that the owner of a vehicle who persistently parked on yellow lines under the archway in Complins Close had appeared to have stopped parking in this area.

RESOLVED

- 8.2 That the item be closed.

9. Sub Committee news round up

9.1 Finance Sub-Committee

- 9.1.1 The Managing Agent reported that the insurance renewal notification would be issued to the Chair to sign. It was anticipated that it would remain the same premium as last year.
- 9.1.2 The accountants had stressed the need to receive information from OM by the end of August in order to complete a timely submission. The Managing Agent confirmed that a schedule would be produced with the accounts department in order to ensure that the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer could review the accounts before sending the data to Critchleys. The audited accounts would be presented to the WMC in September, before final approval at the AGM.

RESOLVED

That the indemnity insurance be forwarded for signature by the Chair.

That the accounts be produced for sign-off by WMC at the September meeting.

9.2 Apartment Block Sub-Committee

- 9.2.1 It was reported that Kone had been awarded the lift maintenance contract on the basis of value for money in terms of the total number of days lost as a result of inoperable lift machinery during the previous year compared to its competitor. The gold service had come into effect from 1st May 2013.

RESOLVED

To note the award of the lift maintenance contract to Kone.

9.3 Gardening Sub-Committee

- 9.3.1 It was noted that the use of reserves towards the cost of planned works on the culvert and wildlife corridor would be drawn down in October and would be highlighted within the accounts at this point.
- 9.3.2 Berkeley Homes had stated that they had no record of the drainage site drawings and had directed the WMC to Gifford, the original drainage contractor, who had now been taken over by Ramboll. Without the site drawings, CCTV cameras could not be used to investigate whether the siphon had been damaged.
- 9.3.3 Oxfordshire County Council had also been attempting to contact Thames Water to find a solution to the management of the surface water. The siphon appeared to be the problem having exhausted all alternative potential obstructions to the water flow. Establishing the source of the water feeding into the lake remained problematic. The pump often operated when no rain had fallen suggesting it was being fed from a pipe leading from Woodstock Road, which Thames Water had denied.
- 9.3.4 A local resident with the requisite experience and knowledge had volunteered to advise on the management of any solution.
- 9.3.5 PIMS, the contractor which maintained the pump for the lake, had agreed to undertake water quality testing for no additional charge by subsuming the tests into the annual maintenance. It was suggested that the contractor make a note of the weather conditions prevalent at the time of the test and that samples should be taken from three points across the development – from the lake, just before the water enters the siphon and from within the balancing pond. The WMC also requested that Metro-Rod should be asked to re-do the die test.
- 9.3.6 It was confirmed that Evergreen would clear the channel running behind Ryder Close as soon as it was dry enough.
- 9.3.7 Posters would be distributed across the development to encourage resident participation in August to clear the section of the wildlife corridor between the second to last footbridge down to the Trap Grounds.
- 9.3.8 It was reported that the GSC had not met to review the decision taken previously on CCTV.

RESOLVED

That Ramboll should be contacted to obtain the site drawings of the drainage in and out of the development.

That the newly elected Counsellor for St Margaret's ward should be contacted to progress matters with Thames Water and Oxfordshire County Council.

That PIMS complete testing in three separate areas of the development as detailed above.

That Metro-Rod repeats the die test on the water flow.

9.4 Feedback

- 9.4.1 It was reported that a complaint had been received in respect of residents keeping bicycles within apartment blocks. Due to the amount of bicycle theft across Oxford it would not be appropriate to condone such action. However, where bicycles were being kept in communal areas in direct contravention of health and safety it would be appropriate to encourage residents to refrain from such action.

RESOLVED

That notices should be placed in apartment blocks discouraging the retention of bicycles in communal areas.

10. Matters arising from question and answer session at Annual General Meeting – 23 April 2013

- 10.1 Directors received a summary of the questions and answers raised after the AGM and felt that no further action was required. Items 7 and 9.3 also refer.

11. WRA CIC

- 11.1 The WRA CIC link director reported that the subsidy provided by the WMC was proving insufficient to cover all the editions of the magazine and there continued to be a resourcing issue. It was likely that the WRA CIC could only guarantee to produce two editions of the newsletter in 2013. The WMC, whilst appreciative of the position, reminded the WRA CIC that in order to receive any payment, in accordance with the AGM, a statement following the WRA CIC's year-end would have to be presented detailing how the money had been used before any funds could be released.
- 11.2 Directors were reminded verbally that the WRA CIC continued to organise two social events a year, had been responsible for the acquisition of the community meeting room and maintained the website in addition to producing the residents' newsletter. Concern was expressed that two editions per annum was insufficient and the WMC enquired whether consideration had been given to sponsorship as well. The main issue remained resourcing and the minute taker and one director agreed to support the current editor to determine whether at least three editions could be produced.

RESOLVED

That a statement from the WRA CIC should be presented at the next meeting of the WMC to ensure on-going funding.

That the newsletter editor, minute taker and director should meet to discuss how to resolve the resourcing issue.

12. Managing Agent Update

- 12.1 Nothing reported.

13 Any other business

- 13.1 Current directors' details were circulated for confirmation and new directors were invited to provide their particulars on the basis that the information would not be given to third parties.
- 13.2 It was confirmed that a dinner would be organised to thank retiring directors and welcome new directors.
- 13.3 Directors wished to record their thanks to the out-going chair for effectively chairing the WMC during his tenure and his on-going commitment to the WMC as a member, despite an increase in other commitments.

14 Date of next meetings

The meetings for the year ahead were set as follows:

8th July 2013, 9th September 2013, 11th November 2013, 13th January 2014 and 10th March 2014.

RESOLVED

That the WRA CIC link director would make the appropriate advanced bookings for the community room from 7.30 pm on these dates.

That the date for the AGM would be set when the school holidays had been confirmed in order to avoid the Easter break.