



## **Barbican Residential Committee SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

**Date: MONDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2018**

**Time: 2.30 pm**

**Venue: COMMITTEE ROOMS, 2ND FLOOR, WEST WING, GUILDHALL PLEASE  
NOTE : AT 1.45 PM THERE WILL BE AN INFORMAL MEETING, HELD IN  
PUBLIC, TO DISCUSS THE FORTHCOMING HOUSING GOVERNANCE  
REVIEW**

**5. HOUSING GOVERNANCE REVIEW – REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK**

**For Decision  
(Pages 1 - 16)**

**John Barradell  
Town Clerk and Chief Executive**

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<b>Committee:</b> Barbican Residential Committee	<b>Date:</b> 17 September 2018
<b>Subject:</b> Review of Housing Governance	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Town Clerk	<b>For Decision</b>

## Summary

The question of the City Corporation's housing governance has been raised on several occasions over the recent period. This has necessarily included discussion as to the arrangements associated with the Barbican Residential Committee, following an expression of concern by the Standards Committee in relation to the potential perception of conflicts of interest associated with resident Members serving on the Committee.

The Policy & Resources Committee considered an initial report at its July 2018 meeting (attached at Appendix A) intended to open discussion, which set out the current structures in place around housing governance, the various issues which Members and Committees had raised concerning the existing arrangements, and presented an initial outline of some of the potential options which could be taken in respect of a future direction. The Policy & Resources Committee expressed a desire to consult with and receive the views of those Committees which would be affected by any change to the existing structures, so as to ensure that any decisions to be made in respect of formative proposals due course is taken on an informed basis.

The initial views of the Residents' Consultation Committee were sought at its meeting on 10 September 2018 and the draft minute of that discussion is attached at Appendix B.

## Recommendation

The view of the Barbican Residential Committee is sought as to the various initial suggestions in relation to housing governance, particularly in relation to the future of the Barbican Residential Committee.

### Background

1. The City Corporation's housing governance arrangements were last reviewed in 2011, as part of the comprehensive Governance Review process which took place at that time. As part of that Review, it was specifically asked that consideration be given to the question of whether oversight of the entirety of the City Corporation's housing activities, including the Barbican Estate, should be undertaken by a single Committee.
2. Ultimately, the decision was made to create a standalone Housing Sub-Committee, dedicated to the management of the City's eleven (non-

Barbican) housing estates, designed give focused attention to engagement with residents. The City of London Almshouse Trust was also subsumed and merged with this new Housing Sub-Committee (to create the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee).

3. The Barbican Residential Committee was retained as a discrete grand committee, with responsibility for oversight of the management of the Barbican Estate, including the management of all completed residential premises and ancillary accommodation on the Barbican Estate, as well as the disposal of interests in the Barbican Estate.
4. It is a non-ward committee appointed by the Court of Common Council which acts on behalf of the City Corporation as landlord of the Barbican Estate and is not to be confused with the Barbican Estate Residents' Consultation Committee, which is an independent body which exists to represent the views of the Barbican Estate residents. In carrying out its management functions, the Barbican Residential Committee must have regard to any representations made to it by the Barbican Estate Residents' Consultation Committee.
5. The City Corporation's Standards Committee, at its 26 January 2018 meeting, resolved its belief that the present operation of the Barbican Residential Committee - and particularly the association of the two distinct roles of managing agent and landlord - gives rise to a perception of a conflict of interest.
6. There is no doubt that the current arrangements are lawful. The Barbican Residential Committee is covered by the rules on disclosable pecuniary interests in the Localism Act 2011 in the same way as any other Committee. Members of the Barbican Residential Committee can deal with any disclosable pecuniary interests that arise by not participating in the discussion and vote on that item, or by seeking an appropriate dispensation from the Standards Committee.
7. However, some concerns have been expressed about the number of dispensations that have been applied for by the resident Members of the Barbican Residential Committee, and resident Members have also highlighted the implications which they feel the dispensations regime has on their ability to fully represent residents' interests.

