

BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE
Monday, 2 September 2019

Minutes of the meeting held at Guildhall at 6.30 pm

Present

Members:

Christopher Makin - RCC Chairman (Chairman)	Heather Hawker - Speed House
Ted Reilly - RCC Deputy Chairman (Deputy Chairman)	Jane Samsworth - Defoe House
Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court	Fiona Lean - Ben Jonson House
Jane Smith - Barbican Association (BA)	Rodney Jagelman - Thomas More House
John Taysum - Bryer Court	Mike Cribb - Andrewes House
Janet Wells - John Trundle House	Nadia Bouzidi - Gilbert house
Mike Bristow - Cromwell Tower	James Ball - Brandon Mews
Fred Rodgers - Breton House	Joe Reeves - Mountjoy House
David Graves - Seddon House	Peter Bennett – Blake Tower
William Naughton - Shakespeare Tower	
Prof. Michael Swash - Willoughby House	
David Lawrence - Lauderdale Tower	

In attendance:

Mark Wheatley – Deputy Chairman, Barbican Residential Committee (BRC)
William Pimlott – Ward Member for Cripplegate and BRC Member

Officers:

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

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Adam Hogg – Deputy Chairman; John Tomlinson (Cromwell Tower) – represented by Mike Bristow; Sandy Wilson (Shakespeare Tower) – represented by William Naunton.

The Chairman welcomed the following new Members:

Mike Cribb – Andrewes House
James Ball – Brandon Mews
Joe Reeves – Mountjoy House

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2019 were approved.

Matters arising

Stock Condition Survey – Members noted that Savills had been appointed to carry out this survey and that following a recent estate tour and meetings to plan the next steps, there would be a ‘pilot block’ over the next 7-8 weeks, to agree how the survey would look. The results of the Stock Condition Survey will inform the 30- Year Barbican Estate Maintenance Programme.

Meeting of the Barbican Residential Committee (BRC) – 17th June 2019

Members noted the headlines from the minutes of the last meeting of the BRC on 17th June 2019. Members noted that, as some of the additional works associated with security for the new stores in the car parks had not been completed, they had not as yet been let to non-residents.

Members also noted that the BRC agreed that the Stores Management Plan will be amended to increase the percentage of stores lettings to close by non-residents up to a maximum of 50%, so as to avoid the need to continually seek planning permission, but the percentage of stores lettings to close by non-residents should not exceed 25% unless further authorised by the BRC.

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

Members received the RCC's outstanding actions list and noted the following:

Members noted that works to the Willoughby House Turning Circle were expected to commence on 16th September 2019. Officers accepted that this had taken longer than expected to resolve but it had been a complex matter and the House Officer had been in regular communication with residents. Members noted that the ramps would not be blocked and Willoughby and its neighbouring blocks would be kept informed of developments.

Members noted that action to address anti-social behaviour was being driven by a BRC Member, who is also the Chairman of the Barbican Association BA's Security Committee. Members were reminded of the all-resident meeting in May this year when the City of London Police Commissioner had advised of national budgetary cuts and their impact on policing priorities. Whilst the Police would intervene in cases of 'intimidation', Members were concerned that its interpretation could be subjective. Members were advised that a first point of contact was the Concierges but were also reminded of the Estate Office's duty of care to staff. Members were asked to advise house groups to keep a record

of incidents and the BA Security Committee would be looking at a logging mechanism at their next meeting.

There was further discussion about anti-social behaviour in the context of how the Culture Mile and Crossrail will bring larger numbers of visitors to the City. Members expressed some concern in that the City Corporation's commitment to ensuring that this would be 'well-managed' was somewhat vague.

Members also noted further disturbances (pre 7 am) by cleaning services and the BA had also raised this with the Art Centre. There was a further complaint about the installation of new water tanks, when a communication about turning off water between 9 am and 5pm had extended to 9pm, without notice. Officers agreed to raise this with the relevant project managers.

5. RESIDENTS SURVEY 2019

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the 2019 Residents Satisfaction Survey which was undertaken in July 2019.

