

BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES BOARD
Tuesday, 13 September 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Bridge House Estates Board held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall and via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 13 September 2022 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Paul Martinelli (Deputy Chair) - In the Chair
Deputy Henry Colthurst
Alderman Professor Emma Edhem
Alderman Alison Gowman
Judith Pleasance
Deputy Nighat Qureishi
Deputy James Thomson

Officers:

David Farnsworth	- Managing Director of Bridge House Estates
Karen Atkinson	- BHE & Charities Finance Director (Representing the Chamberlain)
Simon Latham	- BHE Chief Operating Officer
Anne Pietsch	- Comptroller & City Solicitor's Dept.
Amelia Ehren	- BHE
Samantha Grimmett-Batt	- BHE
Geraldine Page	- BHE
Fiona Rawes	- BHE
Tim Wilson	- BHE
Paul Dudley	- BHE
Ola Obadara	- City Surveyor's Department
Andrew Cross	- City Surveyor's Department
Paul Monaghan	- Environment Department
Kate Limna	- Chamberlain's Department
Joseph Anstee	- BHE

The Deputy Chair, in the Chair, welcomed those in attendance to the meeting, as well as any members of the public and partner organisations observing the meeting via YouTube.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Dr Giles Shilson (Chair), Deputy Simon Duckworth (Chief Commoner) and Deputy Henry Pollard.

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

Deputy James Thomson declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 16 by virtue of also being Chair of the Police Authority Board.

David Farnsworth, Managing Director of BHE, declared an interest in Item 19 and advised that he would not participate in this item.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 6 July 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS***

The Board received a list of outstanding actions for September 2022 and noted the updates provided. In response to a question from a Member, the BHE & Charities Finance Director advised that discussions were ongoing with the Chamberlain's Department regarding lease premiums, and it was hoped that a solution could be provided as soon as possible.

RESOLVED – That the list of outstanding actions be noted.

5. **MANAGING DIRECTOR'S UPDATE REPORT**

The Board considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE providing an update on key areas of activity across the whole charity since the Board last met in July 2022 and outlining upcoming activities for the Board to note. The Managing Director of BHE introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the key points, also noting the forthcoming opportunities for Member engagement on the brand positioning project, learning visits to charities, and the Board's scheduled strategic away half-day in October.

External Audit

The BHE & Charities Finance Director advised that there had been delays to the BHE audit arising from the work being connected to audit work on other areas of the organisation. A resolution was expected soon which would enable the new external auditors Crowe to progress the matter. The Board was asked to agree a reference to the Audit & Risk Management Committee for their review of the year's accounts ahead of submission to the Board.

In response to a question from a Member, the Board was advised that this arrangement was not intended to be permanent, and that whilst the Board had previously agreed to retain BHE audit & risk functions at Board level, this could be reviewed going forward.

Wembley Stadium National Trust (WSNT)

In response to a question from a Member, the Managing Director of BHE outlined the intended arrangements in respect of WSNT and advised that further detail in respect of staffing could be provided in non-public session.

RESOLVED - That the BHE Board, in the 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 contents of the report, including the non-public appendices at Item 15; and,
- ii) Agree that the BHE Annual Report and Financial Statements 2021/22 be referred to the Audit & Risk Management Committee (ARM) for review and recommendation to the BHE Board for approval.

6. CHARITY COMMISSION REQUIREMENT TO REPORT ON SERIOUS INCIDENTS - REPORTING POLICY

The Board considered a report of the BHE & Charities Finance Director providing the BHE Board with an overview of the requirements to report Serious Incidents to the charities' regulator, the Charity Commission for England and Wales, and recommending the adoption of a formal policy for reporting and managing any Serious Incidents which might arise for the charity, and which will inform the exercise of delegated authority. The BHE & Charities Finance Director introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the key points.

Members discussed the prospective policy and raised several points by way of feedback, notably that the report should draw out what is regarded as a serious or significant and the extent to which this is a matter of judgement on the part of the person reporting the incident, as well as the Board's involvement in the reporting process.

In response to a question from a Member, the BHE & Charities Finance Director advised that there would be an element of judgement in reporting and that training would be provided for staff on the matter. The BHE & Charities Finance Director added that the reporting process would require the Board to be consulted on serious incidents as the report to the Charity Commission should be provided by the Trustee.

A Member commented that their instinct was that an incident posing a serious, material threat to the public, a material financial consequence, or significant reputational damage should constitute the threshold for a serious incident. The Deputy Chair noted that a list of incidents considered serious as defined by the Charity Commission was provided within the report, but that these were generic rather than specific to BHE. The BHE & Charities Finance Director further advised that it was intended to provide the Board with a regular update on items not meeting the threshold for a serious incident but of which the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Board had been notified.

Arising from the feedback provided by Members, it was agreed to amend the policy to demonstrate that training would be provided for staff, as well as guidance in respect of reporting.

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

- i) Approve the Serious Incident Reporting Policy for adoption for BHE set out in the report, subject to amendment arising from the feedback provided by Members.

