

BARBICAN ESTATE RESIDENTS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Monday, 22 May 2017

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 6.30 pm

Present

Members:

Graham Wallace - Chairman
Christopher Makin - Deputy Chairman
Richard Tomkins - Lauderdale Tower
Mark Bostock - Frobisher Crescent
Gordon Griffiths - Bunyan Court
Fiona Lean - Ben Jonson House
Robert Barker - Barbican Association
John Taysum - Bryer Court
Janet Wells - John Trundle House
Valerie Mills - Willoughby House
Averil Baldwin – Thomas More House
John Tomlinson - Cromwell Tower
Fred Rodgers - Breton House
Ted Reilly - Shakespeare Tower
Nancy Chessum - Andrewes House
Jim Davies - Mountjoy House
Sandy Wilson - Shakespeare Tower
David Kirkby - Defoe House

Officers:

Julie Mayer	-	Town Clerk's
Helen Davinson	-	Community and Children's Services
Michael Bennett	-	Community and Children's Services
Anne Mason	-	Community and Children's Services
Michael Bradley	-	City Surveyor's Department
Paul Murtagh	-	Community & Children's Services Department

In attendance

Ann Holmes – Chairman of the Barbican Residential Committee (BRC)
William Pimlott – Ward Member for Cripplegate
Mary Durcan – Ward Member for Cripplegate
Randall Anderson – Ward Member for Aldersgate

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Averil Baldwin (represented by Caroline Reed)
John Taysum, David Graves, Jane Smith (represented by Robert Barker),
Michael Swash (represented by Valerie Mills) and Richard Dykes.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

The draft minutes of the previous meetings were approved as follows:

- Barbican Residents Consultation Committee (RCC) 30th January 2017
- Barbican Residents Consultation Committee AGM 6th March 2017

4. **'YOU SAID: WE DID' : OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LIST**

Members noted the '*You Said: We Did*' outstanding actions list from January to May 2017.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

The Town Clerk advised that this item had been deferred from the AGM, when the Committee had not been able to appoint a Deputy Chairman.

Being the only Member willing to serve, Christopher Makin was elected as Chairman of the Barbican RCC for 2017/18.

Members were reminded that that, as the RCC can appoint up to 2 Deputy Chairmen, a vacancy was outstanding and therefore further nominations were invited.

6. **BARBICAN CHARGING POLICY FOR CAR PARKING**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the charging policy for Barbican car parking.

Officers outlined the last report to the Committee, which sought to fulfil the City of London Corporation's Service Based review and provide a fair return on the City's investments. Members noted that a report on storage charges would be presented at a later date and there would be a rolling 'Questions and Answers' document presented to the Barbican Residential Committee on 5th June.

The Chairman asked for Members to be factual and non-anecdotal or emotive in their comments as it was accepted that the local Ward Members had received a lot of communications on this matter. During the discussion, the following comments were noted:

1. The basis of the valuation was challenged as, based on supply and demand, there were currently 513 spaces vacant. The £2,000 market value was challenged as to whether it was a fair comparison. Members suggested that a lower price would raise the level of usage.
2. Members felt that, in its current format, the report was inadequate for taking a decision on. This was only one element of the Charging Policies as the Stores Policy would be presented later in the year.

3. Given that 25% of space renters would give up their spaces if the charges went up, Members felt that this would negate any benefit from the increased charges.
4. Whilst accepting the need for a 'fair' return on investments, Members were concerned that Barbican residents could not park on the street and therefore the Policy was unfair.
5. Dolphin Square was not considered to be a fair valuation on a comparable estate, as it was entirely rented and not local authority managed.
6. Lauderdale House Group has undertaken some costings on other possible savings, which the BRC might consider; i.e. the reallocation of the cost of time spent by car park attendants /Estate Concierge carrying out their duties revenue from baggage stores and restoration of commercial car parking. The House Group suggested setting up a working party to look at this in more detail and then report to the BRC on a proposal to eliminate the deficit, without such a high increase and within the RPI.
7. Was the estimate for supervision and management over generous? Members asked if this could be explained and examined further.
8. Members were concerned that this was a Low Emission Neighbourhood incentive intended to reduce car ownership and use in the City and suggested that, if this was the case, it should be more transparent in the report.
9. There could be an adverse effect on young City professionals on lower incomes and with young families, those with disabilities and the elderly and therefore should be subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment.

The Chairman of the BRC thanked Members for their comments and said she was listening carefully, would ensure BRC Members were made aware of comments made and would then listen carefully to debate at the BRC, before coming to her own view on the best way forward.

