

BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Monday, 4 March 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 6.30 pm

Present

Members:

Christopher Makin - Speed House (Chairman)	Prof. Michael Swash - Willoughby House
Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court	David Lawrence - Lauderdale Tower
Jane Smith - Barbican Association	Heather Hawker - Speed House
John Taysum - Bryer Court	Nadia Bouzidi- Gilbert House
Janet Wells - John Trundle House	Adam Hogg - Andrewes House
John Tomlinson - Cromwell Tower	Jane Samsworth - Defoe House
Fred Rodgers - Breton House	Fiona Lean - Ben Jonson House
Ted Reilly - Shakespeare Tower	Rodney Jagelman - Thomas More House

Officers:

Paul Murtagh	- Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services, Community & Children's Services
Helen Davinson	- Community and Children's Services
Michael Bennett	- Community and Children's Services
Anne Mason	- Community and Children's Services
Mike Saunders	- Community and Children's Services
Barry Ashton	- Community and Children's Services
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerks

In attendance:

Mary Durcan – Ward Member for Cripplegate and Member of the Barbican Residential Committee (BRC).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from James Undy/Vivian Fowle (the alternative representatives for Gilbert House (represented by Nadia Bouzidi); Mark Bostock (Frobisher Crescent) and David Graves (Seddon House).

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that – the minutes of the RCC held on 3rd December 2018 and the AGM held on 28th January 2019 be approved, subject to an amendment to the minutes of 3rd December 2018 (under Working Party Updates) where it should state: '*A Member of the Underfloor Heating Working Party was in attendance*'.

Matters arising

1. In respect of Fire Safety, the Assistant Director advised that a door in Shakespeare Tower had passed the fire test but failed the smoke test. 2 more doors were due to be tested from Thomas More House and Breton House. It is intended that a detailed Fire Safety Update report will be presented to the next RCC/BRC meetings
2. In respect of Building Control regulations, it was confirmed that doors that are designated as fire doors, whether internal or external, must comply with the requirements for fire resistance. The Assistant Director advised that this had been taken into consideration as part of the fire risk assessments (FRAs). As an alternative to conducting another round of FRAs, the Assistant Director would be recommending to Members that, for the time being, work should continue to focus on the improvements identified in the current Fire Risk Assessments, particularly in respect of fire stopping and compartmentation. Members noted that whilst FRAs need to be conducted regularly, there is no requirement for annual assessments. It is considered reasonable for FRA's to be done every 3-5 years, or following major refurbishment.
3. The new fire safety signage survey was complete and about to go to tender. Members noted that the new signage would be modern and fully compliant and works were expected to take place during June and July 2019.
4. Work was underway to secure a contractor from a procurement framework to upgrade compartmentation in Frobisher Crescent residential floors. Officers were continuing their research into smoke ingress.
5. The Director was in regular discussions with the London Fire Brigade in relation to fire safety matters and, in response to a request from a member, agreed to confirm the LFB's average response times in the event of fire.
6. Members received an update on the recent small fire in Cromwell Tower's car park and the Director commended staff for their swift response and professionalism. Whilst the exact cause was uncertain, it was likely to have been caused by a cigarette end, dropped through a metal grill at street level on Beech Street, which fell on to, and set alight, a dust sheet. Officers assured Members that all equipment was stored safely in the car park, with no flammables and the fire did not take hold, just created smoke. In response to this incident, a fire mesh would be fitted across the grill, at pavement level, and the storage of dust sheets reviewed. There were '*No Smoking*' signs in the car parks and cleaners had been asked to remain vigilant of abandoned items.

7. Members were reminded of the City Corporation's decision to fit sprinklers to the City's social housing blocks only and the Assistant Director offered to re-circulate the report to Members.
8. In respect of VFM, Members noted that an issues log was now in place, which was reviewed weekly. There were currently 6 outstanding issues, mainly related to TV reception, not broadband. A review would take place in April and the outcome would be communicated to residents via email broadcast.
9. Officers agreed to resolve the issue with the floor plates in the internal corridors of Bunyan Court and Gilbert House which had not been secured down properly.

4. **'YOU SAID; WE DID' - OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LIST**

Members received the '*You Said: We Did*' Outstanding Actions list, noting the following:

1. Officers advised that the works to permanently resurface the Willoughby House Car Park Turning Circle, due to be completed in March, had been delayed.
2. The Member for Willoughby House expressed disappointment that this work had not been completed as scheduled and Officers agreed to advise the Willoughby House Group once the turning circle works had been completed.

5. **TO ELECT TWO DEPUTY CHAIRMEN**

Being the only Members willing to serve, Mr Ted Reilly (Shakespeare Tower) and Mr Adam Hogg (Andrewes House) were duly elected as Deputy Chairmen of the RCC for 2018/19.