#### **Current Composition**

8. The composition of the Barbican Residential Committee has, for many years, been such that there are nine resident Members: three from Aldersgate Ward and six from Cripplegate Ward (three from each side of that Ward).
9. When the Committee first included resident Members (initially, resident Members were excluded), Aldersgate as a Ward was represented by six elected Members, with Cripplegate represented by twelve Members. The representation on the Committee from those Wards was therefore half the

elected Members. Although eligible, the Aldermen for the two Wards traditionally are not appointed to serve.

10. Following the reduction in the number of Common Councilmen from 130 to 100 during the latter part of the twentieth century, as well as the 2013 Ward Boundary Review, Aldersgate representation has changed to six Members and Cripplegate to eight Members. The composition of the Barbican Residential Committee did not alter with either change in the number of Ward Members.
11. Although the non-resident members (when all vacancies are filled) form a majority of the Committee, resident Members arguably have a greater interest in the Committee's business and have tended to be more regular attendees. As a consequence, they are sometimes a majority of the Members present at a meeting. This adds to the sentiment (whether right or wrong) expressed by the Standards Committee that resident Members might be perceived to have an undue influence or dominate the Committee.

### **Options**

12. The report to the Policy & Resources Committee outlined five potential options in relation to future arrangements, in summary:
  - (i) Maintain the status quo.
  - (ii) Disband the Barbican Residential Committee and transfer its responsibilities to the Community & Children's Services Committee.
  - (iii) Disband the committee and transfer its responsibilities to the Property Investment Board.
  - (iv) Reconfigure the Barbican Residential Committee.
  - (v) Establish a new, non-Ward based Housing Committee.
13. Within each these options, there are of course a range of issues which would need to be considered. For instance, there would need to remain a clear delineation and separation between the management of the Barbican Estate and the City Corporation's Social Housing Estates, given the requirements around the management of Housing Revenue Accounts monies. Consultation would need to be undertaken and the views of residents will need to be considered carefully, particularly when any formative proposals are produced in due course and if any change to existing structures is proposed, subsequent to these initial discussions.
14. This report does not advance arguments for any of these options, each of which (to a greater or lesser degree) could be argued to have advantages and disadvantages. These issues will be captured, together with the comments of relevant Committees, following consultation. However, all views from Members are welcomed in relation to any of the potential options referenced in the appended report, as well as other possibilities which might occur, in order to inform future thinking.

**Options (i) and (iv): Maintain the Status Quo and / or Reconfiguration of the Committee**

15. Following discussion with Ward Members for both Aldersgate and Cripplegate, as well as informal feedback from a number of residents, the Chairman of the Barbican Residential Committee is minded that the preference of residents and his Committee seems, at this stage, to be for the existing Committee to be retained as a standalone Grand Committee.
16. The Residents' Consultation Committee's view was therefore sought as to this inference and a variety of possible reconfiguration approaches within that option, which had emerged from the Chairman's discussions with interested parties as follows:
  - (i) *Reduce the number of resident Members to three*, one from Aldersgate and two from Cripplegate (one from each Side).
  - (ii) *Reduce the number of resident Members to four*, two from Aldersgate and two from Cripplegate. This mirrors what the representation would be if the Barbican Residential Committee were a Ward Committee.
  - (iii) *Reduce the number of resident Members to three*, but on the condition that each resident Member of the Committee could appoint an alternate to attend and vote at BRC meetings in their stead if the appointed Member cannot attend. This would be equivalent to companies, where provision is usually made for a director to appoint an alternate.
  - (iv) *Reduce the number of resident Members to six*, two from Aldersgate and two from each side of Cripplegate).
17. It should be noted that suggestion (iii), i.e. the appointment of alternates, does not accord with the City Corporation's current practice on its other committees, so there is the possibility that this would not be favoured by the Policy & Resources Committee and Court of Common Council on that basis. The Chairman has suggested that, if suggestion (iii) were to be selected but the inclination of Policy and / or the Court of Common Council were to reject it on this basis, then suggestion (iv) might represent a satisfactory alternative.
18. It should also be stressed that this is not an exhaustive list and does not represent the only options.
19. The minute of the discussions of the RCC, which relate to the above options and the wider options concerning the BRC, are set out in Appendix B.
20. It should be noted that a number of Barbican Residents, including the Chairman of the Barbican Association, have written to express their firm view that they would expect to continue to have their interests represented by their Ward Members on any committee considering matters involving the management of the Barbican Estate and that they would be firmly opposed to any transfer of responsibilities to the Property Investment

Board, given the differing characteristics of commercial and residential property and the focus of that Board.

