



**Wellington Mills Housing Cooperative  
Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2018  
At Oasis Hall, LRC room 7.00pm**

**Present:** Nick Flesher (NF, Incoming Chair), Carole Donaghy (CD, Outgoing Chair), Alistair Crosby (AC, Secretary), Simon Hayley (SH, Treasurer), Raymond Edmonds (RE), Sandra Sykas-Taylor (SST), Rodrigo Postigo (RP), Margaret Pope (MP), Pam Dockerill (PD), Jean Bagnall (JB), Pat Griffiths (PG), Valerie Sillery (VS), plus 31 residents

**In attendance:** Idham Ramadi (IR, TMO liaison officer), Isaac Essuman (IE, Estate Manager), Charlotte Collins (CC, representative of Kreston Reeves auditors)

**Apologies:** Francis Murphy, Maria Parry-Burns, plus 14 residents.

**1. Chair's welcome and introduction**

CD welcomed all and noted apologies (see above).

**2. Minutes of previous AGM – 24.10.17**

Page 2 item 5.3: Pat noted an explanation is still needed. Masood was to follow this up. CD will ask IE to look into the matter (**ACTION IE**). Minutes agreed as an accurate reflection of the meeting held – Pat Cryan proposed, RE seconded.

**3. Matters arising not on the agenda**

No additional matters (see above).

**4. Election of MC members**

The following were proposed as the new Management Committee:

1. Jean Bagnall
2. Alistair Crosby (Secretary)
3. Pamela Dockerill
4. Carole Donaghy
5. Raymond Edmonds
6. Nick Flesher (Chair)
7. Pat Griffiths
8. Simon Hayley (Treasurer)
9. Frances Murphy
10. Maria Parry Burns (Vice Chair and Assistant Secretary)

11. Margaret Pope
12. Rodrigo Postigo
13. Tim Prichard
14. Valerie Sillery
15. Sandra Sykas-Taylor

**4.1** CD asked if there were any objections – none noted. NF introduced himself. NF arrived at Wellington Mills in October and thanked CD for her role as Chair. CD will still be on the MC and do a handover. NF will lead the rest of tonight's agenda. NF listed those MC members who had stepped down over the year or reached the end of their terms: James Birkett, Richard Craig, Mark Jeffers and Chris Sargesson. Thanks are extended to them for the time put in (round of applause ensued).

## **5. Annual reports and financial statements**

**5.1** CC talked through the accounts which were circulated to all. Page 9 gives a summary of organisation income & expenditure. Surplus was made of just under £11k even though the management allowance was less this year. There are detailed breakdowns in the notes. Page 10 is the balance sheet and shows all assets and liabilities. The auditors did not notice any issues or significant changes. CC asked if there were any questions – one lady asked why amounts in the restricted surplus differed from last year. SH explained how the 2018 accounts are in a better format and clearly show what's in bank accounts. Years ago money went into accounts wrongly. The totals have not changed much; restricted surplus increased as the surplus reduced. This was done on the advice of Masood and a policy should have been in place previously. Last year's figures were not compiled in accordance with WMHC's policies (CC agreed with SH's explanation).

**5.2** Elaine Whittock thought restricted surplus fund was the old ring fenced GLC money; it should not be added to. The sum previously could not be touched. SST recalled MC members had questioned the movement of sums too. CC clarified that the movement was not to inflate figures, and sums are accurately reflected in bank accounts. In reality amounts were not actually moved – it was merely a paper exercise. SST explained that it was queried at MC meetings too; hence the accounts were previously in draft format. **SH asked CC to confirm when the 'transfer' occurred (ACTION CC). Previous balances will be revisited and compared (ACTION CC).** CC noted there was movement in 2017 too and this will be clarified. A note can be added to the accounts.

**5.3** NF asked if there were any further questions. One resident wondered why costs for office rates had doubled. CC explained that some invoices were deferred and the correct figure for rates can be confirmed. When asked about the difference between consultancy and professional fees, CC noted that consultants' fees relate to advice. Professional fees would be things like legal advice. **Vote – to approve the accounts subject to amendments – agreed by show of hands.**

*CC left at 7.27pm*

## **6. Estate manager's report**

**6.1** MC members compiled a statement for the accounts and it gave information on the estate manager role. IE then took the opportunity to discuss his first year in more detail. IE started work last October. There have been a few changes and MC members have been very helpful. Regarding staffing, Alan Jones was interim manager and left in October. Tamisan was the administrator and has since left. Tamisan was very helpful when IE first started and areas for improvement were identified. All organisations have their own culture and there are dynamics. Tamisan was very helpful in these areas as well. MC members had high expectations and the first few months were challenging.

