

BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE
Monday, 28 April 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee
held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 28 April
2025 at 6.30 pm

Present

Members:

Jo Boait - (Chair)
Sandra Jenner - (Deputy Chair)
Lucy Sisman - (Deputy Chair)
Lionel Meyringer - Andrewes House
Andrew Tong - Brandon Mews
Fiona Lean - Ben Jonson House
Andy Hope - Breton House
Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court
Helen Hudson - Defoe House
Dave Taylor - Gilbert House
Claire Hersey - Lambert Mews
Alberto Garciga - Lauderdale Tower
Stuart Lynas - Mountjoy House
Jane Smith - Seddon House
Sandy Wilson - Shakespeare Tower
Frits van Kempen - Speed House
Rodney Jagelman - Thomas More House
Petre Reid – Willoughby House
Randall Anderson – Deputy Chair, Barbican Association

Attendees:

Jim Durcan – Chair, Service Level Working Party
Tam Pollard – Chair, Asset Management Working Party

Officers:

Judith Finlay	- Executive Director, Community and Children's Services
Dan Sanders	- Assistant Director, Barbican Residential Estate
Dan Castle	- Contracts Manager, Barbican Residential Estate
Ben Dunleavy	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received in advance of this meeting from David Lawrence (Lauderdale Tower) who was represented by Alberto Garciga, and from Sally Spensley (Frobisher), Mary Bonar (Wallside), John Taysum (Bryer Court) and Pauline Fasoli (John Trundle Court), who was represented by Miranda Quinney.

The Chair welcomed Lionel Meyringer and Fiona Lean as new Members of the Committee and noted that Randall Anderson was attending for Jan-Marc Petroschka, the newly appointed Chair of the Barbican Association.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

Members considered the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2025.

The Town Clerk informed the Committee of a necessary correction to record Gordon Griffith's attendance at the meeting.

A Member said that, at item 11, they had noted that the air quality in the Beech Street Tunnel had significantly improved over the past three years, and asked that the minutes be amended to include this.

Matters arising

With regards to the discussion at point 4, item 6 of the minutes, The Deputy Chair confirmed that the Chair of the Barbican Residential Committee was content with the name 'Transformation Programme Update'.

RESOLVED, that – the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February be approved as a correct record, as amended.

4. **APPOINTMENT OF A FORENSIC ARCHITECT (EXPERT WITNESS)**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of the appointment of a Forensic Architect (Expert Witness) at Ben Jonson House.

Officers advised that the review would be split into two phases. The key deliverable for the Expert Witness would be determining the liability for costs in the first phase. The identification of costs of remedial works would take place in the second phase, and this activity would be more likely undertaken by a surveyor.

Members felt that the Expert Witness would need to be conservation accredited, as well as having knowledge of 20th Century buildings. It was noted that, in addition to being aware of the most recent guidance, conservation architects would be aware of any guidance that was relevant at the time of any repair. They would also have a specialist skillset in identifying defects and specialist repairs.

The Committee welcomed the approach and noted that other houses would reserve judgement until the outcome of the Ben Jonson House review was known.

Members sought clarification on the apportionment of cost and were advised that this would not be determined formally until the finalised scope and terms of reference had been approved.

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

5. **REPCOM REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services providing an update on the work of the Reporting Committee.

Members noted the ambition to increase the Reporting Committee's transparency. It was suggested that measures to support this would include circulating the Committee's minutes to the House Group Chairs and stopping the use of REPCOM as an acronym for the Committee.

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

6. **THE BARBICAN ESTATE OFFICE GOVERNANCE REVIEW - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services concerning the Barbican Estate Office Governance Review.

Members differed on whether the bodies in scope and contained within the definition "Residents' Consultative Committee and its subsidiary fora" should be also listed. Some thought it would help clarity, but others thought trying to be exhaustive risked something being omitted. It was suggested that the view of BRC should be sought.

Members thought that the definition "Freeholder (City of London Corporation)" should be expanded to state "Freeholder / Landlord (City of London Corporation)" to ensure that it encompassed all residents.

Members discussed ways to involve leaseholders, including surveys and interviews. Officers advised that the consultants would be asked to advise in this regard to ensure that all stakeholders were represented during the process. It was felt that, inter alia, the regular meetings between the Assistant Director and all House Chairs should be re-instated.

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

7. **REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of The Executive Director, Community and Children's Services providing an update repairs and maintenance work at the Barbican Estate.

Members felt that it would be more helpful for the following areas to be mentioned explicitly:

- ensuring there was no charge for duplicate repairs
- ensuring that the repairs process was compliant with statutory obligations, including Section 20 consultation requirements
- ensuring there were no charges to leaseholders which should rightfully be the Landlord's

Members also suggested that there should be clarification at the outset of any works as to whether the costs would be included in the service charge or not.

Officers agreed to expand the list and also undertook to update the reference to carrying out works in a 'timely manner' so that this provided more precise information on timings.