### **Conclusion**

21. Members views are sought as to the potential options outlined in both this report and the original report to Policy & Resources, bearing in mind the comments of the Residents' Consultation Committee.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix A: Report to Policy & Resources, July 2018
- Appendix B: Minute Extract, Barbican Residents' Consultation Committee, September 2018.

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<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Policy and Resources Committee	5 July 2018
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Public</b>
Review of Housing Governance	
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>For Decision</b>
Town Clerk	
<b>Report author:</b>	
Greg Moore – Town Clerk’s Department	

### **Summary**

The Policy and Resources Committee has agreed to set up a new Working Party to oversee the delivery of 3,700 new homes, to be built as part of the City Corporation’s commitment to the delivery of affordable housing.

As part of this discussion, the wider question of the City Corporation’s housing governance was raised. This was with particular reference to the Barbican Residential Committee, which has struggled for some time to fill a number of vacancies from the Court and subsequently suffered from quoracy difficulties. The issue of housing governance was also raised and discussed recently at a meeting of the Court of Common Council in June.

The report examines the current structures in place around housing governance and presents a range of options for Members’ consideration in respect of a future direction for the City Corporation’s housing governance arrangements.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to consider the options set out at paragraph 19 of the report and determine a way forward in respect of housing governance arrangements.

### **Main Report**

#### **Background**

1. The City Corporation’s housing governance arrangements were last reviewed in 2011, as part of the comprehensive Governance Review process which took place at that time.
2. As part of that Review, it was specifically asked that consideration be given to the question of whether oversight of the entirety of the City Corporation’s housing activities, including the Barbican Estate, should be undertaken by a single Committee.
3. Up to this point, responsibility for housing matters had rested with the Community & Children’s Services Committee, with the exclusion of the Barbican Estate and the City Almshouses, both of which had dedicated committees.
4. Following consideration, it was determined that the status quo should be maintained in respect of retaining a separate standalone committee for the Barbican Estate. However, there was considered to be merit in creating a separate Housing Sub-

Committee, dedicated to the management of the City's other eleven housing estates, such that it could give greater attention to engagement with residents. The City of London Almshouse Trust was also subsumed and merged with this new Housing Sub-Committee.

### **Current Position**

5. The existing arrangements have worked well since that time in respect of the Housing Sub-Committee and its engagement with the various Estates and Almshouses. The Sub-Committee meets a minimum of four times per annum (and in practice now meets five times per annum) and reports in to the Community & Children's Services Committee. The Director of Community & Children's Services has also confirmed that he is content with the existing arrangements in respect of the Housing Sub-Committee, which he believes compare well with arrangements at other local authorities.
6. The Community & Children's Services Committee is, however, not responsible for the management of the Barbican Estate. Arguments have been rehearsed over the years for not amalgamating the two areas, principally to satisfy Barbican Residents who opted, via a referendum in 2003, to retain the City Corporation as managers of the Estate.
7. The Barbican Residential Committee has therefore retained responsibility for that Estate, including the management of all completed residential premises and ancillary accommodation on the Barbican Estate, as well as the disposal of interests in the Barbican Estate, since its creation. The Committee's Constitution and Terms of Reference are set out for information at Appendix 1.
8. It is a non-ward committee appointed by the Court of Common Council which acts on behalf of the City Corporation as landlord of the Barbican Estate, and is not to be confused with the Barbican Estate Residents' Consultation Committee, which is an independent body which exists to represent the views of the Barbican Estate residents. In carrying out its management functions, the Barbican Residential Committee must have regard to any representations made to it by the Barbican Estate Residents' Consultation Committee.

