

WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMPANY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NO 48

7.30 pm, Monday 13 January 2014

Present: Louise Robertson (Chair), Tao Tao Chou, Sally Duncan, Nicholas Orme, Anne Hall, Adrian Olsen, Imogen Olsen, Paula Reynolds, Miles Thompson, Mary Tovey and Lynda Williams.

In attendance: Rebecca Hill, Richard Dorey

Minute taker: Emma Thompson

1. Apologies

1.2 Apologies were received from Raquel Stremme.

2. Private Business

2.1 None.

3. Minutes

3.1 Approval of the minutes from meeting 47 (14/11/13)

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

4. Matters arising from the minutes from meeting 47

4.1 It was confirmed that OM had distributed a letter to residents in response to information received from a resident concerning the use of pedestrian routes by a motorcyclist.

4.2 The suspected breach of planning within Cox's Ground had been reported to the Council, which had subsequently granted permission for the development.

RESOLVED

That those items that had been completed should be closed.

5. Health and Safety

5.1 A request had been received from a resident regarding the possible introduction on lighting along the wildlife corridor. Directors were reminded that a similar request had been received previously and refused. The directors agreed not to revisit the decision.

RESOLVED

Director to circulate the previous minute as a reminder.

6. Updates from Managing Agent

6.1 Nothing to report which was not included as a substantive item on the agenda.

7. Items from WRACIC

7.1 It was noted that the WRACIC AGM was due to take place on the evening of Tuesday 14th January 2014 and that new directors were being sought. Everyone was encouraged to attend.

7.2 The WMC was asked to consider an increase in the annual fee to cover the cost of publishing the newsletter and for the maintenance of the website. The WRACIC was invited to present a paper for submission to the April AGM but the WRACIC was asked to include reference to a maximum limit of £1,500 but also to demonstrate what action it had taken to obtain sponsorship to cover the increased costs.

RESOLVED

That the WRACIC submit the paper for circulation by the end of March in time for the AGM.

8. Report on the objectives for the year

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

8.1 It was confirmed that Total Drainage had confirmed that it would be prepared to clear the wildlife corridor from the siphon to the first wooden bridge. It was proposed that they would follow the natural water line, cut down any overhanging shrubs and deposit, rather than remove, the silt on the side of the bank for a competitive price.

RESOLVED

To keep Total Drainage informed but that no further work on the corridor would take place until a satisfactory resolution had been obtained with Thames Water.

8.2 The engineers report on the development had questioned whether the siphon remained intact and was the potential cause of the silting which had been provided to the Canal and River Trust. In addition, initial tests on the silt within the wildlife corridor had indicated a similarity with the clay deposits from the canal but the final report was still to be received.

8.3 Pressure continued to be placed upon Thames Water to investigate. OM is to formally request:

- Copies of the maintenance report for the siphon
- That support is given to the planned multi-agency meeting to investigate the current condition of the sewer network and siphon by gaining access to 3 Phoebe Court property where manhole is situated, co-ordinating with Lanes for Drains and Metro Rod.

- Confirmation that the upstream public sewer network and siphon is free of silt and that infiltration of the pipes is low
- Reinstatement of the overflow that we believe has been terminated
- To receive a reply within ten working days and respond to previous correspondence which remains unanswered.
- Failure to address the points raised will result in the matter being referred to an independent legal party.

RESOLVED

That reference should also be made, if Thames Water remained reluctant to provide the original overflow facility, to the appropriate Act which meant that the company legally had to accept the flow of water into their system.

- 8.4 It was noted that the remedial works undertaken over the last 12 months had made a difference, particularly given the level of rainfall which had taken place over the Christmas period which had led to flooding across Oxford.

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

- 9.1 It was agreed that this item would remain in abeyance until the drainage system had been resolved as the WMC would not take on such a liability. It was reported that Berkeley Homes had found that the transfer would not be straightforward as the Land Registry had queried a number of discrepancies in title across the development which would need to be resolved by the developer before any title could be transferred.

. Sub Committee news round up

10. Finance Sub-Committee

- 10.1 OM had investigated whether a property on Stone Meadow should be contributing to Schedule 3 and had made reference to the property transfer documentation which had been given to the legal team to review to assess whether any change to the Schedule could be made. As it currently stood there was no reference to ownership of the parking space and therefore no reason for OM to collect any additional monies from the freeholder.

RESOLVED

To confirm the outcome of the review at the next meeting.

- 10.2 It was reported that the Managing Agent would be reviewing the necessary adjustments which should be made to the accounts for the May billing. The WMC was asked whether any provision should be made for legal fees to seek compensation from Thames Water.

RESOLVED

That each household should contribute £30 towards the continued discharge of water into the canal for a 12 month period. If the situation was resolved within 12 months any monies available would be used to fund a legal challenge.

