

BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES BOARD
Wednesday, 15 September 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Bridge House Estates Board held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall and via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 15 September 2021 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Dr Giles Shilson (Chair)
Dhruv Patel (Deputy Chair)
Henry Colthurst
Alderman & Sheriff Alison Gowman
Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark
Paul Martinelli
John Petrie
Judith Pleasance

Officers:

David Farnsworth	- Managing Director of Bridge House Estates
Douglas Trainer	- Deputy Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Simon Latham	- Town Clerk's Department
Karen Atkinson	- Chamberlain's Department
Anne Pietsch	- Comptroller & City Solicitor's Dept.
Nicholas Gill	- City Surveyor's Department
Paul Monaghan	- Department of the Built Environment
Ola Obadara	- City Surveyor's Department
Jon Averbs	- Director of Markets & Consumer Protection
Christopher Earlie	- Head of Tower Bridge
Samantha Grimmett-Batt	- City Bridge Trust
Sandra Jones	- City Bridge Trust
Ruth Kocher	- Department of the Built Environment
Lorenzo Conigliaro	- City of London Police
Catherine Mahoney	- City Bridge Trust
Fiona Rawes	- City Bridge Trust
Neil Robbie	- City Surveyor's Department
Gordon Roy	- Department of the Built Environment
Simi Shah	- Innovation & Growth
Tim Wilson	- City Bridge Trust
Paul Wright	- Deputy Remembrancer
Scott Nixon	- City Bridge Trust
Joseph Anstee	- Town Clerk's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Henry Pollard.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **BOARD MINUTES***

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

4. **MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Board received a report of the Managing Director of Bridge House Estates (BHE) providing an update on key areas of activity across the whole charity since the Board's last meeting in July 2021 and outlining upcoming activities for the Board to note.

Tower Bridge

The Board noted a recent technical issue with the Bridge's automated control system, which had been resolved. The Chair commented that it was key that lessons were learned in order to prevent such issues going forward. The Head of Tower Bridge advised that whilst the control system was no at the end of its life, it was intended to upgrade the system in alignment with ongoing HV System project.

A Member commented that there had been other recent issues at Tower Bridge, which were highly publicised, and the Board sought assurance that sufficient planning and budget were in place for predicted maintenance over the longer-term. The Head of Tower Bridge explained that plans were in place to overhaul the full system, with some work having been brought forward. The Board noted that work had been done to assess the funding required for the maintenance of the bridges over the long-term.

The Chair advised that a report on the Risk Register for the charity, which would include risks in respect of the bridges, was expected at the next Board meeting in November.

City Bridge Trust (CBT) Activity Update

The Board received an update on CBT's response to the impact on London's Afghan community and refugees of the crisis in Afghanistan. The Managing Director of BHE advised that whilst the scale of the planned resettlement scheme had not been confirmed, as over half of the Afghan community in the UK lived in London, it was likely many would seek resettlement in London. There were several areas where CBT could provide support and the Trust had a longstanding associated with Afghan organisations through which support could also be provided. The Managing Director of BHE added that officers were actively working in this area.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

5. **APPOINTMENTS TO THE GRANTS COMMITTEE OF THE BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES BOARD**

The Town Clerk advised that following the previous meeting of the Board, four Members had been agreed for appointment to the Committee, with Chair of the Board also intending to attend meetings. The Town Clerk further advised that the Court of Common Council had approved the Board's proposed protocol for co-option, also ratifying the Board's proposal to appoint Jannat Hossain and William Hoyle, formerly Co-opted Members of the City Bridge Trust Committee, to the Grants Committee until the next municipal year.

The Board was then asked to elect a Chair and Deputy Chair of the Grants Committee. Expressions of interest were sought in serving as Chair and Paul Martinelli, being the only Member indicating willingness to serve, was duly elected as Chair of the Grants Committee. Expressions of interest were the sought in serving as Deputy Chair of the Grants Committee, and Dhruv Patel, being the only Member indicating willingness to serve, was duly elected as Deputy Chair of the Grants Committee. The Chair then thanked and congratulated the newly-elected Chair and Deputy Chair.

RESOLVED – That the Bridge House Estates Board:

- a) Appoint Alderman Alison Gowman, Paul Martinelli, Dhruv Patel and Judith Pleasance to the Grants Committee of the BHE Board; and
- b) Appoint Paul Martinelli as Chair of the Grants Committee of the BHE Board, and Dhruv Patel as Deputy Chair of the Grants Committee of the BHE Board.

It was also,

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Members of the Bridge House Estates Board express their sincere thanks and appreciation to:

DHRUV PATEL

for the manner in which he presided over the deliberations of the City Bridge Trust Committee for the last two years and the commitment he has demonstrated towards all aspects of the Trust's work.

