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Barbican Residential Committee

Date: **MONDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2026**

Time: **1.45 pm**

Venue: **COMMITTEE ROOMS, 2ND FLOOR, WEST WING, GUILDHALL**

4. **MINUTES OF THE BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE**

For Information
(Pages 3 - 12)

Item received too late for circulation in conjunction with the Agenda.

Ian Thomas CBE
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

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BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE
Monday, 26 October 2026

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee held at HYBRID PUBLIC MEETING (ACCESSIBLE REMOTELY AND IN THE COMMITTEE ROOMS, WEST WING, GUILDHALL, EC2V 7HH) on Monday, 26 October 2026 at 6.30 pm

Present

Members:
Jo Boait (Chair)
Lucy Sisman (Deputy Chair)
Tam Pollard (Deputy Chair)
Andy Hope - Breton House
Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court
Helen Hudson - Defoe House
Sally Spensley - Frobisher Cresent
Nigel Gilbert - Gilbert House
Claire Hersey - Lambert Jones Mews
David Lawrence - Lauderdale Tower
Kathleen Bailey - Mountjoy House
John Holme - The Postern
Robert Bexson - Seddon House
Richard Setchim - Shakespeare Tower
Frits Van Kempen - Speed House
Rodney Jagelman - Thomas More House
Petre Reid – Willoughby House
Jan-Marc Petroschka – Chair, Barbican Association

In attendance:
Anne Corbett – Common Councillor
Jim Durcan - Chairman, Service Level Working Party and Garden Advisory Group
Helen Fentimen – Common Councillor
Adam Hogg – Common Councillor
Jacqui Webster – Common Councillor
Ceri Wilkins – Common Councillor

Officers:

Daniel Castle	- Community and Children's Services Department
Eoin Doyle	- Community and Children's Services Department
Dan Sanders	- Director of Property and Estate Management, Barbican Residential Estate
Shruti Sonawane	- Community and Children's Services Department
Isaac Thomas	- Town Clerk's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Tong (Brandon Mews), John Taysum (Bryer Court), Pauline Fasoli (John Trundle Court), Stuart Lynas (Mountjoy House) and Roy Sully (Shakespeare Tower).

Kathleen Bailey attended to represent Mountjoy House and Richard Setchim attended to represent Shakespeare Tower.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES**

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2026.

In response to a question arising from the minutes, officers advised that independent verification of the planned preventative maintenance (PPM) schedules was planned for March 2027, approximately six months after the repairs and maintenance service had been brought in-house. The review would verify both that all relevant assets had been included and that maintenance frequencies were appropriate. Whilst many frequencies were determined by statutory requirements, non-statutory frequencies would also be reviewed.

RESOLVED – That the minutes be approved as a correct record, subject to correcting the numbering of items 11 and 12.

4. **REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF PROPERTY AND ESTATE MANAGEMENT**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, providing an update on the various workstreams of the Barbican Estate Office over the reporting period.

The following matters were raised:

<u>Repairs performance reporting</u>

It was noted that the exclusion of outstanding jobs gave a more favourable impression and affected comparisons with the previous contractors. A Member suggested that the calculation should include completed jobs and outstanding jobs which had exceeded their target times, but exclude unfinished jobs which remained within target. The 167 outstanding jobs already outside target should therefore count against performance. The Director of Property and Estate Management advised that an appropriate additional column would be included in future performance reports.

Officers noted that they were working to try clear the backlog before Christmas.

A Member queried how residents could establish whether longstanding outstanding repairs were included in the backlog, expressing concern that some jobs might not be picked up. Officers confirmed that this could not be

determined from the report presented. Whilst residents should be able to establish the status of individual jobs, officers would consider how further information about works in progress could be shared for scrutiny purposes, subject to any necessary redactions.

Wet risers

The Director reported that the wet risers at Cromwell and Lauderdale Towers were operational. Repairs to the diesel pump at Shakespeare Tower remained outstanding, pending pressure and flow testing. The project tracker recorded that Shakespeare's backup electrical pump was operating. The systems were approaching the end of their useful lives and would require capital replacement in the near future.

