

**1 BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE**  
**Monday, 3 February 2025**

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee  
held at Committee Room 3 - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 3 February  
2025 at 6.30 pm

**Present**

**Members:**

Sandra Jenner - (Chair)	Dave Taylor - Gilbert House
Jim Durcan - (Deputy Chair)	Rodney Jagelman - Thomas More House
Lucy Sisman - (Deputy Chair)	Stuart Lynas - Mountjoy House
Jane Smith - Seddon House	Petre Reid – Willoughby House
Adam Hogg - Chair, Barbican Association	Claire Hersey – Lambert Mews
Jo Boait - Ben Jonson House	Graham Wallace – Andrewes House
Fritz van Kempen – Speed House	Sally Spensley – Frobisher Crescent
Pauline Fasoli – John Trundle Court	

**In attendance:**

David Lawrence - Lauderdale Tower  
Sandy Wilson – Shakespeare Tower  
Mary Bonar – Wallside  
Helen Hudson – Defoe House  
Dawn Frampton – Cripplegate, Ward Member  
Anne Corbett – Deputy Chair, Barbican Residential Committee  
Michael Gwyther-Jones – Head of Services, Community and Children's Services  
Tam Pollard – Chair, Asset Maintenance Working Party

**Officers:**

Judith Finlay	- Executive Director, Community and Children's Services
Dan Sanders	- Assistant Director, Barbican Residential Estate
Dan Castle	- Interim Head of Property Services
Rhys Campbell	- Town Clerk's Department

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mary Bonar, David Lawrence, John Taysum, Helen Hudson and Sandy Wilson in advance of this meeting. However, Mary, David, Helen and Sandy attended this meeting virtually.

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

There were no declarations.

### 3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a correct record, subject to the amendment that Gordon Griffiths was in attendance at this meeting.

#### **Matters Arising**

- Wording regarding page 6, 'an application for a grant from the Community Infrastructure Levy was expected to help support these costs' to be changed to 'might be expected'.
- Assistant Director to review if leaseholders could receive an invoice for repairs to be an action.
- Credit attributed to non-residential blocks via the Purchase Power Agreement to be included in Action Tracker.
- Regarding page 11, 'Tower Blocks' to be changed to 'Terrace Blocks'.
- The Apportionment Review of Service Charges would be undertaken in consultation with the Service Charge Working Party.

### 4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The Committee received the action tracker for the Barbican Estate Residents' Consultation Committee (RCC) and the Barbican Residential Committee (BRC).

During the discussion the following points were raised:

1. The Assistant Director, Barbican advised the Committee that the Anti-Social Behaviour Report and Asbestos Report shall be submitted to the RCC in Q2, April 2025. He also noted a correction at point three of the as it should be '23/24' and not '22/23'.
2. The Purchase Power Agreement (PPA) non-consumer blocks were still being assessed and once confirmed then this would be included onto the Action Tracker.
3. The explanation of the variance of the £575,000 for Repairs and Maintenance in the 23/24 outturn report would also be included in the Action Tracker.
4. It was confirmed that the Salvage Store was still active, and the Assistant Director advised Members that the BEO was very committed to supporting it

5. A Member asked for clarification on the difference between The Barbican Estate Office Review and the Transformation Programme Update. It was confirmed that the Transformation Programme Update encompasses all aspects of transformation, including several workstreams outside of staffing. In response to a further question, the Chair also confirmed that she would ask the BRC Chair if the title "Transformation Programme Update" was appropriate.
6. The Deputy Chair highlighted the discussion at the previous meeting regarding leaseholders receiving invoices for work done on their property and asked if leaseholders would receive copies of invoices. The Committee were advised that work was being undertaken with a new contractor and report on how this would work in practice was expected to be brought to Committee at a later date. The action tracker would be updated to reflect this.

## **5. WORKING PARTY UPDATES**

### **5a. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WORKING PARTY**

A Member noted that the report on repairs orders showed that there were five houses in one quarter which had significantly more orders than the rest. The Assistant Director agreed to follow up outside of the meeting but recognised that there were various reasons why certain blocks may have disproportionate orders.

