

Battersea Fields Resident Management Organisation
Minutes of the General Meeting 28 October 2019 at 7:00pm

Present:

Val Boxall (VB): Board Member and Chairperson

Vicky Dickson (VD): Board Member

Ayodele Oyelami (AO): Board Member

Garry Sealy (GS): Board Member

Sara Taylor (ST): Board Member

Peter Turnbull (PT): Board Member

Chris Clutterbuck (CC): Housing Manager

PC Gavin Gillam (GG)

Four residents: (JM); (FB); (EB), and (TS.)

Sue Devine (SD): BFRMO - Minute Taker

1. Welcome/Apologies:

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting; there were no Declarations of Interest. Apologies: Peter Paviour (PP): Board Member; Godfrey Agaba (GA): Finance Manager, and Jo Baxter (JB) – WBC.

2. Minutes from the last Meeting/Matters Arising

The Minutes of the previous General Meeting were read, approved and signed by VD and AO.

3. Finance Report:

No finance report was presented as GA was absent.

4. Housing Manager's Report:

Gardening:

CC & VB met with Ian Harrison (Horticultural Services Manager at WBC). It was noted that the run-down plant areas (ie Walden House) had been cleared which will make way for planting in spring. Regular walkabouts will take place. All weeds at the end of Telscombe house will be dug up and the area planted.

National Grid:

The sub-station at Atkinson House will be moved.

Bike Enclosures:

The bike enclosures at Macdonald House are well-used and CC proposed installation of another enclosure on the estate. ST queried the design of the enclosures.

Macdonald House:

CC advised that the scaffolding for the gas works is to be taken down at the end of November 2019 which is ahead of time, and the external window cleaning and block deep-clean will be scheduled after the removal of the scaffolding.

Door-Entry System:

The door entry system will be renewed next year in 2020. PT enquired if it would be on a like-for like basis or if cameras would be installed. CC advised that the system will not have cameras but will be a much more modern setup than the current system in place.

There were no further questions about the door entry system.

5. Report from Sub-Committees

Halloween:

VB reported that around 50 or more people attended and the event went well.

Christmas Party:

This is to be held on Saturday 7 December 2019 from 1pm to 3pm.

Pantomime:

VD enquired if all the Pantomime tickets had been sold and VB advised that there was 1 ticket left

6/7. Comments from the Chair/AOB:

CC advised that FB had enquired about having a motorbike enclosure on the estate, and CC proposed the part of the grassed area in front of Dresden House could have be a motor-bike cage.

ST suggested the 2 diagonal bays at the end of each blocks (turnaround point) as possible areas for the motor-bike bays. ST commented that some residents use the diagonal bays at the end of blocks as a 'permanent garage' and motorbikes are also parked by the recycling bins.

FB suggested that as motorbikes are randomly left on the estate, a designated area would help residents know where to park, as due to lack of alternatives, residents park between cars and on footpaths.

ST queried whether there is much theft of motor-bikes in the area, and GG confirmed that there is, especially on the Winstanley Estate, and that anchorage points would be a very good idea.

AO pointed out that motorbikes are parked on the footpaths (noting the one outside 1-20 Walden House) as there is no designated area for motorbikes to park. AO also noted that motor-bike owners at Walden House are considerate as they park their motor-bikes on the railings on the bays away from cars.

FB said that there was not enough space in the bays for motor-bikes, that there are lots on unused areas on the estate, and that secure areas to park motor-bikes are needed. FB also commented that there are several motor-bikes parked in front of the Berry House bicycle lockers.

ST suggested using some of the green spaces for motor-bike anchorage points.

CC proposed using the area at the end/front? of Dresden house as a secure area for a motor-bike enclosure with a canopy.

TS queried why just Dresden House was proposed and if there were any other options apart from Dresden House.

ST suggested that each block should have a designated area, and that 1 of the 2 diagonal bays in front of the tall blocks could be used and that the parking issue should be looked at on a block -by- block basis. ST went on to propose that only a small area is required and that space should be provided for around 3 motor-bikes per block.

EB queried whether the turning points could be used, however, ST replied that this space is needed for the emergency services.

AO commented that there were no marked lines on the parking bays.

ST commented that since the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) was introduced, there are no more spaces available and that it is not necessary for the motorbike users to park outside their block, and that motorbike enclosures need to be provided.

CC proposed that motorbike users could park on the roads (highways) or convert one or two of the parking bays, ie 1 bay per street in the middle of each road, for example, Kennard Street, therefore not losing out on a parking space. CC will approach WBC about this.

CC confirmed that Highways at WBC would fund the costs and he would make enquiries as to what could be done. All agreed with this.

VD asked when the green portacabin outside Berry house would be removed, and CC confirmed this would be removed by the end of November 2019 by the company carrying out the essential gas works.

CC advised that he is chasing Waste Services at WBC regarding the overturned paladin bins.

