

## **BARBICAN CENTRE BOARD**

**Wednesday, 19 May 2021**

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Barbican Centre Board held on Wednesday, 19 May 2021 at 11.00 am

### **Present**

#### **Members:**

Deputy Tom Sleight (Chair)	Deputy Wendy Hyde (Ex-Officio Member)
Tijs Broeke (Deputy Chairman)	Vivienne Littlechild
Munsur Ali	Wendy Mead
Randall Anderson	Lucy Musgrave (External Member)
Farmida Bi (External Member)	Mark Page (External Member)
Russ Carr (External Member)	Jens Riegelsberger (External Member)
Zulum Elumogo (External Member)	Jane Roscoe (External Member)
Anne Fairweather	Jenny Waldman (External Member)
Alderman David Graves	

#### **In Attendance**

Tobi Ruth (Observer)  
Will Gompertz

#### **Officers:**

Sir Nicholas Kenyon	- Managing Director, 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
Niki Cornwell	- Head of Finance and Business Administration, Barbican Centre
Cornell Farrell	- Head of Engineering and Projects, Barbican Centre
Nick Adams	- Acting Head of Communications, Barbican Centre
Steve Eddy	- Head of HR, Barbican Centre
Linda Barry	- Interim Group Accountant, Barbican Centre
Lorna Gemmell	- Head Of Communications, Barbican Centre
Luke Kemp	- Acting Co-Head of BIE, Barbican Centre
Patrick Moran	- Acting Co-Head of BIE, Barbican Centre
Ola Obadara	- Projects Director, City Surveyor's Department
Laura Whitticase	- Strategic Lead, Barbican Centre
Sarah Wall	- Principal Accountant, Barbican Centre
Andrew Buckingham	- Communications Team, Town Clerk's Department
Leanne Murphy	- Town Clerk's Department

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Stephen Bediako and the Rt Hon. the Lord Mayor, Alderman William Russell.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **BOARD MINUTES**

The public minutes and non-public summary of the Board meeting held on 24 March 2021 were approved as a correct record.

The Chair welcomed the new Chair of the Barbican Centre Trust, Farmida Bi, to the Board and she introduced herself.

4. **BOARD EFFECTIVENESS AND GOVERNANCE REPORT**

The Board considered a report of the Town Clerk in respect of the Boards effectiveness and governance.

Members were advised that the report was a product of the Board effectiveness survey and discussions at the informal Member Board session held on 17 February 2021. The aim was to enhance the terms of reference for the Board's Sub Committees in order to take decisions away from Board and give greater oversight. The proposals also set out discipline and guidelines for the Board's Working Groups and proposals for new groups would follow.

The proposals aimed to pick up themes from the informal meeting and capture where the Board should put its focus by reducing operational items to advance the agenda strategically. By providing the Board more time at meetings, the hope was to develop this strategic content - e.g. succession planning, leadership and the Barbican Renewal Project - as these items were important for the future of the Centre.

A Member voiced concern that they were in danger of micro-managing a highly skilled team through the new NEI Committee and felt that the governance outcomes of the Lisvane Review should be realised first. The Member subsequently voted against the recommendations. The Chair responded that there was no guarantee how the Lisvane recommendations would turn out and the report only amended the existing remit of the Board.

A Member agreed with the concerns regarding micro-management and was of the opinion that the Board only had a right to be involved if there were concerns regarding a specific area of governance, e.g. EDI. It was felt clarity was needed concerning who was doing what and that the new NEI Committee did not become the executive board. The Member stated that Sub Committees should support but not replace the Board. The Chair replied that there were no plans to remove the Board's power as the executive or create additional scrutiny, but rather bring discipline to the Board's role and its Sub Committees and Working Groups.

A Member was supportive of the proposals but felt the Board needed to regularly see financial information as part of the main agenda and not just within the information pack. It was agreed a two-page update providing key data would be helpful and especially important to monitor as the Centre

recovered from the pandemic. This would be included with the streamlined data presented in the new dashboards.

There was significant support for bringing EDI issues into the remit of the NEI Committee to ensure accountability was measured and to hold leadership to think about key issues and concerns.

With regards to the Civic Working Group, a Member did not agree with the task and finish aspect stating that issues such as anti-racism and civic society could never be task and finish with a set end time. It was agreed that there should be outturn reports with suggestions to bring these important areas forward.

The Statutory Deputy Chair welcomed the proposals as a sensible way forward for providing better scrutiny and focus. With regards to comments concerning potential micro-management and the role of the executive and Board, it was agreed the line should not be crossed and that the Chair already informally provided input on the formal evaluation of Chief Officers.

The Board were reminded that there was annual review of the Board's Terms of Reference and Members agreed a review of the new Sub Committees should happen after nine months, at which point the Managing Director could advise if staff found the scrutiny too intrusive.

A Member mentioned the daunting element for introducing the review of Members but agreed everyone should be judged by their contributions. It was noted that external Members were already reviewed, and this process would make it fair for everyone on the Board.

The majority of Members were supportive of the proposals, with only one Member in opposition, and the Board subsequently approved the recommendations.

**RESOLVED – That Members:-**

- Approve the streamlining of management reporting and full Board meeting agendas;
- Approve the proposal to delegate more financial matters for decision to the Finance & Risk Committee and the revised Terms of Reference;
- Approve the proposal to expand the Nominations Committee to form the Nominations, Effectiveness and Inclusion Committee and the revised Terms of Reference;
- Approve the guidelines to formalise the role of Working Groups alongside the regular governance bodies; and
- Approve guidelines on Deputy Chairs and Board Observers consistent with recent Board discussions.

