

# Netherne Management Limited

Company Number: 04026814 Registered Office: One Jubilee Street, Brighton, BN1 1GE

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018, commencing at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Netherne on the Hill.**

*Please note: Within these minutes "QFTF" indicates Question From The Floor and "CFTF" Comment From The Floor as it was not possible to record the names of all attendees asking questions and making comments during the meeting. "Board Response" indicates where the Board responded to a question raised at the meeting.*

## **1. Attendees**

**NML Directors (the Board):** Alex Rodell (**AR**) Rajen Shah (**RS**), Gary Smith (**GS**), Lee Ronan (**LR**) and Lee Sheldon (**LS**).

**Apologies:** Steven Buczek

**Secretary:** Joanna Robins

**Members:** Ms S Narayanan, Mrs L Coughlan, Mr & Mrs Gabriah, Ms A Aldous, Mr R Hullay, Mr R Murcoch, Mr M Rogers, Mr & Mrs Gallagher, Mr A Edwards, Mr M & Mrs M King, Mr G Burlow, Mr & Mrs Lee, Mr Muhammad, Mr N Jones, Mrs L Van Breemen, Mr A Logan, Mr & Mrs Edland, Mrs A Odams, Mr S Tjarks, Ms A Kelly, Ms K Wallace, Mr C Malone, Mr N Conacher, Ms K Laskor, Mr & Mrs James, Mr Lilani, Mrs H Foreman, Mr & Mrs Ifalore, Mr O Connick, Mr M Smith, Mr A Rai, Mr S Howe, Mr & Mrs Mosby, Mrs H Jones, Miss A Madden, Mrs J Shah, Mr & Mrs Spooner, Mr A Baderin, Mr R Ponsford, Mrs S Allen, Mr S Lukacs, Ms M Alexon, Ms J Hinks, Ms V Nel, Ms N Fox, Mr A Davies, Mr D Trotman.

**Apologies received:** Mr J Court & Mr K Tugwell, Mr & Mrs Kriess, Ms B Gallagher.

Paper / online votes were received from 3 members who were unable to attend the AGM.

**Guests:** Michele Gallagher (**MG**) from SHW, Travis Tarrant from Nuffield Health.

**Non Member Residents:** Mrs A Johnson, Ms S Hay

## **2. Introduction**

The meeting was chaired by Alex Rodell. The agenda for the meeting was confirmed to be as follows:

Looking Back:

- Approval of the Minutes of the AGM held on 6 May 2017.
- To receive the Directors Presentation for the year ending 31 December 2017.

Looking Forward:

- To share results of member survey.
- To update members on plans to install a CCTV system.
- To re-appoint Richard Dobson to sign off the accounts for 2017.
- To elect members nominated for election to the Board.
- A.O.B.

### **3. Vote to approve the Minutes of the last AGM held on 6 May 2017.**

AR explained that following the AGM on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2017 the minutes were posted to the NML website. There have been no queries or suggested amendments from any members, so the Board asked for approval of the minutes.

Proposed by **R Ponsford**, Seconded by **R Murdoch**.

Unanimously accepted by members present at the AGM and approved.

AR handed over to RS to take attendees through the Financial section of the Directors Report.

### **4. Draft financials for year ending 31 December 2017.**

**RS** explained what debt was (unpaid service charges); that reserves were the money we had in the bank to pay for non annual expenditure or improvements (such as the Hooley footpath lighting); and that service charges covered annually recurring expenditure (such as Nuffield, staff costs, insurances and utility costs).

#### **Debtors**

**RS** explained that in previous years, NML have had to spend a lot of time on its debt position, with debt running at £450,000 at the time resident directors took responsibility for NML in 2011. However at the very end of 2016 the debt had reached a very 'manageable' level compared to the extraordinary levels in prior years and was down to £15,000.

At the end of 2017, this figure had reduced further to £13,000 and it is under close management and control. Given this low level of debt RS explained that NML have been able to focus time and attention to managing various other projects and initiatives.

RS explained the process for debt recovery; with people who fall into arrears getting a reminder from SHW about their unpaid service charges, followed by a Letter Before Action. If people do not respond to these reminders, they are then referred to our solicitors for debt recovery. Non payment of service charges can therefore become very expensive for debtors, as they have to pay our legal costs of recovery.

