

BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE
Monday, 10 September 2012

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee
held at Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 10
September 2012 at 6.30 pm

Present

Members:

Randall Anderson – Shakespeare Tower (Chairman)

Tim Macer – Willoughby House (Deputy Chairman)

Claire Sharples – Thomas More House

Monique Long – Mountjoy House

Helen Wilkinson – Speed House

Gianetta Corley – Gilbert House

Mark Bostock – Frobisher Crescent

Gordon Griffiths – Bunyan Court

Fiona Lean – Ben Jonson House

John Taysum – Bryer Court

John Tomlinson – Cromwell Tower

Jane Smith – Barbican Association

Robert Barker – Lauderdale Tower

Chris Mounsey – Breton House

David Graves – Seddon House

In attendance:

Gareth Moore – Deputy Chairman of the Barbican Residential Committee

Officers:

Michael Bennett – Community and Children's Services

Karen Tarbox – Community and Children's Services

Helen Davinson – Community and Children's Services

Anne Mason – Community and Children's Services

Petra Sprowson – Built Environment

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Patric Morley (represented by Monique Long); Philip Sharples (represented by Clare Sharples) and Francis Pugh (represented by Gianetta Corley)

2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Barbican Residents Consultation Committee of 28 May 2012 and the Minutes of the Special Barbican Residents Consultation Committee of 11 July 2012 were approved as a correct record.

4. **LISTED BUILDING MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES (ADOPTION)**

Members noted that a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Barbican Listed Building Management Guidelines had been issued for public consultation between May and July 2012. In response to comments received, a number of amendments had been proposed, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, but the comments had no policy implications.

During the discussions and questions, the following matters were raised:

- A resident expressed general disappointment at the response to the Barbican Association's letter (pages 5 and 6 of the report) in respect of alterations made by other departments.
- Whether a portion of the first part of Volume 2 should be moved into Volume 1?
- Concern about possible knowledge gaps in some departments about Listed Buildings Guidelines.

The Chief Planning Officer's representative advised that the Director would be made aware of the concerns about possible knowledge gaps. Members noted that the document had been drafted to reduce the need for small, repetitive improvements but the officer acknowledged the more pertinent sections, such as exteriors. Officers had been holding liaison meetings more frequently of late and the report had been presented to the Barbican Occupiers User Group. The comments from the Residents' Consultation Committee (RCC) and Barbican Residential Committee (BRC) would be incorporated into the forthcoming report to the Planning and Transportation Committee.

The officer was very grateful for residents' awareness and contributions and the re-drafted report would be shared with the Working Party.

Cinema Development

Members had some very specific and serious concerns about the new cinema development; i.e. the removal of hoardings had left about 100 holes, some with metal plugs remaining. The Barbican Estate Office's Head of Technical confirmed that repairs would need to be done very carefully, especially as any metal left in could expand at different rates and cause cracks. Members strongly sought assurance that this would not happen again, particularly as the application for the YMCA site was now live. Members suggested that the use of angle grinders should be prohibited on the Estate and the consequences of damage should be included at the Contract stage.

The officer assured Members that the matter would be raised at the Officer Working Group. Members also noted that Technical Service officers had inspected the damage a few weeks ago and proposed to link the repairs with the works to the tower blocks, to ensure consistent treatment and outcomes. In

the interim, there would be some remedial repairs to fill the holes and remove metal plugs, where possible.

In concluding, Members asked the BRC to strongly note their concerns in this matter.

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5. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2011/12**

Members received the comparison of the revenue outturn for the services overseen by the BRC in 2011/12, with the final agreed budget for the year.

During discussions and questions, clarity was sought in respect of the following:

Annex A2

The increase in the IS recharge (£19k) had resulted from the charge for desktop computer maintenance. This had previously been charged as a direct cost under the supplies and services heading; being included in the IS recharge instead.

Annex B1

Upgrade to Safety and Security - the majority of the costs related to eyebolt testing. There had been some failures and eyebolts had to be replaced. Also new eyebolts had been installed at Brandon Mews at a cost of £9,360.

Asbestos - the main works had been the encapsulation in electrical distribution cupboards in Speed House (£16,069.55) and asbestos works in the roof plant rooms at Ben Jonson House (£8,930). Members noted that £6,875 had been included on this code for works to the ventilation ducts in Breton House. In addition, asbestos inspections were being carried out in various blocks.

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

This report sought to clarify how the division of service charges in the 2011/12 Revenue Outturn Report relates to the service charge schedules provided to long lessees.

During discussions and questions, clarity was sought in respect of the following:

Annex 2

Special Works Safety and Security £93,600.51 - this item had been included in the asbestos works (£40,384.55) and the safety and security works (£53,216.06) mentioned above.

Engineers – The Head of Technical Service had been tasked with maximising efficiencies and managing the maintenance officer. The new resident engineer

would be living in a smaller property and this would be reflected in the service charge.

Water tank replacement – Members noted that these works were on hold as resources had been diverted to the concrete testing. Members noted that not all premises would require replacement tanks and the new Section 20 Notices would accurately reflect the level of works required.