5. **APPOINTMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEES 2021/22**

The Board considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning the appointment of its various Sub Committees for the ensuing year.

**RESOLVED** - That:-

- Approve the Terms of Reference of the Board's Sub-Committees;
- Approve the Composition of the Board's Sub-Committees;
- Agree the Chair is to continue representing the Board on the Culture Mile Working Party; and
- Appoint the Membership to the Sub-Committees for the year ensuing.
- The following Memberships be agreed: -

**Finance and Risk Committee of the Barbican Centre Board**

Tijs Broeke (Chair of the Board)

Deputy Tom Sleigh (Deputy Chair of the Board)

Randall Anderson

Russ Carr

Anne Fairweather (Policy & Resources Committee representative)

Robert Glick OBE (Barbican Centre Trust representative)

Deputy Wendy Hyde (Finance Committee representative)

Alderman David Graves

**Nominations, Effectiveness & Inclusion Committee of the Barbican Centre Board**

Deputy Tom Sleigh (Chair of the Board)

Stephen Bediako (Deputy Chairman of the Board)

Randall Anderson

Tijs Broeke

Zulum Elumogo

Lucy Musgrave

Mark Page

Dr Jens Riegelsberger

6. **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 Managing Director stated that things were on track with number of events going ahead. It was noted that the 17 May opening was only made certain when Government gave confirmation one week before and the same was expected for 21 June announcement.
- Members were advised that EDI underpinned all work and this, along with the civic strategy with Gulbenkian alliance, the Barbican Renewal

Project, the Centre's approach to hybrid working and the development of Business Model, was fully intertwined in the future plan for the Centre.

- The Managing Director introduced Will Gompertz, the new Director of Arts & Learning from 1 June, to the Board who stated he was looking forward to working with the Board on this next step for the Centre.
- The Chair gave thanks to the Interim Director of Arts & Learning, Leo Thomson, and the Head of Finance and Business Administration, Niki Cornwell, for the fantastic work they had achieved who were attending their last Board meeting. These thanks were echoed by Members.
- The Statutory Deputy Chair was pleased to hear that demand for business events was increasing, good to hear, but voiced caution regarding the 21 June deadline which could potentially shift highlighting the need for a plan b. Officers confirmed they were happy with uptake of pre-booked tickets, and were interested to see how demand continues as some surveys were indicating reluctance by some visitors; however, this could not be assessed until the restrictions were lifted. The biggest uncertainty was for the theatre programme.
- The Managing Director highlighted the need for the Business model to be extraordinarily flexible. The return of people remained challenging as the public sentiment and reluctance to travel may lead to a younger audience in person. Also, with everyone reopening at the same time, there was a need to compete against competitors.
- In response to the issues for theatre and potentially not fulfilling wanted audience number and how this would affect the Centre's food offerings, members were advised that they were gradually reopening with demand and that the restaurants would open as appropriate as theatre reopens.
- A Member enquired, given the uncertainty, if Officers were planning for worst case scenarios for the rest of the year and was informed that they were strategically looking at all scenarios with a final decision dependant on the Government and the City Corporation's instructions. It was hoped they would avoid a further closure.
- In response to a question concerning risk sharing with external Partners, Officers confirmed that there was demand; however, whilst Cinema and Music were able to adapt more easily with securing rentals, the Theatre and Gallery were more complex due to large productions. With regards to financials, a cautious view had been taken on income assumptions and Officers continued to review forecasts quarterly.

RECEIVED.

**7. SAFEGUARDING REPORT**

The Board received a report of the Director of Innovation & Engagement and Head of HR Barbican/Guildhall School concerning the Barbican's Safeguarding Policy which is reviewed annually.

The policy has been updated to include new details of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs). With the move of the Creative Learning team to be solely a Barbican department and not a joint department with the Guildhall School, this will be reviewed in further detail to ensure all safeguarding issues that would have previously been dealt with under the Guildhall School safeguarding process are covered. This paper sets out the current interim arrangements.

RECEIVED.

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

There were no questions.

**9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There were no items.

**10. 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.

**11. NON-PUBLIC BOARD MINUTES**

The non-public minutes of the Board meeting held on 24 March 2021 were approved as a correct record.

**12. 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.

**13. BARBICAN RENEWAL PROJECT**

The Board received a report of the Managing Director providing Members with an update concerning the Barbican Renewal Project.

**14. BARBICAN INTERNATIONAL ENTERPRISES (BIE) UPDATE**

The Board considered a report of the Interim Director of Arts and Learning providing Members with an update on the Barbican International Enterprises (BIE) Strategy.

**15. BARBICAN EXHIBITION HALLS - ENABLING WORKS**

The Board considered a Gateway 5 report of the City Surveyor regarding works required to the Barbican Exhibition Halls.

16. **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION UPDATE**  
The Board received a report of the Director of Innovation & Engagement providing Members with an update on the progress being made towards a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for the organisation.
17. **BARBICAN BUSINESS PLAN PERFORMANCE INDICATOR**  
The Board received a report of the Chief Operating and Financial Officer providing an update on the key business measures and of the implementation of the new Barbican Business Plan.
18. **BARBICAN BUSINESS REVIEW - MARCH 2021 (PERIOD 12 - 20/21)**  
The Board noted a report of the Chief Operating & Financial Officer setting out the Business Review for the March 2021 (Period 12 – 20/21) accounts.
19. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**  
There were no questions.
20. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**  
There was no other business.

**The meeting ended at 1.24 pm**

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Chairman

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