

BARBICAN CENTRE BOARD

Wednesday, 22 July 2020

Minutes of the virtual public meeting of the Barbican Centre Board held on
Wednesday, 22 July 2020 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Tom Sleight (Chair)	Deputy Tom Hoffman
Deputy Dr Giles Shilson (Deputy Chairman)	Deputy Wendy Hyde
Stephen Bediako	Emma Kane (Ex-Officio Member)
Russ Carr	Vivienne Littlechild
Zulum Elumogo	Graham Packham (Ex-Officio Member)
Alderman David Graves	Judith Pleasance
Gerard Grech	Jenny Waldman

In Attendance

Officers:

Sir Nicholas Kenyon	-	Managing Director, The Barbican Centre
Jonathon Poyner	-	Director of Operations & Buildings, Barbican Centre
Sandeep Dwesar	-	Chief Operating & Financial Officer, Barbican Centre
Natasha Harris	-	Director of Development, Barbican Centre
Leonora Thomson	-	Interim Artistic Director, Barbican Centre
Sean Gregory	-	Director of Innovation & Engagement, Barbican Centre
Jo Davis	-	Head of Retail, Barbican Centre
Niki Cornwell	-	Head of Finance and Business Administration, Barbican Centre
Phil Newby	-	Head of Marketing, Barbican Centre
Jane Alison	-	Head of Visual Arts, Barbican Centre
Nick Adams	-	Acting Head of Communications, Barbican Centre
Andrew Buckingham	-	Communications Team, Town Clerk's Department
Leanne Murphy	-	Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Lucy Musgrave, Wendy Mead and Alderman William Russell.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. ORDER OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL

The Order of the Court, appointing the Board and setting its terms of reference, was received.

4. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

In accordance with Standing Order No.29, the Board proceeded to elect a Chairman for the ensuing year. The Town Clerk read a list of Members eligible

to stand and Deputy Tom Sleigh, being the only Member expressing his willingness to serve, was duly elected as Chair.

The Chair thanked Members for their support and was pleased to be democratically elected as Chairman of the Board instead of being in the role as Acting Chair.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 30. The Town Clerk read a list of Members eligible to stand and Deputy Giles Shilson, being the only Member expressing his willingness to serve, was duly elected as Deputy Chairman.

6. **BOARD MINUTES**

The public minutes and summary of the Board meeting held on 20 May 2020 were approved as a correct record.

7. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The Board noted the various outstanding actions and the updates provided thereon. The Town Clerk confirmed that the Covid-19 pandemic had significantly impacted the work plan for Board meetings in 2020/21 and would be updated following decisions at this meeting.

8. **BOARD APPOINTMENT**

The Board considered a report of the Town Clerk proposing an appointment suggestion for the Barbican Centre Board.

Members were informed that the Nominations Committee had considered and approved the recommendation to appoint Zulum Elumogo to the Board at their meeting today. Members were impressed by the candidate and were happy to approve the recommendation.

RESOLVED – That Members approve the appointment of Zulum Elumogo to the Board for an initial term of three years.

Zulum Elumogo joined the meeting at this point following his Board appointment.

9. **APPOINTMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEES**

The Board considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning the appointment of its various sub-committees for the coming year.

RESOLVED - That:-

- Approve the merger of the Finance and Risk Committees to form the Finance and Risk Committee;
- Approve the Terms of Reference and composition of the Board's Sub Committees;

- The Reference Sub-Committee be terminated as it no longer serves a purpose;
- The Chairman would continue representing the Board on the Culture Mile Working Party;
- The Terms of Reference for the Finance and Risk Committee and Nominations Committee of the Barbican Centre Board be agreed; and
- The following Memberships be agreed: -

Finance and Risk Committee of the Barbican Centre Board

Deputy Tom Sleigh (Chair of the Board)
 Deputy Dr Giles Shilson (Deputy Chairman of the Board)
 Jeremy Mayhew (Finance Committee representative)
 Emma Kane (Chairman of the Barbican Centre Trust)
 Alisdair Nisbet (Barbican Centre Trust)
 Randall Anderson
 Russ Carr
 Deputy Wendy Hyde

Nominations Committee of the Barbican Centre Board

Deputy Tom Sleigh (Chair of the Board)
 Deputy Dr Giles Shilson (Deputy Chairman of the Board)
 Lucy Musgrave
 Jenny Waldman

10. **MANAGEMENT REPORT BY THE CENTRE'S DIRECTORS**

Members received a report of the Managing Director providing updates from the Barbican Directors on their respective areas. The following comments were made:

- The Art Gallery and Conservatory had reopened to the public receiving 5,149 visitors. The Barbican Library reopened on Monday receiving 354 visitors.
- The Managing Director confirmed that whilst a thriving Centre remained the aim, there was a need to manage the speed and degree of return and a phased pattern was needed to ensure safety in line with Government guidelines.
- Developing the digital offer has remained pivotal and cinema on demand had now launched requiring cross-team working.
- The Creative Learning programme has moved into a blended model with improved digital content and strong Partner collaboration.
- The Barbican and Guildhall School jointly hosted an online workshop around 'Civic Conservatoire / Civic Urbanism' following the cancelled joint Board away day in March. The Town Clerk agreed to circulate the

workshop recording to Members. The Deputy Chairman stated that the civic workshop was very inspiring and suggested that there should be more workshops of this kind.

