

Committee(s)	Dated:
Barbican Centre Board	17 February 2022
Subject: Management Report by the Barbican's Directors	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	n/a
What is the source of Funding?	n/a
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	n/a
Report of: Joint Interim Managing Directors, Barbican Centre	For Decision
Report authors: Directors, Barbican Centre	

Summary

- The Management Report comprises current updates under six sections authored by Barbican Directors.
- Updates are under the headlines of:
 - Joint Interim Managing Directors' Update
 - Programming, Marketing and Communications
 - Creative Learning
 - Operations and Buildings
 - Business and Commercial
 - Development.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Endorse Management's approach to the future activities of the Centre.

Main Report

1. REPORT: JOINT INTERIM MANAGING DIRECTORS' UPDATE

As we stated in our January report, the unpredictability of the current situation means that we have to manage our business tactically on a day-by-day basis. January began quietly with footfall and audience levels considerably reduced as a consequence of Omicron and general uncertainty. However, the latter half of the month has seen an increase in activity across the Centre, with the Noguchi exhibition in particular bucking the trend with over 4,000 visitors at its closing weekend.

With current indications of a steady and gradual increase in people coming to London for work and leisure, there is a sense of growing optimism for business over the coming months. Given the volatility of recent times we will of course need to be cautious in our business assumptions but nonetheless this perceptible increase in confidence augurs well for our 40th anniversary programme of activities.

Alongside our business activities, our work on the Barbican renewal programme has resulted in an exceptional and well received shortlist of design partners. Detailed and broad ranging consultation with staff, partners and stakeholders has placed us in a good position to work with the selected design team over the coming months.

Our work in delivering a more inclusive and equitable organisation, with a new creative vision and the changes of the renewal programme, are creating a platform for transformational change. This will be reflected in our business plan coming to the Board in May.

All of this has been delivered by exceptional work by our staff in unprecedented circumstances. Our creative, development and commercial teams have adapted well in tailoring their activities to unpredictability of these times with considerable success. The immense work and dedication of our operational, technical and engineering teams, our HR, Finance and IT colleagues and staff across the Centre has enabled us to reach a position where we can look to the future with confidence.

2. REPORT: PROGRAMMING, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Noguchi exhibition was extended to 23 January and closed having been seen by over 65,000 visitors and exceeding the additional income target. Shilpa Gupta's commission, which was also very popular, closed in the Curve on 6 February. The next exhibition in the Barbican Art Gallery, Postwar Modern: New Art in Britain, 1945–1965, will open on 3 March and will be accompanied by a residency by associate artist Abbas Zahedi, who will also be creating a project space in the Barbican Foyers. In our partnership programme, Michael Clark will open at the V&A Dundee on 5 March, and Noguchi will open at the Museum Ludwig in Cologne on 26 March.

Every January we present work as part of the London International Mime Festival. As well as two innovative UK shows we welcomed back our international partners with two shows from France. There was a great feature in The Guardian on Short & Sweet, the first show we presented as part of the festival. Audiences for the Barbican Theatre are slow to return, as has been seen across London, but both shows in the Pit sold out which is really encouraging. Boy Blue's co-founder and co-Artistic Director Michael 'Mikey J' Asante has been awarded an MBE for services to hip-hop dance and music. We're proud to have been able to facilitate the work of Boy Blue and to have been part of its journey for such a long time. Belarus Free Theatre's Dogs of Europe was included in the critics' round-ups of the best culture of 2022 in the FT, The Guardian, and The Stage, and Ballet Black's latest Double Bill was recommended in the Evening Standard. During February we will be doing our annual essential maintenance and inspections across the theatres.

Music continues to do well, with concerts in the Hall receiving a sweep of positive coverage throughout January. Five star highlights were delivered by, Lise Davidsen's Artist Spotlight with her recital with Leif Ove Andsnes; Maxim Vengerov's recital with Simon Trpceski; the LCO's 24 hour concert and the BBC Symphony Orchestra's Total Immersion day into Music for the End of Time.

It has been a busy and exciting time in the Cinema department. New East Cinema started 2022 with a sold-out screening of Courage, including a ScreenTalk with Nicolai Khalezin and Natalia Kaliada of Belarus Free Theatre and director Aliaksei Paluyan. Family Film Club's first Show & Tell of the year went ahead with a fantastic session from Catherine Last from the Turing Institute and was captioned and interpreted in BSL. A third and final screening of the T A P E Collective Presents: But Where Are You Really From? was followed by a well-attended workshop led by Dalia Al-Dujail and the Autism and Cinema tour has now come to an end after successful screenings in Glasgow and Manchester. And, after being rescheduled numerous times due to the pandemic, Science on Screen: The Conformist screening, went ahead and played out to a full house. This month we look forward to bringing audiences our Homeland season, films by Australian First Nations directors.

