

BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE
Monday, 1 September 2014

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee
(RCC) held at Guildhall on Monday, 1 September 2014 at 6.30 pm

Members:

Tim Macer - Willoughby House
(Chairman)

Professor Chris Mounsey - Breton House
(Deputy Chairman)

Randall Anderson - Shakespeare Tower

Averil Baldwin - Thomas More House

Robert Barker - Lauderdale Tower

Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court

Helen Wilkinson - Speed House

Robin Gough – Defoe House

Dr Gianetta Corley – Gilbert House

John Tomlinson - Cromwell Tower

Gillian Laidlaw - Mountjoy House

Fiona Lean - Ben Jonson House

Natalie Robinson - Andrewes House

Jane Smith - Barbican Association

Professor Michael Swash - Willoughby

John Taysum - Bryer Court

Janet Wells - John Trundle House

Mark Bostock – Frobisher Crescent

In Attendance:

Professor John Lumley – Member of the Court of Common Council, ward of Aldersgate

Officers:

Karen Tarbox

Michael Bennett

Helen Davinson

Mike Kettle

Anne Mason

Amy Carter

Colin Chuter

Julie Mayer

- Community and Children's Services

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- Chamberlain's

- Town Clerk's

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from John Tomlinson, Jane Smith, David Graves and Gareth Moore (Chairman of the Barbican Residential Committee).

The Chairman congratulated Karen Tarbox in her new role as Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services and welcomed Colin Chuter from Chamberlains and Amy Carter (Community and Children's Services) to their first meetings.

2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

The Frobisher House representative asked for an amendment in respect of page 4 of the minutes in that the House Group had asked that the RCC to be alerted to a potential dispute. There was also an error in the text in that inhabitable should have read 'un-inhabitable'.

Subject to the above, the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2014 were approved as a correct record.

4. **2013/14 REVENUE OUTTURN (EXCLUDING THE RESIDENTIAL SERVICE CHARGE ACCOUNT)**

The Committee received a joint Outturn Report of the Chamberlain and Director of Community and Children's Services. Members welcomed the simplified format of the reports and some had also attended a briefing session prior to this RCC meeting, which had been very helpful.

RESOLVED, that:

The Revenue Outturn Report for 2013/14 and the budgets carried forward to 2014/15 be noted.

5. **2013/14 REVENUE OUTTURN FOR THE RESIDENTIAL SERVICE CHARGE ACCOUNT INCLUDING RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE CLOSED ACCOUNTS AND AMOUNT TO BE CHARGED TO LONG LEASEHOLDERS**

The Committee received a joint report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Community and Children's Services, which provided a summary of expenditure chargeable to the Barbican Estate's long leaseholders.

RESOLVED, that:

The Revenue Outturn Report for 2013/14 and the service charge reconciliation be noted.

6. **RELATIONSHIP OF BRC OUTTURN REPORT TO SERVICE CHARGE SCHEDULES**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which sought to clarify how the service charge division in the 2013/14 Revenue Outturn Report relates to the service charge schedules provided to long lessees.

During the discussion of this item, the following points were raised/noted:

- Lauderdale residents would challenge being charged for the replacement glass at roof level as it related to work that recently been done and should be under warranty.
- Water tanks were tested on a regular basis.
- The drainage issues at Frobisher Crescent were considered to be service chargeable and will continue to be so unless evidence arises to the contrary.
- Members commended the helpful format of the report.

RESOLVED, that:

The report be noted.

7. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (SLA) REVIEW

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which updated Members on the review of the estate-wide implementation of Service Level Agreements and Key Performance Measures for the quarter April to June 2014.

During the discussion on this item, the following points were raised/noted:

- A meeting had been arranged with the Cleaning Manager for later this week, in order to look at spot checks on the podium and other problem areas.
- There was currently no finance available for bike lockers but some TfL funding had recently become available for bike racks and bike cages, which were very popular with residents. Members noted that there may be some modest charges for these such as to cover key administration, and residents would be updated once officers had received further clarity.
- Members noted that the SLA working party considered both leaseholder and service chargeable issues, as there were overlaps with officer responsibilities but the report indicates which account each item belongs to.
- Andrewes House had been extremely concerned about two recent intrusions, where entry had been gained via an open escape door (either left open or not closed properly). Residents noted that this had now been escalated to the Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services, who would undertake a further investigation and update residents by the end of this week. Furthermore, the outcome and improvements would be fed into the wider security procedures on the estate and raised at the next SLA Working Party.

RESOLVED, that:

The report be noted.