- It was noted that a workshop would take place tomorrow looking at how the Centre could refresh and progress thinking on technology which would include a range of staff inputting.
- Members were informed that the aim remained to create an environment that enables and inspires, and that management across the creative alliance with the Guildhall School continued to ensure this was delivered in a compliant, appropriate and efficient way.
- The Director of Operations and Buildings thanked the engineers and operational staff for their continued hard work throughout the building which ensured the reopening of the Barbican. Local residents were also thanked for their patience whilst works continued. The Chair echoed this thanks and appreciation on behalf of the Board and was happy that visitors were returning to the Centre.
- The Managing Director stated that the closure of the Centre had meant a significant loss of income and opportunity, but new opportunities were being explored following the gradual reopening. It was acknowledged that Board networks and sponsorship from all avenues were invaluable, e.g. a Patron-sponsored concert would take place in the Hall in autumn, and advice was encouraged to help develop growth. Large funding applications and funding opportunities were currently on hold or had been turned down which was also a huge impact on the Centre.
- The Managing Director voiced gratitude to the City Corporation for their support ensuring continuity and acknowledged that the Barbican was not in the same position as other arts organisations due to this support.
- A Member highlighted the importance of supporting the Arts at this difficult time and enquired if many people had refused refunds. Members were advised that the Centre and its events programme was complex and therefore there was no straightforward donation option for the first wave of refunds. It was hoped there would be more donations in the second wave of refunds.
- A Member asked that finances be considered from the perspective of the Barbican as an employer and provider of opportunities for artists and freelancers. The Centre had an important role in the UK for the artistic community and these responsibilities should be considered as well as financial implications.

RESOLVED – That Members endorse Management’s approach to the future activities of the Centre.

11. **EQUALITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE**

The Board considered a joint report of the Head of HR, Interim Artistic Director and Director of Innovation and Engagement providing the annual Equality and Inclusion update on the work underway to develop a new strategy for 2020 onwards.

Officers acknowledged that whilst there had been some good progress since last year, the timeliness of reviewing equality and inclusion was more significant than ever following the recent impact of the BLM movement highlighting how much more needed to be done. The Barbican has since initiated Listen and Learn sessions for BAME staff to input into and a Taskforce is being set up to review work practices and recommend future action.

The Chair of the Barbican Centre Trust advised that greater diversity of Trustees was also important, and she hoped that when she stepped down as chair this would allow new talent to emerge.

The Chair advised Members that the City Corporation's Tackling Racism Taskforce (TRT) was working quickly on all issues and encouraged the Team to input on issues within the cultural workstream that was in development.

A Member was concerned that separate BAME groups and networks were another form of segregation for BAME staff and colleagues and felt that groups should be open to all. Several Members disagreed with this view and a Member stated that affinity groups were considered good practice and a safe space for the group in question find their voice and space within an organisation. The Member added that since joining the Board, he had and would continue to explore the diversity question and highlighted the importance of diversity of perspective as morally right and creating value in a post-Covid world. It was accepted that there was privilege on the Board, and they should look at what others were doing better to understand what racism was and to ensure diverse content. The Chair agreed and wanted the Board and the Barbican to be truly diverse in all aspects.

A Member advised that it was common for organisations to have BAME networks as they were safe spaces to express solidarity. It was noted that the LSE BAME Network took research to senior staff concerning BAME frontline staff who were predominantly BAME and more likely to die from Covid-19 which forced development of mitigations in practice.

A Member recommended looking across the piece at staff at all levels and how frequently the Board considered issues of diversity and inclusion. Members agreed this should be a more important part of the narrative and requested more regular information on these issues to ensure progress was being monitored. A Member added that options including best practice in the industry should also be included. Officers agreed that on top of the annual equality and inclusion update, information could be included within the Management report for each meeting.

The Chair advised that he planned to do a full review of what reports the Board received and how frequently they should come.

A Member was interested in diverse content, how it was selected and diversity figures on audiences. Members were advised that the previous Artistic Director had pushed heavily for diverse content in programming and this would continue for all artforms. It was acknowledged that more could be done in areas such as classical and this was being thought about by curators.

