

BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE
Monday, 3 December 2018

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee
held at Guildhall at 6.30 pm

Present

Members:

Christopher Makin - Chairman	Sandy Wilson - Shakespeare Tower
Graham Wallace - Deputy Chairman	Prof. Michael Swash – Willoughby House
Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court	Richard Tomkins - Lauderdale Tower
Robert Barker - Barbican Association	Heather Hawker - Speed House
Janet Wells - John Trundle House	James Wilson Undy - Gilbert House
Rodney Jagelman - Thomas More House	Adam Hogg - Andrewes House
John Tomlinson - Cromwell Tower	Jane Samsworth - Defoe House
	Stephen Chapmen- Ben Jonson House

In attendance:

- Susan Pearson – Deputy Chairman of the Barbican Residential Committee (BRC) and Ward Member for Cripplegate (the BRC Chairman sent apologies)
- Mary Durcan – Member of the BRC and Ward Member for Cripplegate

Ted Reilly – Barbican Resident and Member of the Underfloor Heating Working Party – for agenda item 12.

Officers:

Paul Murtagh	Assistant Director, Barbican, Housing and Property Services, Community and Children's Services
Mark Jarvis	Chamberlains
Julie Mayer	Town Clerk's
Michael Bennett	Community and Children's Services
Helen Davinson	Community and Children's Services
Mike Saunders	Community and Children's Services
Barry Ashton	Community and Children's Services
Anne Mason	Community and Children's Services

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from, Jim Davies - Deputy Chairman; John Taysum - Bryer Court; Fred Rodgers - Breton House; David Andrew Graves – Seddon House; Mark Bostock - Frobisher Crescent; David Lawrence – Lauderdale Tower (represented); Jane Smith – Barbican Association (represented); Fiona Lean – Ben Johnson House (represented)

The Chairman welcomed Rodney Jagelman (Thomas More House) to his first RCC meeting.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2018 be approved.

Matters arising:

1. Members noted that the Review of Housing Governance was due to be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee on 17th January 2019.
2. The Court of Common Council would be considering a Motion in respect of dispensations at its meeting on 6th December 2018.
3. The Chairman agreed to follow up an outstanding query in respect of a budget for an all resident meeting.
4. The Assistant Director, Barbican, Housing and Property Services, advised that the next meeting of the RCC and BRC would receive a detailed report and action plan in respect of fire safety. Members noted that the compartmentation surveys were being analysed, specifically in relation to Frobisher Crescent, and a procurement exercise for new signage was underway. In addition, Fire Management Plans would be developed for each block, explaining how the Landlord will manage fire safety in the blocks; i.e. clear escape routes etc.
5. In response to questions about fire door testing, Members noted that the door that had been tested had met the 36 minute test. However, the passage of smoke had been quicker than expected and further work was underway. A further 2 doorsets, including staircase blocks (one with glazing) had been sent off for testing. The Assistant Director advised that current waiting times in the UK were stretching to July next year but he had sourced an alternative testing facility in Poland, which provided the same service cheaper and quicker.
6. In response to further questions about smoke ingress, Members noted that, as this test had been undertaken in a factory, the ventilation systems in the Barbican might act differently and extract it. However, more research was underway in respect of the use of seals and/or strips, using the Compartmentation Contractor. . Members noted that smoke tests were not compulsory but residents safety was paramount to the City Corporation. Members were also assured that, in the past 33 years, whilst there had been some small fires on the Estate, none had breached a flat and spread elsewhere. Officers agreed take further advice about controlled smoke testing in an empty flat.

7. The BRC Chairman had approached the Hospitality Working Party in respect of the Barbican's 50-Year Celebrations for an event next Summer at the Museum of London and a photographic exhibition in the Guildhall Yard.
8. In respect of the Asset Management and Stock Condition Surveys, Members noted that work would start in the New Year, and include, under floor heating, lifts (this work had been done) and work to the car parks. Members were reminded that windows were a Landlord responsibility but recoverable through the Lease. There could be interim works to poorly fitting windows. The Assistant Director advised that the results of the Survey would be presented to the Asset Maintenance Working Party and a report and plan would be presented to the RCC/BRC in the Autumn of 2019.

4. **'YOU SAID; WE DID' - OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LIST**

Members received the Committee's outstanding actions list. In respect of the Ambulance access points at Frobisher Crescent, Members noted that the London Ambulance Service would conduct a 'dummy run' in December and the results would be fed back via e-mail bulleting and in the next Committee report.

RESOLVED, that – the outstanding actions '*You Said; We Did*' list be noted.

