



World's End Residents' Association

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Minutes of the WERA Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 10th of July 2007 at 7pm in the WERA Clubroom, 16 Blantyre Street

Present:	Margaret Grayling (Chair) John Rendall (Treasurer) Caroline Fairchild Marye Kenton Eryl Humphrey Jones	Jules Montero (Secretary) Maggie Byrne Joy Laven Nigel Palmer
In Attendance:	Faye Williams (Housing Officer, RBKC TMO) Ian Bluckingham (RBK&C) Peter Wheeden (RBK&C) Police Sgt. Otway.	
Apologies:	Monica Boholst Robert Taylor Cllr. Maighread Simmonds	Flora Levi Cllr. Mark Daley

0. Pre-meeting – Flashpoint Play Centre

A 30-minute meeting with Robert Rush (RBK&C), Paul Williamson (RBK&C) and the staff and committee of the Chelsea Youth Club was held prior to the meeting proper to discuss the proposed expansion of Flashpoint Play Centre. Updated/accurate maps of the proposed extension of the building were provided and are now available from the reading tray.

1. Apologies

The above apologies were accepted.

2. World's End Place / Piazza

A number of residents and commercial leaseholders were in attendance for this part for the meeting.

The following issues were discussed with Ian Buckingham and Peter Wheeden:

Lack of Greenery/Planting

IB acknowledged concerns with regards the loss of mature trees on the Piazza and the general lack of greenery and planting. Several of those present expressed extreme displeasure with the fact that several large, mature trees had been removed and replaced with an extremely small number of small "pigmy" trees, in direct contravention of the Council's own tree policy. It was also noted that the "finished" Piazza contained significantly fewer trees than had been originally been promised.

IB stated that the Council did intend to address these concerns and that a process to determine whether additional trees could be planted on the Piazza had already begun. IB described four possible locations for additional trees and stated that exploratory inspections/surveys of the four sites would be carried out shortly.

Those present asked that the Council also consider installing planters and hanging baskets; these would not only help break up the vast, open space that was the current Piazza and reduce the potential for certain kinds of anti-social behaviour, but also re-introduce more greenery into the space.

Actions

It was noted that the final design for the Piazza differed significantly from that shown to residents at the Open Day held in the Chelsea Theatre in the summer of 2005.

Shop-fronts

It was noted that a number of commercial leaseholders had applied for permission to redecorate or refurbish their shop-fronts but that these had been turned down. IB explained that the Council had a general policy of not permitting external shutters or blinds to be installed on its (sub-let) commercial properties and that this was the most likely cause for the rejection of any applications. Those present stated that they did not generally oppose the use of external shutters, in particular given the fact that they were already in use in some properties, and that their use was arguably well justified. It was noted that the recently built Safer Neighbourhoods Police office on the Piazza had external shutters.

A question was raised as to whether any funding was available that might allow improvement works to be carried out to the shop-fronts of all of the commercial properties on the Piazza and introduce an element of uniformity. IB said he would investigate.

It was noted that no compensation for the loss of business had been made available to any of the commercial leaseholders although the works had taken far longer than originally planned and the impact on their businesses had been significant.

IB and PW were asked to consider the installation of a sign indicating the name of the space ("World's End Place"). The back of the long, black seat on the ellipse was suggested as an appropriate location for a large (painted?) sign or name-plate. IB and PW were also asked to consider the installation of a sign listing the various commercial properties in World's End Place. IB noted that the Council did not generally install such signs. It was noted that such a sign was installed at Duke of York square.

Farmers' Market

IB stated that the Council would not object to a farmers market to be held on the Piazza – it was simply a matter of agreeing with the organiser what needed to be put in place to allow the market to be held (e.g. the post-event cleanup) – and that a proposal for such an event was likely to be granted approval. Several of those attending indicated that some interest had been expressed in holding such an event on the Piazza.

Adoption by RBKC

IB explained that the current adoption proposal called for RBK&C/Highways to adopt the Piazza and Edith Yard, but that Alexander Passage would remain as-is. Members accepted that Alexander Passage would remain the responsibility of the TMO but expressed concern that Omega Passage appeared to have been omitted from the proposals. Members noted it did not make sense for the TMO to be responsible for a very short strip of land between the Kings Road and Edith Yard if both of those other areas were to be the responsibility of RBK&C/Highways.

Concerns with regards the possible loss of Edith Yard as an amenity of the estate were also raised, as were concerns regarding the possible consequences with regards to (TMO) contractor parking, deliveries to the estate and the possible imposition of the congestion charge when simply accessing the residents car park – this would only further discourage residents from using the car park.

Cars driving on to the Piazza

Several of those attending described occasions on which vehicles (cars/motorbikes) had driven on to the Piazza. IB stated that they were looking at the installation of additional bollards to eliminate the possibility that cars could drive on to the Piazza. It was noted that it was virtually impossible to physically stop motorbikes or mopeds driving on to the Piazza and clear signs indicating that this was not permitted were suggested.