A Member emphasised that whilst programming was changing, there was still a struggle for good diversity data in the industry and welcomed examples from other arts organisations. Officers agreed that whilst this was a gap in the industry, others were able to provide more information because they were stand-alone organisations. The Centre was proactively working to overcome this, and it was agreed that just because something was complicated, it should not be a barrier. A Member requested that this data be brought to the Board annually to show what had been achieved and to help diversify the programme and ultimately audiences.

RESOLVED – That Members endorse the proposed way forward.

12. **VISUAL ARTS ANNUAL REPORT**

The Board received a report of the on Interim Artistic Director providing an overview of the Visual Arts department's current areas of activity and strategic focus, outlining the impact of our programme over the past year, and points to key future strategic initiatives.

The Head of Visual Arts advised that she was proud of the team as the department had managed to achieve great continuity in comparison to peers in other organisations who had been furloughed. Before the lockdown, huge audiences were being achieved from touring exhibitions. The postponement and cancellation of planned 2020 exhibitions had had a major financial impact, but the team were keen to overcome this challenging time and improve diversity and gender balance of the upcoming programme.

A Member queried why the Into the Night exhibition was hugely successful in Vienna but not in the UK. Officers advised that it may not have delivered as it tried to do too much and there were possible misjudgements in how it was titled and marketed, leading to mixed reviews.

A Member noted the huge success of Basquiat and asked what the Centre did right so this success could be replicated. It was noted key learning from successes was important, but that Basquiat was a cult figure with a huge following with broad appeal which made the exhibition hard to replicate. It was hoped the upcoming programme would inspire success with great diversity and young audiences.

RECEIVED.

13. **PROJECTS UPDATE**

The Board received a report of the Director of Operations and Buildings providing Members with an update on the Centre's maintenance and

refurbishment projects that fall under the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) and additional projects funded from other sources.

The Chair noted that he had recently visited the Centre to observe the projects that had been completed during lockdown and the new carpet looked great.

RECEIVED.

14. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD

There were no questions.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no urgent items.

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item No.
17-31

Paragraph No.
3

17. NON-PUBLIC BOARD MINUTES

The non-public minutes of the Board meeting held on 20 May 2020 were approved as a correct record.

18. INFORMAL NOTE OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Members received the draft informal note of the Finance Committee meeting held on 6 July 2020.

19. VISUAL ARTS: NON-PUBLIC SECTION AND APPENDICES

The Board received the non-public Visual Arts update and appendices to be read in conjunction with item 12.

20. PROJECTS UPDATE: NON-PUBLIC APPENDIX

The Board received the non-public Projects Update appendix to be read in conjunction with item 13.

21. COVID-19 - SITUATION UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Chief Operating and Financial Officer providing Members with an update on the current situation for the Centre as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

22. BARBICAN CENTRE CAPITAL CAP PROGRAMME - ANNUAL REPORT (2020)

The Board received a report of the Director of Operations and Buildings providing Members with an update on the Capital Cap system funding many construction/refurbishment and other projects at the Barbican Centre.

23. **MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS ANNUAL REPORT**
The Board noted a report of the Interim Artistic Director regarding the Barbican Marketing and Communications Annual Report.
24. **UPDATE ON CATERING AND BARS 2019/20**
The Board noted a report of the Chief Operating & Financial Officer providing a progress update on Catering and Bars 2019/20, outlining the performance and issues of 2019/20 and the proposals going forward.
25. **UPDATE ON BARBICAN GUILDHALL CREATIVE ALLIANCE**
The Board noted a report of the Director of Innovation & Engagement providing Members with an update on the current status of the Barbican Guildhall Creative Alliance, following a strategic review and development of a new Framework, to promote and programme mutual benefit-driven collaborative projects.
26. **RETAIL PERFORMANCE 2019/20 UPDATE**
The Board noted a report of the Chief Operating and Financial Officer providing Members with an overview of the retail operation in 2019/20 (covering the foyer shop, gallery shop and online), an update on progress made following the retail review in November 2018 and the response to the Covid-19 pandemic so far.
27. **PROGRAMMING RISK REGISTER**
The Board received a report of the Interim Artistic Director updating Members on the Programming Controversial Risk Register and the identified potential risks that occur as a result of specific programmed events and activities, as well as outlining the mitigation processes in place for each.
28. **RISK UPDATE**
The Board considered a report of the Director of Operations and Buildings updating Members on the risk management system in place at the Barbican, the significant risks that have been identified and measures for mitigation of these risks.
29. ***BARBICAN BUSINESS REVIEW - MAY 2020 (PERIOD 2 - 20/21)**
The Board considered a report of the Chief Operating & Financial Officer setting out the Business Review for the May 2020 (Period 2 – 20/21) accounts.
30. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**
There were no questions.
31. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT WHILST THE PUBLIC IS EXCLUDED**
There was one item.

The meeting ended at 1.45 pm

Chairman

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