

BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Monday, 3 March 2014

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee
held at Guildhall on Monday, 3 March 2014 at 6.30pm

Present

Members:

Tim Macer - Willoughby House (Chairman)	John Tomlinson - Cromwell Tower
Professor Chris Mounsey - Breton House (Deputy Chairman)	Monique Long - Mountjoy House
Randall Anderson - Shakespeare Tower	Fiona Lean - Ben Jonson House
Averil Baldwin - Thomas More House	Tim Macer - Willoughby House (Chairman)
Robert Barker - Lauderdale Tower	Natalie Robinson - Andrewes House
Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court	Jane Smith - Barbican Association
Helen Wilkinson - Speed House	Professor Michael Swash - Willoughby
Robin Gough – Defoe House	John Taysum - Bryer Court
	John Tomlinson - Cromwell Tower
	Janet Wells - John Trundle House

In Attendance:

Professor John Lumley – Member for Aldersgate
Gareth Moore – Chairman of the Barbican Residential Committee

Officers:

Eddie Stevens	- Community and Children's Services
Helen Davinson	- Community and Children's Services
Mike Saunders	- Community and Children's Services
Anne Mason	- Community and Children's Services
Karen Tarbox	- Community and Children's Services
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerk's

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Gillian Laidlaw, who was represented by Monique Long (Mountjoy House), Gianetta Corley (Gilbert House), John Taysum (Bryer Court), David Graves (Seddon House) and Mark Bostock (Frobisher Crescent).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations

3. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Barbican RCC Meeting on 25 November 2011 and the Barbican RCC AGM on 3 March 2014 were approved as a correct record.

An amendment to 25th November was noted in that Gordon Griffiths had given his apologies for this meeting.

4. **UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which set out the Agenda Plan for 2014; "*You Said: We Did*"; Property Services Update and City Surveyors Update.

During the discussion of this item, the follow matters were discussed:

- 270 residents had attended the TV Services Upgrade meeting and a further meeting would be arranged shortly. Members noted that the working party would meet again once the detailed design for each block had been finalised; expected at the end of this week.
- An advance question had been submitted in respect of guttering on the podium, which had not been cleared prior to the recent painting works. The officers advised that the works had been time limited due to budget restraints but the gutters would be cleared in due course. Members thanked officers for using some of last years' Community and Children's Services underspend for non-service chargeable works on the estate. The Chairman suggested, and members agreed, that residents should start to formalise a list of projects, should a similar opportunity arise in the future.
- Members noted that, given the majority of the questions had been received on Thursday evening (27th February), some responses had been marked 'to follow'.
- In respect of the alternative stair edging, members noted that this had been approved by the Disability Team and officers agreed to arrange a viewing for the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.
- In response to a question about what was meant by 'compartmentation', officers agreed to investigate and advise members.

RESOLVED, that – the update report be noted

5. **SLA REVIEW**

The Committee received the regular review on service level agreements for October to December 2013. Members noted that the Service Level Agreement Working Party considered the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) in detail and suggested whether they were fit for purpose.

Members noted that the Residents' Information Pack on security was available on the website. In order to ease the discovery of this and similar items on the website, the Chairman offered to approach the IS Team about adding an additional search facility to the RCC's questions and answers.

RESOLVED: - that the SLA update report be noted.

6. **BACKGROUND UNDERFLOOR HEATING**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the Barbican Estate's background underfloor heating system.

The officer presented the report and the following matters were discussed:

- Members noted that the Working Party had been established for 5 months and was making very good progress, as evidenced from the Minutes at item 7 on the agenda. The Chairman advised that he was a member of the group and it had demonstrated exemplary partnership working between officers and residents.
- The tariff with EDF had been renegotiated until May and was cheaper than expected.
- The Working Party was looking in detail at the tendering process, the various packages available and the best time to go to market. Members noted that this might be a complex process, with some options better suited to the heating system's energy usage profile than others.
- Once the tariff had been negotiated, other phases of the work, such as insulation, would be done.
- A sub group of the Working Party was looking at environmental improvement and controls.
- A resident (Professor in Urban Climatology) had lent the group some sophisticated monitoring equipment and her university would be seeking post-graduate students to analyse the data. Residents noted that monitoring equipment had been installed in a column of flats in Defoe House and around two floors of Shakespeare Tower, to give a broad sample of measurements and that there were three external temperature monitoring stations across the estate.

Members thanked the members of both the Working Party and also the Advisory Group for their excellent work on this issue.

RESOLVED, that – the contents of the report and the progress of the Background Underfloor Heating Working Party be noted.

7. **WORKING PARTY REVIEW - MINUTES OF THE BACKGROUND UNDERFLOOR HEATING WORKING PARTY**

The minutes of the Background Underfloor Heating Working Party were received.

8. **PROGRESS ON SALES AND LETTINGS**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which advised members of the sales and lettings which had been approved since the last meeting.

RESOLVED, that –the Sales and Lettings report be noted.

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

In response to a question about the poor drainage in Thomas More House Gardens, officers advised that this had been discussed at the Gardens Advisory Group and technical officers were working on a solution. Members noted that the minutes of the Gardens Advisory Group would be presented to the next meeting of the RCC and any update would be included in the next edition of "*You Said; We Did*".

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

The Chairman agreed to the submission of an item of urgent business in respect of the Department of Communities and Local Government's '*Review of Property Conditions in the Private Rented Sector*', which sought to scrap current legislation whereby Londoners need to seek planning permission if they wanted to rent out their homes for any period less than three months.

Members noted that the matter was open for consultation until the 28 March 2014. The Director had sought legal advice and reminded members that Barbican Leases were silent on short term lets (i.e. 1 -2 weeks, holiday style lets) but the Greater London Powers Act 1973 prohibited them without planning permission.

A member started the debate by arguing that that such a change might lead to an increase in noise nuisance and a fall in the level of security on the Barbican Residential Estate.

The Chairman sought views from other members and an alternative view was expressed in that short term lets might not cause such a nuisance and it might be preferable for properties to be occupied, rather than empty for long periods.

Given that there could be strong differences of opinion, members agreed that the best way forward would be to canvass residents via an email broadcast. The BEO would then analyse responses. In the interim, officers agreed to investigate whether there was a London-wide consultation. The BRC Chairman was also in attendance and concurred with this approach.

It was therefore RESOLVED and agreed, unanimously that the Chairman of the BA, the chairman and vice-chairman of the RCC and the representative for Lauderdale House Group would meet, as soon as possible, to formulate a question for residents, to be circulated via an email broadcast.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm

Chairman

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