### **Issues**

9. The Barbican Residential Committee has, in recent times, struggled to attract Members to fill the non-residential vacancies on the Committee.
10. Whilst the Committee is comprised of both residential and non-residential Members, for obvious reasons it is only non-residential Members whose presence counts towards a quorum (the quorum being any four Members who are non-residents).
11. With 11 places for non-residential Members (as opposed to 9 for residential Members), the Committee carried five vacancies for the majority of the past municipal year and currently has four vacancies. As a consequence, it has been in danger of either failing to establish or failing to maintain a quorum at its quarterly meetings. Although only one meeting in the previous year failed to achieve a quorum, significant effort has been required at times to avert further meetings being similarly affected.

12. There have also been a number of discussions concerning potential conflicts of interest. Such conflicts are essentially 'hard-wired' into the Barbican Residential Committee itself by the fact that nine places are reserved for Members from the wards (or sides of Wards) encompassing the Barbican Estate, with three Members each being nominated by Aldersgate, Cripplegate Within and Cripplegate Without. The intention of this arrangement was to ensure that the views of residents were fully represented on the Barbican Residential Committee, as well as via the Barbican Estate Residents' Consultation Committee.
13. The Court of Common Council has attempted to offset any concerns over potential conflicts of interests by reserving the aforementioned further eleven places on the Barbican Residential Committee for non-residents of the Barbican Estate. Even when the one ex-officio position to the Chairman or Deputy Chairman of the Community & Children's Services Committee is taken into account, this ensures that a majority of the Members of the Barbican Residential Committee will be non-residents of the Barbican Estate. This does of course only protect the City's position if the non-resident Members attend in sufficient numbers.
14. Further safeguards include the fact that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Barbican Residential Committee must be elected from the Members who are non-residents of the Barbican Estate, and that the quorum stipulates any four Members who are non-residents of the Barbican Estate must be in attendance.
15. There is no doubt that the current arrangements are lawful. The Barbican Residential Committee is covered by the rules on disclosable pecuniary interests in the Localism Act 2011 in the same way as any other Committee. Members of the Barbican Residential Committee can deal with any disclosable pecuniary interests that arise by not participating in the discussion and vote on that item, or by seeking an appropriate dispensation from the Standards Committee.
16. However, Members may wish to consider whether the constitutional arrangements of the Barbican Residential Committee might give rise to a public perception that conflicts of interest could occur.
17. Indeed, the Standards Committee, at its 26 January 2018 meeting, resolved its belief that the present operation of the Barbican Residential Committee - and particularly the association of the two distinct roles of managing agent and landlord - gives rise to a perception of a conflict of interest (please see the accompanying Resolution attached as Appendix 2). They have therefore suggested that the Policy and Resources Committee might wish to review the current composition and terms of reference of the Barbican Residential Committee, dependent on the broader decision concerning overall housing governance arrangements, in order to consider the separation of the managing agent and landlord roles to relieve these perceptions.
18. It should be emphasised that the Barbican Residential Committee is by no means the sole vehicle or mechanism through which the City Corporation consults with residents on the Barbican Estate. This includes liaison with the Housing Associations through the Barbican Association, and with residents through social media and the website, notices on boards, letters, and drop-in sessions.

## Options

19. In view of the issues outlined above and in response to Members' requests for the existing arrangements to be reviewed, a variety of options are presented for Members' consideration:

- (i) **Maintain the status quo.** Whilst issues have arisen in recent times, the Barbican Residential Committee has still only failed to achieve a quorum on one occasion and the existing Housing Sub-Committee works well. Members may wish to consider leaving matters as they stand for the present and reviewing the arrangements in twelve months' time, to see if problems filling vacancies on the Barbican Residential Committee continue.

