

BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE
Monday, 24 June 2024

Minutes of the meeting held at Guildhall at 6.30 pm

Present

Members:

Sandra Jenner - (Chair)	Andy Hope - Breton House
Jim Durcan - (Deputy Chair)	Helen Hudson - Defoe House
Lucy Sisman - (Deputy Chair)	Dave Taylor - Gilbert House
Jane Smith - Seddon House	Rodney Jagelman - Thomas More House
Roy Sully - Shakespeare Tower	Monique Long - Mountjoy House
David Lawrence - Lauderdale Tower	Petre Reid – Willoughby House
Adam Hogg - Chair, Barbican Association	Claire Hersey – Lambert Mews
Fiona Lean - Ben Jonson House	Gordon Griffiths – Bunyan Court
Fritz van Kempen – Speed House	Graham Wallace – Andrewes House

In Attendance:

Tam Pollard – Chair, Asset Maintenance Working Party
Ted Reilly – Chair, Climate and Zero Carbon Working Party
Anne Corbett – Deputy Chair, Barbican Residential Committee
Dawn Frampton – BRC and Cripplegate Ward Member
Mary Durcan – Chair, Health and Wellbeing Board

Officers:

Judith Finlay	- Executive Director, Community and Children's Services (CCS)
Dan Sanders	- Assistant Director, Barbican Residential Estate
Jack Nuttall	- Community and Children's Services
Nichola Lloyd	- Community and Children's Services
Helen Davinson	- Community and Children's Services
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerks

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alexander Wilson (Shakespeare Tower) - represented by Roy Sully, Mary Bonar (Wallside) and Andrew Tong (Brandon Mews).

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

There were no declarations.

3. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS TO NEW STAFF

The Committee welcomed new Revenues Manager, Nichola Lloyd and said thank you and farewell to long-term RCC and Barbican Residential Committee (BRC) Clerk Julie Mayer, who would be retiring at the end of July.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that – the following be approved as a correct record:

4.1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th March 2024

Matters arising

The Assistant Director agreed to provide a breakdown by block on works outstanding, and the Langley Roof Report, to the Asset Maintenance Working Party.

4.2 Minutes of the Special Meeting held on 29th April 2024

Matters arising

- Ted Reilly is a Member of the Repairs and Maintenance Working Party, not Chair.
- Redacted costs would be provided to the Repairs and Maintenance Working Party
- Weightings for cost and quality in the tender process had been agreed in a subsequent meeting attended by Working Party and RCC Members and Officers. The outcome was formally approved at the Special Meeting of the BRC on 9th May; i.e. – 40% quality, 45% cost and 15% for responsible procurement.

5. ACTIONS TRACKER

The Committee received the actions tracker. The Chair advised that, where responsible officers had left the organisation, the action points would be updated to reflect new members of staff.

During the discussion, the Committee noted the following points:

Highwalk

The Chairs of the RCC and Barbican Association (BA) had agreed to remove the £50k contribution, as there had been some confusion in respect of allocations to the Podium works. The position would be clarified in the next version of the Action Tracker. The phased works would be tendered in September and the BRC/RCC would receive a report in November, with works commencing in Quarter 3, 2025. Members noted the working hours of 8.30 am to 5 pm, with noisy works permitted between 9 am and 4 pm.

Energy Audit

A meeting had taken place the previous week between PCMG, Residents and the Energy Team. Completion is expected by August and the September RCC/BRC Meetings would receive the report.

Lambert Jones roof

Planned maintenance was progressing following a pilot on one roof and the RCC and BRC would receive a report in September. The appropriate allocation of costs between the City and Leaseholders was still outstanding.

Service Charges Review

Beever & Struthers have the necessary information and attended a meeting the previous week. The target date of the end of June might slip but the Working Party had noted a lot of moving parts which, will need to be captured, in order to produce a high quality report on the issues identified in the project proposal to the RCC and BRC in September.

Ben Jonson House

The House Group recognised the good working relationships now in place but some past practices had been worse than expected. The House Group had asked for a second opinion and inspection of leaks before any non-emergency works commenced. Whilst the Assistant Director supported this due diligence he stressed the need for pragmatic sequencing and agreed to discuss this further at the next meeting with Ben Jonson House. The next meetings of the RCC/BRC would also receive an update on the audit of invoices for the balconies at Ben Johnson House.

Windows repairs

The urgent repairs across the Estate were 60% complete, noting that the Repairs and Maintenance (R&M) contract was progressing well on Lot 3.

