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## Minutes of Wimbledon Park Co-operative General Meeting Wednesday 22 March 2023

Agenda item	Action/Outcome
<p><b>1. Attendance and apologies</b></p> <p>In attendance: Mary Cunningham (MC), Hugo Pastor (HP), Assetou Nimaga (AN), Toni Causer (TC), Annelise Jespersen (AJ), Diana Farley (DF), Max Findlay (MF), Dolly Contractor (DC), Shaun Wilcox (SW), Kathleen Ryan (KR), John Lynch (JL), Graham Wood, Lloyd Bisnouth, Emily Goodfellow, Barbara Knop, Grace Howarth, Susan Lore, Martin Lore (non voting member), Julie Gray (non voting member).</p> <p>Lee Beddoe (LB), Estate Manager.            Sarah Stevens, Wandsworth Council Resident Participation Officer (SS).</p> <p>Steven Woodcraft from Simpson Wreford (Accountants).</p> <p>Apologies: Linda Stevens, Steve Kelly (SK), Marion Brown, Mary O'Shea, Ellie Kotzia, Joanna Leszczynska</p> <p>Minutes taken by AJ</p>	
<p><b>2. Declaration of interests</b></p> <p>No interests declared.</p>	

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<p><b>3. Agree minutes of previous meeting held 25 May 2022</b> The minutes were adopted.</p>	<p><b>Outcome</b> Minutes adopted.</p>
<p><b>4. Matters arising from the minutes</b> MC said that some actions in minutes were for previous estate manager who stopped work shortly after the previous meeting.</p>	
<p><b>4.1 Arrange a meeting with local police</b> MC said she had attended a safer neighbourhoods meeting, and tried to get police to come to the estate. Despite putting in reports, she's had difficulty speaking to West Hill safer neighbourhoods police team.</p>	
<p><b>4.3 Sheds policy</b> SK has taken lead on this. MC said there has been a survey of the sheds and a number are in process of being made available for rent. She hoped most people who have requested sheds would be able to have one over the next few months.</p> <p>There was a question regarding the policy for taking sheds back when people leave the estate, and live outside the borough, but continue to keep the shed.</p> <p>SS said the Council does rent out sheds/garages to people where they don't live on a particular estate, but where people have moved away from borough, or if there is a waiting list, then it needs to be looked into.</p> <p>MC said the answer the Co-op was given a few years ago was different, and that there was no facility to remove a shed from someone who had left the estate.</p> <p>SS said you could question someone's need for to still have the shed.</p>	
<p><b>4.4 Tracking system for matters arising</b> MC said LB is looking at changing a number of admin processes and revamping office functions, taking into account need for some kind of tracking system.</p>	

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<p><b>4.5 Complaints procedure</b>            JL asked why the Co-op and MC "ignores its complaints procedure". He said he had made a complaint about the previous manager that had not been answered.            MC said a General Meeting was not the place to deal with personal information and personal conversations, but was for residents regarding the running of the estate.            MC said she felt targeted and bullied by John and that the issue was becoming personal. She told him that she had previously told him at the AGM that if he was not happy with her he should complain to the Council.</p> <p>SS asked if this could be discussed after the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>4.6 Depreciation as item on budget</b>            Steven Woodcraft explained that depreciation is when fixed assets such as office furniture are bought. Depreciation allows the costs to be spread over the life of the asset.</p>	
<p><b>4.7 Damp in flats</b>            At previous General Meeting, EK said that issue of damp in flats was not being dealt with by the Council and that leaseholders were 'poor relations'.            SS said that training would be given to LB, and that leaseholders would be given guidance on dealing with damp.            MC asked who was responsible if damp has been caused by the building.            SS said if there is 'penetrating damp' leaseholders should report it to the estate manager initially. If estate manager needs assistance, they should ask the Council's area team.            MC said this needs to be discussed further as the question had not really been answered.</p>	<p><b>Action</b>            This issue to be topic for further discussion.</p>
<p><b>4.8 Light bulbs</b>            MC said cleaners have been shown how to check them, but the main problem is the state of the electrics on the estate.</p>	
<p><b>4.9 Barbecues</b>            SS said barbecues are not allowed on Council estates unless part of an official event that Council was aware of.</p>	<p><b>Action</b>            SS to confirm with LB. Notice to go in newsletter.</p>