The Chairman thanked Mr Reilly and Mr Hogg for volunteering to fill the vacant positions and welcomed them to their new roles.

Members noted that, for the duration of this meeting, Mr Reilly had taken the position of House Group Representative for Shakespeare Tower. However, as was convention, the Deputy Chairmen of the RCC could appoint a new representative, via their House Groups, in order to allow them capacity to undertake the extra duties required. Members noted that Mr Sandy Wilson, the previous House Group Representative for Shakespeare Tower, would continue in this role. The same provision would apply to Mr Hogg and the Andrewes House Group would advise the Town Clerk of their new representative in due course.

6. **BARBICAN RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE (RCC) TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Further to a discussion at the AGM on 28th January 2019 and suggestions for updating the Terms of Reference, Members noted a proposed amended set, with suggested updates shown in highlighting. The Chairman advised that this

would be discussed at the end of the meeting, once the City Corporation's officers had left.

Maps of the Estate

Members reviewed five maps of the Barbican Estate that were presented as an appendix to their Terms of Reference following a request from Members at their Annual General Meeting.

During the discussion and questions, the following points were noted:

- Members were pleased to have the maps and noted that the Barbican Wildlife Garden is included.
- The five maps showed the Estate at different levels, reflecting the complexity of the Estate, however, some matters of detail could not be seen on the map.
- Members suggested that the City commission new maps, using the latest technology, as these would be useful to both the City and residents.
- A show of hands among Members clarified that all but one accepted the map as a useful working tool for the Committee.

RESOLVED, That – the map be accepted as provided, but clarification as to how each level relates to the Estate in real life would be appreciated.

Terms of Reference

Members reviewed the revised Terms of Reference provided following their Annual General Meeting.

During the discussion and questions, the following points were noted:

- Members did not want to split the first point into two and preferred to keep the original text.
- Members did wish to retain the new point 8 regarding Working parties. This was now point 7, given that the first point was not subdivided.

RESOLVED, That – the Terms of Reference for the Barbican Estate Residents' Consultation Committee be as follows:

Barbican Residents Consultation Committee (RCC) -Terms of Reference

1. To be the main formal channel of communication between tenants and the Corporation of London in all landlord and tenant matters which affect the Barbican Residential Estate, including interfaces with other occupiers, and to present the views of tenants on the general management of the estate, within the parameters of the Barbican RCC/Barbican Residential Committee's Terms of Reference and communicating views, via Resolution, as appropriate.*

2. To enable consultation and the flow of information between the Corporation of London and tenants and to work towards a partnership approach to management

3. To develop, in conjunction with the Corporation, Service Level Agreements between tenants and the Barbican Estate Office for the Estate as a whole and for individual House Groups and to be involved in the modification of these agreements as required

4. To oversee delivery of services against any Service Level Agreements with tenants, third parties and Corporation departments, monitoring their performance and satisfaction with the service and making suggestions where appropriate for alterations or improvement

5. To identify Service Charge items and monitor service charge costs, receiving reports of all accounts relating to the estate

6. To discuss routine and major repair works and to consult on how these will affect tenants

7. To seek to achieve efficiencies and improvements to resident services via the network of Working Parties serving the Barbican Estate.

Appendix – map of the Estate Boundaries

**tenants refers to all persons who have a tenancy agreement with the Corporation and includes also any resident who no longer retains the Corporation as a landlord but still pays a service charge to the Corporation*

7. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS QUARTERLY REVIEW

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of Service Level Agreements and Key Performance Indicators.

In addition to the need for renewed 'edge-beam' lighting around the Estate for health and safety reasons, Officers noted residents' strong views as to the aesthetic quality of podium lighting on the Estate and Member's request that the new lighting is compatible with the City's Lighting Strategy. The Chair of the Barbican Association offered to take this forward with the Department of the Built Environment, as it fell within their remit.

The Assistant Director provided an update on the restructure of the Barbican Estate Office and residents noted that additional resources were being recruited in order to put the new structure in place. The Assistant Director was aware of residents' concerns at the pace of implementation of certain matters and was willing to consider interim solutions, if necessary. However, the Director and his team would continue to strive to give residents the best possible service, within current resources.

RESOLVED, that – the reports be noted.

8. POLICY FOR MISCELLANEOUS CAR PARK CHARGES

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which sought approval, from the Barbican Residential Committee (BRC), in respect of miscellaneous charges for the Barbican Estate Car Parks.

Officers advised that this issue had been separated into 3 sub-sets; i.e. the reports at item 8 and 9 on this agenda, along with the review of car parking charges due to be presented to Members in June, following consideration at the next Car Park Charges Working Party, scheduled for early April 2019. Given that there were a couple of new Members on the BRC, officers felt that, going forward, this was the clearest and most transparent way to present and reviewing these policies.

