

BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Monday, 2 December 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation
Committee held at Guildhall at 6.30 pm

Present:

Members

Christopher Makin - RCC Chairman (Chairman)	Mark Bostock - Frobisher Crescent
Ted Reilly - RCC Deputy Chairman (Deputy Chairman)	Heather Hawker - Speed House
Adam Hogg - RCC Deputy Chairman (Deputy Chairman)	Jane Samsworth - Defoe House
Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court	Fiona Lean - Ben Jonson House
Jane Smith - Barbican Association	Rodney Jagelman - Thomas More House
John Tomlinson - Cromwell Tower	Mike Cribb - Andrewes House
Fred Rodgers - Breton House	Jackie Ashurst - Brandon Mews
David Graves - Seddon House	Joe Reeves - Mountjoy House
Sandy Wilson - Shakespeare Tower	Tim Hollaway - Lambert Jones Mews
Prof. Michael Swash - Willoughby House	
David Lawrence - Lauderdale Tower	

In Attendance

Mary Durcan – Ward Member for Cripplegate
Michael Hudson - Chairman of the BRC
Mark Wheatley – Deputy Chairman of the BRC
Helen Fentimen - Ward Member for Aldersgate

Officers:

Paul Murtagh	- Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services
Barry Ashton	- Community and Children's Services
Helen Davinson	- Community and Children's Services
Michael Bennett	- Community and Children's Services
Anne Mason	- Community and Children's Services
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerks
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from; John Taysum – Bryer Court; Janet Wells – John Trundle House; Mike Cribb – Andrewes House; Nadia Bouzidi – Gilbert House and James Ball – Brandon Mews (represented by Jackie Ashurst).

2. MEMBERS DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

Ahead of commencing the business on the agenda, the Chairman reminded Members that, in the first instant, all issues should be raised with House Officers and only escalated to the RCC when necessary. Furthermore, there was an expectation that requests to officers be made politely.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that – the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 2 September 2019 be approved, subject to recording Mark Bostock as having submitted apologies.

In respect of the pre-committee questions appended to the Minutes, the Willoughby House representative thanked the Chairman and officers for their prompt action in respect of Zipcar.

BRC Minutes

In response to a request for BRC minutes to be included as a standing item on RCC agendas, the Town Clerk advised that this was not standard City Corporation meetings procedure. Whilst it was usual for Grand Committees to receive the minutes of their Subs and Consultation Committee, it was not convention to do so the other way round. The Town Clerk would check that this might not set a precedent.

4. 'YOU SAID; WE DID' - Outstanding Actions List

Members received the 'You Said; We Did' outstanding actions list.

In response to a question, officers advised that the Department of the Built Environment was leading on the City Corporation's Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy and the Estate Office would be able to provide updates. Members thanked officers for their action in respect of the complaints of anti-social behaviour.

5. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (SLA) QUARTERLY REVIEW: JULY-SEPTEMBER 2019

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of Service Level Agreements and Key Performance Measures for April to June 2019.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- Members noted that the VFM 6 monthly review had ended and there had been very few comments in that time. Residents would receive feedback via the bulletin and at the RCC meeting in March 2020.
- The SLA Working Party had discussed whether guidance could be issued in respect of flushable wipes as they had been causing drainage problems.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

6. Progress of Sales and Lettings

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which advised them of the sales and lettings, approved under delegated authority, since the last meeting of the Committee.

In response to a request for the sale price of the properties in Frobisher Crescent to be included, the officer advised that the sales were part of the development agreement and offered to check

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

7. FIRE SAFETY UPDATE

The Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services, was heard in respect of the latest position on fire safety works, further to the publication of the Stage 1 Report into the Grenfell Tower fire, as follows:

- Members noted that the contract for the renewal of signage had been awarded and Members would be kept advised of progress.
- In respect of door testing, 1 set of results (of the entire door sets) were awaited and Members were reminded that smoke and not fire had been an issue. The Assistant Director was hopeful of upgrading, rather than replacing doors. Whilst sealing the sides of the doors had made some improvements, more work was required. Members were assured that all works were checked to ensure they had been resealed on completion.
- An initial survey of compartmentation at Frobisher had provided further information. A funding bid had been submitted and the project would go out to tender shortly.
- The Assistant Director, Director of CCS, representatives from the BCC had met with the London Fire Brigade last week. The meeting had been productive and the LFB had recognised the Barbican Estate as a safe environment with appropriate fire safety procedures in place. All parties recognised fire safety as a collective issue; i.e. – the Estate office, the London Fire Brigade, Contractors, Members and Residents.
- Arup's findings would be used in future fire risk assessments.

- There was now a dedicated officer dealing with landlord approvals and Members were asked to note that this was a different process to Building Control approvals; i.e. – the Estate Office needs to be advised of a project's completion so they can make their final check.

8. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS - LATEST APPROVED BUDGET 2019/20 AND ORIGINAL 2020/21 - EXCLUDING DWELLINGS SERVICE CHARGE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Members received a report of the Chamberlain and Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the annual submission of the revenue and capital budgets overseen by the Barbican Residential Committee (BRC), within the budgets allocated to the Director.

Members discussed the BRC's Resolution to Streets and Walkways, which has subsequently been referred to the Community and Children's Services Committee. The BRC would therefore receive a response to this Resolution at its next meeting on 16th December. Members noted that when some of the public realm budget had transferred from the Department of the Built Environment to the Community and Children's Services Department, it had not been sufficient and was rapidly absorbed by the landlord budget.

Members noted that the 2% efficiency saving stated in section 4, page 33, was not present in section 9 of the agenda that covers service charges.

In response to a question about the annualised cost of the initial investment on the Barbican, the Chamberlain agreed to provide Members with an explanation of the capital charges. The Chamberlain also explained that the corporate heading for unplanned maintenance in the budget lines was 'breakdown'.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

9. SERVICE CHARGE EXPENDITURE AND INCOME ACCOUNT - LATEST APPROVED BUDGET 2019/20 AND ORIGINAL BUDGET 2020/21

Members received a report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Community and Children's Services, which set out the original budget for 2019/20 and 2020/21 for revenue expenditure included within the service charge in respect of dwellings. Members also noted the Resolution from the Leaseholder Service Charge Working Party at agenda item 10 (c).

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- Estimated service charges in respect of employees were at current staffing levels and the anticipated pay award. The officer agreed to check that reference to 'National Living Wage', as prescribed by the Pay and Grading Board, was actually the 'London Living Wage', which was the City of London Corporation's standard.
- Underfloor heating related to expected consumption and the current unit rates and savings were sought where possible.

- The Draft Capital and Supplementary Revenue Budgets table contains the approved expenditure only. The 5-year forecast provided to residents includes estimated works expenditure for projects awaiting approval.
- The 5-Year Programme would be factored into the Draft Capital and Supplementary Revenue Budgets once it had been approved but it could be 20/21 for some of the works.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

10. WORKING PARTY UPDATES

Members received updates from the following working parties.

11. ASSET MAINTENANCE

Members noted that the Asset Maintenance Working Party had met again since 30th September 2019; i.e. as set out in the minutes attached to this agenda pack. The most recent set of minutes were expected to be circulated with the minutes of this RCC meeting.

Underfloor Heating Work Party – Questions

There was some discussion about the work of the Underfloor Heating Working Party in respect of input adjustment, based on weather forecasting and demand side response (serviced by the National Grid) which would enable large savings. Members noted that these proposals had been put to the City Surveyor 2 years ago and, in the absence of any outcome, the Working Party asked whether there were sufficient resources to take them forward. The officers advised that the Underfloor Heating Working Party was due to meet this Thursday and would consider the resources required.

13. Leaseholder Service Charge and a Resolution from the Leaseholder Service Charge Working Party

Members received a report of the Leaseholder Service Charge Working Party. Officers advised that additional workstreams that had evolved over the years, particularly as a result of the Working Parties, and they required additional resources.

RESOLVED, that – the BRC be asked to seek mechanisms to ensure the City of London Corporation, as part of its regular activities, manages and controls service charge expenditure, so that future service charge estimates and actuals show overall year-on-year increments to allow it to be kept below inflation, whilst maintaining current service levels.

14. THE BARBICAN - A STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

Members received a report of the Deputy Chairman of the RCC which provided an update on the report presented to the RCC in March, recommending that a strategy for the maintenance of, and improvements to, the Barbican Estate be developed. Members noted that all views had been presented unedited and, at this stage, the implementation of a Steering Group would not require any BEO resources.

A couple of amendments were suggested and the Deputy Chairman asked for them to be emailed. In concluding, Members agreed to consider the Steering Group's Terms of Reference with the Annual Review Working Parties Terms of Reference at the RCC's Annual General Meeting on 20th January 2020

15. Update Report

Members received the Director of Community and Children's Services regular update report on issues raised by the RCC and BRC at their meetings in September 2019. It also provided updates on other issues on the Estate.

In respect of a question about the fountain, Members noted that the waterfall to the west side was controlled by the plant room under the Barbican Centre, which had flooded but was now dried out. The fountain could therefore be turned back on in December.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

16. BLAKE TOWER - VERBAL UPDATE

Members noted that the new handover date was 6th January 2020 and a meet and greet session had taken place in September. Work had been ongoing over the past couple of months, regular communications between residents, the estate office, stakeholders and the City Surveyor. A number of further inspections were planned over the next month.

17. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS relating to the work of the Committee

Officers advised that the questions submitted in advance of the meeting would be responded to and were expected to be circulated with the minutes.

18. Any other Business that the Chairman considers URGENT

There were no items.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

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Chairman

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