Under Dhruv's stewardship, the City Bridge Trust Committee considered almost 500 Bridging Divides applications and awarded over £55m in funding, including a significant number of larger, longer grants. His imagination and enthusiasm as Chair, and his understanding and strategic oversight have driven the Trust with a clear and expansive focus, despite the unprecedented pressures and impact on the charitable sector of the last eighteen months.

Dhruv has been a strong ambassador for City Bridge Trust, devoting considerable time to visiting organisations and promoting the work of the Trust

through the media, and has been incredibly supportive of the Trust's officers. Dhruv has been an active champion for the development of the Committee's equalities work, and he has ensured that so many organisations and communities across London have been supported by the Trust, during the most testing circumstances.

As Chair, he promoted a dynamic and collaborative approach that has helped to introduce new ideas and ways of working to City Bridge Trust, and to the wider charitable sector. This was never more significant than his leadership in establishing the London Community Response Fund, which brought more than sixty funders together to react to the emergency of COVID-19. During his tenure, the Fund worked at invaluable pace to distribute over 1650 grants, totalling more than £30m in funding, and later moving towards meeting the longer-term needs of the sector, by improving the sustainability of organisations in light of the very different operating context they will face. Despite other significant calls on his time, throughout the pandemic he has always been available to help the Trust in its work, both directly and through the London Community Response Fund.

Furthermore, Dhruv has been instrumental in the implementation and progress of the Bridging Divides strategy, culminating in an agreement to extend the strategy by a further five years. He also oversaw key strategic initiatives, such as a £400,000 grant to Centre For The Acceleration Of Social Technology to support digital transformation across the charity sector in London, and £400,000 to Trust for London to tackle some of the root causes of poverty and disadvantage amongst Deaf & Disabled Londoners.

We warmly thank Dhruv for his leadership of the City Bridge Trust Committee and his committed contributions to the continuing success of the Trust and to Bridge House Estates, and hope that both City Bridge Trust and Bridge House Estates can continue to depend on his skills and experience.

6. **CITY BRIDGE TRUST GRANTS OF OVER £500,000 FOR APPROVAL**

a) **Trust for London Collaborative Projects Extension Funding**

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board agree a grant of £840,000 to Trust for London (TFL) to extend the current Moving on Up and the Strengthening Voices Realising Rights projects for an additional two years, subject to confirmation of the TFL match contribution at an equivalent level.

b) **Legal Education Foundation - Justice Collaborations**

In response to a question from a Member, the Managing Director of BHE advised that CBT had a history of supporting the advice sector, including legal advice. The support provided by CBT was used to complement other forms of support and towards funding *pro bono* legal work. The Chair confirmed that grants of this nature were within the remit of the Bridging Divides strategy, but could be taken into consideration for the next CBT strategic review.

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board agree a grant of £500,000 over three years (£200,000; £150,000; £150,000) to The Legal Education Foundation – Justice Collaborations (TLEF) to contribute to the second round of grants for specialist immigration advice services in London.

c) **Strategic Initiative: Catalyst (Centre for the Acceleration of Social Technology)**

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board agree a grant of £900,000, over five years (£200k, £200k, £200k, £175k, £125k) to the Centre for the Acceleration of Social Technology for the continuation of the Catalyst digital network project, release of year two payments will be conditional on funding from the National Lottery Community Fund (or other funder(s) at a similar level of funding) being secured.

7. **REQUEST FOR UPLIFT TO THE CENTRAL CONTINGENCY BUDGET**

The BHE Board considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE and the Chamberlain updating Members on the central contingency budgets held by BHE within the original 2021/22 budget, with a request for an uplift to be approved to enable the BHE Board to meet unforeseen and/or exceptional items that may be identified during the year. In response to points raised by Members, the Chair confirmed that the contingency budget would be directly overseen by the Board, and that requests for allocations would need to demonstrate why the costs cannot, or should not, be met from existing budget provisions in the usual way.

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board, in discharge of functions for the City Corporation as Trustee of Bridge House Estates (charity reg. no. 1035628) and solely in the charity's best interests:

- a) Note the central contingency budgets currently held by BHE for 2021/22 (paras 1-3);
- b) Approve that £50,000 be held as a contingency for consideration for joint projects undertaken with the City Corporation;
- c) Approve that £40k originally held as contingency for contribution pay be transferred to a central contingency fund;
- d) Endorse an uplift in central contingency budgets of £810,000 for onward approval by the Court of Common Council; and
- e) Endorse the use of currently held contingency budgets of £108,000 as stated in this report for onward approval by the Court of Common Council.