#### **Reserves**

**RS** explained that during 2017, significant expenditure was incurred for various improvements, repairs and works (not covered by the service charge budget). As a result of these costs, the reserves have been falling.

Works included damp proofing in the hall, the footpath lighting project and also renovating the Cricket Pavilion. Other improvements included intruder alarms to our buildings, new Leisure Centre equipment and a new pool cover.

The major works expenditure for the year was £250,000, and this led to a reduction of the reserves, partially offset by the non-service charge income that is received such as exit fees, interest and the telephone mast rent.

**RS** highlighted, for reference, the main sources of ***non service charge income*** streams supporting the reserves, specifically Exit Fees (£32,000), Annual Estate Rent charges (£11,000), Leisure Centre memberships (£11,000), Village hall, pavilion and pool hire (£10,000), Telephone mast rent (£9,000), Bank Interest (£4,000).

As a result of the major works costs in 2017, and non-service charge income streams, reserves declined by £184,000 during the year. The reserves position is £355,000 year end and is still relatively healthy. With money to spend on further works and improvements as the need arises, this is another good selling point for the village.

## Service charges

Members have seen an average service charge increase for 2018 of 3.5%. This followed the 3.8% increase in 2017.

The main reasons for this were inflationary pressures on a number of fronts including insurance costs. There was also inclusion of a small provision for random security patrols in 2018 (which were unbudgeted for in 2017). It was found that the provision for general repair costs to buildings (which are old) also needed to be increased to a more realistic level, reflecting the higher costs we have seen in recent years.

**RS** handed over to **LR** to cover the Leisure Centre.

## Leisure Centre

**LR** began by talking about the clean up of the membership list. This was done by reviewing the current list of members and identifying a number of issues that needed to be resolved. Issues included membership cards in existence for people who have moved out of the village, or who are not paying a service charge to NML that includes a contribution to the Leisure Centre costs. To resolve these issues, from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017, a number of membership cards were deactivated.

**LR** showed various slides displaying what had happened throughout 2017, including the installation of a swimming pool lane rope and cover. Issues with the turnstile, water fountain, leaky showers and hairdryers were resolved, and the Nuffield team experienced some staff turnover with both Ciaran Murray and his initial replacement Jason Beller moving on to Whitgift. **LR** introduced the new Manager Travis Tarrant.

A full review of all the gym equipment was carried out to see what needed to be replaced. New equipment was ordered and arrived at the start of 2018.

Looking forward **LR** explained that the class timetable is being reviewed and current attendees have been surveyed in order to get their views on this. More classes of difference levels are being considered and the Village Hall is being used to accommodate some of the more popular classes.

The Nuffield team plan on organizing more social events for members and are open to new ideas and feedback. There is currently a review regarding the swimming policy of 1 adult per 2 children, which has been in place for a long time but not overly enforced. As this is a health and safety requirement, options for resolving the challenges this creates for a few families in the village are being explored.

**QFTF: Opening times on weekends, can these be extended? LR response: It can be reviewed if enough residents are interested, although there would obviously be cost (and service charge) implications of extending opening hours.**

**LR** handed over to **AR** for Village hall review.

## Village Hall

**AR** discussed the damp issues and work to improve the hard standing areas outside the village hall. Unfortunately these works uncovered a number of issues stemming from the ground levels outside the hall having been raised too high by Gleesons. With no quick fix to the problems this had become the biggest project NML have ever had to deal with, both in terms of time and cost.

The main part of the project was completed before Christmas, and the final landscaping part of the project is expected to be finished in April 2018. All of the works have been paid for from the reserves.

**AR** explained that a Defibrillator is due to be placed outside the Village Hall, for emergencies, with free training to be offered on how to use it.

**AR** was pleased to mention the grand opening of the Pavilion Café and the burying of Netherne's own time capsule commemorating this, not to be opened again until April 2109 – which will be the bicentenary of the opening of Netherne Hospital, a moment in Netherne's history!

The Youth club is back up and running having had a few changes to its organisation. This takes place every other Wednesday and activities vary from sports activities to cinema.