Members noted that, whilst response rates were up on last year, 336 was still rather low when compared to the number of Barbican residents. However, the responses received were very positive and Members particularly noted the excellent plaudits for Michael Bailey, the Estate Office's Receptionist.

It was suggested that RCC Members and House Group Chairmen promote the next survey to encourage greater participation but the limitation on personal data, resulting from last year's GDPR legislation, made this challenging. Some Members found leaflet drops to be particularly effective.

Members were then asked to consider the survey question in respect of paying an additional £25 per year to fund additional labour within the private gardens on the Estate, to which 72% had responded in favour. As participation in the survey had been fairly low, Members discussed this and raised queries about the structure of the charging, additional works and spend on management and supervision. There was a further suggestion that, as the outcome was subjective, it might be better to run this initially as a trial. In concluding, the consensus was that the Gardens Advisory Group should consider this further, in light of the comments from this meeting of the RCC, and prepare a proposal that identified measurable outcomes from this additional expenditure to share with the House Groups before further consideration by the RCC.

RESOLVED, That – the report be noted.

6. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT QUARTERLY REVIEW: APRIL - JUNE 2019

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of Service Level Agreements and Key Performance Measures for April to June 2019. Members noted that the introduction an additional KPI on repairs in communal areas was a good example of the Working Parties working together. A member asked that the cleaning staff be commended for removing some graffiti very promptly.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

7. 2018/19 REVENUE OUTTURN (EXCLUDING THE RESIDENTIAL SERVICE CHARGE ACCOUNT)

Members received a report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Community and Children's Services which compared the revenue outturn for the services overseen by the Committee in 2018/19, with the final agreed budget for the year. The Chairman agreed that items 7,8 and 9 could be presented together as they were interrelated.

During the discussion there were concerns raised as to service charge transparency, particularly in respect of recharges and the complexity of City Corporation budget reports generally. Members noted the training/briefing session offered to RCC Members last year, ahead of the presentation of these reports, which had been very helpful.

The Revenues Manager and Chamberlain agreed to take this request forward and explained the format of the reports; i.e. how to navigate the detail and explanations of the various elements which made up the charges. As there were some new Members of the RCC, the Revenues Manager and the Chamberlain agreed to re-introduce a briefing/training session, along with an Executive Summary. In the meantime a training session would be held to explain the accounts and their presentation.

The Revenues Manager then took Members through the headlines, as follows, which would also be explained in the Service Charge letter:

There had been an increase in energy costs; i.e. 30% on the night rate. However, underfloor heating costs had fallen and this had helped offset it.

Lift maintenance had fallen but the cost of resident engineers had risen this year, mainly because they were now fully staffed.

Some manual workers had received a pay rise, in line with London Living Wage and City of London Corporation policy; which had eliminated the lowest point of the grade and added a higher point. The Revenues Manager agreed to provide Members with the background to the City Corporation's decision.

It was clarified that the cost of the garcheys were divided between all flats, even for those where they had been removed, as the plumbing had to remain.

There had been some changes to contract letting, with more emphasis on longer term lets, as had been the case with window cleaning. Some repair and maintenance contracts had also been let over longer timescales to achieve economies of scale. The House Group representative requested a list of repairs to Ben Jonson House.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

8. 218/19 REVENUE OUTTURN FOR THE DWELLINGS SERVICE CHARGE ACCOUNT

Members received a report of the Chamberlain which provided a summary of service charge expenditure. It compared the revenue outturn (actual net costs) for the Barbican Estate's residential service charges with the latest agreed budget for the year ended 31 March 2019.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

9. RELATIONSHIP OF BRC OUTTURN REPORT TO SERVICE CHARGE SCHEDULES

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which sought to clarify how the Service Charge Account for 2018/19 Revenue Outturn Report relates to the service charge schedules provided to long lessees.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

10. FIRE SAFETY UPDATE

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of progress made in relation to fire safety matters, since the last update report submitted to Committee in September 2018.

