

**WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMPANY**  
**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NO 50**

**7.30 pm, Monday 12 May 2014**

**Present:** Nicholas Orme (Chair), Adrian Olsen, Imogen Olsen, Mary Tovey, Tao Tao Chou and Ann Hall.

**In attendance:** Rebecca Hill

**Minute taker:** Emma Thompson

**1. Apologies**

- 1.2 Apologies were received from Louise Robertson, Sally Duncan, Paula Reynolds, Lynda Williams and Adrian Mourby. It was noted that a second potential new member had expressed a desire to observe the meeting in July before making a decision about whether to be co-opted until the next AGM.

A Chair was appointed to the meeting. The number present did not represent the minimum number required to formally hold a meeting. It was agreed that any recommendations would be noted and circulated to members for approval at the following meeting.

- 1.3 The directors wanted to express their gratitude to an outgoing member who had worked hard to pass on their experience and best practice which would make the transition for the remaining directors much smoother.

**2. Private Business**

- 2.1 None.

**3. Minutes**

**Approval of the minutes from meeting 49 (10/03/14)**

- 3.1 No amendments to the minutes were identified, which would be formally ratified at the next meeting.

**4. Appointment of responsibilities for 2014-15**

- 4.1 The matrix of directors' responsibilities which had been circulated prior to the meeting was discussed. It was identified that new lead directors needed to be appointed to the Gardening Sub Committee and the Scrutiny Committee. One director volunteered to support the current lead for the Gardening Sub Committee but it was generally accepted that the current lead member had valuable knowledge relating to the watercourse issues and land ownership which would be invaluable but it was accepted that their duties would need to be reduced. By providing this additional

support and allowing them to stand down from the Scrutiny Committee it was hoped that they would be prepared to continue with these reduced commitments. In the event that this was still deemed to be too much, further discussion would need to take place outside of the meeting between several directors who might be prepared to change their respective roles to accommodate the requirement for the current Gardening Sub-Committee lead to reduce their overall commitments.

- 4.2 It was noted that the current Chairman of the WMC had confirmed prior to the meeting that they would be prepared to stand for a further term of 12 months.
- 4.3 Another director confirmed that they would be prepared to take on the role of lead director for the Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.4 The Treasurer confirmed that they would be willing to continue in this role and would consult widely with colleagues which would remove the need to appoint a Deputy Treasurer, although the option would remain in the future, should it be necessary.
- 4.5 A new secretary was proposed who would contact one of the out-going directors for handover notes in respect of the role and access to the Company portal.
- 4.6 An error was highlighted on the paperwork in respect of changes which had been agreed the previous year which had not been reflected – namely the removal of one director from the Scrutiny Committee and details on the contacts directory which still indicated that certain information could be made public when it should not.
- 4.7 A request was made for a second link between the WMC and the WRACIC. It was suggested that there was a useful alignment between the work of the WRACIC and the activities which were reported within the Waterways World. The current assistant editor of the Waterways World would be a natural fit. It was confirmed that the WRACIC met on the first Tuesday of every month but that attendance would not be necessary at every meeting. The same director volunteered to provide continuity by responding to feedback correspondence.
- 4.8 The matrix would be circulated for comment by absent members and re-presented to the next meeting for approval.

## **5. Setting of objectives**

- 5.1 It was identified that the two main objectives set for 2012-13 remained relevant for 2014-15, these being:

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

- 5.2 It was suggested that further consideration should be given to reviewing the performance/ retendering the managing agent this year.

5.3 That the three objectives for 2014-15 be presented at the next meeting for approval.

## **6. Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

6.1 The draft minutes from the AGM held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2014 were tabled at the meeting. A number of amendments were highlighted. One director had come to the end of their second year of office and had not been elected following co-option, item 7 should be re-worded to state: "had submitted their resignation as Directors" and a set of parenthesis was missing from item 9.2.

6.2 Subject to these amended minutes being approved at the next WMC meeting, the draft minutes should be uploaded on to the Waterways website and that the approved final minutes of the minutes from the AMG held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2013 should be published on the website.

## **7. Matters arising from the minutes from meeting 49**

7.1 It was noted that following further investigation the provision of a power supply from the bin store would be impractical as it would only be available at night. The Council had agreed to yellow lines at the Bainton Road/Elizabeth Jennings Way cycle path link and Green Square had proposed employing somebody to visit its tenants to ask them to respect the use of the Clearwater Place bin store.

