

WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMPANY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NO 49

7.30 pm, Monday 10 March 2014

Present: Louise Robertson (Chair), Tao Tao Chou, Sally Duncan, Nicholas Orme, Adrian Olsen, Imogen Olsen, Paula Reynolds, Miles Thompson, Mary Tovey Lynda Williams and Raquel Stremme (items 13 and 14 only)

In attendance: Rebecca Hill

Minute taker: Emma Thompson

1. Apologies

1.2 Apologies were received from Ann Hall.

2. Private Business

2.1 None.

3. Minutes

3.1 Approval of the minutes from meeting 48 (13/01/14)

The minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record, subject to the meeting number being updated.

4. Matters arising from the minutes from meeting 48

4.1 Having investigated the potential to obtain an electricity feed from the lights near the green on Frenchay Road to support community events, OM reported that in the absence of any feed during the daytime and the limited load capacity an alternative electricity source would have to be identified. It was suggested that the bin store adjacent to the electricity sub-station might be a suitable option for a power supply. It was noted that any power cables placed across the road would need to be fitted with rubber protectors for health and safety reasons.

4.2 OM reported that the item relating to whether double yellow lines could be provided to prevent cars from blocking the cycle path on the access way to Bainton Road remained outstanding.

4.3 It was noted that legally the development was obliged to provide Green Square residents with appropriate bin store capacity, however there was no additional space for the provision of another bin store on the development despite the facility within Clearwater Place becoming inadequate for the number of properties it was serving.

4.4 Green Square had volunteered to write to its residents asking them to respect the storage area. In the meantime, OM was proposing to remove the lids from the bins (but retain them for any future use) so that the containers could be accessed more

readily by residents due to the limited amount of space available to manoeuvre within the store itself. It was anticipated that this would reduce the amount of rubbish which was simply being left on the floor of the store.

RESOLVED

That OM considers whether an electricity supply could be provided from the bin store at the top end of Frenchay Road as an alternative to securing a feed from the lighting near the bollards as originally proposed.

That OM contacts David Tole at the County Council regarding the provision of yellow lines on the access way to Bainton Road.

That those completed items should be closed.

5. Health and Safety

- 5.1 Having reviewed the previous minute on the subject of a request for lighting along the wildlife corridor, dated 13th October 2008, it was unanimously agreed that no lighting would be provided along the corridor and that a response should be issued accordingly to the most recent enquiry. The subject was now deemed closed given the principle had been accepted by directors that lighting would be obtrusive and was inappropriate along a wildlife corridor.

RESOLVED

OM to respond to the resident with the WMC's decision.

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 Given the discussion at the previous meeting about the need for the WRACIC to ask for an increase in its annual fee, the WMC was asked for guidance on what should appear in the report which would need to be submitted to the AGM. The directors reiterated their support for an increase to £1,500 and reminded the WRACIC member that the report should pre-empt any likely questions from AGM members by demonstrating that efforts that had been made to secure funding from alternative sources.

RESOLVED

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

- 7.2 Use of the community room remained limited but a games club was about to commence as well as a coffee morning. It was suggested that a proactive marketing campaign was undertaken to reach potential users by encouraging Kids Unlimited to advertise the facilities and by promoting the room at existing clubs such as Monkey Music which might want to expand their venues.

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 Progress was slow as a response was still awaited from Thames Water. In the meantime, it had been identified that several more inches of silt had entered the balancing pond since February 2014 when OM had previously visited the development to inspect the site. The contractor had yet to provide the silt analysis report and OM was asked to chase for a response urgently.
- 8.2 It was agreed that the continued delays to proceedings being caused by Thames Water were unacceptable and that it was now time to complain to the appropriate regulatory body (Consumer Council for Water) with all the documentary evidence demonstrating that the directors had followed the water company's complaints process **and** had raised the matter to a senior level, but to no avail.

RESOLVED

That a complaint should be raised sooner, rather than later, with the Consumer Council for Water.

That the outcome of the silt survey/testing should be reported at the next meeting.

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

- 9.1 No progress to report.

Sub Committee news round up

10. Finance Sub-Committee

- 10.1 Upon investigation it had been identified that a property in Stone Meadow had no parking within its land registry transfer which was why no charges had been levied to Schedule 3 for this property. In effect, the property concerned has no parking space demised to it. Further legal advice was being sought on whether the Company could seek to charge the owner for using the space(s).
- 10.2 The Treasurer invited the Committee to consider whether several items of expenditure should be included within the forthcoming budget to minimise the level of year-end adjustment for residents. These being, the continued discharge of water into the canal, car park resurfacing and a rolling programme of paving maintenance all of which would amount to circa £62 per household. It was unanimously agreed that these charges should be included.

RESOLVED

That OM provides an update to the next meeting in respect of the legal situation on Schedule 3 charges for the Stone Meadow property.

That the additional budgetary items for paving maintenance, car park resurfacing and discharge of water into the canal should be included in the forthcoming budget.

That the Treasurer include reference to these strategic expenditure decisions within their report to the AGM which should reinforce the need to invest in the estate as it matures.

