

BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Monday, 8 February 2016

**Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation
Committee held Guildhall on Monday, 8 February 2016 at 7.00 pm**

Present

Members:

Tim Macer - Willoughby House
Robert Barker - Lauderdale Tower
Mark Bostock - Frobisher Crescent
Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court
Jane Smith - Barbican Association
Janet Wells - John Trundle Court
Robin Gough - Defoe House
Graham Wallace - Andrewes House
Fred Rodgers - Breton House
Monique Long - Mountjoy House
Natalie Robinson – Andrewes House
Jane Northcote – Cromwell Tower (representing John Tomlinson)
Christopher Makim – Speed House

In Attendance

Officers:

Julie Mayer – Town Clerk's	- In the Chair for items 1-5
Linda Cross – Town Clerk's	- Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Fiona Lean, Richard Dykes, Averil Baldwin, John Taysum, and John Tomlinson. Mr Tomlinson was represented by Jane Northcote.

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 9th February 2015 were approved.

4. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN

Being the only Member willing to serve, Graham Wallace was duly elected Chairman of the Barbican RCC for 2016-17.

As the Chairman accepted his election, Members proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Macer for his work and contribution to the Barbican RCC over three years and commended him for the way in which he had chaired the Committee with a fresh perspective and “hands on” approach.

Mr Graham Wallace thanked Members for their support.

5. **TO ELECT TWO DEPUTY CHAIRMEN**

In accordance with City of London Corporation Standing Orders, the immediate past Chairman was asked if would be willing to serve as Deputy Chairman. Mr Macer indicated that he was and he was duly elected.

There was one further nomination to serve, from Robert Barker. Being the only Member willing to serve, he was duly elected as the Deputy Chairman of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee for the ensuing year.

6. **COMMITTEE’S TERMS OF REFERENCE**

A question was asked about the Disputes Resolution Panel; i.e. what it was, who sat on it, and when had it met? The Committee was informed that the Panel had not met recently, if ever, as there were no unresolved disputes. It was suggested that the RCC Member submit the question in advance to a future RCC meeting.

A further question was raised about how the Arts Centre related to Frobisher and whether the reference in Item 1 to “other occupiers” included the Arts Centre. If so, it was suggested that this should be specified. It was agreed that this was a very specific situation and that it was not appropriate to include the Arts Centre in the Terms of Reference, which might invited others to make further suggestions. Alternatively, the issue should be referred to the Service Level Agreement Working Party, with a position statement from the Barbican RCC saying that they wished to find a way to improve the channel of communications between Frobisher and the Arts Centre.

RESOLVED, that - the situation between the Arts Centre and Frobisher be referred to the Service Level Agreement Working Party.

7. **REVIEW OF WORKING PARTIES**

The Committee received a report from the Barbican Estate Office on the various Working Parties, including representation and dates of future meetings. It was explained that the Minutes were received throughout the year at RCC meetings and a general review took place at the Annual General Meeting.

RESOLVED, that - The review of working parties be noted.

8. **PROPOSAL TO FORM A LEASEHOLD SERVICE CHARGE WORKING PARTY**

The Committee received a report from the Immediate Past Chairman which outlined the background to the proposal and the need to form a working party to look at service charges. The current arrangements only allowed for consideration of service charges in a reactive way and there was no mechanism for examining issues such as value for money in a proactive manner. It was also the only item in the Terms of Reference which was not specifically covered by a Working Party. He thanked Jane Northcote for the work she had done in producing the accompanying paper.

Members thanked the Immediate Past Chairman and Jane Northcote for their proposal and expressed their wholehearted agreement with the formation of a new working party. It was suggested that it might be appropriate to appoint between 2-4 Members from the RCC to allow more representation from other residents. The Chairman said that he fully supported the initiative but would not be able to take the matter forward, for the time being. The Immediate Past Chairman offered to undertake this role and start the process by inviting residents to become members of the Working Party.

RESOLVED, that - the proposal to form a Leasehold Service Charge Working Party be agreed.

9. **2015 RESIDENTS' SURVEY**

The Committee received a report from the Barbican Estate Office on the 2015 Residents Survey, specifically in respect of Question 16 and the level of satisfaction with the involvement of residents in the management of the Barbican Estate and consultation over decisions or new initiatives. The results showed that over 60% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied and only 10% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

In answer to a question, the current means of communications were outlined. Members noted that this would depend on the type of information being distributed. If it concerned something which had to be seen by all residents, then it was issued in hard copy. Other items could be sent by email and these were seen by 1300 residents. Some of these might be duplications to the same address, or to landlords who were not resident on the estate. Information was also displayed on notice boards and passed to concierges, to disseminate it further. Links to Committee papers go out to all tenants and a Newsletter was issued every 6 months. Members agreed that there was still some room for improvement.

RESOLVED, that - the report be noted and that the Barbican Estate Office be asked to look at communications and how the flow of information could be improved.

10. **2015/16 COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

The Committee received a report from the Barbican Estate Office on the communications plan for 2015/16.

It was suggested that the arrangements for responding to emails could be improved. At present, when residents sent emails raising issues, they received an automatic reply saying that the person was away and a reply would be sent within 10 days. This was a timeframe agreed when the RCC was set up many years ago and seemed too long now. The BEO should be asked to look at this with a view to improving communications.

It was pointed out that the website had now replaced much of the print media and documents such as Committee meeting papers were available on line. It was agreed that it would be useful if the BEO could publicise the website more and encourage residents to access the information which it contained.

RESOLVED, that - The 2015/16 Communications Plan and the comments, as set out above, be noted.

11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 8.25pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Julie Mayer
Tel no: 020 7332 1410
Julie.Mayer@cityoflondon.gov.uk