Equally, Members may consider it prudent to wait until the work of the new Housing Delivery Programme Working Party has progressed before commencing a comprehensive review of housing governance, which would take into account outcomes from the Working Party's activity. With the increase of leaseholders on some Estates such as Golden Lane, there may well reach a point where having a separate Private Estates Committee - covering the Barbican, Golden Lane, plus any private ventures emerging from the Working Party's activities - might provide a more appropriate shift in governance arrangements.

- (ii) **Disband the Barbican Residential Committee and transfer its responsibilities to the Community & Children's Services Committee.** They could, perhaps, discharge their new duties through the existing Housing Sub-Committee, which could have its own remit expanded in turn. It should be noted however that the funding models for the Barbican (and other private estates) are different to those for the social housing estates; in addition, the Director of Community & Children's Services has expressed some concern that there might be a risk that Barbican issues would dominate and overshadow social housing issues.
- (iii) **Disband the committee and transfer its responsibilities to the Property Investment Board.** The Property Investment Board manages the City Corporation's property portfolio, including the day-to-day management of a large number of commercial properties, each with varying arrangements with leaseholders. The argument could therefore be made that this function is broadly analogous to the management of the Barbican Estate, which could transfer to PIB's control.
- (iv) **Reconfigure the Barbican Residential Committee,** given the consistent issues in filling vacancies and quoracy concerns, as well as potential perceived conflicts of interest. Should Members wish to pursue this matter, it is recommended that a further report be produced setting out a variety of options.
- (v) **Establish a new, non-ward based Housing Committee.** This could be a comprehensive, overarching Grand Committee in the style of the Investment Committee, which would deliver its work through two Boards – one for the

Barbican Estate, and one for the others City Estates currently managed through the Housing Sub-Committee. The membership of both Boards would flow from Grand Committee, as with Investment Committee and its Boards.

This would exclude responsibility for the delivery of the 3700 new homes, for which a separate Working Party has already been established.

The exact composition of such a Committee and its Boards would be the subject of a further report, but in broad terms it could perhaps comprise two Aldermen nominated by the Court of Aldermen, 14 Members elected by the Court of Common Council, and relevant ex-officio Members. Members may also consider it appropriate to reserve a number of places on the Committee for Members from residential wards and also whether the Committee would benefit from having one or two co-opted non-City of London Corporation Members with appropriate expertise.

### **Conclusion**

20. Members are asked to consider the current position in respect of housing governance arrangements and determine what course of action, if any, should be taken to enhance or improve existing arrangements.

### **Greg Moore**

Town Clerk's Department

T: 020 7332 1399

E: [gregory.moore@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:gregory.moore@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

**BARBICAN RESIDENTIAL COMMITTEE**

1. **Constitution**

A Non-Ward Committee consisting of,

- 11 Members who are non-residents of the Barbican Estate elected by the Court of Common Council, at least one of whom shall have fewer than five years' service on the Court at the time of their appointment
- three Members nominated by each of the following Wards:-
  - Aldersgate
  - Cripplegate Within
  - Cripplegate Without
- the Chairman or Deputy Chairman of the Community & Children's Services Committee (ex-officio)

The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Committee shall be elected from the Members who are non-residents of the Barbican Estate.

2. **Quorum**

The quorum consists of any four Members who are non-residents of the Barbican Estate.

3. **Membership 2018/19**

Non-Residents:-

- 7 (4) Jeremy Paul Mayhew
- 1 (1) Rehana Banu Ameer, *for two years*
- 10 (3) Michael Hudson
- 2 (2) Graham David Packham, *for three years*
- 6 (2) Christopher Paul Boden
- 2 (2) Susan Jane Pearson
- 1 (1) Matthew Bell, *for three years*
- Vacancy
- Vacancy
- Vacancy
- Vacancy

Residents:-

Nominations by the Wards of Aldersgate and Cripplegate (Within and Without), each for the appointment of three Members

**Aldersgate**

Randall Keith Anderson  
Joyce Carruthers Nash, O.B.E., Deputy  
Barbara Patricia Newman, C.B.E.