7. UPDATE ON BHE CONTINGENCY FUNDS*

The Board received a report of the BHE & Charities Finance Director providing an update on the Bridge House Estates (BHE) Central Contingency balances held for 2022/23 and providing detail of new requests being made against these balances.

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:

- i) Note the BHE Contingency budgets currently held for 2022/23 (para 4); and,
- ii) Note that a total of £162,000 has been approved under delegated authority for the three items included in the summary above.

8. BUDGET MONITORING: 1 APRIL TO 31 JULY 2022

The Board received a report of the BHE & Charities Finance Director providing a financial update on Bridge House Estates (BHE) activities to 31 July 2022. The BHE & Charities Finance Director introduced the report and outlined the key points for Members.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. TOWER BRIDGE - INSTALLATION OF PERMANENT WORKING AT HEIGHT CONTROLS AND FABRIC IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1 - RESTING BLOCKS)

The Board considered a report of the Director of Tower Bridge regarding a project to install permanent work at height controls and fabric improvements within the north and south resting block areas at Tower Bridge which includes fall arrest systems, metalwork repairs, timber floorboards replacement/modifications, and associated repairs and decorations. The Deputy Chair drew Members' attention to the pictures set out in the report which demonstrated the magnitude of the work.

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board agree:

1. That the total estimated cost of the project at £328,520 (excluding risk), which is already provided for in the Bridge House Estates (BHE) 50 Year Maintenance Fund for 2022/ 23, is approved,

2. That a Costed Risk Provision of £11,000, which is already provided for in the BHE 50 Year Maintenance Fund for 2022/ 23 (to be drawn down via delegation to Chief Officer) is approved, and
3. Approve the use of 3RS Engineering Limited as per the recommended option.

10. **TFL'S LONDON BRIDGE EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC RESTRICTION**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment regarding a response to the consultation in respect of Transport for London's (TfL) Experimental Traffic Order on London Bridge. The BHE Chief Operating Officer introduced the report and set out its context, adding that the Board was asked to endorse the submission of a separate response from BHE to the consultation, in addition to the response from the wider City of London Corporation. The Executive Director, Environment added that this approach was endorsed by the Streets & Walkways Sub Committee, who had also considered the report and would be leading on the consultation response with regards to the City of London Corporation's role as the highway authority.

Members agreed with this approach noting the concerns in respect of the bridges that would be set out within a consultation response on behalf of BHE.

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board:

- i) Note the contents of the report as relevant to its Terms of Reference; and
- ii) Agree that a response to the consultation should be submitted on behalf of BHE, in addition to the response from the wider City of London Corporation.

11. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022/23 - PROPOSED AMENDMENT**

The Board considered a report of the Chamberlain proposing an amendment to the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2022/23 (TMSS) to improve the alignment between the strategy and the various individual participants whose treasury management activities the TMSS applies to, with the Board making a decision in respect of BHE. The Chamberlain introduced the report, setting out the background to the decision and drawing Members' attention to the key points.

RESOLVED – That the BHE Board note the report and agree the proposals in relation to Bridge House Estates, that funds related to Bridge House Estates are invested in line with the simplified strategy, noting the loss of £222,767 that would be realised as set out in the report.

12. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

Members praised the work of officers and the communications team for their response to the Queen's passing, with special mention for the lighting arrangements on Tower Bridge.

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 6 July 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

15. **NON-PUBLIC APPENDICES: MANAGING DIRECTOR'S UPDATE REPORT**

The Board considered non-public appendices in respect of Item 5.

16. **BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES AND CITY OF LONDON POLICE INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (SLA) PROGRESS**

The Board considered a report of the BHE Chief Operating Officer.

17. **PROPOSED FINAL BHE PRINCIPAL RISK REGISTER**

The Board considered a report of the BHE Chief Operating Officer.

18. **HIGHWAYS OVER THE CHARITY'S BRIDGES - TABLE OF FUNCTIONS**

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

19. **DELEGATED AUTHORITY REQUEST: FUNDING APPLICATIONS OVER £500,000**

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

20. **COLECHURCH HOUSE SE1 - PROPOSED REMOVAL OF PART REINSTATEMENT OF THE ELEVATED FOOTWAY**

The Board considered a report of the City Surveyor.

21. **DELEGATED AUTHORITY REQUESTS**

a) **Delegated Authority Request: Horace Jones House and Bridgemasters House - Works to Address Historic Issues**

The Board considered a report of the City Surveyor.

b) **Delegated Authority Request: Commercial Settlement Offer for 30-34 New Bridge Street**

The Board considered a report of the City Surveyor.

22. **BHE: PERFORMANCE MONITORING OF PROPERTY INVESTMENT PORTFOLIOS TO 31ST MARCH 2022***

The Board received a report of the City Surveyor.

23. **BHE: OUTSTANDING LEASE RENEWALS & RENT REVIEWS - 1ST JANUARY 2022 TO 30TH JUNE 2022***

The Board received a report of the City Surveyor.

24. **BHE: RENTAL ESTIMATES MONITORING REPORT (JUNE 2022 QUARTER)***

The Board received a report of the City Surveyor.

25. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE BOARD AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was other business.

The meeting ended at 12.31 pm

Chair

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