(Commercial Leaseholder) Tables and Chairs

It was noted that the Chelsea Theatre had previously applied for planning permission to put out tables and chairs (for the use of customers of the theatre's café) on the Piazza but that this request had been turned down. IB stated that he could not see any reason why such an application should be rejected and suggested that the theatre (and other commercial leaseholders) re-apply. It was suggested that Lisboa Deli should do the same. Issues with regards contacting the owners of Lisboa were noted.

Several of those attending suggested increasing the amount of seating on the Piazza. Others believed there was plenty of seating. Some felt the current seating was neither welcoming nor suitable.

Lighting

It was noted that the lighting on the Piazza was dysfunctional – complete black-outs had occurred on a number of occasions, most of the time some of the lights were continuously switched on (24 hours a day) whilst others had yet to be switched on for the first time (and could yet prove to be completely inoperative).

It was noted that the now-supposedly-defunct lampposts in Alexander Passage had yet to be removed and that some were still operational.

IB acknowledged the ongoing problems with the lighting on the Piazza but stated that he expected the contractor to deal with these shortly.

Public Art events/exhibitions

IB noted that the original plans called for a sculpture to be installed on the elliptical “events space”, and that the Council had access to a “stock” of such sculptures, some of which might be suitable.

It was suggested that IB and PW consider whether the concrete “half-circle” wall below the church might be used to house a piece of art or decorated with a mosaic or similar. IB stated that this particular wall was the responsibility of the Council, not the church.

It was noted that the theatre had expressed the desire to use the elliptical “event space” in the future.

Car Park

IB stated that the contractor had been instructed to clean the car park once all other works had been completed.

Several noted that the kiosk/security hut outside the car park had not been refurbished as part of the works and was now an obvious eyesore that was visible from across the Piazza.

Other Issues

Several of those attending described several recurring incidents of anti-social behaviour on the Piazza. This included several occasions on which youths played football on the Piazza late at night, dogs running loose in the Piazza, dog-fouling on the Piazza, and the consumption of alcohol by those already inebriated and the subsequent related anti-social behaviour. Some suggested that the Council consider installing CCTV on the Piazza to deal with these issues. It was hoped that the forthcoming opening of the Safer Neighbourhoods/Police office might deter some of the anti-social behaviour.

The guests then left the meeting.

Note: This item took far longer than originally planned. As a result, Faye Williams and Police Sgt. Tim Otway had both also left the meeting by this point

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as correct.

4. Matters Arising

Actions from the Previous Meeting

Item 3 – JM had contacted Graeme Swinburne at RBK&C with regards the proposed adoption of the Piazza and had been referred to Ian Buckingham.

Item 3 – the letter to the Council’s Planning and Conservation department had yet to be sent.

Item 4 – JM had emailed a copy of the minutes to Ian Twyford at the TMO, and included many of the Committee’s observations and comments with regards to the management of the estate in the email.

Item 5 – JM had not contacted Tara Security.

Item 11 – JM had written to Faye Williams and asked her to take action against those littering the garden below Blantyre Tower with unsanitary waste. A letter had subsequently been sent to the residents of Blantyre Tower.

5. Manager’s Update

This item was deferred.

6. Meeting Attended

World’s End Piazza Committee

A meeting of the World’s End Piazza Committee – an unaffiliated committee composed of interested/concerned residents and commercial leaseholders – had taken place on the 4th of July. A number of Committee members had attended. Notes from the meeting had been made available.

Chelsea West Sector Police Meeting

EhJ had attended a meeting of the Chelsea West Sector Group. EhJ noted that concerns about dogs and related anti-social behaviour were still prevalent and had been raised by many of those attending.

7. Upcoming Meetings

JM referred the meeting to the upcoming events and meetings listed on the back of the agenda.

8. Any Other Business

JM stated that World’s End Under 5’s had asked if they could use the room on the afternoon of the 25th of July for a meeting of their management committee JM had contacted Victim Support (who normally use the room on Wednesday afternoons) and they had indicated that they would not be using the room on that day. The request was approved. JM would inform the Under 5’s.

JM

JR stated that he had contacted Ayo Sobowale with regards the cleaning of the wall tiles in the first, second and fourth floor large lift lobbies. Ayo Sobowale and Chris Pellings had stated that MG and MK had attended a walkabout/meeting where the cleaning carried out by the contractor had been approved. Neither MG nor MK had any recollection of such a meeting/walkabout.

JL asked that any proposed dog policy for the estate reiterate that dogs were not allowed in the estate’s gardens at any time and that dogs should be kept on a lead at all times in other parts of the estate. JM reminded the meeting that the TMO still wished to proceed with the installation of a dog toilet. Members expressed doubts that such a facility would actually be used. After some discussion it was agreed that the TMO should be asked to identify a suitable location on the estate and the RA would then assist in consulting the residents.

JL was thanked for cleaning the clubroom’s windows and vents. MK suggested that in future a professional contract cleaner be contracted to clean the clubroom. JL explained that this had been attempted and had proved to be very difficult, as well as potentially very expensive.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next Committee meeting would be held on Tuesday, 21st of August, at 7pm in the WERA Clubroom.

The meeting then closed

..... Chair