**AR** handed over to **LS** to continue to talk about the Pavilion

### **Cricket Pavilion**

The Pavilion transformation was completed in October 2017 with some funding from local and county councillors. Refurbishment included new flooring, a new hand-wash basin and hot water supply added in the main kitchen area, new fridges and a dishwasher. Improved LED lighting was also installed along with insulation and better heating. A new fire door and repairs to holes in the walls. Outside, there is new decking and a patio area.

**LS** talked through the picture slides showing the improvements.

Franklin Lewin will be using Netherne as their home venue again on Sundays for friendly cricket matches. It is also used by a chess and table tennis club (on Wednesday evenings) and a yoga group (on Tuesdays). NML hope that the pavilion will be used by residents as a venue for private hire, meetings, children's parties etc. This can be arranged by contacting Laura Ritchie at SHW on 0207-389-1514 or [lritchie@shw.co.uk](mailto:lritchie@shw.co.uk)

**LS** introduced the team of Netherne volunteers behind the success of the Pavilion Community Café. These residents have voluntarily worked to help set it up and ensure its running. A round of applause was given. The café has proved very popular and is now opening on Fridays and Saturdays serving hot drinks, food and cakes!

### **General Estate**

#### **Footpath to Hooley**

**LS** talked about the the footpath lighting project which was finally completed in April 2017. It was wonderful to see the pathway up from Netherne Drive illuminated, after such a long and tortuous process for all concerned. Unfortunately, not long after the completion of the top section of the path, three of the lighting bollards were vandalised by youths. The Board spent considerable time working with the new contractor to find a way to better protect the lighting bollards and a solution was found in October. The Board hope that all residents who must walk up/down the footpath in the dark feel much safer now.

#### **Other Estate improvements**

Other improvements to the estate include new waste bins that have been added around the village green, and the damaged bin for dogs mess has now been replaced on the path near the cricket pitch. There have been requests from residents for additional benches to be placed in our green areas and pathways so that people can sit, rest and enjoy Netherne.

**CFTF – It would be great to have one around the back of Anthony House, on the main pathway.**

**QFTF – The last picnic tables were vandalised. How vandal proof will these be? LR response: They will need to be bolted or cemented to the ground and possibly covered by CCTV in the future.**

There is an ongoing Estate project to get on top of the Goats Rue situation. **LS** asked the members if they knew what 'Goat's rue' was and went on to explain that with the help and advise of resident, Sonja Angel, it is to be cut on a rotational basis. **LS** showed a slide with the villages' fields mapped out in to 7 sections.

The plan is to spot spray the Goats Rue in fields 1-5 and 7 over the next few months to destroy it before it goes to seed. Rotational cuts will then begin in certain fields on alternate years, creating a flower meadow in field 7.

The lack of 'kerbside weeding' is an issue that has been on the Board's mind for a while. Although it is the responsibility of the Council, a solution was sought to address it, resulting in Graham Stobart (who had asked to rent a storage unit behind the pavilion) agreeing to look after this in exchange for the unit.

**QFTF – Who is responsible for the earth at the side of the road? LS response: The council has adopted almost all roads in the Village (with NML managing Upper Lodge Way only) so they should be contacted about weeds and earth building up at the kerbside. We have received a commitment from the council to visit Netherne in May to attend to the weed issues so we will await their delivery on this promise.**

Finally, **LS** talked through the quarterly estate action plan offering transparency on plans to improve the estate and objectives to be met by Dave Brant and Sean Howley.

**LS** handed over to **RS** to talk about the Community bus.

### **Netherne Community Bus Company**

**RS** gave an overview of the Bus Company and explained that it remains a separate company from NML, but has the same Board of Directors. Without the service that the bus provides, many people would not have been able to move to Netherne and it has undoubtedly contributed towards the rise in property values.

It began operations in April 2012 and its only funding is fare income; in particular it does not form part of the NML service charges. This means that the operating costs have to be covered by ticket sales, to avoid eroding the Bus Company assets.

2017/18 has been a year of change for the bus. Firstly we took the decision to replace the old bus as maintenance costs had become uneconomic. The new bus, which is on a lease with Enterprise, arrived in January 2018. A new driver has replaced our morning driver, Phil, who is moving away from the local area. Her name is Claire Foard, and she is a Netherne resident.