Wooden flooring and noise nuisance

A draft protocol on lease breaches relating to wooden flooring was with the City Solicitor for review and would subsequently be brought to the relevant committees. In response to questions, the Director confirmed that it would address adequate sound insulation and enable noise nuisance breaches to be identified and remedied. A Member asked whether it would cover noise arising from increased hard surfaces and clarify the boundaries of disputes. The Director confirmed that these parameters and the relevant thresholds would be covered, and that this contributed to the complexity of drafting the protocol.

Expert witness report

The report had been received and was undergoing internal verification and redaction. A special meeting of the Committee was being considered so that consideration would not have to wait until February 2027.

House inspections

Officers acknowledged that residents' experience of the new inspections varied between blocks. Work was under way to achieve a consistent reporting standard and compliance with the inspection schedule by the end of the calendar year. Where implemented effectively, inspections had helped identify issues and improve standards, but further work was required across the Estate.

In response to a query from the Chair regarding work undertaken in the stores area, following issues being identified in the Ben Jonson House inspection report, officers confirmed that costs would be met by the City of London Corporation through commercial income from the stores, rather than service charges.

Car park review

Officers advised that initial engagement had taken place with the Barbican Association, the Golden Lane forum and the bicycle user group. Wider leaseholder engagement was planned before the end of the calendar year.

The Committee noted that the City of London Police were no longer pursuing storage space on the Estate, either at Lauderdale Tower or Bunyan Court, having secured accommodation elsewhere.

Governance review

Dates for resident engagement sessions in November and December had been agreed with Charles Russell Speechlys and Inside the Box. The allocation of sessions remained to be finalised, following which booking details were expected to be circulated. Communications would be issued by email, through the bulletin and via the app. Approximately 70 residents who could not be reached electronically would receive letters.

Salvage store

In response to a question about the Barbican Estate Office taking over the salvage store, the Director confirmed that the Office held the keys. Officers would issue contact details and access arrangements shortly. These would enable residents both to collect items from the store and deliver materials from flat refurbishments.

RESOLVED – That the report and the updates be noted.

5. **MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME BOARD**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, on the work of the Major Works Programme Board (MWPB).

An update on project resources was provided. It was reported that Will Roberts had been promoted to Senior Project Manager and Graham Sheret had moved from a contractor role to permanent employment. Further recruitment would be undertaken for the remaining vacancies and to backfill Will Roberts' previous project manager post.

The appointment of consultants for the tower lift project was expected by the end of November 2026, subject to consultation and procurement, while procurement documentation for the terrace lift consultants was being prepared.

Officers explained that resident volunteers would initially support the procurement and evaluation of terrace lift consultants and contractors. Separate delivery working groups would subsequently be established for corridor and staircase blocks, with house group representatives considering matters including sequencing, service charges, project duration and arrangements while lifts were unavailable.

A Member raised concern that this did not reflect the level of resident involvement previously envisaged and questioned whether key aspects of the project could be determined before wider engagement. The Chair and officers confirmed that the project remained at an early stage and that more detailed resident engagement would follow the consultant's appointment, once the available options, costs and impacts were clearer.

The Director advised that the approach mirrored the tower lift project, combining resident participation in tender evaluation with wider delivery working groups. The Director acknowledged that the initial communication could have been clearer and undertook to clarify the procurement role and extend the

deadline. Following representations, provision had also been made for all 13 relevant blocks to be represented through two working groups.

Members highlighted the importance of advance notice of potential lift charges, particularly for leaseholders on fixed incomes. Officers confirmed that affordability was a key consideration for both officers and the MWPB. Once specifications and indicative costs were available, options would be considered, including sequencing expenditure over financial years and providing as much notice as possible, balanced against the need to address unreliable lifts. No commitment to particular financial arrangements could be given at this stage.

In response to a Member's question about specific Willoughby House service charge queries, officers undertook to discuss this offline and provide the necessary figures.

A Member asked about delays to the balcony works at Mountjoy, Seddon and Gilbert Houses. The Committee was informed that Elkins' project manager had left and a replacement was being recruited to provide dedicated oversight. Once appointed, the project manager would meet the house groups and develop the delivery plan. In response to concerns that residents were already being charged, the Director advised the works should be completed by 31 March 2027, within the financial year for which the relevant service charges had been budgeted. Completion within that period would avoid the need for an adjustment on that account.

