

BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES BOARD
Wednesday, 24 November 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Bridge House Estates Board held at North Tower
Lounge, Tower Bridge and via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 24 November 2021
at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

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

Officers:

David Farnsworth	- Managing Director of Bridge House Estates
Paul Double	- City Remembrancer
Simon Latham	- Town Clerk's Department
Karen Atkinson	- Chamberlain's Department
Amelia Ehren	- Town Clerk's Department
Anne Pietsch	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Dept.
Paul Monaghan	- Department of the Built Environment
Ola Obadara	- City Surveyor's Department
Christopher Earlie	- Head of Tower Bridge
Hikmot Ademosu	- City Bridge Trust
Brian Brierley	- City Surveyor's Department
Jonathan Cooper	- City Surveyor's Department
Dinah Cox	- City Bridge Trust
Thomas Creed	- Environment Department
James Edwards	- Remembrancer's Department
Samantha Grimmett-Batt	- City Bridge Trust
Ian Hughes	- Environment Department
Ruth Kocher	- Environment Department
Catherine Mahoney	- City Bridge Trust
Fiona Rawes	- City Bridge Trust
Neil Robbie	- City Surveyor's Department
Tim Wilson	- City Bridge Trust
Joseph Anstee	- Town Clerk's Department

The Chair welcomed all in attendance to Tower Bridge, one of the charity's most iconic assets, and gave thanks to the Head of Tower Bridge and his team for facilitating and hosting the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES***

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 15 September 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

4. **MANAGING DIRECTOR'S UPDATE 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 September 2021 and outlining upcoming activities for the Board to note.

BHE Strategic Governance Review

The Remembrancer advised the Board that the Supplemental Royal Charter remained under consideration by the Charity Commission, with officers having worked through several concerns and hoping that these had now been satisfied. The agreement of the Charity Commission was needed before the Privy Council could approve the Supplemental Royal Charter. The Remembrancer advised that it was still anticipated that the Supplemental Royal Charter would be granted by the end of the current financial year. The Chair thanked officers for the update and for their work throughout this process, commenting that he hoped any issues could be resolved and that progress would be made ahead of the January meeting of the Board.

Social Investment

In response to a question from a Member, the Managing Director of BHE advised that updates on the Social Investment Fund could be supplemented with information regarding the social impacts of investments, as well as the financial information, and that email updates could also be provided.

City Bridge Trust Update

The Managing Director of BHE advised that transitional funding support to organisations who would otherwise seek support through funding programmes currently on pause would be announced the following week, with information to be distributed to organisations. The Board then noted the update provided in respect of the relaunched Funder Plus Offer, The Bridge Programme.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

5. BRIDGING LONDON STRATEGY 2020 - 2045; YEAR ONE ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT, 2020/21

The Board considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE providing Members with a short Annual Progress Report of Bridge House Estates' overarching strategy, Bridging London, for 2020 – 21 and outlining the progress made in delivery of the strategy to date and the future strategic direction which will be reflected in the Year 2 (2022) Action Plan. The Managing Director of BHE introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the key points.

Members then gave feedback on the report, suggesting that a list of all trustees be added to the document and that the pictures be updated to increase their diversity. In response to questions, the Managing Director of BHE advised that the document was largely internal, but a design version would be produced for wider distribution.

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

- i) Note the progress made in delivery of Bridging London, in 2020-21, as outlined in the Annual Progress Report;
- ii) Endorse the proposed strategic direction for 2022 as set out in the Annual Progress Report;
- iii) Approve the updated foreword to be signed by the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Bridge House Estates Board for use in 2022; and
- iv) Note the new designed version of the Strategy.

6. CAPITAL FUNDING - PRIORITISATION OF 2022/23 ANNUAL CAPITAL BIDS - INITIAL REVIEW

The Board considered a report of the Chamberlain regarding the prioritisation of 2022/23 Annual Capital Bids. The Chamberlain introduced the report, advising that the amounts relevant to BHE were relatively small and drawing the Board's attention to corrections that had been circulated in respect of minor errors within the report.

Members reiterated their view that it was impractical for the Board to consider relatively small amounts and that this should be addressed through the Scheme of Delegations to officers. The Chair added that he had also raised this view prior to the meeting, advising that officers understood this view and were working on a more efficient arrangement to be taken forward.

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board:

- a) Note the total value of City Fund and City's Cash bids amounting to £61.9m against a target upper limit of £30m (excl BHE);

- b) Review the initial RAG rating of £24.3m green, £29.3m amber and £8.4m red contained in the appendices (determined in consultation with senior officers);
- c) Agree that, subject to Member feedback, funding for the green bids be incorporated into the medium-term financial plans, providing they remain within the £30m overall limits for City Fund and City's Cash and remain at a similar modest level for Bridge House Estates;
- d) Agree in principle that bids with a final RAG rating of amber and red be deferred;
- e) Agree that amber-rated bids be placed on a reserve list to be progressed in the event that funding headroom is identified; and
- f) Note that the final decision on the green-rated bids for inclusion in the 2022/23 draft budgets will be confirmed at the joint meeting of RASC and the service committee and Bridge House Estates Board chairmen in January 2022.

7. CAPITAL FUNDING UPDATE*

The Board considered a report of the Chamberlain seeking approval to the reallocation of funding between schemes to address an anticipated budget shortfall and to the release of funding post gateway approvals to allow schemes to progress.

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board agree the release of a £6,000 contribution towards the costs of progressing the Guildhall cooling plant replacement project to the next gateway, to be met from the Unrestricted Income Fund with funding previously approved within the 2021/22 budget.