Estate Office Review

The residual gaps in communications, dissemination and filtering would be considered by the Transformation Board.

Repairs and Maintenance (R&M)

The Assistant Director thanked officers (Jack Nuttal and Michal Gwyther-Jones) and residents (Ted Reilly, David Graves and Jane Northcote) for their work on this project, commending the spirit of collaborative and transparent working, which would be a benchmark for future tenders.

Window Cleaning Contract

The Pension and TUPE concerns had been addressed and the contract would be tendered on 1st July. The Assistant Director thanked residents for their valuable input.

Anti-Social Behaviour

A first draft of the leaflet had been shared with the Security Committee Chair for comments and would be distributed shortly.

Brandon Mews Canopy

This had been the subject of a detailed report to the last RCC/BRC meetings in respect of its extensive history. Since then, the Assistant Director had met with the Chair of Andrews House to agree an approach.

Breach of Lease Protocols

This had been presented to the last meeting of the BRC and their comments would be included in the next iteration of the report.

Notice of Intention - 2025 Temporary Workers Framework Agreement

Residents would be receiving this shortly, accompanied by a covering note from the Assistant Director in terms of how the BEO would manage the use of agency staff, with a commitment to report to RCC/BRC on a quarterly basis.

The Chair noted that the Altair Report had found the use of temporary workers particularly high, due to previous poor management of staff leave and sickness. The Assistant Director had given an assurance of improved processes going forward. The Assistant Director also advised of two resident vacancies for the Agency Workers Framework Agreement Board and the Chair welcomed nominations from RCC or House Group Members.

6. INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee received two reports of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services. Members were asked to note an error in 6.1 in that the report should have been titled: '*Major Works Programme*' not 'Internal Audit Recommendations'

6.1 ~~Redecorations Project~~ Major Works Programme

Whilst Andrewes House residents were happy with the improved quality of the redecoration works, and operatives' relationships with residents, there had been some issues with communications in respect of access and the commencement of works. This had particularly affected working residents who were not aware of the need to open balcony doors etc. The Assistant Director agreed to raise this with the Contractor. The Assistant Director also agreed to provide project management costs to the Committee.

Formal complaints remained outstanding in respect of historic works and the Assistant Director asked to be advised of all residual issues. It was suggested that residents should aim to be as proactive as possible in terms of escalating complaints.

6.2 Internal Audit Recommendations: Metwin Contract

The Chair noted that this audit had followed a forensic analysis undertaken by a resident of Ben Jonson House and welcomed the recommendations being taken forward. However, previous practices had led to excessive costs and repairs and residents would be looking for some financial redress from the City of London Corporation in this matter. It was confirmed that the audit had covered the wider estate not just Ben Jonson.

The Assistant Director confirmed that whilst there had been some previous procedural documentation; it was now uniform, complete, followed and well placed to identify accountability.

RESOLVED, that – the reports be noted.

7. **EXTENSION TO LIFT MAINTENANCE - RESIDENTIAL CONTRACT**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of the Extension to the Lift Contract.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) This would not be a procurement of a 5 year contract as reported in the paper but a rolling monthly contract.[Please check with Dan that this is the right description] and it was noted that the cost is service chargeable item, not City Fund as shown in the paper. Members asked for assurance on the correct allocation of costs between parties: HRA; ~City and Barbican leaseholders, going forward, including management.
- b) The Committee was dissatisfied that this was another example of the City not keeping track of contract expiring sufficient to undertake timely procurement of a new contract. Earlier sighting of the report would have been helpful, given that there are some parallels with the R&M Contract. The performance of the existing contractor might not have been as visible as the issues with the R&M contract.
- c) There had been 10 call-outs in respect of Breton House, with issues in respect of parts and a mis-alignment of the doors. Seddon House had similar experiences. The Assistant Director fully understood the urgency and would provide an update to the Asset Maintenance Working Party the following week. This would cover 'bridging' issues and structuring of the new contract, to bring down future maintenance costs.
- d) The Chair of Asset Maintenance Working Party (AMWP) asked for a register of contracts with expiry dates and an action plan for their re-tenders. The Assistant Director confirmed that a template was in place, for testing with the Car Park Working Group, and this would be a blueprint for the Estate.
- e) The specification for the replacement lifts in the towers was underway and there would not be a drawdown on funds until the next service charge period. A decision on priorities and costings would need to go through the City Corporation Committee process but the project was owned by the BEO.
- f) The Special meetings of the RCC and BRC, earlier this year, had asked for a root and branch review of the service charge budgets and the Programme Board would be progressing the Major Works element of this.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

8. WORKING PARTY UPDATES

The Committee received the following updates from the Working Parties:

8.1 Gardens Advisory Group (GAG)

The Committee said farewell to Luis; the Estate's gardener for over twenty years, and wished him well on his forthcoming retirement.

