BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE (RCC)

Monday, 28 November 2016

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee held at Guildhall on Monday, 28 November 2016 at 6.30 pm

Present

Graham Wallace (Chairman)
Robert Barker (Deputy Chairman)
Averil Baldwin - Thomas More
Mark Bostock - Frobisher Crescent
Nancy Chessum - Andrewes House
Bethan Cobley - Mountjoy House
Richard Dykes - Gilbert House
David Kirkby- Defoe House
Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court
Fiona Lean - Ben Jonson House
Christopher Makim - Speed House
Fred Rodgers - Breton House
Sarah Hudson - Barbican Association
John Tomlinson - Cromwell Tower
Janet Wells - John Trundle House
Sandy Wilson - Shakespeare Tower

In attendance

Barbican Residential Committee:
Ann Holmes (Chairman)
Gary Moore (Deputy Chairman)
Professor John Lumley

Officers:

Julie Mayer	-	Town Clerk's
Paul Murtagh	-	Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services, Community & Children's Services
Helen Davinson	-	Community and Children's Services
Michael Bennett	-	Community and Children's Services
Mike Saunders	-	Community and Children's Services
Barry Ashton	-	Community and Children's Services
Anne Mason	-	Community and Children's Services
Mark Jarvis	-	Chamberlain's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**
   Apologies were received from Tim Macer (Deputy Chairman), David Graves, Jane Smith (represented by Sarah Hudson), Michael Swash and John Taysum.

2. **MEMBERS DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
   There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**
   The minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2016 were approved, subject to the following amendment (as shown in italics):

DRAFT

'In response to a question about Frobisher Crescent, Members noted the charge to the Art Centre for the share of relevant repairs, as set out in Annexe 5 to the report, *in order to reflect the shared use of the building'.*

4. **SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (SLA) QUARTERLY REVIEW: JULY - SEPTEMBER 2016**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Key Performance Measures (KPI's) for July – September 2016. Members noted that some new Working Parties had been set up and were reminded that the Annual update on Working Parties, including memberships, vacancies and terms of reference would be presented to the RCC's AGM on 6th March 2017.

In response to a question about failure to meet KPI's for the new Repairs and Maintenance contract, Members noted that financial penalties could be illegal if not sufficiently robust but officers would be looking at introducing reward mechanisms when tendering future contracts.

The Frobisher Crescent representative was very pleased that, since the last AGM, a protocol had been agreed with the Barbican Centre and thanked Michael Bennett for his assistance in this matter. The Chairman of the Barbican Centre Board (also a Member of this Committee) was in attendance and he endorsed this and commended the diligence of the Frobisher Crescent House Group.

5. **RECOGNISED TENANT ASSOCIATIONS (RTAS) - ANNUAL REVIEW 2016**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk is respect of the Annual Review of Recognised Tenant Associations on the Barbican Estate. Members noted that all House Groups had been invited to apply and all those which had applied had achieved their RTA status. The BRC on 12th December 2016 would be asked to formally recognised the result.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

6. **BARBICAN CHARGING POLICY**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which would be presented to the Barbican Residential Committee (BRC) for decision on 12th December 2016.

Members were reminded that there had been no set procedure supporting car parking charges and no increase in charges up until 2009 for ten years. In 2009, RPI based charging had been introduced and has since been challenged as to whether it should be replaced with CPI. In December 2015, the BRC declined to accept a proposal to increase car parking rents (by 5%) because the underlying reasoning for doing so was unclear. It was then decided that a review of the policy be presented to the BRC in December 2016.

Officers apologised for the late circulation of the report, which had also been laid around the table. The Assistant Director advised that the report was seeking agreement, from the BRC, to progress with market valuations in order to present a set of proposed charges to the BRC on 13th February 2017. The report also sought agreement, from the BRC, to the principle that no subsidy should be provided for one group of users by another.

Barbican Resident Consultation Committee (RCC) Members were invited to comment on the report as follows:

- Members agreed that it was more appropriate for the report to note that income from City assets should produce a 'fair' return, rather than be 'maximised'. Members suggested that the City's current projects in respect of Beech Street and the Museum for London, for example, supported this principle.

- Members noted that the Planning and Transportation Committee, which had met earlier today, had agreed to increase parking charges generally across the City.

- Members felt that the calculations on asset returns were very complex and officers reassured them that there were no current proposals to reduce staff numbers. Members noted that there was already a cross subsidy across all car park users, given that a third of staff costs were applied to the general service charge and two-thirds to car parking.

