

# **BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE (RCC)**

**Monday, 10 June 2019**

Minutes of the meeting held at Guildhall 6.30 pm

## **Present**

### **Members:**

Christopher Makin - Chairman	Prof. Michael Swash - Willoughby House
Ted Reilly – Deputy Chairman	David Lawrence - Lauderdale Tower
Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court	Mark Bostock - Frobisher Crescent
Jane Smith - Barbican Association	Nadia Bouzidi- Gilbert House
John Tomlinson - Cromwell Tower	Jane Samsworth - Defoe House
Fred Rodgers - Breton House	Fiona Lean - Ben Jonson House
Sandy Wilson - Shakespeare Tower	Rodney Jagelman - Thomas More House
Andrew Hawkins - Mountjoy House	Mike Cribb – Andrewes House
Humfrey Brandes - Brandon Mews	

### **In Attendance:**

Michael Hudson – Chairman of the Barbican Residential Committee (BRC)  
Mary Durcan – Member of the BRC and Ward Member for Cripplegate  
Peter Bennett – an observer for Blake Tower

### **Officers:**

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
Barry Ashton	- Department of Community and Children's Services
Mike Saunders	- Community and Children's Services Department

## **1. APOLOGIES**

Were received from John Taysum (Bryer Court) and Janet Wells (John Trundle House).

Members noted that with effect from the next meeting, the Mountjoy House representative would be Joe Reeves. Members also noted that Brandon Mews had a new representative, James Ball, who would be in attendance from the next meeting. Brandon Mews was represented by Humfrey Brandes at tonight's meeting.

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

Whilst the RCC did not have decision making powers, David Graves, Seddon House representative, who is also an Alderman of the City of London Corporation advised the Committee that he has a car parking space on the Barbican.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, That – the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2019 be approved as a correct record.

**Matters arising**

Members noted those items that would be picked up in either the '*You Said: We Did*' or from reports on today's agenda. In respect of the Roofs and Balconies, Members noted that the high level estimates for the potential cost of future roof refurbishments would go to the Asset Maintenance Working Party before being presented to September's RCC.

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

Members received the Committee's Outstanding Actions list and noted the following updates:

- a. A Member raised a concern about the 20 minute average response times, noting that, for Tower Blocks, the Fire Brigade used the stairways for their equipment and, therefore, would a 30 minute fire door be adequate? Officers advised that there would be full update on Fire Safety at the September RCC and BRC meetings and this would include compartmentation for Frobisher Crescent and the entire estate. City Procurement were considering a route to market in respect of compartmentation and signage.
- b. Members also noted that the survey results and fire risk assessments were part of the Stock Condition Survey; tenders had been returned and the works could start in the next 8-10 weeks. A Member asked if accessibility for older residents could be included as part of the Stock Condition Survey.
- c. The Frobisher Crescent representative stressed the importance of establishing a clear fire escape strategy, given the commercial element of this building.
- d. Residents had recently received an email bulletin in respect of the VFM Contract's Six-month review. Members noted that there were still some isolated TV issues, which were being resolved via the use of amplifiers, but the Broadband Service was generally very good. The issues log would continue to be updated, and there would be another review in 6 months, with email bulletin updates to residents.
- e. Members were also reminded that the TV and Broadband service was on a 25-year Licence, unless the contract defaulted, and the maintenance contracts were for 5 years, due for renewal in 12 months.
- f. Members reported that there were still some issues with floor access panels in some corridors not being secured properly and making a noise when stood on and officers agreed to investigate.

- g. The Bunyan House representative advised that residents were still experiencing noise disturbance due to early deliveries and particularly from refuse lorries. The Barbican Association Chairman reminded the Committee of the City Corporation Policy of no deliveries between 11pm and 7am and officers agreed to take this up with the Cleansing Team with regards to rubbish collections.

5. **SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS QUARTERLY REVIEW: JANUARY-MARCH 2019**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which provided an update on the Estate-wide implementation of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for January to March 2019. The report also included comments from the House Officers and Resident Working Parties and an on-going action plan for each SLA.

- a. Members noted that, since the agenda had gone out, the fire safety information booklets had been distributed to all flats.
- b. Officers advised that the pumps for the waterfalls were not working. These are maintained by the Barbican Centre, who were working with the Estate Office Engineers to return them to working order. The loss of water in the lake was likely to be coming through the Weir and temporary measures were in place to keep the water flowing. There were some issues with access to complete the works and when timescales were known, they would be communicated via the email bulletin.
- c. A Member suggested that Leaseholder feedback on repairs and maintenance be included in the KPIs.

In concluding, the Chairmen welcomed suggestions to the RCC meetings and encouraged the various Working Parties to share their ideas.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

6. **CHARGING POLICY FOR CAR PARKING AND STORES - ANNUAL REVIEW**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, in respect of the Annual Review on the Charging Policy for Car Parking and Stores on the Barbican Estate.