The AI: More Than Human exhibition opened at the Guangdong Science Centre for the Chinese New Year after a successful remote installation. The seven-month run for Virtual Realms at the Art Science Centre in Singapore ended on 7 January and was de-installed remotely before shipping to the next venue at the Museum of Western Australia in Perth. The Game On exhibition has re-opened at the Groningen Forum after closing due to Government-mandated lockdown. The run will continue through to 5 June 2022.

Production continues well on the development of the Our Time On Earth exhibition that will open on 5 May in the Curve Gallery, across the Foyers and in the Pit Theatre.

As part of the Barbican's 40th anniversary plans, the Public Programme & Archives team will stage a 'takeover' of The Curve gallery, opening on 28 February, with an installation of objects, ephemera and media highlighting 40 moments and stories in London's LGBTQ+ history from the Barbican's neighbour, The Bishopsgate Institute. Open for a limited three-week run, the exhibition will tell the story of an alternative 40 year history to the Centre's own, chronicling the culture, campaigning and political struggles of LGBTQ+ life in London from 1982 to the present day. Looking forward to very early March, additional programming around the 40th anniversary will include a host of new digital content, from new archival film unearthed from the Centre's opening ceremony, to the digitisation of the original architectural plans collection.

3. REPORT: CREATIVE LEARNING

From 21-24 January artist Sam Winston was in residence in the Conservatory with a mindful drawing project exploring the connection between air quality and human health. Funded by the Wellcome Trust, the project welcomed approximately 175 students, members of the public, and resettled Afghan families to a series of workshops drawing inspiration from the flora. The project culminated in a hybrid panel event on 24 January, with Winston, scientist Stefan Reis, and wellbeing expert Rohan Gunatillake – attended by 130 people. Finally, the exhibition of Sam Winston's artwork was seen by over 3,000 people on the opening weekend 22-23 January and will now remain in the Conservatory for others to enjoy until the end of March.

Careers in the Arts Day

On 11 January, the Barbican welcomed over 30 students and teachers from two secondary schools in Harlow to a successful Careers in the Arts Day, funded by Esmée Fairbairn as part of our National Development Programme. Students took part in two seminars on Designing Learning and Community Programmes and Marketing before being given a backstage tour of the Guildhall School and Milton Court's production arts facilities.

Young Creatives Update

We held an EDI roundtable with a selection of our Young Creatives in December 2021 to gather their thoughts on the Barbican's Action Plan. Additionally, Nick Adams ran a paid consultation workshop with eight Young Creatives on Barbican Renewal. We are also excited to be recruiting a new group of Young Creatives for *The Archive is Permanently Under Construction*, a two-month archive curation project delivered in collaboration with the Bishopsgate Institute and culminating in a Young Barbican Night of original work and public programming on 17 March.

3.1 Preview and Planning

Backstage Tours

This spring term Creative Learning and Music have collaborated to pilot a new schools backstage tour of the Concert Hall. Training for staff is taking place in February with one slot available per month during the spring and summer terms.

4. REPORT: OPERATIONS & BUILDINGS

General Update: Our buildings remain safe and compliant. We have continued to maintain and enhance the building over the Covid winter months and to train our staff during the same period. Our BCP Gold worked with Management and the City to ensure that we had four scenarios, ranging from Plan B to complete closure of our sector. Thankfully, Plan B was sufficient. We look forward, hopefully, to a clear run through to the autumn. We will continue our BCP process as required throughout the year, as we have done over the past two years.

Operations: Barbican Protect training has continued, with a completion rate of over 90% for SCaN, and around 70% for the recently released e-SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) training. We have also been reviewing our fire safety training and are rolling out a course in support of the existing programme.

Buildings: We continue to invest in our asset via the CWP, Capital and PSDS programmes, working with City colleagues and contractors as appropriate. We continue to work to ensure that any works requested or undertaken are aligned with Barbican Renewal. Many of our projects over the coming period are Alliance-based, i.e., combined Barbican Centre and Guildhall School. This will ensure efficiency and the interlinking of project outputs. We continue to work with colleagues from across the City on assorted Barbican area projects via BAPG and BAAG.

Risk, Audits and KPIs: Risk is at the top of the agenda of Barbican meetings, ensuring the correct culture and ownership. During the Covid era, working with the City audit team, we have audited our high-risk areas. Results to date are: a) Security audit (Alliance): Green assurance rating; b) UUK (Alliance): Green assurance rating; c) FM (Alliance): currently Amber but continuing to supply data in the hope of further improvement; d) Fire (Alliance): initiated. We will be sharing KPIs in management reports, including finance, climate / energy usage, risk / audits, safety / training, customer care, Cap / CWP / maintenance.