In response to a question, an officer confirmed that the internal redecorations in Willoughby House would be repeated, as the quality was particularly poor. The Committee was also reminded of the previous City of London commitment to remove the paint and varnish that had been splashed onto the concrete and glass during previous years' redecoration projects.

Concerns were raised about the effect of the 30-year programme on conveyancing and requests for reductions in sale prices. The Director advised that a standard signed letter was available to explain the context of the 30-year programme to mortgage lenders and leaseholders during conveyancing, with a view to avoiding unjustified reductions in sale prices. Leaseholders could contact the Director or the service charge team for assistance. The Director undertook to circulate the letter to Committee members. The Chair requested that its availability also be publicised in the bulletin.

In response to a question regarding VAT, the Director reported that discussions with the Chamberlain's Department were continuing and that a formal response on the outstanding VAT issue would follow once the position had been finalised.

The Chair requested a review of the project priority descriptions and classifications where a high-priority project depended on another project currently classified as medium priority. Officers agreed that the dependencies and classifications would be considered at the MWPB.

RESOLVED – That the report and the updates be noted.

6. **REPORT OF THE REPORTING COMMITTEE**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, with an overview of the work undertaken by the Reporting Committee in recent months.

A Member asked about the difference between estimated and actual electricity expenditure. Officers explained that energy budgets were calculated using fixed electricity rate and expected consumption, with limited allowances for Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) credits which fluctuate based on external market conditions.

A Member queried whether residents should be warned about potential energy price increases. Officers advised that higher market prices could increase the credits generated by the sale of excess energy under the PPA, benefiting communal electricity and heating charges. The rate paid under the agreement was stated to be 21p per kilowatt hour. This explanation concerned communal service charges, not residents' individual domestic electricity bills.

A Member enquired how long the PPA agreement would remain in place and was advised that it had initially been for ten years and was approximately three or four years into its term.

A question was raised on behalf of residents of John Trundle Court whose flats had been colder the previous winter, asking whether this reflected a deliberate decision to reduce energy costs. Officers confirmed that there had been no deliberate reduction in heating to achieve savings and that the underfloor heating would not be reduced for a financial benefit.

The Chair questioned the reference to retrospective fire strategies. Officers advised that more detailed plans and drawings were required for the London Fire Brigade, showing escape routes, access points and firefighting infrastructure. The Committee was advised that these formed part of the measured survey work and would be held in the premises information boxes.

The Chair queried the absence of electric vehicle charging maintenance records and final Legionella risk assessment reports. Officers undertook to establish whether these were simply outstanding when the report was written or remained missing. The Committee would be updated on receipt of the documentation or, where necessary, the action being taken in relation to the contractor and payment.

RESOLVED – That the report and the updates be noted.

7. **ACTION TRACKER**

The Committee considered the action tracker and agreed to close actions 2025/24, 2025/32, 2025/34, 2026/03, 2026/10, 2026/12, 2026/13, 2026/14, 2026/16, 2026/18, 2026/22 and 2026/26.

The Chair drew the Committee's attention to action 2026/09 where confirmation had been received that service charge payers will be able to participate in the tender processes for the appointment of consultants and contractors for the Barbican Estate. This protocol was welcomed and it was agreed that this action should be closed.

RESOLVED – That the following actions be closed: 2025/24, 2025/32, 2025/34, 2026/03, 2026/09, 2026/10, 2026/12, 2026/13, 2026/14, 2026/16, 2026/18, 2026/22 and 2026/26.

8. **WORKING PARTY UPDATES**

The Committee considered the working party updates set out below.

8(A). CLIMATE & ZERO CARBON WORKING PARTY (CWP)

The Committee received the report of the CWP and an oral update from its interim Chair, Richard Setchim.

The CWP reported that it was developing proposals to replace the discretionary approach to heating in May and September, drawing on previous protocols and historical survey data regarding overnight heating.