8. REVIEW OF WORKING PARTIES

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which sought a decision on the process for setting up and running the RCC's working parties.

Members particularly welcomed receiving the Minutes of the working parties as it promoted transparency as well as tracking progress. Some Members suggested that an annual report and summary of the work of each group would also be helpful and this could be circulated more widely to residents.

The Chairman advised that vacancies would be filled at the AGM, along with reviewing terms of reference and setting time limits on the working parties, where necessary.

RESOLVED, that:

The draft protocol for setting up and running the Working Parties be reviewed in light of the comments raised, so that it could be considered further and implemented at the RCC's Annual General Meeting in Spring 2015.

9. AUTOMATED PAYMENT SYSTEM FOR TEMPORARY CAR PARKING REVIEW

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which considered the efficiencies in delivering the temporary car parking service. Members were reminded that the Barbican Residential Committee had approved the introduction of an Automated Payment System in February 2013 and this report reviewed the system after its first year of operation.

Members noted that the car park attendants would assist those visitors lacking confidence in using any of the Pay-by-Phone methods. There was also an internet console within the attendant's office, for those without mobile phones.

RESOLVED, that:

It be noted that the system be reviewed again in 2015, with a view to eventually phasing out the physical use of the old Carbon-Paper tickets.

10. BACKGROUND UNDERFLOOR HEATING UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which updated Members on the progress made by the Barbican Underfloor Heating Working Party since the last update in January 2014.

Members noted that a decision on budgets for a consultants brief would be taken in December 2014 and welcomed the range of options presented in the report. Officers advised that the new heating contract would commence on 1 October 2014.

RESOLVED, that:

The progress of the Background Underfloor Heating Working Party be noted.

11. ROOF APPORTIONMENT FOR SHAKESPEARE TOWER

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which sought approval, by the Barbican Residential Committee, to the final apportionment of costs between qualifying Leaseholders and the City of London Corporation in relation to the roof repairs at Shakespeare Tower. The Shakespeare Tower representative confirmed that the House Group was content with the report.

RESOLVED, that:

The Barbican Residential Committee be recommended to approve the final apportionment of costs for roofing repairs at Shakespeare Tower, being 109.2% to the City and -9.02% to qualifying long leaseholders.

12. BEECH GARDENS PODIUM WORKS UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which sought to provide a suitable waterproofing remedy, with appropriate guarantees, for the North West Barbican Podium covering the areas known as White Lyon Court, John Trundle High Walk, Beech Gardens and Bryer Court Pond.

The Bryer Court House Group Member asked for the Group's discontent at the pace of this project to be recorded. The Assistant Director advised that a further Project Board and residents' meeting had been planned for this week, to address their issues. Members were reminded that the project was a pilot for waterproofing the whole of the podium which had, so far, been successful. The report before Members today had been intended as a position statement for the whole estate and the Project Board would receive a more detailed report.

RESOLVED, that:

The report be noted.

13. WORKING PARTY REVIEW - MINUTES OF BEECH GARDENS FUTURE LANDSCAPING WORKING PARTY

Members received the minutes of the Beech Gardens Future Landscaping Working Party. Officers advised that the design had been supported by the Working Party, following feedback from consultation with residents and an open-day hosted by the Architect. The Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services, advised that she would be taking a report to the October Projects Sub Committee, in order to obtain funding approval.

14. WORKING PARTY REVIEW - MINUTES OF BEECH GARDENS PROJECT BOARD

Members received the minutes of the Beech Gardens Project Board.

15. ANNUAL RESIDENTS SURVEY

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Members Services, which advised Members of the results of the Residents' Satisfaction Survey, which was undertaken in July 2014.

Members welcomed a very encouraging report and particularly commended the new format. Officers advised that the exact percentages, as shown in the previous report, were available on request and would be shared with the SLA Working Party. In respect of the cleaning, which had recorded a downturn in satisfaction, officers assured Members that they worked to very high standards and would seek to rectify this as soon as possible. In respect of specific comments and suggestions made by residents, such as the Art Centre's crumbling brickwork on the Lakeside, officers advised that all of these items would be picked up under '*You said; We Did*' and communicated back to residents, so they are aware that their feedback has been acted upon.

RESOLVED, that:

The results of the Barbican Residents Survey, undertaken in July 2014, be noted.

16. **53 FORE STREET - WOOD STREET BAR AND RESTAURANT - NEW LEASE**

Members received a redacted report in respect of granting a new single lease to the Wood Street Bar and Restaurant (formerly Crowders Well Public House) and flat 185 Andrewes House.