**Cripplegate**

Mark Bostock (Cripplegate Without)  
David John Bradshaw, Deputy (Cripplegate Within)  
William Pimlott (Cripplegate Within)  
Joan Mary Durcan (Cripplegate Without)  
John Tomlinson, Deputy (Cripplegate Without)  
Stephen Douglas Quilter (Cripplegate Without)

together with the ex-officio Members referred to in paragraph 1 above.

4. **Terms of Reference**

To be responsible for:-

- (a) the management of all completed residential premises and ancillary accommodation on the Barbican Estate, e.g. the commercial premises, launderette, car parks, baggage stores, etc. (and, in fulfilling those purposes, to have regard to any representations made to it by the Barbican Estate Residents' Consultation Committee);
- (b) the disposal of interests in the Barbican Estate pursuant to such policies as are from time to time laid down by the Court of Common Council.

TO: **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

5<sup>th</sup> July 2018

FROM: **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

7<sup>th</sup> February 2018

10. **BARBICAN RESIDENTIAL COMMITTEE - POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The Committee considered a report of the Comptroller and City Solicitor on potential conflicts of interest on the Barbican Residential Committee. The report had come forward following concerns expressed by Members of the Standards Committee at a previous meeting. Members noted that, on 14 December 2017, the Policy & Resources Committee had asked for the governance of the City Corporation's residential housing to be examined on a more strategic level with the aim of producing proposals which consolidate the governance arrangements of the City Corporation's residential housing offer.

The following matters were noted and raised.

- The Committee noted that the Barbican Residential Committee is responsible for the management of all completed residential premises and ancillary accommodation on the Barbican Estate, as well as the disposal of interests in the Barbican Estate. The Barbican Residential Committee acts on behalf of the City Corporation as landlord of the Barbican Estate.
- Nine members of that Committee are nominated by the residential wards encompassing the Barbican Estate, being Aldersgate, Cripplegate Within and Cripplegate Without. As a matter of practice, the members nominated by the wards of Aldersgate, Cripplegate Within and Cripplegate Without are always residents of the Barbican Estate.
- The Court of Common Council had attempted to offset any concerns over potential conflicts of interests by itself electing a further eleven members of the Barbican Residential Committee who are non-residents of the Barbican Estate. Even when the one ex-officio position to the Chairman or Deputy Chairman of the Community & Children's Services Committee is taken into account, this ensures that a majority of the members of the Barbican Residential Committee should be non-residents of the Barbican Estate. At present, however, there were five vacancies for non-resident members of the Barbican Residential Committee, despite significant efforts to fill these vacancies, and at meetings over the past two years Aldersgate and Cripplegate ward members had always been in a majority.
- The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Barbican Residential Committee are elected from the non-residents members of the Barbican Estate, and the quorum for meetings was any four non-resident members. Non-resident Members from the wards of Aldersgate, Cripplegate Within and Cripplegate Without can also be elected to fill the quota of non-resident members, stand for the Chairmanship and Deputy Chairmanship and count towards the quorum.

Currently, eleven out of the fifteen members of the Barbican Residential Committee represent Aldersgate or Cripplegate.

- The question of disclosable pecuniary interests and dispensations granted to enable members to speak was considered, along with relevant declarations made under the Code of Conduct.
- Members noted that, at the two most recent quorate meetings of the Barbican Residential Committee, the resident Members were in the majority.
- The Comptroller and City Solicitor confirmed that these current arrangements for the composition of the Barbican Residential Committee are lawful.
- Members then considered whether the current arrangements might give rise to a public perception that conflicts of interest could occur, particularly around Aldersgate and Cripplegate ward member ratios, quorum and attendance of non-resident members at meetings. A Member put forward the view that, having previously served on the committee, he was uncomfortable with its composition. Although he did not consider that anyone was motivated by self-interest, there was potential for conflicts of interest to occur and this point was endorsed by another Member who said that Aldersgate and Cripplegate members are put in an 'invidious position'. A further Member confirmed that he ceased to be a member of the Barbican Residential Committee due to similar concerns.
- Discussion continued and views were put forward that a revised structure may be necessary that allowed members at the committee to discuss issues such as service charges, with the management of the estate dealt with separately, effectively splitting the managing agent role away from the landlord role.