Staff and Workers (Casuals): We have continued with our EDI work and are working to develop and introduce new systems and processes to ensure an ever more transparent and fair one-team system for areas such as induction, training, shift allocation and reporting. Training has continued to be a top priority for staff and casual workers to ensure we remain in the vanguard of our sector and offer a consistently excellent and safe customer experience.

Next Steps and Horizon: We will continue to remain flexible as regards Covid, making use of our BCP process and scenarios as required. We continue to work towards our targets for the year. We will share KPIs which will assist us track progress and deliver continual improvement. We continue to maintain momentum to invest in our asset as we progress our Barbican Renewal project. The commitment of our staff and casual workers plus the continued support of City colleagues and Members is very much appreciated.

5. REPORT: BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL

Business Events: As Omicron took hold in December, many Christmas events moved into the last quarter of 21/22, and enquiries tailed off for the festive season.

Whilst January has seen some movement in events from the next 3 months into the 22/23 financial year, we have been encouraged by the growing number of new enquiries for this year, and also by the fortitude of a number of our repeat Universities who made the decision to forge ahead with their graduations in January and February (London Met and City).

The remainder of 21/22 continues to be reliant on both government advice and Covid-19 case numbers which are still causing uncertainty, although filming and photoshoots continue to support us with a number of exciting projects which the team are working on (including a filming opportunity involving the LSO) for 2022.

January has seen new starters in Searcys which has restored staffing levels back to pre-pandemic levels which has been a positive step in the right direction.

Retail: Aided by the extension of the Noguchi dates, the exhibition retail exceeded budgeted sales for the exhibition run. We are now receiving stock for the next Gallery exhibition; Post War Modern, and we are looking at product development and product selection for future Gallery and BIE exhibitions

The Foyer Shop also benefited from the busy Gallery in January, helping to boost footfall and sales during what can be a tricky month. The Foyer Shop is set to achieve an increase of over 400% for the third quarter vs. 20/21 when lockdowns and the closure of the Centre massively impacted our Christmas trading.

Online activity has slowed down since Christmas, but the team has been steady with orders throughout January and will achieve over £35k in sales for Q3. This is a decrease when compared to the same period last year when online was the only sales channel available, but this is more than offset by the increase in physical sales in store.

Catering & Bars: After a slow start to the year due to the Covid-19 Plan B restrictions, the public and our audiences are returning once again to our spaces. Performance Bars are yet to return to normal, but the Martini Bar is performing well at about 80% of pre-pandemic levels. The Conservatory has been open to the public for more days in January and Barbican Bars have taken the opportunity, now staffing issues have subsided, to open a pop-up bar. This is an opportunity that we will be developing this year. The Barbican Kitchen and Foyer cafe are the most affected by the reduced visitor numbers into the Centre, especially with the closure of Noguchi in the Gallery and limited activity in the Theatre. Osteria is now open at lunchtime during the week and is seeing a steady return to normality.

6. REPORT: DEVELOPMENT

Working with Management, the Board and Barbican Centre Trust, the Development team continue to work towards securing new supporters before the financial year end on 31 March.

Since the last report, the Trust and Grants team have successfully secured funding from the Boshier-Hinton Foundation and CHK Foundation towards Creative Learning programmes, and from the Golsoncott Foundation towards Music. Work is underway in collaboration with the Barbican Futures team to prepare the Barbican's application to re-join Arts Council England's National Portfolio over 2023-26.

The Individual Giving team continue to transition all Patrons at the point of renewal throughout the year to the new split gift scheme, and recruit new Patrons onto the programme. As well as renewals, new joiners and lapsed members rejoining, three £5k Exhibition Circle pledges for the upcoming *Soheila Sokhanvari* exhibition have been secured with an additional gift of £10k towards the *Carolee Schneemann* exhibition. At the end of 2021, £10k was received in support of the National Open Youth Orchestra (NOYO) from two Barbican residents.

Corporate Membership renewals continue with all current members agreeing to the changes of benefits and/or fee increases. A lapsed Member has also renewed their support from February 2022 onwards, following a pause as a result of the pandemic. The final prospective sponsor for Post War Modern declined, but conversations with warm leads for *Our Time on Earth* continue.

Event wise, whilst restrictions and cancellations affected programming at the end of 2021, the Individual Giving team successfully hosted pre-show drinks ahead of pianist Lang Lang's performance at the Barbican on 10 December. Unfortunately the increase in the Omicron variant meant several events were cancelled in the new year but will resume from mid-February onwards. To celebrate our upcoming exhibition, Postwar Modern, and the Barbican's 40th birthday in March, additional events for supporters and new individual, corporate and Trust & Grant supporters are being planned.