Members noted that the application would be subject to a decision by Barbican Residential Committee (BRC) on 15th September 2014 but the final terms of the licence would fall under the jurisdiction of the Licensing Committee. In respect of a recent complaint about noise, Members noted that this had been resolved.

RESOLVED, that:

The report be noted.

17. **PROGRESS OF SALES AND LETTINGS**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which sought to advise Member of the sales and lettings which had been approved by officers since the last meeting.

RESOLVED, that:

The report be noted.

18. **UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which updated Members on issues raised by the Residents' Consultation Committee and the Barbican Residential Committee at their meetings in June 2014. This report also provided updates on other issues on the estate.

Former Barbican/COL insignia affixed to the end of the Willoughby House Car Park ramp - Members were disappointed that this had taken so long to resolve and felt that it should have been covered by a planning condition and replaced at Heron's expense. Officers noted residents' comments, which would be reported to Legal Services.

North elevation scaffolding - Members asked if both the painting and concrete testing works could be carried out whilst this was in place.

TV upgrade – Officers advised that residents would be able to keep their existing TVs. However, there was some dissatisfaction about the level of communication generally and Members asked for clarity and further publicity about the meeting with VFM, which had been planned for 15th September in Shakespeare Tower.

Podium tiling - the Assistant Director apologised for the delay in the supply of the step edges but advised that there had been an issue with the manufacturer. The outcome would be reported under '*You Said; We Did*', or sooner if possible.

RESOLVED, that:

The update report be noted.

19. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

The questions received in advance and their responses had been circulated and would be appended to this set of minutes.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

The Town Clerk was heard in respect of the suggested dates for RCC Meetings in 2015 and Members agreed that they would keep to the usual cycle; i.e. Monday's at 6.30pm, two weeks before the Barbican Residential Committee. Members agreed that, for those dates in 2015/16, where the respective Mondays fall on a Bank Holiday, the RCC meetings would still take place on a Monday but one before the BRC meeting; i.e.

- 7 September 2015
- 6 June 2016

The Town Clerk undertook to complete the draft minutes as soon as possible in time for the Grand Committee meetings the following week.

The AGMs for 2015 and 2016 would be scheduled for a Monday evening in April of both years and dates would be advised shortly. All other dates were now available on the web site.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm

Chairman

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Pre RCC Member QUESTIONS For 1 September 2014 RCC

1. **Q. Replacement seating on St Giles Terrace & Ben Jonson Place –**
When will this be replaced?
 - A. The Department of Built Environment have confirmed that the manufacturer has visited the site again to re-measure to ensure the replacement benches match the exact height and location of the previous benches. They are just finalising the details but the installation will be scheduled to be late September. Once everything has been confirmed Streetscene Officers from the Department of Built Environment will send through a further update with advance notice of the replacement dates to circulate to residents.
2. **Q. Plinth repairs along Ben Jonson Highwalk –** When will they be replaced?
 - A. A trial plinth referred to in the “You Said; We Did” update will be completed in October – if successful the remainder of the plinth works will follow.
3. **Q. Podium Tiling –** When will the stair edge tiles be replaced?
 - A. The update in the “You Said; We Did” update is current – there are no planned dates for these works.
4. **Q. Public lift doors –** is it possible for the doors of the public lifts to be left open as standard to prevent the smells from polluting them?
 - A. Lifts can be set to have doors open when parked but this is extremely unusual and invites vandalism, this arrangement also provides a slower service.
5. **Q. Ben Jonson House scaffolding –** Why weren’t residents of Breton House informed about the scaffolding on Ben Jonson House? Whilst the scaffolding is on Ben Jonson House will the concrete investigations and remedies also be carried out?
 - A. Subject to the procurement timetable including the second stage Section 20 procedure, and coordination of works, the intention is that scaffolding will be made use insofar as this is practicable. The scaffolding on Breton House was

mentioned at the Residents Redecoration Open day in April, the external redecorations letter in July and the contractors update newsletter in August.

6. **Q. Ongoing concrete repair works Breton House** - When will the concrete repairs on Breton House be completed (large chunks of concrete have been removed but no remedial action)?

A. The remedial works to both Breton and Mountjoy House were completed in August.

7. **Q. Breton/Mountjoy Houses concrete repairs/costings report** – Will a full report on the Breton/Mountjoy concrete repair works including costs be presented to the RCC/BRC?

A. This has not previously been requested but can be provided. The concrete condition survey report was provided to Breton and Mountjoy House Group Chairs earlier in the year.