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

- a. Charges on management and supervision were up in respect of the stores project but owners paid a fixed charge and this cost was not passed on to residents.
- b. The BRC had taken a decision last year to allow 10% of the stores to be let to local non-Barbican residents.

- c. The Car Parking account deficit affected the City Fund.
- d. Officers agreed to review the commercial use in Bunyan Car Park in relation to noise nuisance to residents.
- e. Officers agreed to investigate, with City Solicitors, progress in respect of the Brandon Mews Garages, agreed by the BRC in Autumn 2018.

RESOLVED, That – the report be noted.

## 7. **PROGRESS OF SALES AND LETTINGS**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of sales and lettings which have been approved by officers, since the last meeting, under delegated authority and in accordance with standing orders.

RESOLVED, that - the report be noted.

## 8. **WORKING PARTY UPDATES**

Members received updates from the following resident working parties:

### 1. **Gardens Advisory**

The officer thanked Jenny Nesbitt for producing this report and the Chairman for attending the last meeting of the Working Party. Members agreed to add a question to this year's resident survey as to whether residents would be happy to make an additional small contribution for extra Open Spaces staffing of the private gardens. Members asked if the question could include an explanation on the benefits and be clear that this would provide extra working hours to maintain the gardens, rather than for a specific project. Members were reminded that private gardens were those with key access only and not all the planters on the podium across the Estate were maintained by Open Spaces.

The Working Party was carrying a vacancy and Nadia Bouzidi volunteered.

### 2. **Leaseholder Service Charge**

Members noted that last years' service charges letter contained 8 pages of information. For this year, 4 blocks had been trialled and received a shorter letter with headlines, with the bulk of the detail provided online, and there had been a split of preferences.

Members were reminded that there were hundreds of electricity meters and sub meters on the Estate. The Deputy Chairman (also a Member of the Working Party) offered to explain the variances in charging outside of the meeting. Members noted that meters were read on a monthly basis and the Estate Office did not have the resources for weekly readings, but a one-off reading would be passed on to an interested resident who wished to make comparisons.

In respect of Underfloor Heating, the Working Party were concerned that some procurement delays might have resulted in missed opportunities for achieving better value. The Chairman of the Working Party would be writing to the City Corporation on this matter and Members asked for their disappointment to be noted.

### **3. Asset Maintenance**

The officer advised that water ingress and salt deposits to the tiling around Bunyan would be investigated. In response to a question, Members noted that repairs to the tiling on Ben Jonson House's 5th floor balconies would not be charged to leaseholders. Officers advised that various options had been explored and it was hoped that the methodology could be used for similar problems.

Members noted that the fire door testing for Thomas More and Breton House doors would take place in July, in Poland, and would include the glazing and door surround. Planning Permission had been obtained for the temporary replacements, which would take place on 24th June. Due to extremely high demand, all UK test centres were fully booked until November and the results from the test centres in Poland were expected in 4-6 weeks.

There was a vacancy on this Working Party and Fred Rodgers volunteered.

### **4. Electric Vehicle Charging**

In response to a question about residents installing their own charging points, officers explained that, whilst the infrastructure was in place in 5 of the car parks, as a result of the LEN funding, the remaining had not been completed. These works were subject to sourcing additional funding. The Working Party was due to meet in July, with an update report to BRC at their September meeting.

## **9. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE RCC**

Members received the following reports of RCC Members:

### **1. City of London School for Girls (oral report of the Chair of the Residents' Working Party)**

Members noted there was a public meeting planned this Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> June, in respect of the plans for expansion, ahead of the planning application in September. The Chairman encouraged all residents with concerns to attend the meeting. In summary, residents were most concerned with the damage to the architecture as well as their amenity and felt that there were viable alternatives. Residents also felt that the proposed works might not meet all of the School's requirements and further plans for expansion would follow. Generally, residents felt that the school's business case was weak.

**The RCC asked the BRC to support a reconsideration of the plans for the City of London School for Girls.**

**2. Anti-Social Behaviour (report attached to agenda)**

A report of Members noted that this had also been a concern at the recent City Wide Residents' meeting. Members had noted the Assistant Commissioner's statement in that, due to current resourcing levels, skateboarders and parkour could only be challenged if accompanied by intimidating behaviour. It was alleged that this had been the case in one incident, where a resident confronted a skateboarder and was threatened. It had been suggested that, generally, anti-social behaviour fell within the BEO's remit, who had in turn challenged this as they did not have sufficient resources, and the area was City Walkway.

The report explored alternatives such as CCTV, an integrated security function and Public Space Protection Orders and suggested that a working party be set up to carry out an appraisal and explore future options. Officers felt that this would be helpful in clearing current blurred lines of responsibility and reaching a solution, but Members were asked to be mindful of the current resourcing issues. In the interim, the report author, Michael Bennett and Paul Murtagh, Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services, would arrange an initial meeting, with a view to framing the work of the new Working Party. It was suggested that the Working Party should also consider how safe Barbican residents felt generally.

