

CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LIBRARIES COMMITTEE

Monday, 19 July 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee held at
Virtual meeting on Monday, 19 July 2021 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Wendy Hyde (Chair)	Alderman & Sheriff Professor Michael
Jeremy Simons (Deputy Chairman)	Mainelli
Munsur Ali	Andrew Mayer
John Bennett	Jeremy Mayhew
Peter Bennett	Wendy Mead
Deputy David Bradshaw	Deputy Barbara Newman
Tracey Graham	John Petrie
Alderman David Graves	Judith Pleasance
Graeme Harrower	Deputy Dr Giles Shilson
Deputy Tom Hoffman	Deputy Tom Sleigh (Ex-Officio Member)
Ann Holmes	James Tumbridge
Vivienne Littlechild	Mark Wheatley
Deputy Edward Lord	Dawn Wright

In Attendance

Officers:

Ben Dunleavy	- Town Clerk's Department
Nick Bodger	- Culture and Visitor Development Director, Innovation and Growth
Elizabeth Scott	- Head of Guildhall Art Gallery, Innovation and Growth
Laurie Miller-Zutshi	- Innovation and Growth
Carol Boswarthack	- Community and Children's Services
Colin Buttery	- Director of Open Spaces
Christopher Earlie	- Head of Tower Bridge, Open Spaces Department
Aqib Hussain	- Chamberlain's Department
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerk's Department
Julia Pridham	- Town Clerk's Department
Charlotte Scott	- Town Clerk's Department
Rob Shakespeare	- Open Spaces Department
Leanne O'Boyle	- Innovation and Growth
Emily Rimington	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Graham Nickless	- CHB - Accountancy

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from David Bradshaw, Tjies Broeke, Mary Durcan, Graham Packham and Henrika Priest.

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

There were none.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 14 June 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

4. **MINUTES - BENEFICES SUB-COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED, that – the minutes of the Benefices Sub-Committee meeting held on 2 June 2021 be received.

5. **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee's forward plan was noted.

6. **CHIEF OFFICERS' REOPENING UPDATE**

Chief Officers were heard in respect of the updates on re-opening City attractions and services. The following updates were noted:

Head of Tower Bridge & the Monument

City of London (COL) visitor attractions all remained in close contact with each other in the run up to 19 July. The latest visitor attraction data received shows a significant public appetite for the retention of social distancing measures, with 40% of respondents saying they would not visit without some measures in place. On this basis, the general guidance from the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA) is to retain social distancing measures to maximise business in line with visitor confidence. All City of London attractions will follow minimum public health requirements, but the intention is to retain the majority of measures so as to retain visitor confidence after 19 July. There will be periodic reviews, with the potential for phasing down this approach in line with guidance and public appetite. The first of these reviews is likely to take place in August. The reinvigoration of business is an important part of the return to normal, and this can only happen by responding appropriately and responsibly to visitor sentiment.

A recent meeting of UK attractions covered a number of these points, with most attractions saying it was their intention to retain many of the measures. Discussions around face coverings involved how to manage and message the government's 'recommend and encourage' approach. Attractions also discussed the ability to manage 'walk-up' visitors, with COL attractions to continue to offer flexibility on this approach, offering pre-booking as well as walk-ups. Many attractions, including Tower Bridge, have already seen a spike in bookings prior to 19 July.

Tower Bridge will retain most measures, with a few exceptions. The 'encourage and recommend' approach to face coverings will be adopted. Messaging on this will be key, especially to provide support for staff when communicating with visitors. Capacity at the Bridge will be increased by 40%, which will keep capacity within previous distancing guidelines. Cash transactions in the gift shop will be restarted. Tower Bridge reopened on 17 May and saw 2,000 visitors in the first week, and over 6,000 visitors during half-term. This has helped to restart the income generation of City Bridge Trusts through admissions and retail. Weekly figures have grown to about 4,000 per week

A Member asked for more information on what social distancing measures should and shouldn't be kept. The Head of Tower Bridge replied that the intention is to maintain all social distancing measures, including bookings and walk-ups. There is a constant review of visitor feedback.

Head of Guildhall Art Gallery

The Gallery will retain all social distancing measures, including offering both a booking system and walk-ups. There will be a constant review of feedback, and introducing changes one at a time. The change this time is to adopt the 'recommend and encourage' approach to the wearing of face coverings. The next change will be to increase capacity from August, having learnt from visitor movement through the Noel Coward exhibition.