5. **REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS - LATEST APPROVED BUDGET 2018/19 AND ORIGINAL 2019/20 (EXCLUDING DWELLINGS SERVICE CHARGE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE)**

Members received a joint report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the latest approved budget for the Revenue and Capital Budgets. Members were asked to note the increase in the employee budget and repairs and maintenance, and the explanations thereon. The Chamberlain also drew Members attention to an error in the report in that the number of commercial bays with Deutsche Bank was 23 and not 15.

In response to questions the following points were noted:

- In response to a written query, the Chamberlain stated that capital charges are levied on the City's assets based on a calculation that charged a proportion of the latest valuation of properties to revenue annually. Members noted that, in accordance with standard recommended accounting practice, some fluctuations in the capital charge was usual following the annual revaluation of assets.
- Officers agreed to make enquiries as to the status of the current planning permission, in respect of the use of surplus bays for commercial car parking, and would provide an update to the Charging Policy for Car Parking and Stores Working Party and in the next formal report to the RCC/BRC. Members noted that business rates were payable on commercial car park spaces.

- If the Turret public lift was taken out of service, it would be for as short a time as possible and would follow consultation.

RESOLVED, That – the Revenue and Capital Budgets – Latest Approved Budget for 2018/19 and Original 2019/20 be noted prior to its recommendation to the Barbican Residential Committee on 10th December 2018.

6. SERVICE CHARGE EXPENDITURE AND INCOME ACCOUNT - LATEST APPROVED BUDGET 2018/19 AND ORIGINAL BUDGET 2019/20

Members received a joint report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the latest approved budget for the Service Charge Expenditure and Income Account. The Chairman and Members commended the work of the Leaseholder Service Charge Working Party in contributing to this report.

During the discussion and questions, the following points were noted:

- There had been three areas of change in expenditure, with notes thereon, in respect of employees; the reallocation of car park attendants' time to include Blake Tower; increases in repairs and maintenance and revenue projects (i.e. repairs, decorations and car park charges).
- In respect of the new Energy Contract, Members noted that pricing was based on kw per half hour; this determined the day and night rates and therefore each meter was different.
- The Asset Management line included an allowance for any additional surveys and unknowns and was £150,000, compared to the figure quoted to the Asset Maintenance Working Party of £114,000.
- In respect of fluctuations, officers advised that they always sought best value in contracts, with due diligence. The budgets reflected an estimate, pending the preparation of service charge bills in April each year, once the final positions were known.

RESOLVED, That – The Service Charge Expenditure and Income Account, Latest Approved Budget 2018/19 and Original Budget 2019/20 be noted, prior to its recommendation to the Barbican Residential Committee on 10th December 2018.

7. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS QUARTERLY REVIEW JULY - SEPTEMBER 2018

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the Service Level Agreements Quarterly review.

Members noted the very low response rates from the Major Works Survey. In response to a question in respect of the Willoughby House car park turning circle, the officer advised that quotations were being sought and it would be replaced by end of the Financial Year. In respect of potential changes to

response times in the Repairs and Maintenance contract, Members noted that this would align the Barbican to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Estates, at no extra cost.

In respect of the VFM contract, Members noted that this was being reviewed from the end of September 2018, for six months, with a performance review in March 2019. Residents would receive an email bulletin updating them on the position and would no longer need to provide credit card details on initial contact. However, if the fault was with residents' equipment, then they would be charged and this would be administered by the Estate Office. Members expressed concerns at the lack of a schedule of charges on the VFM website for any work that needed to be recharged.

External redecoration of the car parks would be added as a line for future works and Members noted that responsive maintenance had improved at no extra charge.

RESOLVED, That the report be noted.

8. **CHARGING POLICY FOR CAR PARKING AND STORES**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the Charging Policy for Car Parking and Stores and were asked to comment on the report and specifically the options listed in paragraphs 21 – 29. Members noted an error in recommendation 3 to the BRC which should read '*available car parking spaces plus (Not less) those that are occupied*'

During the discussion on options 21 – 29, the following points were noted:

1. A strong resistance to any reduction in the free period of visitor car parking, as most trades were likely to work longer than the minimum suggested.
2. Visitors may be considerably longer than 1 or 2 hours – an amenity greatly valued by the residents.
3. Parking by visitors and trades should not be subject to an additional charge and any changes/additional charges should be subject to full consultation.
4. The comparison to other London car parks was unfair.
5. Officers advised that they could issue double bays to disabled users without Committee approval. With any costs accruing to the Landlord.
6. Will there be extra pressure on parking in Lauderdale Place rather, than paying for Thomas More Car Park.