Another meeting between the SLAWP and officers was expected to take place to finalise a decision of adopting the Housing Ombudsman. Questions were being drafted to obtain legal advice from the Federation for Private Residential Associations.

### **5b. SERVICE CHARGE WORKING PARTY**

The Service Charge Working Party update was discussed at item 19.

The Chair stressed the Working Parties dissatisfaction with the lack of any explanation from the Chamberlain's Department for the £1.3 Million recharged for City overheads. However, this and other supplementary questions were addressed at item 19.

## **6. REPORTING COMMITTEE UPDATE - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee received a report of The Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of an update of the Reporting Committee and its Terms of Reference.

The Assistant Director advised the Committee of a small correction on page 33 where it should have stated 'Reporting Committee' instead of 'Monitoring Committee'; that the disclaimer paragraph on page 30 was being double-

checked by the Comptrollers Department and the inclusion of terms of office was being considered by the Town Clerk's Department.

A Member was concerned that the Reporting Committee would be chaired by the Assistant Director and noticed that this may be a conflict of interest. The Chair advised that this was a recommendation from the house groups. The Executive Director, Community and Children's Services advised that if any issues were to arise it would be reviewed and if necessary, she would independently review of the Assistant Director's stewardship of the estate. The Assistant Director assured the Committee that he would step aside in the event of a conflict of interest.

The Assistant Director advised the Committee that a timetable for meetings for the year had been developed with the Major Works Programme Board (MWPB) meeting before the Reporting Committee so that the Reporting Committee could include the most up to date information in its report to the RCC and BRC.

RESOLVED, that - the report and its contents be noted.

## **7. MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME BOARD - LIFT TOWER REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of Major Works Programme Board and a recommendation of a full capital replacement of the tower lifts situated on the Barbican Estate.

The report sought approval from the BRC for £75,000 (£25,000 per tower) to draft specifications of works and tender lift replacement works across all three towers. The Assistant Director recognised the urgency of lift replacement at the towers and full capital replacement was favoured over refurbishment since this would ensure longevity, reliability and value for money. It was specified that an open protocol system would be implemented to avoid monopolisation by a contractor. The costs of this programme shall be spread over two financial years. A further report considering leaseholder funding options would be submitted to Committee at a later date.

He assured the Committee that lifts would be replaced sequentially in the same financial year, replacing one lift per tower, with replacements taking approximately six to eight weeks. A Member raised a further concern about modernisation and full replacement, and whether the relevant house groups would be well informed of the process, the Assistant Director wanted resident and leaseholder involved and was also keen to establish a Tower Lifts Working Party with leaseholders representatives from each tower (preferably 2-3 per tower). However, it was a professional recommendation that these lifts needed to be replaced.

A Member noted comments made by residents of Shakespeare Tower and increased estimate from £1.5 Million to £2.65 Million and it was noted that the delay by the City Corporation in progressing the original program may have contributed to these increased costs. He asked if the £2.65 Million was based

on inflated costs for when the programme was expected to be completed or costed at current costs and would inflate further. The Assistant Director advised the Committee that the estimate was based over the project timeline (2 years). The Member asked for further explanation of costs and reasoning for going for replacement and not refurbishment, he also suggested spreading the costs over several years. The Assistant Director agreed to investigate and discuss further outside of the meeting.

A Member asked why the replacement of lifts at Cromwell Tower was £20,000 cheaper compared to other lift replacements. The Assistant Director agreed to investigate further, however attributed this decrease to a lift component. A Member asked whether Grants for improving disabled access were available and whether this could be classed as a landlord improvement. The Assistant Director agreed to investigate further.

RESOLVED, that – the report and its contents be noted.

**8. BARBICAN ESTATE OFFICE - RESTRUCTURE UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of the restructuring of the Barbican Estate Office.