The Assistant Director reassured Members that although good progress continued to be made with the fire safety improvement works, this was not easy to detect from the report itself. He also reminded Members that the Barbican Estate was low risk. The last fire risk assessments had taken place in 2018 and, whilst there were no regulations as to their frequency, guidance suggested every 3 years. Members also noted that a further two door sets had recently been tested and the outcome report was due at the end of the month. Further final testing on a corridor block door was also planned.

Whilst the doors had passed the 30-minute flame test, an issue remained about the degree to which the doors would prevent smoke transfer. The Assistant Director has approached Arup, a specialist consultant with an in-depth knowledge of the Barbican Estate, to carry out a series of follow up surveys to look at specific matters such as compartmentation. Members noted that tenders had been invited for the works to deal with the compartmentation issues at Frobisher Crescent. It was expected that the cost of these works would not be passed to leaseholders.

The Assistant Director was also aware of concerns raised during a recent training exercise at Cromwell Tower. Members noted that the City Corporation's Fire Safety Advisor had been communicating with the London Fire Brigade about the 'stay put' advice. Further advice had also been sought from some of the City Corporation's Building Control Officers. Some of these officers had been in post for many years and had considerable knowledge of

the design and construction of the Barbican Estate. In concluding, Members noted that the City Corporation had made good progress on fire safety.

The Assistant Director confirmed that the current advice of the London Fire Brigade was to implement the “Stay Put” policy in the event of a fire.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

11. PROGRESS OF SALES AND LETTINGS

Members received the regular report of the Director of Community and Children’s Services in respect of sales and lettings that had been approved by officers, under delegated authority, since the last meeting.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

12. WORKING PARTY UPDATES

Members received a report on the work of the various working parties. A resident member of the Underfloor Heating Working Party was also heard in respect of recent success with ‘trimmers’, which were inexpensive and could control heating within staircase flats. Members noted that the BA had also voted in favour of levelling temperatures. The Working Party had expressed some disappointment following a poor response from the City’s Electrical Procurement Team in the pursuit of investigations into the potential for Demand Side Response using the Barbican’s heating system

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

13. THE PUBLIC REALM AROUND THE BARBICAN ESTATE

Members received a report of the Deputy Chairman which expressed some disappointment at the City Corporation’s approach to maintenance of the public realm in and around the Barbican Estate. This report sought a resolution to the BRC to support this, on behalf of residents, and for the benefit of visitors to the City.

In response to a question about the fountains, Members noted that this was on the next BA Agenda, when there would be feedback from the Arts Centre.

Members discussed the general footfall through the Podium and how this was likely to increase in the wake of Culture Mile. Members also noted that the City had been conducting Architecture Tours. In concluding, the Chairman and Members thanked the Deputy Chairman for the strong messaging in the report and the Chairman of the BA confirmed their endorsement.

On being put to a vote, 20 voted for, with one abstention and it was therefore RESOLVED, that:

1. The RCC ask that the BRC acknowledge the reasonable concerns of residents and on behalf of visitors;

2. The BRC ask those responsible for the funding and implementation of maintenance programmes for the public realm, in and around the Barbican Estate, to look for a new approach for upgrading and maintenance.

14. UPDATE REPORT

Members received the Director of Community and Children' Services update report.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

15. A VERBAL UPDATE ON BLAKE TOWER

Members received an update in respect of the handover of Blake Tower, to the Barbican Estate, which had been expected on 1st September 2019. Given the number of defects in this development; Members noted that there had been a series of site visits and meetings over the Summer, including the City Surveyor and updates from the Resident's Association. Further to discussions between the City's Lawyers and Redrow, the handover would now be on 18th October 2019 and this had been communicated to Blake Tower residents. Officers hoped that the extension would enable further inspections bring about a satisfactory resolution. A representative from Blake Tower was in attendance and endorsed these concerns. Members noted that a troublesome noise nuisance with a heavy metal door, which was used frequently by construction workers was included in the City's current defects schedule.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

16. DATES OF THE AGM AND 2020 RCC MEETINGS

Members noted the dates of the 2020 meetings as follows:

2nd March

1st June

7th September

30th November all starting at 6.30 pm

The AGM would take place in January 2020, at a date to be advised by the Town Clerk.

