

## **BRENTFORD DOCK LTD**

### **Minutes of 574th Board Meeting**

14<sup>th</sup> January 2016 @ 7.00 pm

**PRESENT:** Veronica Wray (Chair VW), Mike Edwards (Deputy Chair ME), Charles Kraus – Alternate for BSB (CK), Roy Swainston (RS), Leslie Ferber (LF), Paul Booth (PB), Phil Stephenson (PS), Katherine Baxter (KB), Chris Birch (CB), Caroline Turner (CT) Charles Sturt (CS)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** from Michael Richards & Co Adam Goldwater (AG) and John Antrobus (JA)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Joanna Houghton (Minutes Secretary).

#### **574/1 Apologies for Absence**

None received.

#### **574/2 Minutes of Previous Meeting (573 10 December 2015)**

The minutes of Meeting 573, 10 December 2015 were agreed as a true record.

#### **Matters arising on Action points**

**Meeting 549/5/10 – Nationwide Windows** – this matter is still ongoing. Nationwide want to complete the snagging/cosmetic jobs to the windows but have not been in contact since October 2015, JA will chase and report back.

**Meeting 566/6/7/7 - Gas supply** – All work completed and properties connected to gas.

**Meeting 569/8D – Duck Headed Paper:** The agreed headed paper had not been used as there had been a problem with converting it into a work document. JA had resolved this and it would now be used for a trial period as agreed and it was agreed that CB would use the new duck on his presentation at the AGM.

#### **Meeting 572/6/11 – CAFM** (Computer-Aided Facility Management software)

JA will organise Directors training on 4/2/16 during daytime and will confirm with Directors.

**Meeting 572/6/12 – Bulk Waste/Recycling Project** – to come back to Board in February 2016.

**Meeting 572/6/13 - Animal surveillance** – The Estate staff had identified feline activity and had dealt with this item.

**Proposal:** Minutes of Meeting 573 held on 10 December 2015 agreed as true record.

#### **574/3 To Agree Any Other Business Items**

- a) New Paths (CB)
- b) Operations Support Committee Jan 2016 (PB)

**574/4 To Dispose of Business if any remaining from last Meeting**

None.

**5734/5 To receive such communications as the person presiding may wish to lay before the Board** None.

**574/6 To receive and consider written reports and any other reports from the Company's Managing Agents, Michael Richards & Co.**

- a) MR&Co Management Report
- b) AG's Presentation – brought forward from December 2015 Meeting
- c) Building Insurance – brought forward

**a) MR&Co Management Report**

**1. Service Provider KPI's**

Latest KPI's need to be voted on by the Board, as the OSC meeting was not quorate. RS asked Chair to relay thanks to Trigion and office staff for the way Security, parcel storage and cleaning up of the storm damage was dealt with. AG confirmed a letter of thanks had been passed on.

**Proposal:** To pass service provider KPI's as proposed in Management Report of 14/1/16. All in favour.

**a) 2. Contract & Fee Proposal**

AG presented a paper on the above. The Chair suggested that Directors could ask any questions now, while MR&Co. were present to enable a full discussion later in the private part of the meeting.

AG provided the meeting with background to this item. AG suggested that the original KPI system, which is still in use, was brought in to deal with failings of the previous Managing Agents to provide basic management information, and that this system was no longer a good indicator in assessing MR&Co and their performance. His paper suggested a review of the current system to enable recognition of MR&Co going 'the extra mile' for BDL and how to measure the 'added value' MR&Co had given the Estate. AG wanted to assure the Board that the current level of service/contract would not alter, but this paper was a proposal to review the current KPI system and make it more relevant. However, any changes could also mean an increase in the MR&Co. contract fees.

**The following questions were asked by Directors to AG:**

Would the increase in the contract also include staff costs? – Yes

Could there be a model for incentives over and above contract, i.e. identified key tasks such as implementation of CAFM? – *Yes that was the thought behind AG's proposal.*

If the current KPIs are out-dated and a new system is needed would a new contract every year be a better solution? – *It is better to review changes each year on the current contract.*

There were no further questions and Directors felt that all queries had been answered adequately.

### **a) 3. Fee Scheme for Sublet Properties**

After last meeting, legal advice had been sought and their opinion was that such a scheme did not require a special resolution to be presented at an AGM. Legal view was that this is a company decision. JA asked if this would need to be added to the Book of Rules. Chair agreed this would be prudent for the future and would save any unnecessary searching by future Boards. ME pointed out that the Board had not actually decided to adopt the scheme; they had only so far decided to seek legal opinion. The scheme's paper highlighted that the majority of bulk waste on the Estate is caused by the change of occupancy on short-term tenancies. Views were expressed for and against the size of the fee, some of the meeting felt it was not a large amount and that the landlords would pass it onto their tenants, some thought fees could mount up for multiple property owners if charged every year. It was put forward that a monitoring element should be included in the scheme to show when there is a change of tenancy, then fee could be charged, this could then limit the cost for landlords with long-term tenants. Therefore notification of change of tenancy would be a better way to levy this charge. JA informed meeting that new landlord legislation being brought in means that BDL has to be informed of the lead tenant on sublet properties and this could be trigger for charging fee, the charge could then be levied for first year and if no change in tenancy on second year, then no charge.

Any monies raised from such a fee would go to pay for the disposal of bulk waste, and could be assigned to a waste disposal budget heading. It was felt that more work needed to be done on the proposal and the Board asked MR&Co to return to the next meeting with an updated proposal to take into account the following:

- Long term tenancies more than 25 months.
- Specifics on what the fee would go towards.
- How it will run, with regard to notifications and when charged, etc.
- Annual review details.

JA informed that if not agreed in January and postponed to February for agreement such a scheme would require a speedy implementation for the 16/17

financial year. **Proposal:** To bring back to February meeting, with the new proposal taking into account Board's requests mentioned above.