The Assistant Director responded to questions regarding management layers, in particular supervisory roles. These were frontline roles with four-six hours per week of holiday/sickness absence management. Job holders would still be fulfilling their cleaning or concierge duties. Career progression and a gateway for staff into the BEO was envisaged. Car Park Attendants and Lobby Porters would be retitled 'Estate Concierge'. The name change reflecting that over time their responsibilities had extended. The Deputy Chair wondered if those taking on supervisory roles would receive the appropriate training required and it was confirmed that they would be appropriately trained and receive the necessary equipment to carry out works required.

RESOLVED, that – the report and its contents be noted.

**9. BRANDON MEWS CANOPY - OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

The Committee received a report of The Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of the Brand Mews Canopy.

The Assistant Director provided the Committee with an update regarding an options appraisal and impact assessment of the canopy which was to be conducted by Avanti. This was proposed to be City Funded, however any work resulting from this appraisal would be based upon Avanti recommendations.

RESOLVED, that – the report and its contents be noted.

**10. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of the Transformation Board.

The Assistant Director informed the Committee that the Transformation Board had considered a meaningful and good communication strategy as difficulties existed on how to report more frequently on sensitive work streams. A Member was concerned that the Transformation Programme had decided to dissolve itself at the end of March 2025 despite the BRC requesting a standard agenda item and the work of the Board had not been concluded. Start and end date for each workstream should have been provided for each quarter. The Member asked particularly how to deliver service level agreements were commercially sensitive. The Assistant Director advised that commercial sensitivity and how to deliver service level agreements related to the BEO restructure. The Executive Director, as Chair of the Transformation Board, highlighted to the Committee that the Board had been established 18 months prior to this meeting with an assignment to improve services for Barbican Residents by working with residents to understand existing issues. The Executive Director was satisfied that the Transformation Board had served its purpose by doing this. The creation of the Assistant Director, BEO role, other Officer roles and other works had been conducted within these 18 months to improve services. She maintained that the Transformation Board had been true to the requirements of the Altair Report and further work will be undertaken by officers as 'business as usual'.

The Deputy Chair referenced the review of Frontline Service which was listed in the report and asked if this would affect jobs of Car Park Attendants or result in the closure of Car Parks. The Assistant Director stated that this was not the intention of the review and wanted to ensure that staff are in a supportive environment while delivering a best level of service to Barbican Residents.

Regarding the new BEO structure, a Member wanted to know the number of resident engineers and if this would be altered. The Assistant Director confirmed that there were three fully electrically qualified engineers with another undergoing training and the lead resident engineer was being supplemented by an administration resource, and said there was still work to be done. The review would identify how the BEO could provide support where needed. He also confirmed that resident engagement would be involved in the review process.

A Member noted that the Assistant Director's Report would be well received by Barbican Residents and wondered if officers had discussed whether Altair would return to conduct another review. The Assistant Director said that the Reporting Committee should consider this further.

RESOLVED, that – the report and its contents be noted.

**11. BARBICAN PODIUM WATERPROOFING, DRAINAGE AND LANDSCAPING WORKS**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of the Barbican Podium Waterproofing, Drainage and Landscaping Works.

The Chair asked how the report could possibly be 'For Information' when it was so heavily redacted and the disclaimer at the top of each page stated that it was only valid if read in conjunction with the City Intranet which no RCC members had access to.

The Assistant Director admitted that the report being redacted with commercially sensitive information may not have been easy to read and in future a more concerted effort to provide a condensed version would be considered. It was highlighted that a public version of the report, without redaction, had been submitted at the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee and Members were keen to view it.

The Head of New Developments & Special Projects, Housing Property Services informed that Gateway 5 report was expected in the coming months. He advised the Committee that planning listed building consent was being granted and a detailed design had been completed. An application of building regulations had been submitted and tenders for the project had been received. The possible start of the project was expected to be early 2026 with completion at early 2028.

A Member asked if it was possible to maintain resident engagement when dealing with matters of commercial sensitivity, potentially offline, instead of receiving redacted versions of reports.

The air quality of Beech Street Tunnel was questioned and the closing of vents was concerning for Members and they were keen to understand the rationale behind the closing of ventilation. It was advised that 14 vents above Beech Street Tunnel were blocked and therefore ineffective and a technical evaluation of these vents deemed them to be obsolete. Highways and Technical experts had considered repairing these vents, however they concluded that vents were no longer required and could be removed.