- Officers had produced a draft brief to support the market valuations, which would make provision for demand led pricing. Members asked that, when the valuations were presented, they should include a narrative on to how the valuations had been made.

- Car parking would not be available to non-Barbican residents but storage would be available to those within a short walking distance. Members noted that this would be highly unlikely, given the current length of the waiting list.

- Commercial use of car parking would not be permitted under the terms of the Local Plan.

- Members were concerned about security implications in respect of the proposed Consolidation Centre and the use of stores by potential non-residents.

RESOLVED, that the above comments be presented to the Barbican Residential Committee on 12 December 2016.

7. **REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE TO ROOFS/BALCONIES FOLLOWING WATER PENETRATION**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which updated Members on the progress made by the Working Party in respect of the City of London Corporation's approach to dealing with repairs and maintenance to roofs and balconies to the residential units on the Barbican Estate.

Offices advised that the report currently before RCC Members would be subject to some further amendments, following feedback from the Working Party, but they would not affect the substance of the report. Members noted that a further draft would be ready by Wednesday this week, ready for inclusion in the BRC agenda.

Members were then invited to comment as follows:

Frobisher Crescent to be in included in the draft.

- The Company which had provided the warranties would shortly be carrying out an initial roof inspection and their report was expected within the next 6-8 weeks. The Town Clerk reminded Members of the earlier scheduling of City of London Corporation Meetings next spring, on account of the Common Council Elections in March 2017. Therefore, the next meeting of the RCC would be on Monday 30th January 2017 (i.e. in 9 weeks' time).

- The Deputy Chairman had served on the Working Party and thanked officers for their candid and transparent approach to seeking a solution.

- Both the RCC and BRC meetings in June 2017 would receive a further report which would explore whether the warranties could be re-validated. The report would be accompanied by a full condition survey of the roofs, as requested by the Asset Management Working Party. The report would also set out the position for each block, with their respective financial implications.

- In response to a question about the temporary Perspex roof by the waterfall, officers advised that this had been erected 20 years ago, with an expected lifespan of just 10 years. This roof would be inspected but would not be included in the condition survey as it was not an asphalt roof.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

8. **SERVICE CHARGE EXPENDITURE AND INCOME ACCOUNT - LATEST APPROVED BUDGET 2016/17 AND ORIGINAL BUDGET 2017/18**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the Service Charge Expenditure and Income Account, which would be submitted to the BRC for approval on 12 December 2016.

RESOLVED, that - the report be noted and recommended to the BRC for approval.

9. **REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS - LATEST APPROVED BUDGET 2016/17 AND ORIGINAL 2017/18 - EXCLUDING DWELLINGS SERVICE CHARGE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

The Committee received a report in respect of the Revenue and Capital Budgets, which would be presented to the BRC for approval on 12th December 2016. Members noted that the reports at items 8 and 9 on today's agenda would also be presented to the Leaseholder Service Charges Working Party for further scrutiny.

RESOLVED, that – the reports be noted and recommended for approval by the Barbican Residential Committee.

10. **PROGRESS OF SALES AND LETTINGS**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the progress on sales and lettings which had been approved since the last meeting. In respect of the exchanges of sold flats, Members noted that this Policy has not been carried out for a number of years.

RESOLVED, that - the report be noted.

11. **UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee received its regular update report and specifically noted the following:

Electric Charging points

Members noted that the Contractor was currently agreeing terms and conditions with the Procurement Team and an on-site survey would follow, with a view to installing approximately 10 charging points across the Estate. In response to questions about difficulties with a similar scheme at London Wall, Members noted that officers in the Department of the Built Environment had learnt from this, which would help mitigate any anticipated problems at the Barbican. Officers agreed to pass residents' concerns on to colleagues in the Department of the Built Environment and reminded Members of last year's survey, the results of which would be revisited.

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

The following matters were raised during questions:

Phase 2 Podium Waterproofing Works

A report scheduled for the Project Sub Committee in the autumn had been deferred to January 2017, due to resourcing issues, but Members noted that the project was progressing well.

Officers would get an update from City Surveyors on the position with regards to Bernard Morgan Police Section House in advance of a Breton House Group meeting the following evening.

In answer to one of the Pre Committee questions regarding the removal and non-replacement of the original grilles in Speed House garden pergola officers agreed to review the position.

