

Barking Reach Residents Association Meeting

29 March 2017 at The Rivergate Centre, 7.30pm. 45 present
Committee: Yvonne Thomas, Vanessa, Alex, Gareth

Yvonne Thomas (also known as Lulu O'Donnelly) took the chair and outlined the agenda. At 8pm there was to be a Night Walk with guests.

There was a proposal to amend the agenda. Pete Mason proposed that parking be the first item on the agenda. The parking fines had begun two days before (27 March) and people were angry and needed to discuss this issue urgently.

The chair rejected the proposal, but conceded that parking could be discussed with the other items after the Night Walk.

Pete Mason asked that his proposal that parking be the first item on the agenda be put to a vote. This was denied by the chair. A number of residents, including Thelma, explained the urgency of the situation and called for the proposal to be accepted. The chair said she didn't recognize the people present.

Steve Roberts then proposed a motion of no confidence in the chair. Nabila Sher-khan seconded among a number of others. A vote was then taken and a majority were in favour of the motion.

The chair then left the room with the co-chair and the other committee members present. A vote was then taken on a person to chair the meeting and Pete Mason was elected unopposed. Syed Islam was elected acting secretary. Marta acted as membership secretary and circulated an attendance list.

It was then agreed to discuss the urgent issue of parking.

Discussion on parking

Proposal agreed:

This residents' association demands:

- The removal of the yellow lines except for safety issues.
- All fines to be rescinded and for Pinnacle to refund parking fines paid.
- The immediate ending of the parking fines.

Moved by Ruth Mason, seconded by Francesca.

Additionally, residents raised the question of the reallocation of bays, so no one has their allocated bay any more. This has caused enormous confusion and upset. A number of problems were raised. Marta explained that the excuse for the yellow lines, which was the planning permission called "section 106" actually does not state that every household gets one car. It is misleading to say that it does. A copy of minutes outlining what had been verbally agreed between the parking subcommittee and Matt Carpen – prior to L&Q becoming the major player in Barking Riverside Limited – was circulated, which makes proposals on parking every road.

Pete Mason proposed a parking sub-committee be formed. He explained that there was a “nuclear option” of withholding a month’s service charge. In the distant past residents of brought their landlords to book by famous rent strikes of all tenants together. But Pete explained this would have to be looked into very carefully, and first a mass campaign to make sure everyone on the estate was going to do it together. No one should take unilateral action. So it would take the formation of a parking subcommittee like before to discuss this in detail and examine its practicality.

It was agreed to form a parking sub-committee, volunteers came forward. The meeting felt the need to urgently reconvene, and a proposal to meet next Wednesday was overwhelmingly passed by vote with none opposing to further consider options to take the battle against the parking charges forward.

Discussion on the residents’ association

Dissatisfaction with the way the residents’ association had been previously chaired was expressed. A proposal to form a Barking Riverside residents association was discussed but the general feeling was that the residents, if they continue to turn up, will from now on have a voice in the existing body, and that it would be better not to have two associations as this could potentially divide us. The residents association must not only discuss the parking, but it must address the important issues of the day.

An Extraordinary General Meeting to vote for a new committee was discussed, date to be decided. Agreed to ask the acting chair to inform the estate management of the views as agreed at the meeting.

Meeting closed at 8:50pm

Addendum

Just to report, I initially sent this very courteous email to Matt with whom I negotiated previously, and am awaiting a reply. In the mean time from my research yesterday, I now know that in reality Richard Southall (an L&Q assistant director) is in charge. From now on we need to address ourselves to him.

Hi Matt,

Hope you are well. I wonder if you are still with the GLA and in charge of Barking Riverside? If not, perhaps this will find its way to the person in charge?

I’ve been asked by the residents to look into the matter of the parking again, after I had taken a long break. There’s been one or two very large angry meetings on the estate.

It appears that the issues which were agreed between us have apparently not been implemented, yet the parking fines have begun. The double yellow lines are still there, permits have not been issued, and even the parking spaces in the school car park have just now been made impossible to use. I’ve attached my notes on the results of our survey.

Wondered if you knew anything about it, and whether we can stop the implementation of the parking fines, rescind where issued and refund where paid, remove the yellow lines from the streets (except the corners) so that they return to how they were when the residents first moved in (this would be very simple and cheap to do), and then take a three month review period while we re-look at things.

I'd prefer a happy estate to one that is full of anger.

Ends

I'm sure that interested parties are aware of residents' views, of what took place as minuted above, and will be further interested in what we do next.