Members asked for further information on structural support and why this was not listed in the plans. Officers explained that there were inaccuracies in historic records of the Barbican Estate and upon site investigation several columns did not exist which had featured on the original record drawings. However, he had no reason to believe there was any structural instability but would obtain further technical expert advice to confirm this. The Assistant Director, confirmed that structural renovation surveys had been conducted on the wider columns of Beech Street and they were "structurally sound". A member queried artwork being included in the project when it was water proofing which was the necessity and made the point that if the project is overbudget, the artwork should be removed not any fundamental waterproofing works

The Head of New Developments & Special Projects, Housing Property Services confirmed that although residents were not involved in the consultation process

with Planning Officers, the scheme had been shared with residents and other stakeholders. A Member asked if noise emanating from exercise and play areas on the podium had been considered and the Committee were advised that Planning Officers had considered this and all consultations had been conducted via the statutory process hosted by City Planning. Further questions were prompted by Members and it was suggested that these questions be collated post-meeting and shared with the Planning Department for further comment.

RESOLVED, that – the report and its contents be noted.

## **12. REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk advising Members of action taken by the Town Clerk outside of the Committee's meeting schedule, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Barbican Residential Committee, in accordance with Standing Order No. 41(a).

RESOLVED, that – the report and its contents be noted.

## **13. BARBICAN APP**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Assistant Director in respect of the Barbican App.

The Assistant Director advised the Committee that they were on track for delivery of the Barbican App by the end of the first quarter following positive engagement meetings with a two-week pilot project at Thomas Moore House expected in early March 2025.

## **14. REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE MOBILISATION**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Assistant Director in respect of Repairs & Maintenance Mobilisation.

It was confirmed that de-mobilisation of the existing contract and mobilisation of the new was on track and there were no projected issues with 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 being the start date.

## **15. RECRUITMENT**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Assistant Director in respect of BEO recruitment.

The Assistant Director informed the Committee of the appointment of Eoin Doyle as Head of Property Services and thanked Dan Castle for supporting as interim Head of Property Services since he would be returning to his post as Contract Manager, Barbican Estate. He also advised the Committee that an offer had been made to a Project Manager and interviews were being conducted for a Service Charge Manager with the Head of Resident Services post still being vacant at the time of this meeting.

**16. WATER PENETRATION**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Assistant Director in respect of Water Penetration.

The Barbican Windows Project had been approved under urgency procedure and work was being undertaken to specify which blocks would undergo replacement first. Specification of waterproofing work was planned to be undertaken at Ben Jonson House. This was expected to be a pilot for how replacement roofs and linked waterproofing work would be considered going forward and was happening in tandem with repairs charging conversations. A Member was concerned that the windows were being specified separately to roofs and drains. The Assistant Director explained that the two projects were interdependent. The tender for window repairs is progressing so when the issues of water penetration (balconies, roof and drainage) are resolved we are prepared to take forward the windows work without delay.

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

The Executive Director, Community and Children's Services thanked the Chair for her dedication and full-time commitment to the RCC in her role as Chair. She appreciated her work and engagement since it was beneficial in helping to deliver a better service for the Barbican Estate.

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

The Assistant Director asked for volunteers from Shakespeare Tower, Defoe House and Speed House for the Barbican Heating Study.

**19. SERVICE CHARGE EXPENDITURE AND INCOME ACCOUNT - LATEST APPROVED BUDGET 2024/25 AND ORIGINAL BUDGET 2025/26**

The Committee received a report of The Executive Director of Community & Children's Services in respect of the original budget for 2024/25 and 2025/26 for revenue expenditure included within the service charge in respect of dwellings.