After reviewing our income and expenditure, we took the decision to increase ticket prices again from March 2018. We know that increased ticket prices are never "good news" but with increased costs we could not keep prices as they were. We have however committed to a two year price freeze on ticket prices until 2020, when they will next be reviewed.

**QFTF – Can you buy tickets on the bus? RS response: Yes, or in the Pavilion Café. We have stopped selling tickets in the village shop.**

There will be a new bus timetable next month as Thameslink trains will be using Coulsdon South on a regular basis.

**RS** handed over to **LR** regarding the Members survey.

## **Members survey**

**LR** summarised the main themes coming out of the member survey.

93 NML members filled the survey in. Results found that the Leisure Centre and Estate are the most used assets and that members generally feel that they are getting value for money.

Feedback was that NML are generally doing a good job, with positives including the upkeep of the Estate Grounds, managing our finances, and communications. The Pavilion and Bus service were also mentioned as positives.

The Board appreciate that they can't please everyone all of the time, with some members feeling that more could be done on Estate Grounds, Finances and Communications. Parking and Roads were also mentioned as issues members were concerned about, although these are matters for the council or local management companies rather than NML.

Member feedback indicated there were six top projects that members wanted the Board to consider, including CCTV, new gym classes and Director clinics. **LR** explained that these initiatives were already underway. Of the other suggested projects, **LR** noted that parking was not really an NML issue as the roads have been adopted by SCC, and that lighting is an ongoing challenge with some residents wanting more lighting, others wanting less.

**LR** finished by noting that Social events fall under the NOTHRA (residents association) banner, and handed over to **LS** to explain what they do.

Nothra is the Netherne on the Hill Residents' Association and represents everybody in the village whether a home owner or someone that rents (not just NML members). Nothra is run by volunteers and they focus on issues that affect the community. Areas they cover include making suggestions to NML for improvements, the organisation of litter picking and lobbying the council on issues that will affect all residents such as fixing the potholes in the roads. Nothra are also responsible for any social events such as quiz nights and the annual Christmas party for children.

They raise funds to purchase specific items for the village to use.

Anyone can join and support this committee and help is always welcome (via Anita Aldous). The Nothra AGM will be on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

**LS** handed over to **GS** to discuss Estate security.

## **Estate security – crime rate**

**GS** talked members through the crime rate statistics that have been reported in Netherne during the year ending 9<sup>th</sup> April 2018. There were 21 reported crimes, with half of these occurring during one week in July 2017 when the village suffered from a number of garage break-ins. NML were quick to act and hired a company to conduct overnight security patrols. This was not budgeted expenditure for 2017, but had a very positive effect on the village in terms of reduction in crime, reduction in anti-social behaviour, and improved community confidence. Security patrols were also in place over the Halloween/Guy Fawkes period.

Netherne is one of the safest villages in Surrey with a low crime rate. NML meet with local police quarterly and work closely with the Joint Enforcement Team (JET). It is imperative that any crime or anti-social behaviour is reported. This can be done online or by calling 101 or 999. If there is more reporting of issues, the police presence in Netherne could be increased and act as a deterrent.

## CCTV Project

**GS** provided an overview of the CCTV project which the Board initiated last year.

**GS** noted that there had been a number of incidents in the village that prompted the Board to investigate measures to reduce / deter crime and anti-social behaviour. **GS** talked through the benefits of a CCTV system as an increased deterrent, increased detection/prosecution rates and residents feeling safer with reduced fear of crime. This ultimately provides support to property values.

Exploring CCTV has been a complex and demanding project that has taken much time to progress to the current stage. Out of nine different companies who were approached to provide a service, three were invited to an interview and selection exercise. This was followed by a site visit to installations that each of the three companies had been involved with in order to fully understand what may be feasible for a village wide CCTV system.

**GS** demonstrated where the cameras might be placed within the village, including the three entry points, Children's playpark, pavilion, the village green and the shop car park. These are considered to be vulnerable areas of the village.