Lake Frontage (Barbican Centre)
Members had observed that the brick work and tiles to the lake frontage at the Barbican Centre were in a very poor condition, as was the decoration above the exhibition halls. The Chairman of the Barbican Centre Board, who was in attendance as a Member of the RCC, advised that there had been historic difficulties in respect of remedial works to the Lake, as it may need to be drained and this would present a risk to wildlife. Officers confirmed that these matters were outside the remit of the RCC and were discussed at the Barbican Occupiers User Group meetings.

Beech Gardens Fountain
Members noted that the Contractor was due on site again and the issue with the white tiling would be raised.

Podium Waterproofing Works – Phase 2
Officers reminded Members that there would be another Beech Gardens Project Board, with an expected start on site in spring 2018. Whilst accepting that this was not within the remit of the RCC/BRC, Members asked to be advised as to who they should contact in the event of difficulties with contractors.

Pre-Committee questions are appended to these minutes.

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
The Town Clerk advised that, due to the Common Council Elections in the spring of 2017, only essential meetings would take place after 17th February 2017, until the Annual Meeting of the Court of Common Council in April 2017. For this reason, some meetings were being scheduled earlier: ie 13th February for the BRC, with the RCC meeting 2 weeks before on 30th January. In order to space the meetings evenly the Town Clerk suggested, and Members agreed, that the RCC's AGM take place on 6th March 2017.

The meeting ended at 7.45 pm

Chairman

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

APPENDIX

Questions for RCC Meeting, 28 November 2016

Maintaining the Barbican Estate

1. *What management processes are in place to ensure that BEO and other City staff who commission work on the estate (and contractors or in house staff who carry it out) are familiar with the Listed Management Guidelines – the latest volume on the landscape- and know how to adhere to the guidance?*

All contractors who carry out work on the Barbican are made aware of the Listed Management Guidelines. In the first, instance it is the responsibility of officers to determine whether the work is covered by the guidelines and to take the necessary action.

2a. *In the light of guidance in the guidelines (see below) please can you explain how the following detrimental changes to Barbican listed landscape features have occurred:*

Removal and non-replacement of original grilles in Speed House garden pergola

These were unfortunately removed during recent works to improve the tiling and were discarded. There are no current plans to replace. Our understanding (from the contractors), is that they were not in very good condition.

Non replacement of white edge tiles to steps around the Barbican

The white edge tiles are not original and actually not fit for purpose (they are tiles designed for indoor use). Their replacement was carefully considered and the tile is the same as in Beech Gardens and has been approved by Planning.

Wrong typeface on bespoke signs

The additional signs added in the summer were done as a temporary measure. They are all in capitals to draw attention to the message. Their font is "Helvetica" a Barbican font, although the BEO does recognize that the Listed Building Management Guidelines (2.3.6) stipulates that the slat signage should all be in the same font. Their addition was only ever temporary and they can be updated/removed with the correct font or stay in place ahead of a more comprehensive signage review.

White flex used for fitting exterior lights to concrete

The BEO has spoken with the Dept. of Built Environment about this previously and will remind them that this is still outstanding.

2b Was listed building consent sought – because the guidelines suggest it should have been

“1.7.2 The guidelines, nonetheless, encourage wherever possible and practical the retention of original features and like-for-like replacement, unless subsequent alteration at the time of listing (or since) has been detrimental”

1.7.11 RED
“Example layout of walkways, planter beds, raised planters, surface patterns, gates and railings, walls, screens, canopies, gullies and drains, grates, signage (freestanding, ground-fixed and wallmounted) and access routes into estate.

The changes listed here would be subject to a LBC application as they would affect the existing character of the estate. Retrospective changes to reinstate original or achieve best practice design are encouraged but are also subject to a LBC application. “

2.2.11 – Good practice on lighting
Ensure a consistent fixing detail to tiled pavements and concrete, brick or tiled structures

3. *What measures are in place to ensure that future repairs/replacements maintain the heritage nature of the landscape (which is Grade II* listed) and are done thoughtfully?*

Regular consultation takes place with the Planners and English Heritage regarding works that may be covered under the guidelines.

4. We would like to know what is happening in general terms about making the resident car parking facilities around the estate self-financing.

5. If any investigation that is proceeding might result in economies being applied....particularly in terms of staff ....then what options are under consideration.

6. The Defoe House Committee requests the opportunity to share in and comment on any financial assessment that is prepared before any proposal is implemented.

A separate report on the Charging Policy for Car Parking and Stores is being presented to the November/December RCC/BRC meetings.