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<p>It was asked whether a notice could be put up to highlight this, as "many sublet flats have BBQs". MC said the Board had previously been told that they couldn't ban them.</p> <p>SS said she would speak to LB and put a notice in the newsletter.</p>	
<p><b>4.10 Fire safety doors on flats – info for leaseholders</b> SS said LB would receive training from compliance team re this and would provide information. SS also said the main doors in stairwells were due to be replaced.</p>	
<p><b>5. Budget proposal 2023/24</b> Steven Woodcraft clarified that the original version of the budget had incorrect date but it had already been sent out when this was noticed.</p> <p>HP said there had been an uplift of 14.92% on last year's allowances.</p> <p><b>Kitchens and bathrooms replacement</b> MC said that the Council will refund money spent on replacing kitchens and bathrooms in Council tenant flats. She said one a month could be done, and it would take nearly three years to finish all, but no better solution available. Not all properties need both a new kitchen and bathroom, and some don't need either. Council does not have a large enough sum available for them all to be done at once.</p> <p><b>Cleaning contract</b> Steven Woodcraft said there had been increases for inflation. HP said the cleaning company wants to increase charges by about 8%. The budget calculations were based on this but in process of negotiating new contract.</p> <p>MC said we can't afford 8% increase, and the Board will meet with the cleaning company to find out what they can provide for the amount currently being paid. MC said the cleaning needed to be put out to tender this year because there isn't a proper contract, and the contract doesn't include all that's needed, so looking for an interim solution for next year.</p>	

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<p>It was asked if the cleaning contract would include paths and weeds.</p> <p>MC said the tendering process is long and the Board doesn't have enough expertise – she hopes the Council will help with the process. A specification needs to be put together to list what is needed.</p> <p>MC said the more that is spent on cleaning contract, the more that leaseholders pay for it in their service charges. So the estate needs to decide what it wants.</p> <p><b>Repairs</b></p> <p>It was asked why increased budget was so big for block repairs? MC said there was a lot needed to be done on blocks – walkways, walls, stairwells all have problems – and Board has allocated what can be reasonably afforded.</p> <p>A C1 has been put in for repairs to external parts of the estate and work will be started next year, so aiming to keep external parts of the estate safe, but not spend too much ahead of major works. Will do as many repairs and as much upgrading as we can.</p> <p>MC said it was impossible to know in advance how much would be needed for repairs.</p> <p><b>Software</b></p> <p>JL asked what was the £7k for software being spent on.</p> <p>MC said it would not necessarily all be spent but all software systems need reviewing. She said cost would hopefully be a lot less but needed facility to upgrade.</p> <p>She said telephony, computer issues and the website needed reviewing. She said the website is a big communication tool and money might needed to be spent on that. She said everything spent would be accounted for.</p> <p>She said nothing in the office works properly and it has to function well to address the needs of the estate.</p> <p><b>Gardening</b></p> <p>It was asked why the gardening budget was a lot lower than in previous years.</p>	

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<p>MC said Co-op no longer responsible for it and it had been handed back to Council.</p> <p><b>Service charges</b>            JL asked who submits figures to Council for anticipated costs for service charges.            MC said the Office did this.</p> <p>He said his recent service charge bill included an item for CCTV which now wasn't going to be installed.            SS asked if individual service charge questions could be discussed after meeting.</p> <p><b>Void works</b>            The budget assumes three voids a year.</p> <p><b>Office repairs</b>            MC said increase in budget for office repairs is because of likely leak, damp, and ongoing problem with heating. Boiler had been replaced but didn't solve the problem. Need to identify the problem, which will take quite a bit of work.</p> <p><b>Office salaries and training</b>            MC said the Board had been trying to recruit an admin assistant for several months but had not received any suitable applications. She said the Office desperately needed the admin support but can't recruit someone for the money available (approx. £12 per hour).</p> <p>MC said Board members needed training, which needs to be funded. She confirmed that no Board member ever takes or claims any expenses.</p> <p>[MF had to leave the meeting as he was feeling unwell]</p> <p>Question asked about 'bad debts'. Steven Woodcraft said it was generally prudent to include this but he didn't know of any.</p> <p><b>Printing costs</b>            MC said the Estate Handbook needs updating and will need to be printed.</p>	