8. BHE BUDGET UPLIFT REQUEST - STAFFING

The Board considered a report of the City Surveyor requesting approval of a 2021/22 budget uplift of £14,000 to extend the funding (from December 2021) for the interim role of Tower Bridge Programme Co-ordinator until 31st March 2022.

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board approve this additional funding of £14k from the BHE Central Contingency Fund, to enable this role to continue supporting the co-ordination of major construction activities, by various stakeholders to Tower Bridge.

9. UPDATE ON BHE CONTINGENCY FUNDS

The Board received a report of the Chamberlain providing Members with an update on the 2021/22 Central Contingencies uncommitted balances held by Bridge House Estates (BHE). The Chamberlain introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the key points.

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; and
- b) Note that £14,000 was approved from the central contingency provision at Item 8 for the Tower Bridge Project Coordinator role.

10. BUDGET MONITORING: 1 APRIL TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

The Board received a report of the Chamberlain providing a financial update of Bridge House Estates (BHE) activities from the start of the current financial year to 30 September 2021, alongside the latest forecast for the year. The Chair introduced the item and drew Members' attention to the Financial Dashboard appended to the report. In response to a question from a Member, the Chamberlain advised that targets in respect of the charity's free reserves were for the charity to determine, and it had been suggested that the minimum target be increased to £90 million due to current uncertainties.

In response to a question from a Member regarding grants spending, the Managing Director of BHE advised that work was underway on reopening funding programmes and grants spending was gradually increasing. The Board was advised that CBT had discussed and were cognisant of the reputational risks of underspending, but had felt that increasing grants spending too quickly risked overdistributing funding or distributing without proper planning, which would also carry reputational risks, and therefore spreading the uplift over a longer period was the preferred approach.

Noting that bridge spending was also currently under budget, the Chamberlain advised that the methodology for budgeting in respect of the bridges would be reviewed, but was currently phased and matched on the basis of projects rather than as an even spread across years. The Chamberlain further advised that a project was planned in the near future in respect of Millennium Bridge. The Executive Director of Environment then advised that the Millennium Bridge had not recently required any spending, with some recent work done as part of the Illuminated River installation having been externally funded.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

11. PROGRESS UPDATE - MINIMUM ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS & NET ZERO CARBON ACTION PLAN*

The Board received a report of the City Surveyor providing an update on work being done as part of the Climate Action Strategy in respect of energy efficiency and net zero carbon. Members reiterated their support for the programme and their desire to set ambitious, line-leading targets for BHE, with wider targets providing a 'long stop'.

In response to a question from a Member regarding recruitment in specialist areas, the City Surveyor advised that there was expertise and understanding

within the property and energy teams. A combination of in-house expertise and outsourcing was in use, with the City Surveyor seeking to build a 'centre of excellence' within the department, whilst planning to bring in additional resources where they were needed.

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board, as relevant to their terms of reference:

- i) Note the progress update; and
- ii) Note the continuation of the CAS NZ4 plan for resourcing the Sustainable Property Specialist in order to ensure the continued success of this programme

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

The Chair then thanked Members of the public observing via YouTube for their participation.

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 MINUTES***

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

15. **NON-PUBLIC APPENDICES - CENTRAL CONTINGENCIES BUDGET UPDATE**

The Board received a non-public appendix in respect of Item 9.

16. **BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES PRINCIPAL RISK REGISTER**

The Board considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE.

17. **BRIDGE UPDATE REPORT: 50-YEAR MAINTENANCE PLAN AND REPLACEMENT STRATEGY**

The Board received a report of the Executive Director of Environment.

18. **TOWER BRIDGE HALF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT APRIL TO SEPT 2021**

The Board received a report of the Executive Director of Environment.

19. **SECURE CITY PROGRAMME BRIEFING TO BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES BOARD**

The Board received a report of the Executive Director of Environment.

20. **SECURE CITY PROGRAMME (SCP) - VIDEO MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (VMS)***

The Board received a report of the Executive Director of Environment.

21. **DELEGATED AUTHORITY REQUEST: APPROVAL OF THE 2020/21 ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Board considered a report of the Chamberlain and Managing Director of BHE.

22. **UPDATE TO BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES TRANSITIONAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT**

The Board considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE.

23. **64/65 LONDON WALL - RE-COVERING AND REPLACEMENT OF ROOF - BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES**

The Board considered a report of the City Surveyor.

24. **REFURBISHMENT OF TOWER CHAMBERS, 74 MOORGATE, EC2 - BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES**

The Board considered a report of the City Surveyor.

25. **BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES (BHE): ARREARS OF RENT AS AT SEPTEMBER 2021 QUARTER DAY MINUS 1**

The Board received a report of the City Surveyor.

26. **BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES RENTAL ESTIMATES MONITORING REPORT***

The Board received a report of the City Surveyor.

27. **BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES - QUARTERLY DELEGATED AUTHORITIES UPDATE - 1ST JULY 2021 TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021***

The Board received a report of the City Surveyor.

28. **BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES - 64-65 LONDON WALL, EC2 - FREEHOLD DISPOSAL**

The Board considered a report of the City Surveyor.

29. **INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE MONITORING TO 31 SEPTEMBER 2021: BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES***

The Board received a report of the Chamberlain.

30. **DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY***

The Board received a report of the Town Clerk.

31. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE BOARD AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was one item of other business.

32. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES***

RESOLVED – That the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2021 be approved as a correct record.

The meeting ended at 1.00 pm

Chair

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