

RCC Pre Committee Questions – 30 November 2015

Agenda item 4, “You Said; We Did” Actions List - Page 9 Redecoration costs at Frobisher Crescent

Q. Here, there is a comment on the redecoration of the metal work on the north elevation which is not correct. We are still awaiting information on when this metal work was last painted together with sight of the condition survey made at the time of the development. This information has remained outstanding now for months!

A. **City Surveyors do not have a copy of the condition survey of the metalwork at the time of development. We are awaiting confirmation of the date when the works were last carried out from the Barbican Arts Centre.**

Agenda Item 6, SLA Quarterly Review - Page 20 Noisy works generated by flat refurbishments

Q. A flat in Defoe is currently undergoing extensive refurbishment including the installation of a suspended ceiling to accommodate new wiring and down-lighters. A number of residents have experienced extremely noisy episodes and have requested the committee to look into the issue of permissions and management of refurbishments on this scale. It is apparent that the current Alterations Booklet is now out-dated and in need of rewriting so that refurbishment of this scale are managed considerably by the Contractors and the City. The Defoe Committee understands that the SLA Working Party is looking into this with Michael Bennett, we would like representation the next time this issue is discussed at the SLA Working Party but would also suggest that this issue warrants the establishment of a separate body. Is the SLA Working Party the right place for this issue to be looked at?

A. **The BEO are reviewing a number of publications including the alterations guide. The latest draft will be passed to SLA Working Party in December at which stage requests for additional resident representation will be sought.**

Agenda Item 6, SLA Quarterly Review - Page 20 Barbican Estate Office Call Out Charge

Q. There has been a query raised by a Defoe Resident as to why she has had a call out charge levied by the BEO when the issue was initiated by the flat owners below her. The cause of the leak which necessitated the insurance claim below her was in fact situated in her flat (her water cylinder) and in due course she paid for the replacement of said cylinder. Can the BEO please issue a clarification notice to residents so that we better understand in which

circumstances residents are liable for a call out charge and also where the delineation is between Leaseholders and City ownership of water pipes causing leaks and damage. For example some flats have immersion heaters in riser cupboards with access panels and others have soil pipes and vents accessed via external riser cupboards?

A. In this particular instance, the callout was requested by the resident affected by the leak. The charge for the investigation was put to the Long Lessee of the flat where the leak originated. This is standard practice and happens frequently as the flats most affected by leaks are often underneath where the leaks originate. Delineation between Landlords and Long Lessees plumbing occurs at the stop valve.

Agenda Item 6, SLA Quarterly Review - Page 22 Fire Escape Strategy

Q. Defoe House has twelve staircases with two dedicated fire-protected stairwells. There are also a number of flats situated below podium with access routes out into public areas via a car park. This year new way-finding signage has been installed in the car park with exit routes shown through doorways which have fire shutters. Is there an up-to-date Fire Escape strategy for Defoe House? If so can it be publicised and if not can we have one developed please?

A. This year new signage has been installed as an upgrade to the old signage. The strategy has not changed. This signage is within the car park and some does point toward doors that have fire shutters on them. However the roller shutters are heat sensitive and therefore would not all come down at the same time. If one shutter were to come down due to fire, the illuminated new signage clearly indicates other exits from the car park. These arrangements were approved by an on-site visit by the City's Fire Officer this week.

Fire advice for the flats remains as it ever was: *to remain in your flat unless directly affected by the fire or by smoke. Resident should familiarise themselves with their fire escape routes.*

If residents require assistance with this, they should contact their House Officer.

Agenda Item 6, SLA Quarterly Review - Page 22 Security of residents

Q. Estate staff are placed in a position of trust, because staff have access to private areas such as balconies and roofs, and occasionally to people's homes too.

We would like to know what measures are in place to protect the privacy and security of residents in their homes, both when new staff are recruited and in practices routinely followed for staff with access to these private areas.

A. In 2014 an audit of all positions within the Department of Community and Children's Services was conducted by HR in close liaison with Service Managers to review the level of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks required for each position. The DBS helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. It replaces the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

Following this review an exercise took place to ensure all staff had the required DBS check associated to the position in which they were working. This exercise was completed by December 2014.

Agenda item 6, SLA Quarterly Review - Page 27 Frobisher Crescent Lifts

Q. I am not sure where this question fits in with the agenda and supporting papers. The House Group notes that there is, at present, no regular reporting on our four lifts. Can we please request regular lift performance statistics for each of them together with their performance history from 2010?

A. The BEO is working with Barbican Centre and City Surveyors Department to provide this information to Frobisher Crescent House Group. When received we will request that we receive this information quarterly in order that it can be presented as part of the KPIs with the other lift performance measures in the SLA quarterly reviews.

Agenda item 6, SLA Quarterly Review - Page 27 Podium Maintenance

Q. A below podium flat in Defoe has suffered from a bad water leak coming through an expansion joint above. This is now being repaired only after some considerable inconvenience for the resident below. The cause of the leak is likely to be down to the failure of the expansion joint but could also have been caused by blocked drainage cast into the podium structure. Can the BEO please outline any strategy in place for cleaning out the drains and also any budget available to replace or maintain the expansion joints across the podium as they likely to fail in numbers over time?

A. A drainage clearance programme is currently in place. An additional £100k is being sought for our drain clearance programme for 2015/16 pending approval at December 2015 BRC. The longer

term strategy for dealing with leaks through the expansion joints and leaks from other areas on the Podium is currently being reviewed. A report, outlining the options, will be presented to a future committee.

Agenda Item 10, Asset Maintenance Plan - Page 57

Capital Works

Q. When is the Working Party that will look into the management and expenditure of Capital Works be reconvened?

A. A separate report is being presented to this committee.