Principal Curator, Keats House

Keats House is following a similar approach to that followed elsewhere, and has benefited from the advice and support of other departments. The Keats House garden is to reopen with unlimited access. Pre-booking for access to the house is being retained, but with increased numbers available. They will also be introducing the ability for people to walk-up, within capacity. The capacity of the house is 24 people. The sentiment received from visitor feedback is that people feel safer with some measures in place. Social distancing markers around the house will be removed, but will remain in communications. Measures such as contactless payment, protective screens, sanitisers and advice to wear face coverings will also remain. The measures will be reviewed continuously.

Director of the London Metropolitan Archives

The London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) remain open to pre-booked researchers who wish to consult original archives. They are fully booked for July, and bookings are open for August and September. They intend to open access to microfilm in August. Advice to wear face coverings will remain. The Archives also offer additional days for researchers to view large-scale plans, for which the Archives needs to make special arrangements to produce in a COVID-safe manner. The Archives have provided access to a team of researchers from the Infected Blood Inquiry, who have been consulting archives for some years.

LMA's outdoor football exhibition, A Capital Game, moved from Guildhall Yard to Aldgate Square in mid-June and closed on 15 July. The Archives were

pleased that the Lord Mayor was able to attend. The display was produced in collaboration with the City's Cultural and Visitor Development team.

Guildhall Library and the Small Business Research and Enterprise Centre also continue to be open to pre-booked users. The Business Centre has provided advice and encouragement to small and medium sized enterprises who have applied to the City of London's Recovery Grant Fund.

Head of Barbican & Community Libraries

A message to customers was sent last week, and posted online, to say that the libraries will resume normal hours from 19 July. Visits to the library will cease to be time-limited. Soft furniture and study spaces have been restored. Hand sanitiser dispensers have been left in place, and visiting customers have been asked to continue to scan the QR code for the Test and Trace app when entering the library. Paper Test and Trace forms are also available. Some concerns have been raised over the lack of a mandatory requirement for customers to wear face coverings. This has been raised with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS), who have confirmed that public libraries will not be an exception to the lifting of the mandatory requirement to wear face coverings in public spaces. Therefore, the libraries can only recommend that customers wear them, and this message is being pushed.

The rising number of self-isolation cases could affect the staffing of libraries, and so customers are being asked to check that the library is open before they visit. This has been put on the departmental risk register and the COVID Pandemic Plan has been updated so that staff are aware of how to proceed and the priority order of closing services.

Responses from customers to the measures enacted have been generally positive.

Members asked the origin of the data that departments were relying on regarding visitor support for retention of restrictions, and whether the feedback that is being gathered from visitors to COL attractions is being fed back to the government. The Head of Tower Bridge replied that the data originates from ALVA, to which the majority of UK visitor attractions belong. ALVA have been conducting regular visitor sentiment surveys since the start of lockdown. The data has been gathered from the majority of UK attractions. The data applies to the whole of the UK, and so may differ from conditions in London, but COL attractions are comparing the overall UK data to data that is gathered onsite. ALVA also acts as a lobbying service for the industry, and feeds the data back to DCMS. It was also mentioned that many of the measures are not enforceable; for example, hand sanitiser dispensers are provided, but it is up to visitors to use it. The minimum of public health requirements are being followed, and there is some flexibility on how this is approached.

Head of Cultural Programming and Partnerships

The Head of Cultural Programming and Partnerships provided an overview of the Outdoor Arts Programme planned for the upcoming months. There are

around 40 events planned between July and November. The theme of the programme is 'A Thing of Beauty', commemorating the bicentenary of the death of John Keats and the recurring theme of beauty throughout his work.

Members praised the line-up of events and congratulated the Officers involved. A Member asked how the programme organisers are prepared for potential changes at a time when the pandemic situation is changing quickly. In response, an Officer said that all events go through the Significant External Events Group process to ensure that they follow guidance and that events can be delivered safely. The Group contains officers from various departments, including the City of London Police and the Public Health team. A Standard Operating Plan is also being developed, in association with Hackney, to provide clear guidance for events delivered in the City.

Members expressed concern that the programme was not being marketed as effectively as it might be to City Residents. The Culture and Visitor Development Director replied that they have been late in marketing because they did not know until recently if they would be able to go ahead with some of the planned events. This means that most of the marketing has been digital.

City of London residents are being targeted through the usual communication channels. The Programme has worked with the Community and Children's Services Department to engage with these audiences, not least through estate newsletters.

A Member asked if there was a formal process for residents to approach officers to suggest their own events and also if there could be a 'Coming Soon' advertisement in newsletters and on Ward notice boards for upcoming events.

Members commented that there needed to be improved efforts made to engage with residents, especially those who are not estate-based. A Member suggested that events could be marketed through the weekly email bulletin circulated by the Barbican Estate Office. The Culture and Visitor Development Director replied that the newsletter is sent information and that residents were as much of a priority as other audiences.