11. Apartment Block Sub-Committee

- 11.1 OM was thanked for printing the revised welcome pack for residents. It was noted that the requested adjustment had been made for a disabled resident to improve their access to Complins Close apartments. No feedback had been received from the resident who had made the request to date.
- 11.2 It was noted that the new bins servicing apartment blocks had been delivered to the stores throughout the development but that they had yet to be labelled which had resulted in residents putting rubbish in the wrong containers. It was reported that it was the Council's responsibility to label the containers.

RESOLVED

OM to circulate the accompanying leaflet and letter concerning the new arrangements for waste collection.

- 11.3 Parking continued under the Complins Close archway which had nearly resulted in an accident, inappropriate parking remained a problem within Lark Hill and rubbish continued to be placed within the salt bin by the bridge.
- 11.4 Bin storage had become inadequate within Clearwater Place. It was confirmed that the store was shared between Green Square residents and private residents.

RESOLVED

That the issue be taken forward by the ABSC to discuss with Green Square the possibility of providing alternative storage at their expense for their residents.

That OM issue letters to residents in an effort to curb inappropriate behaviour.

12. Gardening Sub-Committee

- 12.1 It was noted that a positive response had finally been received concerning the request to remove garden furniture which had been at risk of causing damage to neighbouring property during the recent inclement weather.

13. Feedback

- 13.1 Whilst a high level of complaints continued to be received from a single individual the newly implemented policy remained in force.

14. AGM Sub-Committee

RESOLVED

That a letter should be issued to St John's College's governing body in an effort to encourage them to attend the AGM.

That the proposed introduction of regulations on the development should be presented at the meeting. Next item refers.

15. Development of a policy for determining applications to the Company for material alterations to the external appearance of houses on the Waterways

- 15.1 It was noted in accordance with the standard freehold transfer that the WMC was not responsible for consenting to freehold property alterations beyond the first five years but retained responsibility for any changes to leasehold apartments. Directors were asked whether they wanted to influence and comment upon planning applications. It was agreed that it would be useful to have some policy to ensure decisions could be made across the development consistently to retain the overall street scene and character of the Waterways. In addition, it was reported that the St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum was looking to develop a Plan which would be used by the Local Authority when determining planning applications. It would be useful if such a policy could be included within this document. In order to ease the administration of such a policy a flow chart or checklist with associated paragraphs could be prepared to support the production of future letters by the WMC.

RESOLVED

That a policy based on the provisions used by the Dulwich Estate should be prepared for approval at the WMC AGM.

- 15.2 An application was received from a resident who wished to include solar panels on their roof. The WMC referred to the Government's position on solar panels which stated that a balance should be retained between allowing an individual to benefit from alternative forms of energy and the proposed solar panels being intrusive.

RESOLVED

That the resident be informed that whilst the WMC had no right to make a decision on the use of solar panels it would be submitting a policy to the next AGM. In light of the Government's position the WMC would be supportive of the option presented which included the use of 14 solar panels on the east facing roof and no panels on the front of the property.

- 15.3 An extension had been submitted in Lark Hill which would appear to require the builder to lay foundations within the garden of the neighbouring properties due to the size of the extension being proposed. This was deemed unacceptable.

RESOLVED

That OM would respond on behalf of the WMC to object to the planning application in support of the residents who would be affected.

That the WMC would apply its policy if adopted at the AGM and comment accordingly on all planning applications made within the development.

16. Scrutiny Sub-Committee

RESOLVED

- 16.1 To confirm a suitable Tuesday to convene the next meeting.

17. Any other business

- 17.1 A request had been received for the provision of two double lockable power points near the bollards at the Frenchay Road green to support resident events in the area. The annual Hog Roast and summer barbeque was reliant on neighbours donating their electricity and/or the use of noisy generators.

RESOLVED

OM to investigate on which schedule the invoicing for the lighting near the bollards featured to determine whether it would be feasible to provide the power points and re-charge the consumption to the development as a whole.

- 17.2 The WMC was asked to consider writing to the Council to provide yellow lines to prevent cars blocking the cycle path on the access way to Bainton Road.

RESOLVED

Despite the lack of funds within the Council to complete the necessary Order it was agreed that OM should write to the Council.

- 17.3 It was noted that all the apartments within the block containing the nursery and community room had been sold and were now private. No provision in the process had been made for them to contribute to the development. Consequently it would remain the responsibility of owners to maintain parking spaces and any amenity areas within their boundary rather than the WMC and its respective managing agent.

18. Date of next meetings

The meetings for the year ahead were noted as follows:

10th March 2014

AGM, 29th April 2014

12th May 2014

14th July 2014

Addendum: following circulation of the previous minute from the meeting at which lighting on the wildlife corridor was discussed it was confirmed that lighting had been refused on the grounds that its provision would be detrimental to wildlife.