8. **Q. Ben Jonson Place Waterproofing** - Is a date planned for the waterproofing of Ben Jonson Place? Have the London Film School asked that these areas are waterproofed?

A. City Surveyors have confirmed that reconfiguring the Exhibition Hall into an internationally recognised Film School is going to involve a significant amount of works, both by the City of London and LFS itself. There are not currently any proposals to re-seal the Breton House area but given the leaks from the podium and the desire to prevent the leaks in the future similar works to those undertaken in the Beech Street Gardens area may well occur in the future.

9. **Q. TV broadband upgrade** – Why was the fibre broadband installation projected for August moved back to October? What works have been completed, what is being done now and what is still to be done – is this on track?

A. Installation of the 'dark fibre' onto the estate has taken place. Works to install the main fibre ring around the estate within the subway continues. The lead-in time for some of the major components resulted in the delay from August to October. We are still on track to commence connections into individual flats in October.

10. Q. Beech Gardens project – When is the Beech Gardens project due to be completed? Where are the minutes of the Project Board meeting 6 August?

A. The project is due to be completed in February 2015 (see separate progress report). The most recent Project Board minutes missed the Committee deadlines for reports.

11. Q. Podium drains - Following recent heavy rains and the ensuing failure of the drains on the podiums – has thought been given to a major overhaul of the water collection system?

A. This will be considered as part of the Asset Management Strategy. Existing drains are subject to an annual planned maintenance programme. The recent heavy rain we have experienced is beyond what we would normally expect and drain failures were not limited to the Barbican Estate.

12. Q. Public Gardens and Watering – how much has been spent on the North podium now that the sprinkler system is not in use?

A. Hand watering costs for 2013/14 were £1,591 and for 2014/15 £2,674.

13. Q. Recruitment – Estate Concierge/Car Park Attendants – what are the replacement plans for the up and coming Estate Concierge/Car Park Attendants who are due to retire over the next year or two?

A. The Barbican Estate Office has been able to progress with the recruitment of 8 new starters for the Estate Concierge team. A further 6 positions have been advertised externally and we anticipate being able to announce these new team members during the Autumn, which will provide us with a full complement of permanent staff – 28 in total. Moving forward we will recruit into those positions as and when there are confirmed retirement dates from the team members.

14. Q. Carry forward budgets - £50,000 carry forward budget for car park signage and emergency lighting – what else was competing for expenditure and why was the decision made to use it on car park signage and emergency lighting?

A. At the beginning of the financial year the Department of Community & Children's Services ask divisions to put forward prioritised projects for any potential departmental underspends from the previous year. The BEO team will review any possible landlord charged projects, for example, car park works, podium works including planters, signage, tiling and put forward a prioritised list. The car park signage and emergency lighting was prioritised following recent Fire Risk Assessments in those areas.

15. Q. Frobisher Crescent – Drainage on balconies – can we have an update/position statement?

A. A meeting has been scheduled for the Frobisher Crescent House Group with the Barbican Estate Office on 9 September to update on the position.

16. Q. Frobisher Crescent – Heating system - There was a lot of discussion in 2013 with the residents and the BEO, The City Surveyor, DSL and UHC on the issue of the future maintenance of the heating system including the need for annual health checks. It was agreed that the first one would be done before the effective handover of the system to the City by the developer, UHC which was thought to take place in April 2014. The last one was done in all the flats in autumn 2013. As a precursor to any handover of the heating system, we believe that the second health check needs to be undertaken by DSL. Can we be advised when this will happen?

A. An update will be provided via the next 'You Said; We Did' and to the Frobisher Crescent House Group when received from the City Surveyor.

17. Q. Underfloor Heating System - While the Underfloor Heating Working Party is looking at the potential for improvements, such as increased individual controls, as part of identifying options for a future upgrade, we face a number of heating seasons before such improvements might be introduced. What can be done in the short term to alleviate the situation for flats which are cold during periods of reduced temperature outside the heating "season" [such as those immediately above podium level? Is it possible to change the background heating period to [say] September-May.?

A. The lease states for 'the provision of underfloor heating at other reasonable times' - the Barbican Estate Office already does this – in April/May and September we review the forecasted minimum night time temperatures, the potential overnight charging times of the system and the amount of resident feedback. The BEO will then

decide whether to keep the system running in May and or turning the system on early in September which has been done a number of times over the years.

18. Q. Bin store under Speed/Willoughby - What are the plans and what is the timetable?

A. It remains our intention to provide a further Bin Store for the Willoughby House area in this financial year. We are currently liaising with Property Services, the Cleansing Department and the Planning Department regarding further building requirements.