11. Apartment Block Sub-Committee

- 11.1 It was noted that the leaflet advising residents of the changes to Council policy regarding refuse collection for apartment blocks had been issued.
- 11.2 It was reported that an application had been received from 37 Complins Close to extend into the roof space. Estates and Management the freeholder was considering the application to purchase the extra roof space. In the meantime the WMC had made a series of objections on the grounds of fire and loft insulation as well as the general impact on the exterior design of the building. Directors were of the opinion that Building Regulations alone would make the alterations unaffordable even if Estates and Management gave their permission.

RESOLVED

ABSC to keep the Company informed of developments.

12. Gardening Sub-Committee

- 12.1 It was reported that the Canal and River Trust had undertaken works on the Poplar tree on the green at the top end of Frenchay Road without the relevant permission from the Council due to the presence of a Tree Preservation Order and, as a result, had received a Prosecution Notice. The Trust claimed that it owned, or was responsible for, a 6 metre strip of land from the canal bank.
- 12.2 The Trust was claiming that it had made a bulk application for tree surgery along the canal but the Council had been unable to find such an application. The WMC had no other recourse, given the tree's current state, to remove the remaining material once permission had been received from the Council's Tree Officer. In addition to replacing the tree it had been suggested that the stump could be recycled into a work of art or that a bench circulate its remains.
- 12.3 The WMC would be seeking compensation from the Canal and River Trust once the outcome of the current prosecution was known.
- 12.4 It was noted that all the gardening contracts had been re-tendered.

13. Feedback

- 13.1 Nothing to report.

14. AGM Sub-Committee

- 14.1 It was noted that a letter had been issued to St John's College's board to encourage representation at the next AGM but that no response had been received to date. No director nominations had been received to replace those directors standing down.

- 14.2 It was reported that the notice for the AGM would be issued during the last week in March. It was agreed that each sub-committee Chair would be responsible for reporting back on their particular section of the Chair's report and they would be invited to field any questions relating to the topics for which they had been responsible.
- 14.3 It was also recognised that it would be a useful reminder for the Chair to reinforce at the beginning of the meeting the procedural issues relating to the formal discussion of any other business which should have been notified in advance by residents. An informal question and answer session would be held after the meeting for anyone wishing to raise a concern that did not form part of the AGM, but these questions should be presented to the Committee in writing prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED

That all the directors should sit at the top table in support of the Chair at the AGM. That sub-committee Chairs should report on their respective activities as part of the Chair's report at the meeting.

15. Development of a policy to guide the approach of the Company when responding to consultations on proposals for development of properties on the Waterways

- 15.1 The draft policy for submission at the AGM was received. A number of modifications were proposed as follows:
- (a) 2, (a) – first sentence to read 'The estate was carefully planned.'
 - (b) 2 (d) – boundaries – second sentence to read – 'Any developments such as conservatories and extensions, including their foundations, should therefore take place within such walls and fences, as stated above.'
 - (c) 2 (g) – wildlife corridor – second sentence to read – 'No developments should be planned in respect of building, lighting or anything else that may adversely affect the wildlife corridors.'
 - (d) Advice section – initial contact should be through the Managing Agent.

RESOLVED

That the draft is revised accordingly prior to submission to the AGM.

- 15.2 It was reported that the owner of 15 Complins Close had taken into account the comments received from the WMC and had submitted a planning application for the inclusion of solar panels on the rear elevation only.
- 15.3 Disappointingly it was noted that the Council had given permission for an extension which the WMC had felt would impinge upon the boundary of a neighbouring property.

16. Scrutiny Sub-Committee

- 16.1 It was noted that the Committee had reported on the Managing Agent's performance and would continue to monitor OM now all the agreed metrics were in place. In response, the Managing Agent had clarified its position where it had secured low scores.

17. Any other business

- 17.1 It was noted that a resident was in dispute with Berkeley Homes over a substation maintenance access way.
- 17.2 Directors were asked to consider changing the arrangements for reimbursing the minute taker for their time. In light of a conflict of interest one director refrained from participating in the discussion.
- 17.3 It was reported that the Managing Agent was changing its procurement policy which would potentially increase the administration required for such a small fee, which would no longer make it cost effective for the minute taker to undertake the role. As a result, directors were asked to approve a reduction in service charge equivalent to the time invoiced for attending the Company meetings and preparing the minutes.

RESOLVED

That the minute taker should be recompensed for their services through a reduction in their annual service charge.

- 17.4 A number of individuals had been challenged for fishing by the lake. It had been noted by directors that the 'No fishing' signs had been removed from the edge of the lake.

RESOLVED

That the 'No fishing' signs be replaced.

- 17.4 The directors expressed their gratitude to Miles Thompson who was standing down. He was formerly thanked for all his hard work since 2007, including his time as Chairman. He has made a particularly strong contribution, with his knowledge and experience as a Town Planner, to both The Waterways and the WMC Committee as they have developed.

RESOLVED

- 17.5 That a director should organise the usual post AGM event for departing, remaining and new directors of the Company.

18. Date of next meetings

The meetings for the year ahead were noted as follows:

AGM, 29th April 2014

12th May 2014

14th July 2014