7.2 It was noted that the managing agents were proposing to ask the cleaners to ensure that the refuse area within Clearwater Place was tidy each week. This additional cost would be allocated to Schedule 7 which would result in both private and Green Square tenants contributing to this cost.

7.3 It was reported that even Kids Unlimited suspected that residents had begun using its refuse facilities to dispose of residential waste.

7.4 A discussion ensued on whether the Council would accept plastic bags within apartment recycling containers. A director proposed to seek clarification on the Council's policy.

## **8. Health and Safety**

8.1 It was noted that no response to the correspondence issued by the managing agent on behalf of the WMC had been received from the resident who had enquired whether it would be possible to including lighting along the wildlife corridor.

## **. Sub Committee news round up**

### **9.1 Finance Sub-Committee**

9.1.1 It was noted that the premium for the indemnity insurance had remained static for the last two years and that it was likely to be around £410. The managing agent confirmed that as soon as they received notification of the renewal that they would forward it on to the Treasurer.

- 9.1.2 Having reviewed the legal position regarding the transfer ownership and Schedule 3 charges relating to a property on Stone Meadow, the managing agent confirmed that the details of the transfer did not allow for the WMC to charge for parking maintenance.

## **9.2 Apartment Block Sub-Committee**

- 9.2.1 It was reported that the lift pit within apartment block 56-90 Elizabeth Jennings was full of water and had been out of order for seven weeks as a result. This was having a serious impact on a number of residents who were suffering from severe asthma. It was noted that Kone had to be in attendance to open the lift pit but that they had been refusing to remove the water on the basis that it was contaminated with oil. The managing agent had arranged for contractors to be on standby with a variety of methods to remove the water (buckets, pumps etc). The lift operator was proving less than co-operative in resolving the situation which was made even more frustrating as they had recently had their contract renewed. This type of service was not what the WMC had grown to expect. Future lapses in service would not be tolerated.

## **9.3 Gardening Sub-Committee**

- 9.3.1 It was noted that no news had been received from the Tree Officer in respect of the application which had been made to reduce the stature of the Poplar tree by between 30% and 50% to make it safe following its partial reduction by the Canal and River Trust. No information had been provided on the progress of any enforcement action which the Council might wish to take against the Canal and River Trust.
- 9.3.2 It was reported that a coded gate lock would be installed this week for the electricity sub-station access way.
- 9.3.3 A report from Metro Rod on the watercourse was received. Directors were concerned that the organisation had not undertaken what they had been asked. As a result, the managing agent had withheld payment. In fact, it was noted that Metro Rod had refused to put a camera down the siphon to check whether it was operating correctly. This evidence was vital to determine the potential site of the blockage within the entire watercourse in order to develop a solution.
- 9.3.4 It was noted that Thames Water had come to site three days after a formal complaint had been made to the Consumer Council. The company had claimed that the siphon was clear and that they had now complied with their obligations.
- 9.3.5 Several directors volunteered to meet with Metro Rod to talk them through exactly what was required to avoid any future confusion.
- 9.3.6 The discussion reminded the Treasurer that they needed to confirm with the Oxfordshire Conservation Volunteers the date for this year's wildlife corridor clearance weekend.

#### **9.4. Feedback**

- 9.4.1 It was noted that a request had been made for a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding which would be duly actioned.

#### **10. Matters arising from the question and answer session at the AGM, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

- 10.1 The questions were noted and it was reported that whilst the coffee morning had been less than successful two clubs had been established in the community room – creative writing and meditation.
- 10.2 It was noted that the managing agent had replied to a resident who had enquired whether any other residents within the development had experienced problems with door handles failing, confirming that this had been the case.
- 10.3 The managing agents confirmed that following approval of the guidelines on proposals for development of properties within the Waterways at the AGM, it would circulate the final version to freeholder owners.

#### **11. WRACIC**

- 11.1 Nothing additional to report.

#### **12. Managing Agent**

- 12.1 Nothing to report.

#### **13. Any other business**

- 13.1 It was proposed that an evening dinner should be arranged in June at the Anchor for departing, current and newly appointed directors.

#### **14. Date of next meetings**

The meetings for the year ahead were noted as follows:

14<sup>th</sup> July 2014

8<sup>th</sup> September 2014 (provisional, subject to confirmation by absent members)