The Chair reminded the Committee that, towards the end of 2023, they had recommended, and the BRC had approved, a proposal to ask officers to identify costings for an ecological survey of the private gardens and, on the basis of that survey, to develop a Master Plan to secure the future of the gardens; in keeping with the recommendation in the Barbican Listed Management Building Guidelines Volume 4 – Landscape; ie – ‘*the City is encouraged to establish an Estate-wide Landscape Master Plan in order to maintain consistency of design, specification and detailing*’.

At its meeting on June 5th, the Gardens Advisory Group discussed the following costings:

Baseline ecological survey	£4,000
Development of a master plan	£20,000
City Gardens Project Management Costs	£1,500
Consultation	£15,000
Preparation and Submission of Planning application	£1,500

(it is unlikely that planning approval will be required but this item is included as a risk factor)

TOTAL COST	£42,000
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The Group noted that the ecological survey would cover not only trees, shrubs and plants but also bio-diversity. The GAG is very conscious of the impact of rising service charges on leaseholders but felt that, at an average cost of approximately £21 per flat, the development of a master plan should be undertaken. Officers were thanked for their work in bringing together these costings and proposals. A Members of the RCC suggested that the cost could fall over 2 years, rather than one.

It was noted that, whilst this had initially been raised 6 months ago, RCC Members would still welcome a further opportunity to consult their respective House Groups now the costs were known. The Chair suggested, and Members agreed, that the BRC should therefore be asked for an agreement in principle, subject to positive feedback being received from the House Groups. There

was a further suggestion that other interested parties; ie – Heritage England, should have the opportunity to comment.

On this basis, it was RESOLVED, that – the above proposal be put to the BRC on 1.7.24, for an in principal agreement, subject to further consultation with house groups and other interested parties, noting the comments set out above.

8.2 Climate Change and Carbon Net Zero

The shifting of loads during the day would improve the comfort of residents but concerns were raised that technical expertise was required. The Chair (of the RCC) suggested that BEO should be the 'client' of the technical expertise in this matter, noting that the Programme Board would be best placed to oversee it.

8.3 Repairs and Maintenance Contract Renewal

This was the first report on the contract renewal, which noted significant improvements in processes.

8.4 Service Level Agreement

In respect of the installation of smart meters, the Assistant Director advised of good progress with the asbestos survey. For the time being , resident requests for smart meters were being supported on a case by case basis. Any residents with concerns were asked to contact the Estate Office. The RCC /BRC would receive a report at their next meeting, with a standard operating procedure.

The Chair of the Working Party agreed to include targets in the next KPI report.

8.5 Asset Maintenance

The Group understood that some of the outstanding information would emerge as action points from the Programme Board and welcomed the new working practices.

8.6 Service Charge

The Assistant Director agreed to follow up on the process for finalising the 23/24 service charges, as there are still a few variables; ie the outstanding Energy Audit.

9. VERBAL UPDATES

The Committee received the following verbal updates:

9.1 Major Works Update (Programme Board)

The Terms of Reference had been attached to the agenda, noting that affordability issues for leaseholders would be included. The ToRs also included the distinction of liabilities between the City of London Corporation, Leaseholders and any Third Parties and a flow chart would be produced. An initial meeting had taken place between the AMWP Chair, RCC Chair, Deputy Chair of BRC and the Assistant Director in terms of administration and a formal meeting would be arranged shortly.

The Chair noted an outstanding vacancy for a Resident Member and the Committee was asked to advertise this to the House Groups, noting that the ideal candidate would have an interest and understanding of programme management and construction.

9.2 **Transformation Update**

The BRC/RCC would receive a detailed report at the September Meetings.

The following items were covered earlier on the agenda :

9.3 **Lease Enforcement**

9.4 **Water Penetration (Balconies and Roofs)**

9.5 **Windows**

9.6 **Window Cleaning**

10. **PROGRESS OF SALES AND LETTINGS**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of sales and lettings agreed since the last meeting of the Committee. Members noted that the 999 year lease was in respect of a one-off historical item.

RESOLVED, that - the report be noted.

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

There were no questions.

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

There were no items.

The meeting ended at 8pm

Chairman

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