7. Officers advised that income from Temporary Car Parking would go into the car parking account, to the benefit of external decorations and other similar work. Payments for Temporary Car Parking are in advance; cashless and monitored by the Concierges.
8. Some Members stated that it was unfair on car users to take the bulk of Concierge charges, as they service all residents.
9. In respect of the CPI increase for motorcycles and bicycles; the Working Party felt that the volume would be relatively low and this would keep the calculation simple. A Member suggested this should be pro-rata to the recent car park charge increases and officers agreed to take this back to the Working Party.
10. If car parking spaces were being removed for the new residents stores, then would the service charges be spread across less spaces?
11. The potential for the re-allocation of concierge charges was noted by some Members
12. Security duties by the Concierge does include other areas of the Estate and will need further analysis by officers.
13. Should electric cars be discounted or parking free? Members noted that there would be a full report to the RCC's AGM in January and to a Special BRC in February on the Electric Vehicle Charging policy.
14. In respect of an external consultation, there was a view expressed that this might compromise the good relationship between concierges and residents. There were further comments in that the questions would need to be very precise and it was suggested that paragraph 28 in the report was a little vague. Members agreed not to recommend the commissioning of an external report.

RESOLVED, That – the report be noted ahead of its presentation to the BRC on 10th December 2018, and subject to the comments on paragraphs 21-29 of the report as set out above, and Members' agreement NOT TO commission an External Report on the Concierge Service.

9. **REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE TO ROOFS/BALCONIES FOLLOWING WATER PENETRATION**

The Assistant Director, Barbican, Housing and Property Services was heard in respect of repairs and maintenance to roofs and balconies following water penetration. Members noted that the Roofs Working Party was due to meet again shortly and the next meetings of the RCC/BRC would receive a more detailed report.

The Assistant Director advised that the Brandon Mews roof survey by Langleys was now complete and some minor maintenance works and cleaning would be required, including the drainage between barrels.

Members noted that some minor repairs were required to the roofs that Langleys had warranted. The Assistant Director had felt it prudent to wait on the results from the Brandon Mews Survey before commencing the works, which would take place before the end of the current financial year. Members also noted that the tender for cleaning, repair and re-coating in respect of the 320 barrel roofs across the Estate had been returned. The Director would now mark them for quality and send them to procurement to determine the most economically advantageous bid. The BRC would receive a further update at their meeting on 10th December 2018.

Work was also in hand in respect of the Ben Jonson house leakages. Members noted that the number of water ingress incidents had reduced and remedial works were in hand.

Finally, the Assistant Director advised that, following further consideration by the Working Party, the next Committee report would provide an overview on the residual lifespan of roofs on the Estate, based on the best estimates for modern day costs in 7, 10 years etc.

10. **PROGRESS OF SALES & LETTINGS**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the sales and lettings approved by officers, under delegated authority, since the last meeting of the Committee. In response to a question about the number of new tenants moving into Bunyan Court, officers advised that only 1 flat had been sold and the others were likely to be sub-lets. Residents were reminded that the Estate Office reception can change doorbell nameplates, but only on approved sublets. Members noted that some residents preferred not to have their names appear on these nameplates.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

11. **LANDLORD'S APPROVAL PROCESS - SIX-MONTH REVIEW**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Service, which provided a six month review in respect of the Landlord's approval process. Offices clarified that 'major works' would include the installation of a mezzanine floor, for example.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

12. **WORKING PARTY UPDATES**

The Chairman thanked officers and residents for this excellent example of joint working.

The Chairman of the Underfloor Heating Working Party (UHWP) was in attendance and, whilst he agreed that the meetings were very collegiate, some

Members felt that the Working Party had lost some impetus and the meetings could be more constructive. However, the Chairman UHWP acknowledged the success in installing the new control equipment and suggested that the Working Party be re-structured with a more flexible approach. Members noted that the background underfloor heating was covered by the service charge and residents could ask for the trimmer to be adjusted, if they needed more heating. In concluding, the Chairman of the RCC and Assistant Director, Barbican, Housing and Property Services, agreed to attend a meeting with the Chairman UHWP of the Working Party and Mr Saunders, in order to set some new objectives and timescales.

13. UPDATE REPORT

Members received the update report of the Director of Community and Children's Services. In respect of a comment about the increasing number of weeds on the Estate, officers agreed to follow this up with the Department of Open Spaces.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

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

There were no questions.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no items.

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified

Chairman

Contact
tel.no.: 020 7332 1410
Julie.Mayer@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Officer:

Julie

Mayer