

**Barking Reach Residents Association Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday 22 July 2020**  
**7.30pm, online video conference**

**Attendance:** 36 online (including Councillor Bill Turner)

**Apologies** from police officers who could not attend.

**Meeting started:** 7.30pm

**The agenda** was agreed.

**Minutes** of the previous meeting were agreed.

And item was added to AOB: Right to Manage for Leslie Hitchcock House.

### **1. Security**

Chair Pete Mason read the email from the police about the incident on Saturday (see addendum 1) and also read the motion to residents (see addendum 2), which reiterated what was discussed between the residents' association (RA) and BRL and Pinnacle at a meeting almost a year ago (August 2019). Back then it was discussed that signage of opening/closing times be put up in local parks, that Playhill Park be closed at 9pm and that the contract with security company TCS with BRL be reviewed to include more action on their part.

Treasurer Venilia Amorim mentioned that there were lots of residents interested in the Neighbourhood Watch programme and said that any resident can start their own groups within the estate. There are currently [four groups](#) on Barking Riverside.

In a presentation, Venilia also explained that residents can join the OWL programme, which helps improve communication between the police and the public. As a member, residents can receive messages as and when new alerts are issued and they can also send out messages regarding any incidents happening in the local area.

### **2. Service charge**

Pete suggested residents perhaps have no need to contact their respective managing agents (Pinnacle, RMG, Encore, L&Q) directly when it comes to paying for their service charges in instalments. Several residents reported struggling to pay their service charges in one lump sum, but other residents reported that while managing agents state categorically that they will not accept instalments, where individual residents arrange instalments that clearly will play off their debt, then that has been quietly accepted by the managing agent. Pete, however, did make clear that non payment of service charge will lead to repossession if residents do not engage with their managing agents.

Venilia mentioned template letters to managing agents on the RA's website for service charge payments but also for those wishing to contest any charges.

### **3. Fire inquiry and progress on removing flammable materials**

Pete stated that in an email from the RA to BRL on 7 July, the RA made clear that the issue of flammable cladding urgently needed to be addressed. The email reminded BRL a fire took place in Ferrier Point in Canning Town just a few weeks ago, in which 100 people were evacuated.

*Newham MPs Lyn Brown and Stephen Timms stated:*

*"Thankfully, Newham Council removed the cladding on this building last year, but it is haunting to imagine what might have happened if this had not been the case."*

This only emphasises the urgency of the issue facing Barking Riverside residents, Pete said, as he mentioned that in the high of summer, temperatures were already reaching 30 degrees.

The email further requested from BRL that their promised letter was delivered in the next 14 days. This letter promised to give residents a clearer picture of what fire safety measures would be put in place, along with a clear timeline for completion.

And the email also reminded BRL that flammable materials such as balcony decking are found throughout the first phase of the estate, and residents need to know when this material will be removed as well.

With regards to the fire enquiry on 10 June, BRL's Matt Carpen declined to attend and so did Darren Rodwell, the council leader. The RA also sent him an email 24 June expressing residents' disappointment and highlighting residents demands as a result of the enquiry:

1. Ensure that all flammable material is removed from all parts of the estate in consultation with residents, at the cost of the developer, landlord or government;
2. Do not remove, but instead guarantee resident control over the estate;
3. Remove Adriatic Land from the estate.

The email requested for Rodwell's support on this as well as any other feedback on the council's own enquiry into the fire.

#### **4. Balconies**

Two members of the RA's committee who are residents of phase two confirmed several complaints to L&Q on materials used on balconies, many complaining of low-quality materials and poor installation and maintenance. So far, there has been no feedback from L&Q.

Several residents from Samuel Garside House and Ernest Websdale House also complained of the materials being used to replace the timber cladding on their balconies, with many showing spots of rust.

Secretary Nuno Amorim mentioned that it could actually be a case of metal corrosion and advised worried residents to contact RMG directly and inquire.

#### **5. Heating and Water**

Pete reminded the meeting of how Rhodes Mansions and Pedley House residents had intermittent heating last winter.

A committee member and resident of Rhodes Mansions received an email from L&Q Aftercare which states they are looking into their findings with regards to loss of heating.

Another committee member and resident of Rhodes Mansions also said that he has been informed by the technicians that visited his premises that the radiators in the ground floor flats were of an insufficient size to keep properties warm. Since heating is provided by L&Q Energy, and L&Q oversee this, he has had confirmation that all his radiators would be changed to the right sized ones.

