

Barking Reach Residents Association Meeting Minutes
Wednesday 13th December 2017 at the Rivergate Centre. 7:30pm

Committee: Pete Mason, Nuno Amorim, Venilia Amorim, Siarul Islam.

Apologies: Eight committee members.

24 residents were present.

Meeting started at 7:40pm

Minutes of previous meeting (22nd November 2017) agreed. No matters arising.

Parking update

Chair reported on the meeting with BRL on the 4th December.

- Minutes produced by the RA have been published.
- Present: Matt Carpen, Director, Richard Southall, assistant director, Barking Riverside Limited, Pete Mason, Chair, Nuno Amorim, Secretary, BRRA.
- We first raised about Samuel Garside House, which had been without heating since Tuesday 28th November.
- We requested that all ticketing be stopped at a sign of good will by BRL from 24th December – 2nd January.
- BRL told us that council planning officers felt that they could not sanction the addition of spaces along **McAllister Grove**. The green space there, with its lake and wildlife, is considered a central part of the provision of wildlife and green space in the development. The chair stated that although he sympathised with this view, he has told the councillors that residents that bought their properties prior to the imposition of the yellow lines have a right of easement and that for this reason in his view the councillors should tell the officials of the council that an exception must be made in this case.
- Some other minor changes proposed by the council can be resolved as a result of the RA consulting with residents.
- BRL informed us that they have always said that they will pay for this work.
- BRL intend to do a walk-in consultation of the new plans at the Rivergate centre before submitting planning permission to the council.

Chair moved motion 4 on the agenda.

This Residents Association calls on Barking Riverside Limited to suspend the ticketing for the Xmas period to allow residents to have visitors over Xmas. This to be between 24th December to the 2nd January.

Seconded by Venilia Amorim

Amended to say:

This Residents Association calls on Barking Riverside Limited to suspend the ticketing for the Xmas period, except for pavements, allocated bays, cycle paths and the corners of roads, to allow residents to have visitors over Xmas. This to be between zero hours 24th December to midnight 2nd January.

Passed overwhelmingly with three opposed.

Heating and Hot water issues

- Chair reported on the emergency meeting on heating held by the Residents Association on Saturday 9th December.
- Minutes of that meeting have been published on our Facebook page and will be circulated in our next newsletter.

- Heating failed to four blocks since late November, and was still not working in Ernest Websdale House at the time of this BRRA full meeting on the 13th December.
- The emergency meeting was attended by Councillor Geddes, who undertook to write to the council to see if Zing Power has broken any trading standards laws and had completed the email at the end of the meeting.
- Margaret Hodge MP gave her apologies to the emergency meeting but offered to write on our behalf. The association has asked Margaret Hodge to enquire into what oversight there was of Zing Power gaining the contract, and if there was none why not?
- Chair asked why BRL did not step in after TGE went into administration to ensure that the specialist engineers were kept on site and that a competent well-established firm was brought in. Residents said we should take legal action against Zing Power which was alleged to be nothing but an asset stripping firm, or an asset management company without experience in the field. Chair pointed out that legal action requires funds and that is one reason why we are discussing the new constitution as next item. Residents raised stopping payments to Zing Power. Chair said it was a wholesale failure of privatisation.
- The meeting felt that ultimately the landlords of the estate, BRL, should take responsibly for fixing the issue or multiple issues that cause the heating failure. The residents felt that BRL should have exercised oversight and now needs to take the necessary steps to not just bring back heating to Ernest Websdale House immediately, but also to sort out the underlying issues identified by the experienced TGE engineers who fixed Samuel Garside and John Miller/Leslie Hitchcock. They have stated that there is an underlying issue which causes these outages.
- BRL had given their apologies for the emergency meeting and had emailed to say they were actively intervening and reviewing, “the contractual position urgently now so that we can establish how we can assist and look at what the options are.”

Motion

This Residents Association calls on BRL to sort out the heating and hot water infrastructure problem in the interests of the residents.

Passed Unanimously

New Constitution

A new, more professional constitution was discussed thoroughly and amended. First amendment, proposed by the committee and adopted unanimously was the addition of an equal opportunity policy. Various other amendments were passed, notably that there should be one person one vote, rejecting only one vote per household and rejecting proxy votes.

It was proposed to remove the section on membership fees. A discussion on fees followed. The chair argued that the association needs funds to fight legal battles and to organise itself properly and that the best way to fund the association was through a membership fee. However the overwhelming feeling of the meeting was that while fund raising was necessary, the best way was through special appeals on specific issues, like the heating issue just discussed, with targets set, of say, £500 or £1000 and an appeal to reach them quickly to assist on an issue. This was agreed to be the best approach.

The new constitution was then adopted overwhelmingly, with 2 opposed.

The chair then proposed the rest of the items on the agenda be postponed to the next meeting as the meeting had overrun its time.

AOB

Xmas feast on Saturday. All welcome.

Meeting closed 9:15pm