At present, the Board are deliberating between two companies who are considered to be viable providers of a system and hoping to make a final decision by the end of May. Due diligence continues, as does liaison with both Reigate & Banstead and Surrey County Council. The current lampposts will need to be used for fixing and to draw power.

It is expected that once this is complete, an Extraordinary General Meeting of Members will be called to discuss and vote on a proposal to install a CCTV system in Netherne. Expected costs to be around £60,000 plus electrical ground work, fixtures and fittings and ongoing maintenance costs.

**QFTF - What type of technology will be used? GS response: Infared and digital, with ANPR cameras at the entry points.**

**GS** noted that a concern had been raised by a resident about the potentially negative health impact of wireless systems. **GS** stated that the systems we are exploring are not wireless – they are hard wired and use 'Electro Magnetic Frequencies'.

**QFTF – How far down Netherne drive might a Camera be able to see? Could it cover fly tipping if it is lower down. GS response: The camera will probably have to be placed near the junction with Rookery Mead. It may be difficult to get a signal further down Netherne Drive, but we may be able to have a "dog leg" that allows us to go further down Netherne Drive.**

**QFTF – Is it a reactive or proactive system? Will it be monitored constantly or will the tapes be looked at after an event. GS response: It has to be reactive as we cannot a 24/7 security.**

**GS** handed back to **AR**.

## Looking ahead

**AR** summarised that the Board remain committed to managing the village properly in a cost-effective manner. The Boards priorities for 2018 are:

- To implement (subject to EGM vote) a village CCTV system at the access points and areas experiencing anti-social behaviour
- To manage cost base, minimizing future service charge increases

## Appointment of Auditor

The Board have been very happy with the service provided by Richard Place Dobson (RPD) and recommend that they are re-appointed.

Proposed by **R Murdoch**, seconded by **R Ponsford**. Unanimously accepted and approved.

## **5. Election of Board Members**

**AR** proposed the reappointment of the current directors who were standing for re-election.

It was explained that in order to maintain confidentiality, the Director election will be carried out by secret ballot and members were asked to leave their voting cards in the ballot box at the end of meeting. A slide was shown of how to fill out the voting card correctly.

Note: Following the meeting all votes were collated. There were no votes against any of the directors being re-appointed, and accordingly all the Board members were duly re-elected to serve on the Board for the coming year. The Board would like to place on record their thanks to members for the unanimous level of support.

### **AOB:**

**AR** reminded members that there is an email account, from which periodic news and updates from NML are sent to people who have registered to receive those updates. There are now approximately 250 members registered. Anyone wishing to register, is advised to leave their email address at the end of the meeting.

There has also been a new NML members facebook page set up.

## **6. Questions from the floor**

There was time for a limited number of questions at the end of the meeting:

**QFTF: Can we get a better digital signals/broadband? SHW response: The BT cabinet is at capacity. BT were meant to provide further capacity last December and they continue to be pursued by SHW (MG).**

**CFTF – BT will only respond when lots of people complain. LR Response: Residents should lobby BT through the Residents Association.**

**CFTF- BT upgraded the cabinet in February and it has improved slightly.**

**LR Response: They have only increased the band width to the cabinet, they have not increased capacity.**

**QFTF – What about Virgin Media? Could we Co-partnership with Virgin? LS response: Yes we can ask SHW to investigate the potential of Virgin Media wanting to supply super fast fibre broadband services to the Village. Ultimately this will be based on the number of houses in the Village and Virgin's view of the likely client base up here**

**CFTF – Parking. Rookery mead is very dangerous as people park on corners and on pavements.**

**CFTF – Beckett road is also dangerous, especially at night. Residents don't seem to want to use their car barns which are empty and just park on the road. There are many commercial vehicles blocking the road.**

**LS response: As NML is not responsible for the roads (other than Upper Lodge Way) NML is limited with regards to the action we can take. NML will speak to NOTHRA about jointly penning a letter to residents raising the concerns of villagers/members with regard to dangerous parking of cars and commercial vans, especially on corners/bends. NOTHRA could lobby the council to lay down Yellow/Red lines on the key bends in the road but this should only take place after writing to villagers.**

The Chairman thanked all residents for attending, and declared the meeting closed at 8.45pm.