



# Wimbledon Park Co-operative Limited

**Board Meeting:** Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

**Present:** Mary Cunningham (chair), Kirsty Corcoran (treasurer), Linda Stevens, Hugo Pastor, Craig Nicol, Sue Lore (secretary)

**Apologies:** Martin Lore, Bernard Koudjo.

**Absent:** Phyllis Edwards

**Last Minutes.** Everyone present agreed the minutes of the last meeting.

**Future Direction:** Mary introduced the meeting by stating that as we are at the start of a new contract, are about to change our rules and have some significant pending issues we need to look at our future direction. Mary gave a brief history of how she saw the co-op had been working over the past few years, where we stand today and what we need to consider moving forward. The importance of board members understanding & meeting our responsibilities was discussed as well as the importance of a cost effective and efficient office function.

## **Budget Considerations:**

Mary said this would be a major factor in determining our direction over the term of our current contract.

She talked through the first draft of the budget, provided by Blasé Lambert, for 2020-2021.

She gave her opinion that we cannot expect any real terms increase in our income over next 5 years.

The draft budget sheet presented (based on current year income & expenditure), has included an amount for garden maintenance of about 16,852. As we returned garden maintenance to the council, some or all of this amount may be subject to clawback for the current year 2019/20. The income figure currently showing Wandsworth BC fees of 268,796 for 2020/21 will need to be altered by Blasé Lambert to reflect this. Our discussion on spending factored in the income reduction.

We spoke on the basis that we will have an estimated budget of 53,000 for office salaries.

Other new or possibly increasing costs we will need to be aware of over the next 5 years include:

- External repairs – footpaths for example
- Tenant flats needing major repairs
- Cost of digitalising the office
- Staffing costs
- Fire Safety issues – uncertain what costs we might incur
- Other Potential Expenditure, Temporary cameras following episodes of fly tipping and stolen Catalytic converters

### **Staff Implications:**

Lizzie has handed in her notice & will leave on the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

Mary asked the Board individuals how they saw the future for the Co-op in light of the budget & our now pressing need to recruit a new manager.

Kirsty recognised that there is no other way to save money if we maintain the staffing levels that we have at present.

Craig agreed with Kirsty comments but felt that we should have some one on site 35 hours a week so being able to inspect the estate regularly.

Linda Talked about the Manningtree estate being run by the council remotely and having regular surgery's on site in a portacabin. From people she knows there it seems to work.

Sue asked about handing it back to the council to run. Felt it was important to have staff in the office to answer queries.

Mary responded, voicing concerns about handing the co-op back to the council saying that, as a resident of the estate, she would be fearful of the council then contracting out the day to day management of our estate to an external management company to run. She suggested we need to start considering alternative management models such as fulltime/reduced hours Estate/Housing Manager and/or a part time administration support. She also mentioned contracting out some services.

A discussion was then had regarding the current staffing of the office.

It was agreed that we could not continue financially as we are at present but that having someone in the office as much time as possible was the ideal. In practice this would mean either a full time Estate/Housing Manager or a part time Estate/Housing Manager and a part time administrator.

It was agreed that we would advertise for a full/part time Estate/Housing Manager immediately. Then at a later date we would look to employ an administrator. Mary was to contact Blase and Lizzie is contacting the HR Company Peninsula for advice on this.

We agreed that this is just the start of a what will need to be a major review of our structure.

**AOB**

It was agreed unanimously by the Board that, until further notice, we will pay Lizzie in full while she is working shorter days or needing to take some days off due to her father's illness. Elyse will be in the office at all times when Lizzie is out. The board expressed their support & good wishes to Lizzie.

A question was raised about the next General Meeting on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January re: New Rules. Would Blase be present to present them and answer questions?

Mary pointed out that we have meetings 3 weeks in a row, on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> January. She said that while we have a lot of change happening that some people may find this number of meetings too much. She asked if we wanted to defer/reduce the meeting scheduled for Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January. The board agreed unanimously that they would prefer the meeting to go ahead.

Mary raised the issue that once the new rules are agreed and the Board have been elected then any of us on that board must all be clear on our roles and responsibilities as board members, looking at such things as the training we need to help us develop our roles and deliver our responsibilities.

Next meeting: Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 19.00 in Fernwood office.