

BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Monday, 26 November 2012

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee held at Guildhall on Monday, 26 November 2012 at 6.30pm

Present

Members:

Randall Anderson - Shakespeare Tower
(Chairman)
Tim Macer - Willoughby House (Deputy
Chairman)
Mary Hickman - Andrewes House
Prof. Chris Mounsey - Breton House
John Taysum - Bryer Court
Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court
John Tomlinson - Cromwell Tower
Matt Collins – Defoe House

Frances Pugh - Gilbert House
Robert Barker - Lauderdale Tower
Patric Morley - Mountjoy House
David Graves - Seddon House
Helen Wilkinson - Speed House
Philip Sharples - Thomas More House
Jane Smith – Barbican Association
Chris Punter – Ben Jonson House

In Attendance:

Deputy J Barker (BRC Member)

Officers:

Eddie Stevens	- Community and Children's Services
Michael Bennett	- Community and Children's Services
Helen Davinson	- Community and Children's Services
Jacqui Campbell	- Community and Children's Services
Karen Tarbox	- Community and Children's Services
Mike Saunders	- Community and Children's Services
Anne Mason	- Community and Children's Services
David Bacon	- Chamberlains
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerk's

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mark Bostock, Fiona Lean, Mary Bonar and Gareth Moore. Fiona Lean was represented by Christopher Punter

2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Residents' Consultation Committee of 10 September were approved as a correct record, subject to an amendment in respect of **Frobisher Crescent**, adding at the end: "*until the City has accepted the hand-over of the system from the developers*".

Matters arising:

- The soil removal and survey of Beech Gardens would pioneer future works; i.e. Ben Jonson Highwalk (and the other side). The irrigation system at the east end of Ben Jonson would remain disconnected until a solution had been found.
- The holes which had been left in the balustrading following the erection of the cinema hoardings would be repaired, with no impact on service charges.

4. UPDATE REPORT

This report updated Members on issues raised by the Residents' Consultation Committee and the Barbican Residential Committee at their meetings in September 2012. During consideration of the report the following items were raised:

Beech Street

The Barbican Association (BA) had been consulted in respect of the Silk Street/Beech Street Junction and asked for a co-ordinated approach with the pending Beech Street tunnel project.

Podium Tiles

Residents were pleased with the repairs to the podium tiles but asked for any missing small white tiles on stair edges to be replaced. This had particular health and safety implications for partially sighted residents.

Bicycle and Baggage Stores

Officers advised that there were free spaces for more baggage stores; ideas were being explored and timelines would be reported back in the next update report. The bicycle stores, which were subject to TfL funding, would proceed regardless and residents would be updated in the next report.

Heron Parking Bays

Residents noted that works would commence in January 2013.

Concrete Works (subject of a separate report on this agenda)

The Chairman of the Barbican Association (BA) asked about future communications regarding methods of work and specifications and officers suggested the setting up of drop in sessions before the commencement of works. Residents were advised that repairs to the low rise blocks would be done by abseillers, with no further need for scaffolding.

TV Network

Residents noted that Concerro would send draft KPI's by 28 November to the Working Party with feedback to be given by 3 December, it was anticipated that the Licence and KPIs would be sent to VFM by the end of the year. Officers advised that the specification was being developed and would be rolled out block by block. Marketing would start in Spring 2013 and residents would be able to choose from the commercial offerings.

Technical Services Structure Chart

Residents were given assurance as to the transparency and apportionment of charges for Technical services. Officers advised that any changes in methodologies would be put presented to a Working Party and residents asked for an update in the January/March 2013 quarter. Whilst the recent review had been driven by improved efficiency and customer care, residents noted that it was anticipated that it would be translated into cost savings in the future.

Barbican Cinema Scheme

The Barbican Association had asked the Arts Centre for the baseline sound testing data.

Frobisher Crescent

A resident felt that the City Surveyor's report was minimal and there was no mention of the outstanding issues regarding heating/hot water, which had not been resolved. However, residents were pleased to note that the Developer had appointed a maintenance contractor to deal with the issues of leakages and other related problems.