8. **BHE BUDGET UPLIFT REQUEST - STAFFING**

The Board considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE requesting approval of a 2021/22 budget uplift of £77,800 to fund 3 roles until 31st March 2022.

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board, in discharge of functions for the City Corporation as Trustee of Bridge House Estates (charity reg. no. 1035628) and solely in the charity's best interests, and subject to the Court of Common Council's approval to an uplift in the contingency budget to be held within the control of the BHE Board, approve a budget uplift of £77,800 for the 2021/22 operational budget held by BHE to fund the extension of 2 roles linked to the implementation of the BHE Strategic Governance Review and 1 additional role for BHE operational support.

- a) Implementation: To approve a 2 day a week extension of the existing BHE Review Programme Director role and a full-time 4-month extension to the existing BHE Transformation Project Accountant position until March 2022.
- b) Operational: To approve a 2.5 day a week BHE Project Officer role until March 2022.

9. **CAPITAL FUNDING UPDATE***

The Board considered a report of the Chamberlain on capital prioritisation and the 2020/21 and 2021/22 rounds of annual capital bids. Members commented that it was important that parallel procedures and appropriate officer delegations be set up to avoid the need for decisions in respect of relatively minor sums to be submitted to full Board meetings, and asked officers to look for efficiencies in this regard.

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board agree the release of an initial £3,000 contribution towards the costs of progressing the Wide Area Network upgrade project to the next gateway, to be met from the Unrestricted Income Fund with funding previously approved within the 2021/22 budget.

10. **BUDGET MONITORING: 1 APRIL TO 31 JULY 2021***

The BHE Board providing a financial update of Bridge House Estates (BHE) activities from the start of the current financial year to 31 July 2021 to enable the Board to have an overview of the charity's financial position and performance, alongside updating on forecast changes made.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

11. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**

There were no questions.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

The Board gave thanks to Ciaran Rafferty, CBT Funding Director, on his last meeting after twenty years at City Bridge Trust. The Board thanked Ciaran for his long and valuable service to the charity and wished him luck in his next role.

In response, Ciaran Rafferty thanked the Board for their tribute, remarking that it had been an honour and privilege working for the charity, and wished the Board luck with their important work going forward.

13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That with the Court of Common Council for the City Corporation as Trustee of Bridge House Estates (Charity No. 1035628) having decided to treat these meetings as though Part VA and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 applied to them, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that their consideration will in each case disclose exempt information of the description in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A, being information relating to the financial and business affairs of any person (including the City Corporation as Trustee of the charity) which it would not be in the charity's best interests to disclose.

14. **NON-PUBLIC BOARD MINUTES***

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

15. **NON-PUBLIC APPENDICES - REQUEST FOR UPLIFT TO THE CENTRAL CONTINGENCY BUDGET**

The Board received a non-public appendix in respect of Item 7.

16. **RESOLUTION OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

The Board received a resolution of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

17. **SUICIDE PREVENTION IN THE CITY OF LONDON**

The Board considered a report of the Deputy Town Clerk and Chief Executive.

18. **GATEWAY 3 - SECURE CITY PROGRAMME (SCP) - VULNERABLE PEOPLE WORKSTREAM**

The Board considered a report of the Director of the Built Environment and the Commissioner of the City of London Police.

19. **CAS: AGREEING TARGETS AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS FOR A NET ZERO PATHWAY FOR FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS FOR EACH FUND**

The Board considered a report of the Chamberlain.

20. **PERFORMANCE MONITORING TO 31 JULY 2021: BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES***

The Board received a report of the Chamberlain.

21. **GATEWAY 5 - REFURBISHMENT OF ELECTRA HOUSE, 84 MOORGATE, EC2 - BHE**

The Board considered a report of the City Surveyor.

22. **BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES: OUTSTANDING LEASE RENEWALS & RENT REVIEWS - 1ST JANUARY 2021 TO 30TH JUNE 2021***

The Board received a report of the City Surveyor.

23. **BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES - RENTAL ESTIMATES MONITORING REPORT***
The Board received a report of the City Surveyor.
24. **DELEGATED AUTHORITY REQUEST: APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS**
The Board considered a report of the Chamberlain.
25. **GUILDHALL COOLING PLANT REPLACEMENT**
The Board considered a report of the City Surveyor.
26. **REPORT OF DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY***
The Board received a report of the Town Clerk.
27. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**
There was one question.
28. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE BOARD AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
There was no other business.
29. **BHE TOM PROPOSAL**
The Board considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE.

The meeting ended at 3.27 pm

Chair

Contact Officer: Joseph Anstee
joseph.anstee@cityoflondon.gov.uk