

8. **CAR PARK CHARGING POLICY**

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of car park charges and stores on the Barbican Estate. Members noted that there had been extensive communications from residents in this matter, including an alternative proposal from one of the House Groups, which had been supported by the RCC when it met on 21st May. Since the meeting of the RCC, the City Solicitor had provided legal responses to some of the questions raised at the RCC'S meeting on 21st May and these had been circulated to RCC and BRC Members ahead of today's meeting.

The Chairman opened the debate by asking Members as to whether or not they wanted to consider car park and storage either together, or as separate items, and the consensus was for them to be taken together.

During the discussion and debate the following points were noted and each Member, who had been granted a dispensation, was given the opportunity to speak:

1. Should the proposal before Members not go ahead, could Members take a decision in respect of the bigger stores, and some increase in respect of car park charges, to residents only, although by a lesser amount than that suggested in the report?
2. Could the Car Park Charges Working Party undertake a new study, including the proposals put forward by the RCC House Groups?
3. Could there be a longer-term approach, with a quick fix on short term problems, to assist those in small flats who are in need of storage?
4. The proposal appears to lack a consolidated financial analysis and might need more work; it was suggested that a 15% drop in demand might be underestimated.
5. Could the proposal be more creative, without the need for a large increase? Gradual increases are always more acceptable and Concierge allocation and stores need a more holistic approach.
6. If non- residents use baggage stores they would not have an assa key which would access private residential areas of the Estate. Access arrangements would be via a dual lock system; 1 would be kept by the Concierge and 1 by the non-resident, as agreed by the Police and the Barbican Association Security Committee. Could charging for key porters be introduced?
7. Residents of the City are entitled to a considerable discount in City car parks and there was a concern about assumed elasticity of demand.
8. There should have been an Equalities Impact Assessment with the report and Members expressed concern for those residents with mobility issues who need to park their cars close to where they live. Could a reduced amount be introduced for residents with a disability?

9. The RCC had rejected this report but there had been unanimous support for the Lauderdale Tower House Group proposal. House Groups had clearly given serious thought to producing logical arguments for scrutiny at the RCC.
10. There were concerns about the accuracy of data in respect of the number of car parks and vacancies. Whilst Members accepted that the car park deficit cannot be sustained, they had concerns that commercial costs appeared to have been applied to a residential area.
11. The Girls School proposal and Culture Mile will impact on car parking spaces.
12. BRC Members would have liked more time to consider the extensive number of emails from residents over the past week.
13. If the Stores application to the Planning and Transportation Committee had not been delayed, there would be a different set of figures before Members.
14. The Deputy Chairman is a resident of Golden Lane and pays more for car parking than Barbican residents.

Some Members spoke in support of the report and Officers responded, as follows:

15. There is a need to look at reappportioning service charges and, whilst not affecting the basis of this report, car park users effectively pay for the parking of other residents' visitors and contractors.
16. This report is based on the views of a Member/Officer Working Party, on which Members were in a majority. It was established a year ago as the BRC had no charging policy and needed one, and the remit of the Working Party was to look for a fair return for car parking and storage.
17. It is commonly accepted that a fair return is based on market values - the basis by which City Corporation rents are set. The City Corporation can choose not to go to the maximum suggested by market valuations; as set out in the proposal before Members.
18. The only leaseholders with any entitlement to a parking or storage space in the car parks are those who have bought a lease on one. Other residents have no entitlement to the use of these spaces.
19. Policy and Resources Committee and the Court of Common Council can intervene in decisions which impact on a Committee's ability to balance its budget. If a facility fails to return a fair rent then it is possible that other uses can be found.
20. The City is densely occupied and has a very limited amount of land. As we move towards a City community, which is a mix of business, cultural and residential uses, is it prudent to leave tracts of land either underused or undercosted?

21. In response, the resident Members stressed that, notwithstanding their duty to the City and the Committee's role as a Landlord, they are also here to represent their constituents. Given that such a high number of residents are unhappy, then the Committee should consider an alternative.
22. Officers confirmed that the current stores Charging Policy expired in March 2018 and the current car parking Charging Policy expires in September 2018. Officers also confirmed that stores and car parking licence holders require three months notification to take effect and that this would have to be completed by 23 June to effect an increase for the September quarter.
23. The signing of the contract for the new stores has been delayed and if this is not done shortly then the works would have to be re-tendered.

It was then Proposed by Jeremy Mayhew, seconded by Matthew Bell and RESOLVED, that -

The Car Park Charging Working Party convene a meeting to consider the matter further and a Special Meeting of the BRC be convened, on the morning of Court, 21st June 2018 to take a decision.