**6.2** IE noted he likes being hands on, including doing things like replacing light bulbs. IE has seen conditions of all the roofs except for one. Also, inside the intake cupboards and electrical areas. There were so many keys in the office and several storage spaces. In February IE had a bereavement (his mother) and had to travel abroad. Alan returned to cover IE for 2 weeks, up until June. Alan was supportive around rent collection and tenancy issues. IE noted he still had to get a firm grasp of WMHC's financial position. New software was purchased and this has improved the quality of various reports. There are notes of all stock managed (including the garages) and an improved filing system (now more orderly) which this was done in the IE's first 3 months. A temporary worker was brought in for 6 weeks. The role was advertised and IR kindly assisted with advertising it on the 'go public' website. Responses were good –around 60 CVs - and 10 candidates were selected. Roseline started in August and she has plenty of relevant previous experience.

**6.3** Regarding leaseholder charges, six-monthly figures for 2017/18 were submitted to Lambeth. In March the next set of figures were due. Fortunately things were in place and streamlined; this allowed easier finding of cost codes and some 2017/18 credits were made. There are still prevailing issues, including a 2015/16 leaseholder charges query. Liaison with Masood still continues. It is a split responsibility and charges are set by the council. IE has met with contacts from Lambeth's home ownership team and they went through WMHC's 2017/18 figures. It was decided (along with MC members) to not pass certain charges onto leaseholders. However, this may not be financially viable long term. For instance communal areas, domiciliary assistance and so on are not covered by the allowance.

**6.4** Regarding major works, there were strenuous efforts to oppose the council's proposals. Negotiations continue and IE acknowledged he found it challenging initially. Contractors are now on site and heating/electrical work will proceed. There was a recent response about windows and doors; 2019 is too soon and Lambeth want the ongoing work to end before any new work starts. Works start on Monday (excavation). IE noted things will be difficult when the work starts. The website will be updated too with information. The team were invited to tonight's meeting but declined due to other commitments.

**6.5** IE noted the year had gone quickly for him. Alongside the MC members, a lot has been achieved. From the reserve fund there has been planting, stair well painting and the Holst Court garage gates were upgraded. Also there was work on Oakey block's roof. Roofing issues still continue in some areas. IE noted he has

worked in housing for quite a while and still enjoyed it. It also came with its challenges and fortunately, the overwhelming majority of residents at WMHC are very polite and helpful. PC asked about the 2015/16 charges and noted being informed that Lambeth would repay the service charges. IE noted a statement needs to be sent to Lambeth Council. Lambeth cannot reduce amounts in isolation. Lambeth is querying the figures that WMHC had sent them. EW recalled being in a meeting with Masood and Pamela Mosely where figures were agreed. IE reiterated that Lambeth requested more information. They seem to want justification around why figures were on the first set but not the second. The second set superseded the first. **IR will also feedback to colleagues and ask them to clarify things (ACTION)**. Mark Jeffers suggested asking that the matter is resolved before end of the year (no objection to this suggestion).

**6.6** IE noted that residents are passionate and a few had been MC members previously. However, there can be a slight danger of straying into operational aspects. For instance, reporting a repair and advising how it should be resolved. Balance is needed and this is important.

## **7. Resolution to continue as WMHC**

Vote – for Wellington Mills to remain a housing cooperative - unanimously agreed by show of hands.

## **8. New auditors**

**8.1** SH led the discussion. Over the years there have been issues around getting responses to queries from Kreston Reeves. This year, MC members propose that alternative auditors are sourced (no objection). Recommendation is Keith Johnson, who is self-employed and will attend the next MC meeting. KR costs £5K, Keith will charge £3k and is based locally.

SH informed all that there is now an accountant who comes on site every quarter (SH explained difference between quarterly management accounts and audited accounts). IE undertakes the bookkeeping function. MJ asked if the accountant would verify quarterly figures prior to submission to Lambeth. This would reduce the issues around service charges. **Vote – to disengage Kreston Reeves and appoint Keith Johnson as WMHC's new auditor – unanimously agreed by show of hands** [proposed by Mark Jeffers, seconded by SST].

## **9. Any Other Business**

None.

*Meeting closed at 8.09pm*