

Committee(s): Residents Consultation Committee – For Information Barbican Residential Committee – For Information	Dated: 30/11/2020 14/12/2020
Subject: Service Level Agreement Working Party Review - Barbican Estate Office Recovery Planning COVID-19	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3 & 4
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	n/a
What is the source of Funding?	n/a
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	n/a
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Michael Bennett Head of Barbican Estates	

Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Service Level Agreement Working Party review of the Barbican Estate Office (BEO) recovery planning in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and the provision of services.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note, consider and comment on the report.

Main Report

Background

1. Our last report to Committee updated Members on a number of actions and changes to our services during lockdown and as part of our subsequent recovery planning.
2. All of our services as outlined in our Service Level Agreements with residents are currently being carried out with the exception of:
 - Reception being open between 11am – 2pm Monday to Friday
 - The “pink card” delivery system for parcel notification for residents
 - Non- urgent repairs within occupied properties that pose a high risk

3. At the time of writing this report the advice from the government, PHE and the Town Clerk is still that those who can work from home should continue to do so which includes the BEO teams.
4. The weekly virtual meetings between the Chairs of the Residents Consultation Committee (RCC), Barbican Association (BA), a representative from the resident volunteering groups and the Head of Barbican Estate are still ongoing. These meetings provided an update on all communications and services and an opportunity for issues to be raised and reviewed by Officers.
5. Your House Officers reviewed a number of issues and “lessons learnt” in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and the provision of services as your residents champions as a basis for the recent virtual meeting with the Service Level Agreement Working Party.
6. This review included House Officer communications with residents, comments and complaints to the BEO, the previous report to Committee on our recovery planning and associated comments from resident representatives.
7. Members of the resident Working Party include Randall Anderson, Jane Smith, David Graves, Graham Wallace, Fred Rodgers, John Tomlinson and Christopher Makin.
8. The issues and “lessons learnt” that were outlined and open to discussion at the Working Party meeting are detailed below:

Parcel Delivery/collection (“pink card” delivery system)

9. It was agreed that the “pink card” delivery system required further attention than could be given in the Working Party meeting and a sub-working party group was suggested.
10. Resident volunteers from the Working Party for this sub-group include David Graves, Graham Wallace and Fred Rodgers. The group will also include a House Officer and be chaired by Barry Ashton, Car Park and Security Manager.

Lift Etiquette

11. Tower House Groups requested the BEO issue guidance about lift etiquette; but this was not agreed due to issues around enforcing this.
12. Feedback has been generally positive about lift usage. Many residents, visitors and contractors are choosing to wear masks and not share lifts with others.

Shielded staff

13. The BEO has been following Government Guidance. Currently during the second lockdown it does not appear that “shielding” will operate in the same way as the first lockdown and will therefore potentially have less of an impact on frontline resources. At the time of writing there are two frontline staff that have been classified as “clinically extremely vulnerable” and have received letters from the government that strongly advises them to follow extra precautionary shielding measures to help keep them safe. They are strongly advised to work from home. If they cannot work from home, then they should not attend work.
14. General opinions of the Working Party were that frontline staff such as Car Park Concierge and Lobby Porters are absolutely critical and the posts should be covered wherever possible.

Leaseholder Home Improvements

15. During the initial part of the first lockdown the BEO asked all private work to stop unless deemed essential. We reviewed each project on a case by case basis.
16. The BEO contacted all those leaseholders with ongoing projects and most had either stopped their contractors from working or were happy to stop.
17. The BEO received a great number of complaints about the handful of projects which needed to continue. This took up a lot of officer time handling the complaints and chasing leaseholders and contractors for updates.
18. This was amended in May when government advice changed and people were advised to go to work if they could not work from home.
19. During the second lockdown, this advice remains and has been publicised via the weekly bulletin. We appreciate there are still a great many residents working from home and its fully expected that we will receive further complaints.
20. The BEO have and will continue follow up with leaseholders who allow their contractors to work beyond the prescribed noisy working hours (10am-4pm Monday-Friday) or fail to work in accordance with the guidance in the Home Improvements Pack.

Non-service charge – Podium cleaning

21. There has been much less footfall across the podium since the first lockdown in March and this continues to be the case. As a result, there has been a review of the cleaning schedules for the podium which have been reduced.

Non-service charge – ASB on the podium – bicycles and skateboarding

22. The Barbican Association Security Committee are currently leading on this and are working closely with City Officers and resident volunteers in the provision of a residents guide on how to report crime, Anti-Social Behaviour and noise on the Estate Barbican in order to establish evidence of the issues.

Officers Working from Home

23. The Working Party commented on issues with telephones not being answered or diverted to voicemail. It was acknowledged that there were some issues initially which have since been resolved.
24. There are regular updates in the weekly residents bulletin of the House Officer contact details and in line with Government Guidance, *“that the BEO is running a skeleton service from the Estate Office but that we are all still working very hard remotely and to contact us by telephone or email in the usual way”*.
25. There has been Senior management presence on the Estate throughout to support front line staff carrying out duties that could not be done from home.
26. Generally, officers who are Working from Home were able to carry out their duties successfully.
27. It is anticipated that the normal provision of action plans and Key Performance Indicators for the quarter October- December will be reported to the Working Party at their next meeting in February and Committee in March 2021.

Noise/neighbour complaints

28. The BEO noted an increase in neighbour complaints which was understandable given the conditions.
29. There were several “hard floor” complaints which were placed “on hold”, but the BEO are trying to resolve or manage these issues internally where possible.

Conclusion

30. It was agreed that Officers would review comments on our services during and since lockdown. The Service Level Agreement Working Party reviewed a number of these comments and an update of the recent virtual meeting is provided in this report. It is anticipated that there will be a return to the normal Service Level Agreement quarterly reporting to the next Committees in March 2021.

Background Papers

- Barbican Estate Office Recovery Planning COVID-19 - September 2020

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