RESOLVED, that - the following be recommended to the BRC for approval:

1. A policy based on CPI, to be reviewed annually in line with Car Parking Charging.
2. Charges listed below be increased by CPI (using CPI for May 2018 and CPI for May 2019), to take affect from September 2019:
 - a. Temporary Car Parking
 - b. Motorcycle Licences
 - c. Bicycle pods
 - d. Bicycle lockers
3. The long-term car bay agreements be updated, so that the service charge is calculated as the estimated cost of services for car parking and stores in the car parks, divided by the number of available car parking spaces, plus those occupied by residents' stores.

9. CHARGING POLICY FOR DISABLED CAR PARK USERS

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which sought approval, from the BRC, to a Charging Policy for disabled car park users. The Chairman asked, and Members agreed, that the consultation/resident survey in respect of charges linked to Concierges be presented to the RCC for comment before being circulated.

RESOLVED, that – the BRC be recommended to endorse the work and recommendations of the Member/Officer Working Party and, specifically, to approve a Charging Policy for Disabled Car Park Users, based on either Option 1 or 2, as set out in the report:

1. Option 1: a 25% reduction on the approved Car Parking bay charges in line with the annual review of charges in June 2019
2. Option 2: a CPI increase on the approved Car parking bay charges in line with the annual review of charges in June 2019; and

3. in addition to provide a concession of 2 hours free parking for disabled residents (blue or red badge holders) visiting ward motes (in Cripplegate and Aldersgate), and by prior arrangement with the Barbican Estate Office
4. The Chairman advised Members that it had been clarified at call over that the cost for the concessionary parking would be paid for by the City Fund not residents.

10. **ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POLICY**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which sought approval, from the BRC, to a policy for Electric Vehicle Charging at the Barbican Estate from April 2019. Members noted that, at the request of Members at the Special Meeting of the BRC on 31st January 2019, this report had been made more concise and the recommendations were clearer in respect of the consultants' calculations.

There was some discussion about increased EV usage and Members noted that the Policy would be subject to a review in 1 year. Members also suggested that it would be helpful to see a comparator with the charges paid by residents who were making their own charging arrangements outside of the Barbican Estate

RESOLVED, that - the Barbican Residential Committee be recommended to endorse the following:

1. From April 2019, EV Charging users incur an additional quarterly surcharge on their car parking bay permit of £25 per quarter.
2. From October 2019 (or sooner if funding and resources permit) EV Charging users be charged only for the electricity they use.
3. From October 2019 EV Charging users be billed directly per kWh of electricity at 25p/kW (14p/kW domestic rate + 11p management levy/kW)
4. All EV Charging users be assigned a dedicated EV bay, in line with the Car Parking Licence.
5. Officers progress associated works to provide as many of the other car parks with charging facilities and connections via Smart Technology as possible, within the current additional LEN funding.
6. Officers continue to update the Electrical Vehicle Working Party (EVWP), carrying out a review after one year and a report back to the RCC/BRC.

11. **BARBICAN ESTATE REDECORATIONS PROGRAMME 2020/25 - GATEWAY 3/4 OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which sought approval, from the BRC, to a policy for Electric Vehicle Charging at the Barbican Estate from April 2019.

In response to a question about disturbance from loading and unloading in Bunyan Car Park, the Car Park and Security Manager agreed to reiterate delivery hours with the Concierge Team and measures which could be taken to limit them during unsocial hours.

RESOLVED, that - the Barbican Residential Committee be recommended to approve:

1. Option 2 (i.e. to build upon the previous successful approach by procuring a single contractor for a 5-year programme of works) for proceeding to Procurement and Gateway 5 .
2. Expanding the Project Scope to include the internal redecoration of those six blocks removed from the expiring redecoration contract, due to the ongoing uncertainty regarding the need to replace internal fire doors.
3. An additional budget of £3,000 to reach the next Gateway; and
4. The estimated total project budget of £3,037,500 - £3,375,000 be noted.

12. **REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE TO ROOFS/BALCONIES FOLLOWING WATER PENETRATION**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of progress made by the Working Party in relation to the City Corporation's approach to dealing with repairs and maintenance to roofs/balconies following water penetration.

Members noted that the works to the barrel roofs was about to start and the results should last for 7-8 years. In response to a question about the podium (which is also a roof), Members noted that these works were part of the Beech Gardens 5-6 year Programme, Stage 2 of which was due to start this time next year; to include Ben Jonson and Cromwell high walks and the steps of Speed and Willoughby houses. The Chairman and Members commended the Assistant Director and the Members of the Working Party for providing sensible estimates and timelines.