The Barbican Area and Culture Mile Strategies for a 'well managed space' were noted and it was suggested that these officers be engaged. There was a further suggestion to provide a Skateboard Park, as was the case on the South Bank.

**3. The Barbican at 50: A Blueprint for the next 50 Years (report attached to the agenda)**

A report of Members endorsed the suggestion for a working party and noted that the City Solicitor would be in attendance at the next BRC meeting. Members thanked Barbican Association Chairman, Jane Smith, for her presentation at the 'Barbican at Fifty' celebration on 8<sup>th</sup> June, for depicting the Barbican's sense of place.

**RCC Members endorsed this report and recommended it to the BRC**

**10. UPDATE REPORT**

Members received the update report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

Members had particular concerns about ongoing issues at Blake Tower and noted one very recently in respect of the cold water system. Members noted that a meeting had been arranged with the House Group for the first week in

July. With effect from September 2019, there would be a Blake Tower representative on the RCC and tonight Mr Peter Bennett was in attendance as an observer. The Chairman of the BRC was in attendance and assured the RCC Members that he was taking this forward with the City Solicitor and future concerns should be emailed to him via the town clerk: [julie.mayer@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:julie.mayer@cityoflondon.gov.uk). The Chairman and residents thanked the Chairman for his intervention.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

**11. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

**12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There were no items.

**The meeting ended at 8.30 am**

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Chairman

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**Appendix: Pre-Committee questions – RCC Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

## **Pre-committee Questions for RCC Meeting, 10 June 2019.**

1. Recently a film crew was filming in Ben Jonson, making an advert for smart meters. Four flats on Level 5 were involved. Heavy equipment on large trolleys was taken up in the lift - no protection - and some of the time leaving it unattended in the corridor. Damage to the lift car and fire escape issues were evident. There was a large gentleman sitting on a stool wearing a security badged jacket at the bottom of the car park ramp. The CPA's knew nothing about him. He was apparently there to watch the contents of the four lorries parked in Golden Lane, being transported in and out of the lift.

The day after, contractors working on the roof were taking bits of scaffolding up and down in two of the lifts, leaving lumps of dust and deep scratches in the lift cars because there was no protection.

On both occasions, the CPA's were not aware that these activities were happening, hence no protection to the cars, plus the weights put in them could have caused over-loading. It is understood that both activities were without the consent or knowledge of the office.

It is a big ask to expect the lifts to remain in good condition, and reliable, with this type of uncontrolled use. This is private property where residents ask each other to show their key if they are following one another into the life lobbies and, although very reassuring that people are conscientious, now rather pointless when there are huge breaches elsewhere. It is to be remembered that all residents pay the service charge for a secure environment and the maintenance of plant and machinery.

Incidents such these pose a challenge for the management process in its broadest sense, but we would like to hear how the system copes with those flat owners who allow such activity to happen and how contractors, who should know better, are monitored.

It is surprising, and perhaps needs further explanation, as to why these activities took place without the knowledge of the CPA. To prevent them, could CPAs be more vigilant and be given the authority to stop them straight away, and not wait for a decision to do so from the BEO?

**With regards to the filming incident, a resident had been not altogether truthful with the Car park Concierge as to who was entering their flat. This person was a tenant and this matter has been taken up with the leaseholder. Additionally we understand that the resident involved had also been misled about the scale of the shoot and when they found out they cancelled the second day.**

**We will remind all contractors about the availability of lift protection.**

2. The agenda report on charges for car parking and stores shows that the budgeted expenditure for the baggage stores in the basements of the residential blocks is £359,000 for 2019/20 (second table, appendix 5.) In

last year's similar report (appendix 3b, last table) the expenditure for these stores in 2018/19 was given as £189,000, and the breakdown showed that most of this sum - £167,000 - consisted of capital charges. May we please have a similar breakdown for the 2019/20 expenditure and an explanation as to why the expenditure on the routine supervision and management of these basement baggage stores, negligible in 2018/19, has apparently risen by £170,000 in one year?

**The expenditure for 2019/20 is broken down as follows-**

<b>Stores</b>	<b>2019/20 £,000</b>
<b>Repairs and Maintenance</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Notional interest (buildings)</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>Notional interest (equipment)</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Equipment depreciation</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Total Capital Charges</b>	<b>204</b>
<b>Recharges</b>	
<b>Cleaning</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Supervision and Management</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>Technical Services</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total Recharges</b>	<b>148</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>359</b>

**The Equipment notional interest and depreciation (£47k) should be transferred to the car park account. The amount budgeted for supervision and management reflects the activity recorded in this area.**