



THE ESTATE OFFICE WENTWORTH CLUB WENTWORTH DRIVE VIRGINIA WATER SURREY GU25 4LS

Minutes of the 294th Meeting of the Committee Held on Monday 4th May 2020 held via video conferencing

Present: ALEX HOWARD (AH)) Chairman
LORNA PONTI (LP)
JOHN BAINES (JB)
NEIL COULSON (NC)
CHRIS ROBBINS (CR)
MARK LEE (ML)

JAMES PERITON (JP) Estate Manager

1. The **MINUTES** of the 293rd meeting had already been approved and circulated on the website, no further matter was raised.

2. REVIEW OF POLICIES, PROCEDURES & STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

a) Welcome new members to WERC

AH opened the meeting and formally welcomed NC, CR & ML to the Committee filling the casual vacancies afforded by the resignation of Aidan Heavey, Peter Lomas & Taji Zadeh. Although not present AH wished for it to be recorded that the Committee were very grateful for the three past member's contributions over their respective spells. AHe was instrumental in the drafting of the 'draft' Code of Conduct & Governance.

b) WERC Code of Conduct & Governance

AH & JP gave the update and background information to the three new members with the Code of Conduct and Governance, in particular that it would supplement the Act not sit alongside it, as it has no legal basis. The Act would remain the sole authority. The CofC&G would give guidance to members on their role and what is expected. In addition, residents will get a better understanding on the role of the Committee and the modern working interpretation of the Covenants. AH commented the draft should be amended to incorporate the 'Nolan Principles' even though the tone of the CofC&G does so they should be specified. Other areas, for example the Compliance Officer needs to be amended.

The way forward was discussed and agreed the CofC&G should be amended with the Principles but also condensed. AH agreed to undertake this.

It was further discussed whether the CofC&G should be incorporated into a new revised Wentworth Estate handbook. This was viewed favourably and requires further consideration.

At the recent WRA Liaison Meeting it was agreed the WRA would be consulted, probably in the form of a meeting, to go through CofC&G and this can only happen once the CofC&G has been amended and then discussed at the next Statutory Meeting to be held in August.

3. FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) 2019 Draft Accounts - Comments

JB confirmed the recent Audit and prior to the meeting the Draft Account 2019 were distributed. They showed a surplus of circa £215k in the P&L but it was acknowledged there was approximately £325k spent on the capital investment of the Vehicle Access Control Barriers ('VAC') project.

JP is to report to the Auditors there needs to be further Notes regarding the VAC included and the investment clearly shown in Capital Assets.

Reserves are £365k over four accounts. How and where to invest was also discussed.

b) 2020 Road Rate – Comment

JP updated the Committee on the Road Rate payments and that as expected the amount received to date was down on the same time in previous years. The consensus was this was due to the Covid-19 global pandemic and the lockdown. 86% of payments were in (555 residents) whereas last year it was 94%. 85 are still to pay amounting to £110k.

Prior to the meeting a re-written Final Reminder letter was circulated, this was approved by the Committee and will be issued with the exception of the shops within the next few days. It was agreed the shops should be treated separately as many remain closed. ML kindly offered to assist JP in handing the shops, for example promote the Grant Schemes that the government are offering.

c) 2020 Budget and Finance – Budget reconciliation

The Budget Reconciliation was circulated prior to the meeting. It was commented it was still too early in the year as accurate assess performance and the end of year budget variance. The current status showed a forecast year end surplus of £82,000, however this did not include the second resurfacing project that is traditionally undertaken at the end of the year and the remaining circa £150k on the barriers.

JP confirmed the monies for the release of the Methodist Church covenant had been received, to be split 50/50 with Lindgray (Wentworth) Ltd.

4. GENERAL MATTERS

a) VAC Barriers – Update

JP and JB gave an update as to the latest stage of the VAC barrier project, in summary:

1. We are still waiting for County Highways to report on Gorse Hill Road/Lane barriers due to the two adopted roads. They initially said 'No' to these barriers even though they were to be 24/7 automatic. We have replied that they are 'replacing' existing barriers which they seemed to have failed to consider.

2. We are waiting for Surrey C.C. Rights of Way to confirm their report re the TWO barriers on West Drive. To get the overall application approved we will have to accept the barrier beside the Executive Course cannot function and we will have to submit a separate new planning application but after consent to apply for a redirection of a public footpath. West Drive main entrance can operate as it is 'replacing' an existing barrier but until we apply for redirection of the public footpath this will have to operate automatically 24/7.

Once the above two reports are received the Planning Office we will then prepare his report for the Committee, only then can it allocated onto the Agenda for the next (remote) RBC Planning Committee meeting. It is known not when this will be.

Another point to comment is the relocation by setting further into Portnall Drive by 10m away from the A30.

As per the recent Liaison Meeting with the WRA the Committee is to provide a timeframe of implementation along with a breakdown of costs, the Committee agreed this can only happen after planning consent is obtained.

b) Crime - Update

JP reported since the last meeting (February) there had been 0 'confirmed' burglaries and that the virus lockdown was probably a big factor. It was commented during April there had been one 'attempted' burglary in Lake Road that the resident commented it seemed amateurish and bungled.

Separate to this a suspicious broken window at a property near North Drive was reported but the police were recording as an 'attempted' burglary even though there was no sign of a break in. JP mentioned he had raised this with the police in that it was incorrectly reported.

c) Construction Sites - Update

The number of active building sites fell from 27 at the last meeting to 20 (13 on the golf side, 7 on the shop side) and that of the 20 50% were new builds (5 of which are speculative builds to be sold). Some sites are fully operational, but majority are well below full output due to either lack of available materials/deliveries and/or not over-crowding the site to maintain '2m social distancing'.