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

Members noted the questions which had been received in advance of this meeting and the responses circulated this afternoon and laid around the table.

There were further concerns about siting of defibrillators and public notification of defibrillators on City Corporation properties which might be closed when needed (such as the school). The Deputy Chairman of the BRC was in attendance and suggested that the BRC consider this further at its meeting on 16th September.

The Willoughby House Group representative was not satisfied with the response in respect of the Electric Vehicle Charging Points in Willoughby House Car Park and remained very concerned about strong evidence to suggest that drug dealers might be operating in the car park. The Car Park Manager agreed to meet with the resident as a matter of urgency.

18. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
There were no items.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

Chairman

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Appendix – Pre Committee Questions

Pre-committee Questions for RCC Meeting, 2 September 2019.

1. Willoughby Car Park - Electric Vehicle Charging Points

- The charge points appear to be used by the general public, in addition to Willoughby House residents. Indeed, the charge points in Willoughby House are advertised on the internet.
- It is therefore impossible for the Concierge staff to check who is coming and going through the Car Park to use these charge points and the associated vehicles - the Willoughby House Group believes this is a serious security risk, since the locked doors to the stairs and lifts are by no means themselves secure - they are often found 'ajar'.
- The electric charging points are located deep within the car park, far from the entrance, making it impossible for the concierges to monitor them adequately.
- There are two ZIP-Car vehicles available at these charge points for anyone to hire. These are regularly surrounded by rubbish and this rubbish shows signs suggestive of substance abuse. One hirer of such a vehicle complained to the car park attendants about the stench of marijuana (hash) in the vehicle and I can vouch for this in the vicinity of one vehicle recently. The residents of Willoughby House do not leave rubbish around their own vehicles!
- I point out that the brief hiring of a ZIP-car is a perfect method for transport and sale of street drugs, and the Barbican car parks are secluded and free from the likelihood of police detection
- It was not our understanding, when we welcomed these charging points, that they would be available in this manner to all Londoners.
- This situation is unmanageable and most unsatisfactory. On behalf of the Willoughby House Group I ask that this problem be addressed, thoroughly and expeditiously.

One of roles for the Estate Concierge is security and the controlling of the entrance area to the Car Park. Whether it is a resident, visitor, worker or someone unwanted – it's their responsibility to deal with them appropriately.

Any issues throughout the car park (bay usage, rubbish, door repairs etc) should also be addressed via the Estate Concierge as part of their patrols.

2. Automated External Defibrillators – locations on noticeboards

Can the location of the Automated External Defibrillator, kept at Lauderdale Tower, be placed permanently on all the estate noticeboards?

A schedule of the locations of the Automated External Defibrillators in and around the Barbican Estate as provided by the First Responder Department, London Ambulance Service last year was placed in our weekly bulletin:

Barbican Underground	Aldersgate Street, London EC1A 4JA
Barbican Estate	Lauderdale Tower, Lauderdale Place, Barbican, EC2Y 8BY
City of London Girls' School	St Gile's Terrace, Barbican, London EC2Y 8BB
Citypoint	One Ropemaker Street, London EC2Y 9AW
Citypoint Club	1 Ropemaker St, London, EC2Y 9AW
Guildhall School of Music & Drama	Silk Street, Barbican, London EC2Y 8DT
Moor Place	1 Fore Street Avenue, Moorgate, London EC2Y 5EJ
Moorgate Underground	Moorfields, London EC2Y 9AE
Museum of London	150 London Wall, EC2Y 5HN

The BEO will schedule a more regular update on this in our bulletin.

The 160 noticeboards across the Estate generally include the following standard items from the BEO:

- ***window cleaning schedules***
- ***locations of the Emergency Services points***
- ***block inspection reports***
- ***use of lift curtains (in some cases)***

As there can be varying comments about your noticeboards what do RCC Members feel about the current standard and any additional items including the locations of Automated External Defibrillators?