St Alphage

The Chairman asked that the Deputy Chairman of the RCC and the Chairman of the Barbican Association (BA) ask the developer for a progress update in 2/3 months' time.

Milton Court Car Parks and Security

Further to residents' concerns about potential security breaches and the misuse of fire doors/exits, officers had met with the developers Project Managers. Alarms would be set louder and audible from both sides of the site area and car park; cameras would be installed on the car park side and any breaches by staff would result in disciplinary action.

Repairs - Officers agreed to investigate an intercom failure at Breton House.

Lift Alarms (Wood Street)

Residents felt that there were service issues that did not bode well for the new arrangement concerning the call centre/control room for Barbican fringe lifts.

Escalators

With regards to the recent works to the Moorgate escalators residents were generally unhappy at the poor consultation. They felt that the poor access and signposting at the east end of the estate was particularly unsatisfactory. Concern was raised as there will only be one escalator in operation until the Crossrail escalators are installed and this has already been delayed.

Residents asked if an officer from the City Surveyors' Department could attend future RCC/BRC meetings as Wood Street public lift and Moorgate escalators are the remit of the City Surveyor.

YMCA

The Barbican Association's General Council had discussed this matter last week. Residents had expressed a preference for a Frobisher Crescent style residential development.

Open Spaces

Appendix 6 referred to plant choices for replacement planting on the podium, which had been chosen to complement existing planting, provide seasonal interest and survive minimal watering. Officers advised that there would be resident consultation with regards to the concrete planters fronting Cromwell and Lauderdale Towers. The plant selection attachment was not yet available and would be circulated to RCC members before the BRC meeting.

The puddle in St Giles' Terrace was being investigated.

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5. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS REVIEW

This report updated Members on the review of the estate wide implementation for Service Level Agreements for the quarter July to September 2012.

Insurance

In response to a question from the BA Chairman, officers advised that the 25% premium, to cover administrative costs associated with insurance claims, is not recharged by the Chamberlain. Given its complexities, residents asked if the Estate Office could arrange a short meeting for residents, with Chamberlains, to discuss the City's insurance arrangements.

Water Penetration

Officers agreed to investigate a problem with the overflow system at a flat in Bunyan Court.

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6. SALES REPORT

This report advised Members of sales and lettings approved by officers since the last meeting. Approval had been given under delegated authority and in accordance with Standing Orders. The report also provided information on the surrender of tenancies received and the number of flat sales to date.

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7. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2013/14

This report contained the annual submission of the revenue and capital budgets overseen by the Barbican Residential Committee, prepared within the resources allocated to the Director. In response to a question about the concrete repairs contingency, officers confirmed that the majority would be for the towers. As the nature of local government accounting is very different to the traditional style, Members asked for more narratives on future reports, particularly to explain the significance of negative or debit values.

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8. COMPREHENSIVE LIFT MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

Residents noted that, in September 2011, the BRC had approved a waiver of Standing Order 53 (3) and Standing Order 52 (8) obviating the need for tenders and permitting the variation of the existing Lift Maintenance Services Contract for a period of 11 months. Residents complimented officers on seeking best value.

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9. REMEDIAL TOWER CONCRETE WORKS RESOLUTION

At 8.25 pm, Members agreed to suspend Standing Order to conclude the business on the Agenda.

This report followed the resolution of the Court of Common Council on 19 April 2012, requesting the BRC to consider the question raised by the Ward of Cripplegate Within and Without, that the City, as Landlord, should not charge the cost of the work of the concrete investigation and repairs to the three Barbican towers to the long leaseholders. The report provided a background as to why work was necessary and evaluated whether the work could be considered to be the making good of a structural defect in the original construction.

The Chairmen of the BA and RCC had written to the Chairman of the BRC seeking an urgent meeting about charging leaseholders and the impact on asset management in the future. In this letter, the Chairmen had asked the BRC Chairman to consider deferring further consideration of the report until after the meeting had taken place. Residents were aware of some earlier reports dating back to 1986 and 1991. The Housing and Technical Services Director assured residents of full transparency and, if relevant, these reports would be provided as appendices when the final report was taken to the RCC and BRC.

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

There were no questions

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm

Chairman

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