The Assistant Director advised the Committee that the report detailed budget costs for the period 2025/26 and the variance against 2024/25 was a reduction of £2.4 Million. The three main reasons for this decrease were:

- Repairs and Maintenance now being restructured into two new workstreams (waterproofing and repairs) and this amounted to approx. £1.1 Million under new contracts with tighter terms, kpis and penalty clauses.
- Utilities – through the projections of kilowatt per hour usage, cost, and the approximate amount of energy expected to be sold back to National Grid via PPA. This amounted to approx. £500,000.

- Projects – project budget reduced by £850,000 as there had been a ‘pause’ so that the BEO could deliver a 25-year Capital Expenditure Plan.

The Assistant Director highlighted appendix two of the report which displayed support services and capital charges and costs included to support departments such as Chamberlain’s, Comptrollers, Town Clerk’s and Corporate Services equalling £1.3mn. He stated that the percentage allocations and rationale for these figures were not provided but the Chamberlain’s Department were undergoing a full review which would be submitted to the Service Charge Working Party and then the RCC.

Whilst discussing details of appendix 3 of the report, the Assistant Director highlighted staff costs and supervision of management in relation to the Barbican Estate Office and a document shared with the SCWP which summarised staffing costs of employees of the BEO. The new staffing structure contributed to less reliance on some of their support teams through dedicated posts such as Project Manager. The Assistant Director informed the Committee that their actual staffing budget was approximately £3.2 Million and the bottom line was £4.8 Million with the discrepancy being attributed to overheads, and confirmed that the bottom line figure of £4.8 Million was correct.

The Assistant Director advised the Committee that the actual energy spend for the period 2023/24 was £4.297 Million. He reminded Members that the energy market during this period underwent some turbulence therefore the City Corporation was able to generate a large sum of money from selling excess energy back to the National Grid which explained the significant underspend against the budget listed in the report. However, the Assistant Director did not expect this to happen again due to the stability of the energy market at the time of this meeting with it being noted energy was not expected to be sold at 72p per kilowatt per hour as had been done so previously.

A Member asked if there in any contingencies (e.g. missed projects) in relation to the capital expenditure plan and what procedure would be undertaken to introduce a new project. The Assistant Director confirmed that contingencies were in place and explained that the basis of the plan was to encompass, understand and assess every asset and its cyclical life cycle, and understanding the future repairs and maintenance expected of the asset. The plan shall inform the BEO of its 25-year obligations and a Planned Preventive Maintenance Programme was expected to be in place also. A new project manager had been appointed to lead the Capital Expenditure Programme and Dan Castle will lead the Planned Preventive Maintenance Programme, with both documents to be made publicly available to leaseholders.

A Member noted that an asset survey had been conducted by Savills in the past and wondered if the Capital Expenditure Programme was building on this. The Assistant Director confirmed that the BEO would review all surveys conducted and the Savills’ Stocks and Condition Survey would be included, however the reliability and age of surveys must be considered.

The Assistant Director maintained his confidence that repairs were expected to cost less and advised the Committee of a document provide to the SCWP which listed the detail surrounding repairs such as fluctuations of orders and first-time repair rates, and suggested that a public version of this document be made available. A Member asked for confirmation that there would be cost savings from structure changes. The Assistant Director provided assurance that the new structure would be cost-neutral or lower than the pre-Altair costs (adjusted for changes to pay scales) and a full comparison would be brought to the Committee upon conclusion of the consultation period.

The Chair raised a concern about the unexplained £1.3 Million and noted the commitment given by the Chamberlain's Department in January 24 to assist with a full review of the service charge budget, however this had not been forthcoming. The Chair expected further details of the budget from the Chamberlain's Department at the next meeting. The Assistant Director admitted that the report was not the "finished article" and not having resource locally had made an impact, however those involved were committed and further resource was being implemented to support this. The Deputy Chair noted appendix 1 of the report and asked the Assistant Director to advise the origins of the extra £240,000 attributed to consultancy fees to which he agreed to provide an update post-meeting.

The Assistant Director informed the Committee that work had been conducted concerning the management and oversight of repair works on the estate from the BEO, and that the quality of management oversight and initial repairs shall be greater which would overall reduce costs.

RESOLVED, that – the report and its contents be noted.

**The meeting ended at 8.42 pm**

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Chairman

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