Another committee member and resident of Pedley House said they have contacted Bellway regarding loss of heating and Bellway seems to think that residents are incompetent on how to operate their own heating systems. The suggestion is to wait for evidence from L&Q and present it to Bellway eventually.

#### **6. CIC Learning Forum**

Pete briefly updated the meeting by saying that several committee members belong to the Barking Riverside Community Interest company (CIC) learning forum and have now formed sub-groups which will start to meet briefly and discuss several issues such as models, research and governance, placemaking, communications and tech, finances and estate procurement.

He made clear the RA's ultimate aim is to gain residents majority control over the CIC, and thereby oversight over the estate management. This does not include management of individual apartment blocks.

#### **7. AOB**

A resident has suggested that skips are placed on for phase 2 for bulk rubbish as the Evac systems seems to be constantly blocked.

It was reported that a campaign for Right to Manage (RTM) was proceeding at Leslie Hitchcock House and that John Miller House residents were already in favour of RTM.

The chair noted that the RA would not normally meet in August due to holidays.  
Next meeting to be confirmed.

**Meeting closed at 9.15pm**

## **ADDENDUM**

### **Addendum 1**

#### **Email from the police to the RA (22.07.2020)**

Dear Barking Riverside Resident's Association

Apologies that we've not been in touch sooner, we've been trying to juggle other commitments but in the end we will not be able to take part in the meeting.

Also our Met computers are pretty clunky and have so many security features that I don't think we're able to use Googlemeet. I'll look into it further for the future.

Regarding the incident on Saturday the investigation is still ongoing so there's not much I can say. However if it provides any reassurance the matter did not involve anyone who actually lives on the estate or even nearby and it does not appear to be a 'random' attack that might have involved a resident.

In relation to the ASB you mention, nobody has mentioned it to us yet. We have been patrolling as much as we can fit in yet and have noticed the basketball court being used for basketball but hadn't noticed any actual anti-social behaviour.

Unfortunately recently the team keep getting deployed to patrol other areas for shifts, for example both last weekend and the coming weekend we are working late shifts Friday and Saturday night assigned to patrol pubs across the borough for issues. These shifts away then cause a backlog of our work dealing with long term issues like neighbour disputes, breach of the peace prevention at domestics, knife searches and dealing with all the other ASB issues across the ward that we then have to catch up with when we are around. This in turn then impacts on time we have to patrol.

If your residents can clarify exactly what is occurring with any descriptions of people, registrations of cars if applicable and what times of the day then that would help us be there at the problem times to deal. I understand if not all that information is not available but the more the better.

With regards to any large gatherings that happen that are either causing unacceptable disturbance or are in breach of coronavirus legislation we are happy for calls to 999 to be made. The East Area has units out every day ready to be despatched to these sort of incidents.

I'm happy for this email to be read during the meeting (if my grammar isn't too bad) and/or circulated amongst your members and if minutes are taken or issues raised then please let us know.

Hope you are all keeping well.

Regards

Gary Jones 1856EA  
Thames SNT

### **Addendum 2**

#### **Motion from Barking Reach Residents Association on safety**

We, the residents of Barking Riverside, are saddened by the reports from attendant police officers that a stabbing occurred on Saturday 18th July at approximately 8:30pm at the back of Playhill Park. We hope the victim recovers and our thoughts are with him and his family.

We wish to set on record at this meeting that we never want to have a stabbing occur on our estate again.

We support the demand first raised in August 2019 by the Barking Reach Residents Association officers with Barking Riverside Limited (BRL) and Pinnacle on 28 August 2019, that the parks on the estate be closed at 9pm daily with the assistance of notices to that effect and BRL's security team to remind people to comply.

We remind BRL and Pinnacle that we do not raise with them questions which concern residents only marginally. We raise from time to time questions of life and death.

Yet this request, agreed at the time, as set down in the approved minutes, was not acted on.

It was with regret that the residents' association officers decided in April 2020, after 8 months waiting, to withdraw from meetings with BRL and Pinnacle until such time as progress was made on the outstanding issues.

We now reiterate that progress must be made on these life and death issues.

Given that the stabbing occurred at 8:30pm, we further propose that security attend Playhill Park from that time forward.

The same minutes of August 2019 state that "BRL has introduced, at their own cost of £100,000 per year, a 24/7 security patrol, TSC (Total Security Care), brought in since the Samuel Garside fire."

This team must do its job. No extra cost to residents is necessary.