Frobisher Crescent - The officer advised that, in respect of heating charges for Frobisher Crescent, there were no charges for boiler maintenance, just gas based on meter readings.

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7. **UPDATE REPORT**

This report updated Members on issues raised by the Residents' Consultation Committee and the Barbican Residential Committee at their meetings in May/June 2012 and other issues on the Estate.

During the discussion and questions, clarity was sought on the following:

Car parking – Members noted that an on-line payments system via the web site was on hold but the various options being considered would be put to the RCC/BRC in a future report. Older systems would run in tandem as new ones were trialled.

Barbican Area Streetscene Enhancement Strategy: Moor Lane – the Barbican Association (BA) had provided detailed comments on the design but received no feedback. They had asked, where possible, if benches could be located away from bars at City Point and the smoking areas.

Proposal to narrow Silk Street to Chiswell Street – Members were concerned that this would have implications during peak traffic periods. The Chairman felt that consultation had been inadequate and the Barbican Association offered to raise this. The Barbican Estate Manager agreed to liaise with the Street Scene Team regarding the communication and consultation on these projects.

Broken tiles on Ben Jonson Highway - A partially sighted resident was particularly concerned at this health and safety hazard and the RCC asked for the BRC to be made fully aware. The Estate Manager advised that he had today met with the new Highways Manager and that, under a new Highways contract, remedial works would be given a priority. Members also noted that the Barbican Estate Office would be taking the lead role for the management of the overall Barbican Estate and giving direction on co-ordination and stakeholders' budget allocation. Members also noted that the Health and Safety Risk would be transferred to the Director of Community and Children's Services. Furthermore, the Health and Safety Officer would be reporting directly to the Head of Technical Service.

Beech Gardens Podium: Drop-in sessions - Members were concerned that some pertinent questions, particularly in respect of Beech Gardens drainage and toxicity of the new pond lining, could not be answered at the sessions. The Head of Technical Service advised that the sessions had been very well attended and residents would receive a letter with a Q&A update, covering about 50 questions on the issues raised.

Redecorations – a Member asked if the new quality control system for the redecoration works could be included in future update reports.

Concrete testing – this report would be presented to the BRC on 24 September and the Chairman of the RCC would be attending as the residents' spokesperson. The report would be published later this week, as part of the BRC agenda, and RCC members would also receive a copy.

Frobisher Crescent heating system – further to the Minutes of 28 May 2012, Frobisher Crescent residents maintained their view in that the City should take this over after the winter of 2012/13, to ensure that all the hot water issues had been fully resolved.

Organisation Chart – Members asked if future charts could also cover the Technical Division of the Department.

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At 8.29 pm Members agreed to suspend standing orders in order to conclude the business on the agenda.

8. **SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS QUARTERLY REVIEW**

This report updated Members on the review of the estate wide implementation of Service Level Agreements for the quarter April to June 2012; detailed comments from House Officers and the Resident Working Party and an on-going action plan for each of the five Service Level Agreements.

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9. **PROGRESS OF SALES AND LETTINGS**

This report advised Members of the sales, lettings and surrenders of tenancies, which had been approved since the last meeting.

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10. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF RECOGNISED TENANTS' ASSOCIATIONS (RTAS)**

Having undertaken a thorough review of the levels of membership and constitutional make-up of the various Barbican Residents' Associations, this report outlined those which had met the required qualification for Recognised Tenants' Association (RTA) status. Members noted that all House Groups, which had applied for RTA status, had been successful. Members also noted that six groups had been operating an 'opt-out' membership, whereby all

residents would be members unless they chose not to be. Of these groups, the number of opt-outs had been very small. House Groups were recommended to consider adopting this style of membership, which would need to be formally agreed at the House Group AGM.

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11. **GARCHEY 5-YEAR REVIEW**

It was agreed to defer this report to November.

In the interim, a Member made the following observations and asked that they be included in the updated report to the November cycle of RCC and BRC meetings:

1. Could the financial analysis be revisited?
2. Is the capital works estimate realistic?
3. Could running costs be split over 2 service charge years, with works completed during 1 calendar year
4. Could the running costs over the next 20 years be revisited?
5. Usage had reduced considerably in recent years as a result of other recycling options and therefore should its removal be postponed for 5 years?
6. Could the Working Party review the updated report before it returns to Committee?
7. A Member suggested a survey of all residents.

DEFERRED

12. **RESPONSIVE REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

This report advised Members of the outcome of the tender process for responsive building repairs and maintenance schedule of rates contract on the Barbican Estate.

Members asked if the recent changes to tendering and evaluation procedures could be set out in a future report to RCC/BRC. Officers agreed but advised that different contracts might have different quality assurance standards.

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

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

Residents of Ben Johnson House were generally very unhappy at the sound level monitoring for the new cinema development. This had been discussed at the Barbican Association and the Chairman had scheduled a meeting with the Chairman of the Barbican Centre Board in early October.

Dates of future meetings (all at 6.30 pm):

26 November 2012

28 January 2012

25 March 2013 (AGM) – to include election of Chairman

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Julie Mayer

tel.no.: 020 7332 1401

Julie.Mayer@cityoflondon.gov.uk