#### **4. Timber Window Redecoration**

Legal opinion had been sought and this view was included in MR&Co report. AG sought direction from the Board on charging for any redecoration of windows to Leaseholders. There was a general discussion on the issue and it was clear that the Lease provisions may not be considered reasonable, although the liability for redecoration remains with BDL as it stands. CB said that most Shareholders had chosen to upgrade their windows at their own cost. JA pointed out that a relatively small number of flats (around 15%) still had timber windows and these are spread across each Block, so redecoration would have to be charged to each Block as a whole, rather than individually.

**5. Over cladding** (external asbestos panels) AG informed that they would find another firm to quote for work and return to Board.

**6. DDA/Equality Act Compliance Audit** (DDA - Disability Discrimination Act) JA had received 2 more proposals, attached to report, he felt that the company, *Access all Area's* quote was idealistic whereas *Evans Jones'* was more pragmatic. ME expressed the view that such an audit was *not* necessary as the Estate was private and not used by the public, and therefore BS8300 was not relevant. There followed a discussion on the relevance of such an audit and if the Board should be proactive in its Health and Safety on the Estate. CT has knowledge of the H&S field and felt that it was prudent to get the survey done. However, ME suggested that the Board request an expert, not from any of the quoted firms, to visit the Estate and walk around and then advise on necessity of audit. MR&Co mentioned that requests for alterations on buildings where DDA is implied are often complex as 'reasonableness' needs to be proven, an example could be the demand that stair lifts be retroactively fitted to staircases would be considered unreasonable, whereas for instance, installation of ramps would be considered reasonable. The Board discussed the possibility of commissioning a report by a specialist. JA informed the meeting that Evans Jones & Co had implied in their covering letter that they were doubtful that BDL needed such a comprehensive report/audit and were happy to advise further. Eventually the Chair put forward the following proposal:

**Proposal:** As Evans Jones & Co. had already indicated to JA that a full audit may not be necessary that we invite them to visit the Estate and they give their views on necessity of further in depth Report, (paid at an hourly fee rate).

#### **a) Building Insurance**

An insurance valuer is visiting the Dock on 20-21 January 2016 and MR&Co are having in-house training at the end of January. A report should be received by end of February and ready to move forward for the beginning of April. The Chair

requested being kept up to date on when item could be included on Board Agenda, i.e. February or March 2016. **Action** MR&Co to update Chair.

**574/7 To receive and consider any other reports, including those from Committees.**

**Finance Committee** – PB reminded Directors that there is a budget planning meeting on 21 January, however, PB would not be able to attend until 7.30pm and asked the Board to consider either; changing start time; changing the date of meeting; finding an alternative Chair, or asking CC if she would be willing to attend the meeting at the later time? It was appreciated that this was not usual practice and not part of CC's usual work schedule and AG said he would check with CC and get back to Chair with response asap. **Action:** AG to consult with CC and inform VW of outcome.

**574/8 Decisions taken out of Committee - None.**

**574/9 Items for Discussion**

**a) Marketing of New Flat**

All Directors had now viewed the new flat. There are still a few snagging jobs to be completed. The marketing group had met and agreed to meet 4 agents, 3 in TW8 area and 1 in W4 to ask their advice and to allow them to bid for the opportunity to sell the flat, firstly as sole agents for a limited period and then if not sold, as multiple agents. The Chair stated that she would contact the 4 agents as soon as possible to get the flat on the market. There was a brief discussion about linking a parking space to the new flat. VW will seek advice from Estate Agents on any added value of providing a parking space with the flat. Any subsequent decision on a space could be dealt with out of committee. **Action:** VW to contact Estate Agents and move marketing forward.

**b) Update on Augustus Close Bridges**

ME advised that ME, VW and JA had attended a meeting along with other stakeholders and contractors at LBH regarding the procedures and timetables for the Bridge works. The start date put forward is April 2016 as PFI funding being used will end December 2016. Amongst other works, the bridge will need to be lifted 9 millimetres to allow the replacement of bearings and will be unusable during this process; with alternative access via Dock Road. Louise Batts who is the Local Authority lead on this project, has been asked to attend the AGM (to give a short presentation on the works) along with Steve Curran, current Leader of the Council. It was a positive meeting and JA and VW/ME were very impressed with the Council's planning.

**574/10 Any Other Business (as agreed at start of meeting).**

1. **Paths** – CB wanted to draw attention to the new paths, and the current wet weather. The hardening off of the new paths would be monitored closely as this may take longer due to weather conditions. JA assured meeting that the contractors had visited and sorted out any problems and happy to return in future. The Board agreed the new paths looked good and expressed thanks to be passed onto contractors. It was requested that the contractors, Top Level Construction, be added to ‘approved’ contractors list. **Action** JA to pass on thanks to Ray Pocock and contractors for works carried out.

2. **Operations Support Committee** – PB requested an update on the digital TV upgrade. Marcus Court had received no information on new services from Sky. This may be an item for OSC. The Chair reminded Directors that any further upgrade could not take place where the system is currently housed on the Estate roofs due to contractors unwillingness to work in confined areas where asbestos is present, albeit sealed and un-disturbed. **Action:** JA to follow up on information and to research further on fibre optic digital options via Hyperoptic.

3. **Motorbikes on Dock Road** - CT raised the problem of delivery motorbikes using the pavements around the Estate and especially on Dock Road. The meeting discussed possible options to resolve the matter, i.e. signage, extra bollard, new gate with specific opening, however, it was decided that this matter should be taken to the next OSC meeting.

MR&Co left meeting at 9.30 pm. Minute secretary left the meeting 9.40 pm.

**Date of Next Meeting 11 February 2016 at 7.00 pm.**