In conclusion, the informal meeting considered that the present operation of the Barbican Residential Committee, with the distinct roles of managing agent and landlord, and with the current vacancies for 5 non-resident members and Aldersgate and Cripplegate ward members being in a majority at its meetings over the past two years, could give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest and that the Policy and Resources Committee might wish to review the current composition and terms of reference of the Barbican Residential Committee, in order to consider the separation of the managing agent and landlord roles, to relieve these perceptions.

The inquorate meeting asked that these **views be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee under the urgency provisions of Standing Order No. 41(a) to ensure that these views could be considered as part of that Committee's review of the governance of the City Corporation's residential housing.**

**GOVERNANCE REVIEW DRAFT MINUTE  
RCC MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018**

Members received a report of the Town Clerk in respect of the City Corporation's Housing Governance. Members noted that the Policy and Resources Committee had considered an initial report at its July 2018 meeting, which had opened the discussion. This report sought the view of the Barbican Residents' Consultation Committee as to the future of the Barbican Residential Committee and any potential amendments that might be made.

Members were invited to give their views and, whilst some of these were representative of their House Groups, some felt that they had not been given long enough to consult as the paper had been circulated after the main RCC pack.

A Member from Aldersgate was in attendance and, with the permission of the Chairman, addressed the Committee and encouraged Members to share their views on all the options in the report; i.e. the five potential options in relation to future arrangements, which was reported to the Policy & Resources Committee in the Summer, and their views on the options which had emerged from the Chairman's discussions with interested parties.

The Deputy Chairman of the Barbican Residential Committee was in attendance and set the context by explaining the background and circumstances which had led to this report; i.e. the BRC was carrying a number of non-resident vacancies which were proving difficult to fill, and meetings were at risk of being inquorate. The recent debate on Car Park Charges and the rigid adherence to dispensations had highlighted the issues currently faced by the BRC.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- Could proxy voting at Committee meetings be introduced in order to avoid the risk of being inquorate?
- The difficulty in recruiting to the Committee might arise from a lack of interest in residents' issues, as the Community and Children's Services Committee also carried vacancies. This gave rise to implications for succession planning and finding individuals willing to stand as Chairman or Deputy Chairman.
- There was a strong reluctance to disbanding the BRC as the current arrangements work well for residents.
- There was, however, strong support for the status quo (option i), with a possible tweaking of Membership numbers to reduce the risk of being inquorate. Of the five options set out in the report, Members were not in favour of:
  - (ii) Disbanding the Barbican Residential Committee and transferring its responsibilities to the Community & Children's Services Committee as

this would overload the Committee, which was heavily engaged on HRA matters.

- (iii) Disbanding the BRC and transferring its responsibilities to the Property Investment Board was inappropriate, given this Committee's asset focus and lack of housing expertise.

Members generally felt that comments (iv) Reconfigure the Barbican Residential Committee, particularly if on a large scale and (v) Establish a new, non-Ward based Housing Committee were not desirable.

Members felt that the Code of Conduct in respect of pecuniary interests and the rigidity around dispensations inhibited the resident members. Members also felt that the Committee needed the current level of resident Members to represent constituents and take forward lobbying. There was a further view in that, if the number of resident Members were to reduce, then the non-residents should do likewise, reducing the quorum to 3 (i.e. a third of the non-resident Members).

It was suggested that the advantage of reducing the number of non-resident Members was that it would address the long-standing vacancies on this committee that are highlighted above. However, a concern was expressed that, in the event of a number of apologies for a meeting, decision making powers would then lie with a very small group of non-residents.

It was noted that the continued existence of the BRC, with an RCC to garner residents' views, was a fundamental part of the vote that took place some years ago regarding the management of the Barbican estate. As such, residents expected the City to continue to honour the commitments made at that time.

Finally, the Town Clerk advised Members of the arrangements for the BRC meeting next Monday whereby the formal BRC would start at 2.30pm but Members would hold an informal discussion in public, on the Housing Governance Review, at 1.45pm.