The working party wished to explore automated switching informed by forecast temperatures and whether existing heating periods, established when off-peak energy was significantly cheaper, remained optimal. This required usage and cost data, together with a clearer understanding of the heating control system and its scope for adaptation.

A meeting between a CWP member with relevant professional expertise and the engineers had been arranged for 30 October 2026. The CWP emphasised the need to document the system's operation and capabilities. The intention was to have an approach ready before May 2027.

The interim Chair reported on changes in planning policy concerning climate resilience and the potential implications for the balance between heritage considerations and adaptation measures. The CWP had briefed Members of the Planning and Transportation and Community and Children's Services Committees, where questions had been raised about how the policy would be applied locally.

The Barbican Estate Office had asked Ambue to consider the policy changes in its study. Permanent solutions would take time, and possible interim measures for the next two summers were also being explored. The CWP would support this work and was strengthening its relevant expertise. It was reported that Scott Orr, from UCL's Institute for Sustainable Heritage, would join the Working Party.

8(B). GARDENS ADVISORY GROUP (GAG)

The Committee received the report of the Gardens Advisory Group.

The Group advised that the summer heat and drought were expected to result in greater-than-usual losses of plants, shrubs and trees. Some replacement costs would arise, although the full extent would not be known until the following spring or early summer, once recovery could be assessed. It was noted that leaseholders met the costs of the private gardens under their leases, whilst the City met the costs of the other gardens.

The Chair of the Group noted that it had been agreed some time ago that a proposals should be developed to make the gardens more resilient to drought, water shortages and hotter summers, and requested that, considering the recent summer, this should be progressed. The Director undertook to follow this up with the Head of Resident Services.

The Group recorded its thanks to the City's gardeners for their work during the summer heat and drought, noting that newly planted trees near John Trundle Court and Speed Lawn had survived successfully.

8.(C). SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WORKING PARTY (SLAWP)

The Committee received the report of the Service Level Agreement Working Party.

The Chairman emphasised the need for reliable performance data to support scrutiny and improvement of services. The former regular cleaning inspections had ceased, removing a measure of cleaning standards. The newer house inspections had identified cleaning issues, reinforcing the importance of consistent monitoring.

The Working Party welcomed the repairs information in the Director's report and sought further measures, including the number of jobs inspected and inspection outcomes. Clear metrics should be recorded and communicated to residents so that progress could be assessed. Officers undertook to take these points forward through their KPI reporting and return to the Committee. The Reporting Committee would also pursue the matter.

A Member queried high water ingress figures recorded for Speed House in the appendix, and officers undertook to verify their classification and charging treatment.

8(D). Service Charge Working Party (SCWP)

No meetings of the Service Charge Working Party had been held since the previous RCC meeting, and no update was provided.

RESOLVED, that the Working Party Updates be noted.

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

There were no questions.

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

Estate security and antisocial behaviour

A Member asked about progress with deterrents, including CCTV, in view of concerns that reduced footfall during the Barbican Centre's closure for refurbishment could increase the risk of antisocial behaviour or crime.

Officers advised that they were working with the Centre on security arrangements in the context of Martyn's Law. Discussions included an agreement under which additional Centre security staff could undertake Estate patrols at a lower cost than a separately employed Estate security service. The Centre's security provision and CCTV would remain in place during refurbishment.

Officers hoped to introduce stronger visible measures by the following summer. The City of London Police had offered some spare CCTV for bicycle storage and locker areas in car parks, whilst a longer-term proposal was being developed. A report with further detail and indicative costs was expected in February 2027.

Emergency preparedness and power outages

A Member asked about the Estate's preparedness for major disruptions, particularly power outages affecting lifts. Officers advised that disaster recovery arrangements covered major power loss, water escape, fire and bomb threats, and had been used during the previous year's water outage.

Officers reported that uninterruptible power supplies supported essential communal infrastructure, including emergency lighting and lifts. It was noted that supplementary diesel generators could be deployed where necessary, though these arrangements did not extend to individual domestic properties.

At the Committee's request, officers agreed to include information about the emergency arrangements in the bulletin.

The meeting ended at 7.46 pm.

Chairman

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