Officers described the process by which the new contracts were being managed on a day to day basis, including ensuring that all contractors were brought together at least once a week and that the KPIs were monitored at least monthly.

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

8. **MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME BOARD UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of The Executive Director, Community and Children's Services concerning the Major Works Programme Board.

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

9. **LIFT PROJECT - TERMS OF REFERENCE (WORKING GROUP) & STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of Tower Lifts projects.

Officers explained the factors leading to the change in recommendation from a full capital replacement to a major modernisation. It had been established that warranties would still be available if existing guides, counterweights and frames were retained which were better quality than could be achieved today. This would also reduce the costs.

Members noted that the project had repeated a previous exercise (and had come to similar conclusions). Officers advised that they felt the review had been necessary, but would discuss the areas of duplication with the Resident Steering Group. It was generally agreed that the work should be expedited. Officers advised that an experienced project manager who would take responsibility for this programme of work had been appointed and was due to start on 6 May 2025.

Officers, in reply to a question on whether they had appropriate data to provide details of breakdowns and the costs of their repair, undertook to bring a cost benefit analysis to the Committee in due course.

In response to a question on warranties, officers advised that it was likely that a package of warranties would be available, with terms dependant on the particular lift component. Guidance would be obtained from the consultants in this regard. Officers advised that the third-party consultant would monitor the lift warranties and any potential claims, as would the Estate Office team in accordance with the suite of standard operating procedures.

A report on the terrace lifts would be brought to the Committee in September, incorporating the lessons learnt from the tower lift project. At the request of some Members, officers agreed to circulate the consultant's reports on the individual lifts to the House Group Chairs for dissemination as they see fit.

Officers agreed to amend the Terms of Reference of the Barbican Towers Lift Project Resident Steering Group to include a member of the Major Works Programme Board.

Officers confirmed that the only implication of not having to comply with the NH120 requirements for new lifts was that the reporting would be less burdensome.

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

10. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT (INC HEATING SURVEY, BRANDON MEWS CANOPY & APP PROJECT)

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services concerning ongoing carried out by the Barbican Estate Office.

Officers advised that the heating survey was continuing and that, to ensure that there was as much supplementary data as possible, more volunteers would be sought in the blocks currently being reviewed and, perhaps, in some other blocks as well. Officers confirmed that ambient temperatures were being taken into account.

Officers agreed to provide an offline briefing regarding work undertaken to date and leaseholder engagement in respect of the Brandon Mews Canopy.

Officers confirmed that they anticipated that the procurement specifications for the architectural services to replace the roofs on Ben Jonson House, Defoe House and Bunyan Court would include consideration of:

- the whole envelope of the building (including water shedding);
- all options for materials (including those with a life span of more than 25 years); and
- likely maintenance costs when considering value.

The above would be included together with the requirement for the preparation of a maintenance programme and repair methodologies for lower floors. It was also anticipated that a peer review of the plans and materials would be undertaken. A Member suggested that these points should be included in a risk register for this project, that would first be discussed at the Major Works Programme Board.

Officers noted that the update on service charges had been sent as part of the regular weekly bulletin.

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

The Chair congratulated the Officers on the content and quality of the reports that had been presented to the meeting.

11. WORKING PARTY UPDATES

11a Service Level Agreement Working Party

Members heard that the Working Party felt that the Housing Ombudsman was a more appropriate body for the Barbican Estate Office than the Property Ombudsman. The Working Party also felt the cost of joining should be borne by the landlord.

Officers advised that they would suggest to the Barbican Residential Committee that the proposal should be withdrawn.

11b Garden Advisory Group

The Working Party Chair agreed to consult with residents in the appropriate podium flats on the proposals in respect of the Speed House lawn.

11c Climate and Zero Carbon Working Party

There was no update.

11d Asset Maintenance Working Party

The minutes were noted.

11e Service Charge Working Party

The Chair of the Working Party advised that they planned to hold a meeting soon to discuss the items in the report. Officers advised that that progress had been made with regard to the breakdown of the City Corporation overheads, and Members noted that they expected to receive explanations of both the formula used and the actual sums for this year. It was noted that the June service charge payments would be adjusted for any under or overspend from the previous years' service charge, together with adjustments in respect of the heating bills.

12. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

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

It was noted that Items 6, 11 and 16 were closed and could be removed from the Tracker.

A Member suggested that the Barbican Estate Officers should be more realistic on the timelines in which it expected to complete actions; this would help to avoid slippage. Officers advised that they were preparing an agenda plan for the RCC which would include some of the more long-dated actions.

The next iteration of the action tracker would include the door fireproofing project.

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

A Member asked officers for further information on reports of a person sleeping rough inside Willoughby House, apparently with a key. Officers advised that they were progressing a resolution of the issue, ensuring that they followed the City Corporation's welfare first approach, but also considered the security aspects.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no items of business that the Chair considered urgent.

The meeting ended at 7.57 pm

Chairman

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