Meanwhile, she responded to a number of factual points which had been made:

1. The Barbican had never been social housing.
2. There is no right to a car parking space in leases and Barbican residents can use places in other city car parks at residential rates.
3. The report doesn't say 25% will find the increased costs unaffordable but that an increase in cost could lead to a reduction in use.
4. Commercial car parking is not an option because of City planning policy.

The Barbican Estate Office Manager responded as follows:

1. Income from stores in the car parks will be credited to the car parking account. Treatment of the reallocation of cost of the time spent by car park attendants /Estate Concierge carrying out their duties is still under review.
2. For Blake Tower, the take up of car parking is anticipated to be less than 1/3.
3. Advice was taken on all comparators used in the report.

In summary, the Chairman thanked everyone for their comments and asked that the BRC note the following:

1. Members concerns at the level of increase; the methodology used in the valuations, fairness and necessity of the charges.
2. The suggestions for looking at alternative revenue streams and the establishment of a working party to do so; the report should not be considered in isolation to other possible revenue streams
3. The suggestion that the report needs a full Equality Impact Assessment.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

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

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of repairs and maintenance to roofs/balconies following water penetration. The report provided Members with an update on progress made by the Working Party in relation to 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.

Robert Barker (former Deputy Chairman of the RCC) thanked officers for their contribution to the work of the Working Party and for the spirit of open dialogue in which it had operated.

During the discussion and questions, the following points were noted:

- Frobisher Crescent was still under warranty and the Assistant Director would ensure that it was included in the new Barbican Asset Management Strategy.
- The RCC and Barbican Residential Committee (BRC) would receive a further report on Lauderdale Place roof inspection and other similar roofs that have not as yet been inspected due to various access problems as soon as possible after the inspections have been done. Members noted that this would likely be in the Autumn.

The costings and position on warranties and repairs would be included in a future report to the RCC/BRC once the Working Group had reached its conclusions.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

8. **BARBICAN ESTATE ELECTRICAL VEHICLE CHARGING POINT PILOT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the Electric Vehicle Charging Points Pilot Project.

During the discussion the following points were highlighted, the details of which would emerge in the next report to the RCC/BRC:

- Methodology, cost recovery and the placing of meters.
- The Barbican Estate Office had cross referenced the use of bays to ensure no duplication.
- First usage would be in the autumn, as part of the pilot.
- There would be a number of communal bays.
- There would be a resident survey over the summer.
- Additional electrical infrastructure had been installed in the five selected car parks and this would be reviewed as part of the potential roll out of charging points.

In concluding, the officer thanked Members of the Working Party for their valued input.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

9. **WORKING PARTY REVIEWS**

The Committee received the minutes of the Asset Maintenance, Underfloor Heating and Gardens Advisory Working Parties. Members noted that reports in respect of the fire doors on some of the top floors at Ben Jonson House and a condition survey were due in June 2017. In respect of a query as to whether update reports could be provided in addition to the Minutes, officers offered to include them in the regular update reports, under the 'property services' appendix.

10. **UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee received the regular update report of the Director of Community and Children's Services. Officers advised that, due to the timing of the RCC's committee cycle and the early despatch of reports in order to accommodate questions in advance, this report was often 5-6 weeks old by the time of the RCC meetings. Members therefore agreed to receive this report closer to the meeting date in future.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

11. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (SLA) REVIEW

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the quarterly review for Service Level Agreements between January and March 2017.

Members noted that, in order to achieve 100% performance, residents were encouraged to use the generic email addresses for the BEO, rather than email direct to individuals. In respect of cleansing, Members noted that it was not practical for the barrier at the entrance to the Garchey bay next to Defoe car park to be down during the day but it might be possible to do so at night. Officers advised that this was being looked into further.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

12. PROGRESS OF SALES AND LETTINGS

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of sales and lettings.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

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

The Deputy Chairman asked whether Members would be happy to be emailed without being blind copied; i.e. so that the email addresses were visible. This would allow members to exchange views readily. Whilst there was a general agreement to this, the Town Clerk advised that she would check the data protection implications before following this up with a formal request to RCC Members.

Officers had met with the Planners about the application for the baggage stores and agreed a way forward in respect of the objections. Members noted that pre planning consultation would take place via email broadcast before a formal application was submitted.

In addition to the above, some questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting, which had been circulated earlier in the day and were tabled for Members.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no items

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm

Chairman

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