Members were also pleased to note the references to the Asset Maintenance Plan (AMP) and the Assistant Director advised that work was underway with City Procurement to appoint a consultant to carry out the Stock Condition Survey (SCS). Members were reminded that the information gained from the estate-wide condition survey, in respect of the 30-Year Plan, would feed into the AMP, including the information from the roofing survey. Depending on the procurement route selected, the Assistant Director would hopefully be able to

provide some estimates for the timescales for the SCS at the time of the BRC meeting.

Residents were asked to note the formalities and timing implications in respect of letting very large and complex contracts. Nonetheless, Members were disappointed that progress was being restricted by the need for a decision on the appointment of consultants. This has been awaited for over a year.

RESOLVED, that – the progress made by the Working Party be noted.

13. PROGRESS OF SALES AND LETTINGS

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

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

14. WORKING PARTY UPDATES

Members received the Working Party Updates from the following: Gardens Advisory; Leaseholder Service Charge; Asset Maintenance and Background Underfloor Heating.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

1. The Leasehold Service Charge Working Party (LSChWP) was currently light on Members. Members were asked to seek expressions of interest from their House Groups in the first instance and, if unsuccessful, officers would include a request in the email bulletin.
2. There was some discussion about the possibility of a small levy from each resident (50p or £1 a week) in order to improve some of the private gardens. Members agreed that this should be discussed further at the LSChWP, and the Gardens Advisory Group should provide more detail as to what would be required and how the gardens budget had varied in recent years. Members noted that works to re-laying paths a couple of years ago had impacted on some of the private gardens. Officers suggested that this should also be included in the Annual Residents Survey.
3. Officers agreed to investigate why a quotation to replace the lino in the Defoe House lift had been so high.
4. Members were very pleased at the installations of trimmers, instigated by the Underfloor Heating Working Party using an innovative design by one of the Barbican's own resident engineers. This was further reference in the update report under 'What's gone well'.

The Chairman and Members thanked members and officers of the Working Parties for their commitment and efficiency.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

15. UPDATE REPORT

Members received the Director of Community and Children's Services Update Report, which covered issues raised at both RCC and BRC meetings in December 2018 in addition to other issues on the estate.

Members noted that Blake Tower would legally become part of the Barbican Estate in September 2019. The Assistant Director advised Members that there were some on-going issues with the development and, whilst most were outside the remit of the Estate Office, he would continue working with City Surveyors to resolve as many as possible before handover.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

16. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no items

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm

Chairman

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Appendix – questions asked in advance of the Committee

Pre-committee Questions for RCC Meeting, 4 March 2019.

1. Can the Barbican Estate Office/Property Services explain why Thames Water is not able to install meters for the supplies to individual flats?

According to generic information from Thames Water, most blocks of flats have only one supply pipe and Thames Water installs one meter at the supply pipe boundary.

Does the Barbican Estate Office/Property Services know of any meters operating at this scale measuring supplies to communal tanks or whole blocks? If there are such meters, is it possible to define their supplies as residential so that their readings could be made available to the relevant House Groups/customers?

Are there any developments planned that would facilitate water meters for individual flats?

Property Services are only aware of 2 water meters on the Estate. Thames Water may have others on the boundary of the Estate that we are not aware of. Residents can ask Thames Water to supply individual meters, but our experience is that they are reluctant to do so as flats receive water from different sources.

Residents are advised to contact Thames Water direct as water rates are not part of the Service Charge. The City currently has no planned works that would facilitate the installation of individual water meters.

2. Residents in Breton have informed me that a neighbour, who is hard of hearing, is causing nuisance and annoyance by playing music loudly at night and through into the early hours.

The advice from the BEO is that complaints should be made to Environmental Health and after the most recent complaint, the Officer, in this case Dawn Patel, was, as usual, very responsive and helpful. Dawn has arranged to carry out a week's sound monitoring and this should be ongoing by the time of the meeting.

However, there are specific covenants under our leases regarding nuisance and annoyance, as well as an obligation on City Corporation's part to enforce breaches of covenant by other lessees. In the circumstances, I would like to know why City Corporation, as our landlord, isn't taking action under our leases instead of leaving us to complain to Environmental Health. Certainly this policy seems to be at odds with City Corporation's policy regarding wooden floors although, with nuisance and annoyance being the problem, there is no difference between the two.

Without knowing the specifics of this case, it's quite hard to comment. The procedure for residents with Out of Hours noise complaints from a neighbour, would be to contact the local Estate Concierge in the first instance. If this doesn't prove successful, then the advice would be to contact Environmental Health. If the Estate office is made aware of an Out of Hours nuisance, we would follow up during office hours.