AO said that she had noticed more parking on double yellow lines recently and that the paladins could not be emptied by the bin operatives, and that there are penalties for parking on double yellow lines.

AO noted that the bin operatives cannot do their job (if they cannot access the paladins due to parking on yellow lines) which is an inconvenience to residents when the paladins become full.

CC confirmed he will make further enquiries about motorcycle bays and that the yellow lines need to be re-painted.

VB advised that the Board were considering setting up a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme & TS advised that she would be interested in this due to anti-social behaviour, (ASB) caused by youths on the estate growing up, hanging out outside her property on the top floor, and on bikes in the area.

AO commented that today (the day of the meeting) at around 4.45pm she saw a group of youths on bikes.

TS told those present that she did not want her block to become the 'bad' block.

PT added that he finds groups of youths at night to be intimidating.

GG advised that the police are carrying out dedicated patrols.

PT said that in some flats in the blocks there is a strong smell of 'skunk' cannabis.

TS commented that the ASB spoils the enjoyment of living in the block which she has lived in for 25 years and questions what is happening with youths nowadays.

CC advised that the RMO is targeting the families responsible and that himself and SD have interviewed 2 families and a family in Bishopstone House about the ASB. He added that the RMO is aware of 2 youths in the end block of Dresden who are causing ASB.

AO said that it is 'scary' to name and shame residents responsible and that this year for the first time, she had felt unsafe, and that groups of unknown youths in the blocks are intimidating. Also, that WBC needs to patrol within the blocks.

GG commented that there is nothing for the youths to do, and the top of blocks is a vantage point for them. He advised residents to diarise incidents and that police will be carrying out more patrols.

TS was concerned that the youths in the blocks see when she is leaving her property, and PT added that youths in the stairwell see him leave his property which causes him to worry.

GG said that the problem concerns the drop-keys which are no longer unique to the emergency services, and that the best solution is for WBC to install a fob system. Also, that CCTV does not resolve the problem, and that youths follow people in to the blocks.

TS said that the problem is such that this was the first general meeting she had attended in all her years of living on the estate.

GG advised residents to identify those responsible for the ASB in the blocks with a view to calling in the parents for interview advising them they are in breach of their tenancy conditions, and that police will carry out more controls.

ST said that youths hanging out in the playground is worse in the summer and questioned what could be done about this.

CC replied that it is important to identify the youths responsible for the ASB.

AO informed that 'something happened' on 27.10.19 near Walden House; lots of banging and shouting but she could not see what it was.

GG reported that the 'gang issue' in the area is not as bad as in other areas such as the Winstanley estate where some of the larger families have moved out of London. He stated that Blondel street is a nice area, but that youngsters are now growing up, and have no focus and so they hang around. More ward officers are needed: there used to be 12 officers a few years ago.

TS agreed that police need to be visible, and that seeing the police can 'nip problems in the bud' and acts as a visual deterrent.

GG commented that police get to know youths by sight and that they are carrying out more patrols. As for Neighbourhood Watch (NW,) WBC can be involved in organising this, and NW can communicate by social media including police in the group, and can be reported anonymously.

TS queried whether to video culprits, however, GG said that is inadvisable.

ST: said that the shops in Culvert Road do not report to police, which is fuelling the situation, ie allowing ASB to happen, and intimidating others in the area.

GG replied that an eviction case regarding an occupant above one of the shops in Culvert Road did not succeed due to their strong legal team who 'trounced' WBC.

ST added that drug dealing happens along Culvert Road.

GG advised that the way to resolve this is by targeting the drug suppliers, and that the shopkeepers are licensed to sell alcohol but they also sell to the underaged.

AO agreed that the shopkeepers sell to under 18s including her son. She went back to the shop demanding her money back. In this way, the shop-keepers are enabling the drug-dealers.

GG said that every ward has an issue with cannabis being smoked and that the wealthier areas have issues with hard drugs.

ST suggested that 2 or 3 residents in each block could act as NW representatives.

CC added that they could form a sub-committee like the Board does and that he will approach the safety team at WBC for advice, and the NW could start off small and expand.

AO said that NW members could act 'undercover' and report back/make checks on any ASB.

ST advised that NW reduces household contents premiums and possibly car insurance also.

TS advised that she felt supported by the meeting but that the area is 'going downhill.'

AO said that there were problems 4 years ago in Walden House which went away, but a huge problem now is knife crime which is a fear factor and people are frightened.

GG reported that robberies are lower than previously, and in 2010 robberies in Wandsworth (WA) were the worst in London, but this has been 'nipped in the bud' now.

GG advised that NW is a good idea and that it would be good if the parents of the culprits of ASB could see the group email.

VB would like to gather a list of residents interested in NW and arrange a meeting. A flyer would be posted to arrange this.

There was no further business and the meeting ended at 8.24pm