There is a corporate newsletter in which events are featured, but that requires residents to be aware of it and to sign up. The Events Team is unable to use electoral databases held by the Corporation for marketing purposes.

A Member asked if using resident databases could be explored further as an option.

A Member expressed concern about the gap between the proposals and the communication. He also questioned the interpretation of what constituted advertising on-street. He felt information about the Corporation's own cultural activities was within the bounds of what was acceptable. He asked if Officers could come back with a renewed approach to their communications.

7. CAI RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE

Members considered a report of the Director of Innovation & Growth in respect of the City Arts Initiative Recommendations to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee.

RESOLVED, that – Members ratify the City Arts Initiative’s recommendations in relation to the proposals as follows:

1. City of London Corporation - Festival Garden Entrance Sculptures: approve subject to planning permission, access requirements being met, and a sufficient maintenance fund being established
2. Westbrook Gallery – Lions Trail 2021: approve subject to final permissions being granted by Highways and relevant public liability insurance being put in place by the applicant
3. Natalie Robinson - Reflection (Totally Thames): approve subject to relevant authorisations being granted from officers managing Walbrook Wharf and the additional recommendations outlined below.
4. DP9 – The Garden of Floating Words: approve subject to maintenance being funded by the owners of the sculpture.
5. Keats Foundation - Keats Memorial Bust: approve in principle subject to final designs being approved by delegated authority and a satisfactory maintenance fund being raised by the applicants.
6. Culture Mile and Brookfield - Play Totems: noting that the application is privately funded and will likely be installed on private land and would therefore not require your Committee’s approval but, delegating authority to the CAI to approve final visuals should any part of the installation appear on the public highway.

8. **CULTURE AND COMMERCE TASKFORCE: APPROVAL OF ACTION PLAN**
Members considered a report of the Director of Innovation and Growth on the Culture and Commerce Taskforce: Action Plan.

RESOLVED, that – Members approve the City Corporation’s Fuelling Creative Renewal action plan as detailed within this report, noting that the five projects identified as appropriate for the City Corporation to lead will have significant involvement and/or leadership from across City Corporation departments and teams, and the five projects that will not be pursued by the City Corporation.

9. **THE WALK: LITTLE AMAL**
Members received a presentation from the Head of Cultural Programming and Partnerships on the chance for the City of London to host a stage of the ‘The Walk: Little Amal’ project, a giant puppet travelling across Europe to focus attention on the needs of young refugees. The project and the chance to host has support from the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee.

RESOLVED, that – Members approve the hosting of ‘The Walk: Little Amal’.

10. **PRINTED VERSION OF THE CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION POCKET BOOK**
This item was withdrawn from the agenda before the meeting.

11. **KEATS HOUSE RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Members received a report of the Director of Open Spaces relative to the Keats House Risk Management.

RESOLVED, that the report be received and its contents noted.

12. **THE MONUMENT - FULL YEAR 2020/21 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Members received a report of the Head of Tower Bridge relative to the Monument to the Great Fire of London Full Year Performance April 2020 to March 2021.

Members heard that the Monument has been closed throughout the pandemic. Expenditure has been reduced, and it has benefited from the furlough scheme. The closure has allowed necessary maintenance work to be done. The Monument has remained digitally open with activities available on the website, which has allowed continuation of its education provision. There have been high levels of participation.

RESOLVED, that the report be received and its contents noted.

13. **DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY POWERS**

Members received a report of the Town Clerk relative to decisions taken under urgency.

RESOLVED, that the report be received and its contents noted.

14. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

A Member asked why the item on the Pocket Book had been withdrawn from the agenda. The Chair responded that it would be returning to the Committee at a later date.

A Member complimented the masonry work of Thomas Clark Collins on the Festival Gardens Entrance Sculptures in the CAI recommendations.

15. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was none.

16. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED, that – under Section 100(A) 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 I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

17. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 June 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

18. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES - BENEFICES SUB-COMMITTEE**
RESOLVED, that – the draft non-public minutes of the Benefices Sub Committee held on 2 June 2021 be received.
19. **CHARITIES REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS - GUILDHALL LIBRARY CENTENARY FUND (206950)**
Members received a report on the Corporate Charities Review recommendations for the Guildhall Library Centenary Fund.
20. **TOWER BRIDGE - FULL YEAR 2020/21 PERFORMANCE REPORT**
Members received a report from the Head of Tower Bridge relative to the Tower Bridge 2020/21 Performance Report.
21. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
There were none.
22. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
There was none.
23. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**
RESOLVED, that – the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

The meeting ended at 12.58 pm

Chairman

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