JP mentioned there are 4 – 5 properties that have recently finished and awaiting signing off but these can wait until the lockdown is lifted.

5. MAINTENANCE MATTERS

a) Resurfacing Programme – Proposed Portnall Rise

The sanctioned resurfacing of Portnall Rise was on hold as the manufacturer of the channel blocks, Marshalls plc had closed due to the lockdown. The appointed contractor, Spadeoak are seeking a matching alternative, JP commented this is harder than it appears as Marshalls have some sort of patent over the block.

JP mentioned he had received comments from a resident along Portnall Rise even though it was known it is due for resurfacing and that it appeared there was a two-tier appearance to the Estate. The Committee agreed this is not the case or intention and that once widened, edged and resurfaced it will match other improved roads and be maintained to the same.

b) General Update

The maintenance team are still functioning and after a couple having been furloughed, had returned to work to make 3 out of 4 working. Some work projects had been put on hold due to the staff shortages. On the whole the Estate is presenting well under the circumstances.

The recent bulb planting project was a success.

Due to the lockdown and in particular the closing of car parks to Windsor Great Park, Chobham Common etc., the dog walking had increased on the Estate roads and as a result so had dog fouling and dog bags. It was suggested and agreed a letter should be issued confirming the Committee and the maintenance remain operating and that residents should collect and dispose of their dog's foul, also any Estate comments should be directed to the WERC.

6. WRA MATTERS

a) S.II Investigation - update

Following the recent AGM AH summarised the subsequent S.II investigation by the WRA to the new Committee members. He added, to bring the matter to a conclusion and in the interest of other existing Committee members Taji Zadeh had offered his resignation. It was with regret that AH accepted his resignation as this seemed out of proportion because TZ believed he only did what he did for the resident's proxy to be used as the resident wished.

b) WERC members allocated constituencies

The WRA had recently requested that the Committee adopt the directive under S.22 of the WRA Constitution to have the 6 Committee members allocated a constituency. The Act is silent on this matter. The main discussion point was what benefit or enhancement to the functioning of the Committee would this have? Of which there was no answer. It was commented the Committee has functioned for over 25years (at least as far back as can be recalled) without this allocation so it appeared odd as to why the WRA would request this now. The constitution dates to before there was an Estate Office and Estate Manager so it is thought having one member allocated an area was a means of a resident of reporting any Estate issue. With the Estate Office/Manager and now the ability to use email & mobile phones as a means of reporting there doesn't appear any need. The Committee agreed their function is as a group and not individually (as this could lead to internal disparity) and as this was not a breach of the Act or acting against the objects of the Association it was decided not to adopt this.

AH is to report to the WRA.

c) The Outstanding £1000 for 2019

The £1,000 payment (£500 for contribution towards use of the office and £500 towards the collections and processing of the £100 WRA subscription on the Road Rate invoice) remains outstanding for 2019. AH reported the background and it was discussed including alternative methods of assisting in the WRA collection of their subs. It was unanimously agreed the amount should not be waived and AH would issue a letter to WRA requesting payment.

d) How many members to date via RR payments

Of the 555 payments 390 had paid the WRA subs (70%), continuing the year-on-year trend, however it was commented as the late payments are received JP confirmed this would go down as the late payers don't tend to sign up to the WRA.

7. WENTWORTH CLUB MATTERS

a) Pre PGA 2020 Tournament – Any Comments

NC updated the Committee as to the latest with the PGA Tournament, discussions are ongoing with the European Tour and BMW as to whether it will be open or behind closed doors or even with a limited number of spectators remains uncertain. The Government are due to make an announcement as to the relaxing of the lockdown on Sunday 10th May. The Committee raised with NC the WERC Tournament Fee and to have this in mind during talks and the risk of having a behind closed doors Tournament would be negatively viewed by the residents.

b) Other Matters – Club Closed, Wentworth Drive & Robinswood

NC reported that depending on the Governments pending announcement the Club are preparing for a partial re-opening.

- NC acknowledged last year he had committed to resurfacing and improving a large section of Wentworth Drive however due to the Virus he admitted this is now unlikely for this year but accepted it will be addressed and the plan is still to go ahead.

- The purchase of some Club land to Robinswood is currently on hold due to the Virus.

c) The 'Kitchen To Go' – comments

The Committee had been heavily criticised by the WRA for the circulation of the Club's 'Kitchen To Go' initiative, it was confirmed by NC that a miscommunication with a colleague at the Club inadvertently led to simultaneous discussions occurring with the WRA which resulted in the Club agreeing to the circulation with the WRA the same which lead to both bodies sending it out on the same day. The Committee were not aware of this. AH confirmed this was not promoting 'The Club' i.e. in its membership etc. but was a goodwill gesture to the residents in unprecedented times and praised NC for such an initiative. AH had taken advice and this was not considered a breach in Data Protection and/or GDPR and there was no breach of duties within the remit of the Act. The WRA had received complaints from residents for such a promotion but JP reported the only emails he had received were of praise.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Resident Dispute

The legal dispute with the resident remains ongoing and whether the WERC revert to mediation was discussed and in particular the issue over 'recovery of costs'. The Committee will revert to the lawyers for comment and advice.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING(s)

24th August starts at 5pm

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.20pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Howard', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alex Howard
Chairman WERC

12th May 2020