

BARBICAN RESIDENTIAL COMMITTEE
Monday, 1 July 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Residential Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 1 July 2024 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Mark Wheatley
Anne Corbett
Helen Fentimen OBE JP
John Foley
Steve Goodman OBE
Timothy James McNally
Alderwoman Susan Pearson

In Attendance;

Jim Durcan – Deputy Chair of the RCC
Mary Durcan – Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board
Alderman Christopher Makin – Alderman for Aldersgate Ward
Jacqui Webster – Ward Member for Cripplegate

Officers:

Judith Finlay	- Executive Director, Community and Children's Services
Dan Saunders	- Assistant Director, Barbican Residential Estate
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's
Nichola Lloyd	- Community and Children's Services
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerk's Department
Rhys Campbell	- Town Clerk's Department
Emma Bushell	- City Surveyor's
David Blane	- Community and Children's Services
Michael Gwyther-Jones	- Community and Children's Services

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Dawn Frampton, Paul Singh and Ceri Wilkins. Dawn Frampton and Paul Singh attended the meeting remotely.

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8TH APRIL 2024**

RESOLVED, that – the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 8 April 2024 be approved as an accurate record.

5. **MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 9TH MAY 2024**

RESOLVED, that – the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 9 May 2024 be approved as an accurate record.

6. **ACTIONS TRACKER**

The Committee received the actions tracker and noted the following:

Barbican Highwalks – a question was raised regarding available funds for the Barbican High walk. Members were keen to know how the City Corporation were going to address this since at the time of the meeting there was no available funding, however they wanted to know if funding from off-street parking could be applicable for this purpose. The Assistant Director, Barbican Estates confirmed that he would investigate and return to the Committee with a final update.

Five-year Asset Management Programme – Members noted that an update was expected at the end of June 2024, however they were yet to receive it. The Assistant Director confirmed that an update report is expected to be brought to the next Committee meeting scheduled for September 2024. The Executive Director, Community and Children's Services also informed the Committee that a workshop had been held to review the asset management strategy with recommendations and engagement from staff sought, with a view that the final product shall be produced in due course.

A Member noted that internal works to Bunyon Court was not mentioned specifically within the report to which the Assistant Director, Barbican Estate confirmed that there was no specific reference to Bunyon Court but took it as a point to note.

Brandon Mews and Blake Tower – Members asked when an update report shall be provided to the Committee to which the Executive Director confirmed that this shall be done at the next Committee meeting since regular meetings were still ongoing between Redrow and residents. At the time of the meeting Savills (Real Estate Company) were expected to review the survey work carried out by Redrow. So, an update would be provided once this had been completed. The City Corporation had issued an improvement notice and Redrow were proceeding to make the necessary improvements. In response, Members were keen to know of the City Corporation's legal position and the Chair reminded the Committee that the ongoing matter concerning Blake Tower and Redrow was not formally yet a BRC matter. However, having had a meeting with both the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services and the Policy Chairman he was satisfied with the work done so far. A Member shared similar thoughts and acknowledged that the length of time to resolve this issue was not due to the fault of the City Corporation.

7. BARBICAN RESIDENTS' CONSULTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Deputy Chair of the Barbican Residents' Consultation Committee (RCC) attended this meeting and also echoed the Chair's thanks for the outgoing Clerk, Julie Mayer, and appreciated her work supporting both the BRC and RCC in her time at the Corporation. Another show of thanks was also given to the Barbican Gardener Luis who was departing the City Gardens Team after 20 years of service.

The Deputy Chair of the RCC spoke in reference to item 8.1 of the RCC minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2024 which cited a resolution made by the Gardens Advisory Group who sought approval from the Committee, subject to the completion of consultation with selected house groups, to redevelop the gardens situated on the Barbican Estate. The Gardens Advisory Group brought forward a proposal, six months prior to this meeting, which recommended a two-year master plan for the improvement of the estate gardens. The overall cost was estimated to be approximately £42,000 with the costs spread out across the 2,000 flats situated on the estate.

The Deputy Chair also provided a further working party update, stating that the repairs and maintenance contract work on the tender is progressing and praised the good working relationship between residents and officers in managing this process. However, service charges for 2023-24 had still not been finalised. The Major Works Programme Board had agreed their Terms of Reference, subject to some revisions such as the need to distinguish between the liabilities which belong to the leaseholders and those which belong to the City of London Corporation being mentioned.

Whilst Members supported the proposal it was noted that it might be possible to source funding for this project from the Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund (CILNF). The Chair agreed and tasked the Town Clerk to investigate if this was indeed a possibility.

Resolved, that – The Barbican Residential Committee agreed in principle to the proposal, subject to further consultation with house groups and other interested parties, with the Town Clerk tasked to investigate whether funds for this project were available from the CILNF.

8. INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Metwin Contract

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services informing the Committee of the current implementation of measures following the internal audit dated 13 December 2024.

Having noticed that there was some dissatisfaction with the works carried out at Speed House and other areas of the Barbican Estate, the Assistant Director Barbican Residential Estate identified the pinch points in the process which was

causing delays and dissatisfaction. There were some notable concerns regarding the Barbican Estates Office's (BEO) management and oversight of the principal contractor (Metwin). Therefore, a standardised operating procedure was created and implemented which specifically referenced the repairs contract but would be applied to a range of items that the BEO dealt with. This standardised operating procedure was to be made available for leaseholders to view if they wished to do so.

Whilst Members were pleased with the reviewing of the standardised processes and procedures, as well as the City Corporation acknowledging mistakes made in the past they agreed that it would be helpful that in future a report be provided to the Committee demonstrating the improvements made had a tangible impact across the estate; allowing for the Committee to provide further oversight and scrutiny.

8.2 Redecorations Project

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services informing the Committee of the current implementation of measures following several complaints from House Groups expressing concern around quality of work and lack of BEO engagement.

The Assistant Director, Barbican residential Estate identified that there was some dissatisfaction regarding the works that had been carried out, notably from residents situated at Speed House and Willoughby House, therefore the Assistant Director opted to pause works to evaluate the entire process. After consulting with stakeholders a more collaborative approach to the project had been undertaken and as a result improvements were made to the works carried out. The Assistant Director informed the Committee that going forward, subject to the continuation of better communication between stakeholders, the contract should reach its conclusion by March 2025.

RESOLVED, that – the contents of the reports be noted.

9. VERBAL UPDATES

Members noted the detailed updates provided in draft Barbican Residents Consultation Committee minutes, which had been circulated ahead of this meeting. The update covered the Major Works Programme and Members were also informed that a detailed report regarding the Transformation Update would be received at its next meeting in September 2024.

10. PROGRESS OF SALES AND LETTINGS

The Committee received a report from the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services to advise members of the sales and lettings that have been approved by officers since the last Committee meeting. Approval is under delegated authority and in accordance with Standing Orders.

RESOLVED, that – the contents of the report be noted.

11. ARREARS

The Committee received a report from the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services to advise members of the current arrears in respect of tenants and leaseholders on the Barbican Estate.

RESOLVED, that – the contents of the report be noted.

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

A member asked for clarification regarding the forthcoming dates of Committee meetings and the Chair tasked the Town Clerk with confirming the forthcoming dates, then circulating these to Members shortly after the meeting.

The Deputy Chairman raised a question about the instillation of sprinkler systems on the Barbican Estate with a desire to seek a decision on this matter since it had been left unresolved since the last report received at the March 2024 meeting. The Assistant Director confirmed that whilst no risk had been identified which would need to be mitigated by sprinklers, specifically tower blocks on the Barbican Estate, that it would be best to bring a report back to the Committee at its next meeting for formality. The report shall also feature any arrangements in place for vulnerable people, for instance those with disabilities, unable to leave their residence in the event of an evacuation whilst also detailing a clear distinction between landlord and leaseholder responsibilities regarding an emerging medical issue.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

The Chair proposed the notion of swapping the BRC and BERCC meetings where possible, opting that on some occasions BRC could meet in the evenings and vice versa. However, a Member raised a valid point that it might be difficult for some BERCC Members to meet during the day due to work commitments. The Chair acknowledged this and suggested exploring the idea of evening Committee meetings for BRC. The Town Clerk was asked to investigate if this would be feasible.

14. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that - under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

15. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8TH APRIL 2024

RESOLVED, that – the non-public minutes of the Meeting held on 8th April 2024 be approved as an accurate record.

16. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 9TH MAY 2024**

RESOLVED, that – the non-public minutes of the Special Meeting held on 9th May 2024 be approved as an accurate record.

17. **ARREARS**

The Committee received a report from the Executive Director, Community and Children’s Services to advise Members of the current arrears in respect of tenants and leaseholders on the Barbican Estate.

18. **EXTENSION TO LIFT CONTRACT**

The Committee received a report from the Executive Director, Community and Children’s Services in respect of the Lift Maintenance Contract with Guideline Lift Services Limited to provide Residential Lift Maintenance services to the Barbican and HRA Estate.

19. **RESIDENTIAL RENT REVIEW**

The Committee considered and approved a report from the Executive Director, Community and Children’s Services requesting the approval of eight residential rent reviews.

20. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no non-public questions.

21. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

The Chair thanked Alderwoman Pearson for her service to this Committee and stated that it was privilege to serve alongside her.

The meeting ended at 14:35pm.

Chairman

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