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<p>The Co-op rules also need to be reviewed – it was agreed before the pandemic that they would be changed – which will require large amounts of paperwork being provided to residents.</p> <p>It was asked if the printing was needed and whether the information could be provided online.</p> <p>MC said the Board needs to ensure they're providing residents with necessary information re policies and procedures and don't want people to be able to say they weren't given it.</p> <p>MC confirmed that the newsletter would be reinstated.</p>	
<p><b>6. Vote to adopt proposed budget</b></p> <p>The proposed budget was adopted. The voting result was:  14 in favour  2 abstentions  0 against.</p> <p>[Steven Woodcraft left the meeting]</p>	<p><b>Outcome</b></p> <p>The proposed budget was adopted.</p>
<p><b>7. Manager's report</b></p> <p>MC introduced the new estate manager, Lee Beddoe (LB). LB said she had previously worked for Southwark Council and in the private sector. She said she was looking forward to working with Co-op members and residents and invited people to come and see her.</p> <p><b>Lifts</b></p> <p>There have been 112 call outs for the lifts in the last nine months, from electrical faults to damage. Sometimes the lifts are working by the time the engineers arrive. The Council has no plans to replace or upgrade the lifts and don't regard them as a big problem.</p> <p>The more reports they get, the more they might see it as a problem.</p> <p>LB said she would ask the Council whether they have benchmarks for when lifts should be replaced, eg age or number or repairs.</p>	<p><b>Action</b></p> <p>LB to check with Council on their criteria for replacing lifts.</p> <p>LB to get a further opinion on power washing of walls.</p>

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<p>MC said lifts are the Council's responsibility, but the service is chargeable – the Co-op is charged for emergency call-outs, and if lifts are replaced this will be chargeable to leaseholders.</p> <p><b>Parking permits</b> The Office has had some training, and they hope to issue permits by next week.</p> <p><b>Paths</b> Some paths have been repaired but the major work for external areas will be start next year and take place over two years.</p> <p><b>Trees /shrubby</b> LB said she and MC had meeting with tree maintenance department. A tree survey will take place at the end of June and the work will take place in August/September. LB said she will keep pushing for an earlier date because of the danger of branches falling.</p> <p><b>Bulk refuse/fly tipping</b> LB said more than £6,000 was spent dealing with this last year. A letter is going out to all flats on the estate about this issue.</p> <p><b>Retaining walls/cleaning</b> JL expressed concern about the state of retaining walls on balcony walkways, which he said are covered in green algae, and said these used to be the responsibility of the caretakers.</p> <p>MC said professional advice was that power washing makes things worse, but there is an increased budget for block repairs, so will look at this issue. She said the Council have said that if there is a major works problem outside of the budget, they would be amenable to discussing it.</p> <p>LB said she will ask relevant contractors for further advice re power washing of walls.</p> <p>JL said the situation is totally unacceptable and that the residents of one flat had cleaned and repainted their own section.</p>	



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<p>He said the cleaners don't clean but just spread dirt. MC asked him if he had reported this.</p>	
<p><b>8. Trees management update</b>  It was mentioned in the manager's update that work on trees would be carried out in Aug/Sep.</p> <p>DC said that trees would be in full bloom at this time and the Co-op had previously been told trees couldn't be cut in full bloom. SS said this was ok as the work needs to be done.</p> <p>MC said the tree problem had been unacceptable for years and asked SS how it had got so bad. SS said she couldn't explain why the Council's tree section haven't been on the estate – she said she would follow it up with LB.</p>	<p><b>Action</b>  SS to follow up with LB on why Council haven't previously carried out work on the trees.</p>
<p><b>9. C1 referral for pathways, car parks and other general external estate environment</b>  MC said a C1 referral had been submitted to the Council, and works were scheduled to take place over two years, starting in 2024/25.</p>	
<p><b>10. Electrical upgrade</b>  LB said the Council is due to put this work out to tender, but she doesn't have a start date.</p> <p>MC said they have been told it will start this year.</p>	
<p><b>11. AOB</b>  It was mentioned that front doors in some blocks were very stiff and hard to open, and some don't shut properly. LB said she will get someone to look at them.</p> <p>DF said that if MC hadn't stood in when the previous estate manager left, the Co-op wouldn't be here. She said MC had been working very hard and that Martin Green and Mary Gell had been absolutely fantastic.</p>	

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<p>MC said that she and the Board don't get everything right and were facing a lot of challenges but are working hard to put things right. She said she would like to thank other Board members.</p> <p>DC said had previously written to the Office about noise of someone using a treadmill in another flat. LB said it's hard to tell someone not to exercise, but she would contact DC.</p>	
<p><b>Next meeting</b> MC said the Board is trying to get back to the usual timetable of meetings. She proposed another General Meeting for 24 May 2023.</p>	<p><b>Outcome</b> The next General Meeting will be on 24 May 2023.</p>