

Committee: Grants Committee of the Bridge House Estates Board	Date 26 September 2022
Subject: BHE Managing Director's Update Report	Public
Which outcomes in the <i>BHE Bridging London 2020 – 2045</i> Strategy does this proposal aim to support?	1, 2, 3
Which Bridging Divides Funding Strategy priority does proposal aim to support?	All
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
Report of: David Farnsworth, Managing Director of BHE	For Decision

Summary

To support the Grants Committee in the discharge of its duties, this regular report provides an update on key areas of activity to note and agree, where necessary. Specifically, the report provides details on the following: Bridging Divides funding updates relating to expected grant spend, the Cornerstone Fund, Risk and Grant Recommendations, LocalMotion, the Anchor Programme, Alliance Partnerships, Levelling Up Report, Impact Investing for the Capital, the Bridge Programme. The report also provides updates on Philanthropy, Communications and Events, and Impact and Learning workstreams.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Grants Committee of the Bridge House Estates 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; and
- ii) Agree to allocate £1,823,019 from the Bridging Divides designated grant fund for 2022/23 to the Cornerstone Fund.

Main Report

Bridging Divides Funding Updates

1. Expected Grant Spend in 2022/23 - At Agenda Item 9 the Budget Monitoring report is presented. This includes the current expected total grant spend for the year, which has been significantly reduced when compared to the original budget that the Grants Committee received in December 2021. Since then, a reforecast was circulated to the Committee by email, which explained that the expected spend had reduced, and indicated that further revisions would likely be required following further programme development. The reduction in expected spend is due primarily to the time it has taken to develop the collaborative Anchor and CAR funding programmes. A fuller explanation of the reduction is provided at **Appendix 1**.
2. Cornerstone Fund Round Two - The Cornerstone Fund (Cornerstone) was originally devised in October 2016, with the former CBT Committee approving an allocation of £3m to assist in the strategic development of infrastructure support for

London's civil society, by funding partnership work between civil society infrastructure organisations. Round 1 was launched in April 2018, as part of the overall Bridging Divides funding strategy, and Round 2 in April 2021. The continuation of Cornerstone (Round 2) was supported by the former CBT Committee in their endorsement of the recommendations of the Interim Review of Bridging Divides. Cornerstone is a collaborative initiative, bringing together funders (namely CBT, Trust for London (TL) and the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF)) and civil society support organisations and their partners with the aim of to bring about systemic change and enabling civil society support organisations to collaborate to achieve the goals of a: thriving civil society that is adaptable, resilient, collaborative, sustainable and driven my communities.

3. All of the Round 2 applications have now been assessed, barring one which is awaiting a decision under Delegated Authority. TL contributed £500,000 over 3 years to Cornerstone (both rounds) as a restricted grant towards this programme with the NLCF also taking part by awarding 2 of the Stage 2 grants using its own funding procedures. The table below outlines the Round 2 funding awarded.
4. Sufficient resource has been allowed in the 2022/23 grants budget for the funding of Cornerstone, and the continuation of Cornerstone was endorsed by the former CBT Committee. However, a note seeking Grants Committee approval to officially allocate c£2m to Cornerstone round 2 was omitted from the March 2022 MD report in error, due primarily to the departure of two senior funding staff. Officers apologise for this and, whilst it is an essentially administrative error, in the interests of good governance, the Grants Committee's approval is now sought retrospectively to allocate £1,823,019 of the agreed 2022/23 grants budget to Cornerstone.

Income	
Cornerstone Fund - brought forward 01/04/2022	£95,291
Trust for London - final instalment of £500,000 over 3 years	£100,000
Total	£195,291
Expenditure	
Learning Partner	(£33,050)
Grants approved between April and August 2022	(£1,985,260)
Total	(£ 2,018,310)
Total to be allocated from BD Designated Grant Fund	(£1,823,019)

5. Risk and Grant Recommendations - Thoughtful consideration of risk (in relation to applicant organisations and their projects) is central to good grant-making and covers a range of issues including equity, delivery models, likelihood of achieving proposed impact and financial management. Following the suggestion of the Chair of the Grants Committee, officers are developing a summary guide to sit at the front

of each grant recommendation report, highlighting issues of note. This is likely to include whether the organisation's leadership is reflective of the communities it serves, whether the expected approach is innovative (or 'tried and tested') and whether there are any specific financial issues. A proposal is intended for the Grants Committee's December meeting and, if approved, this will be trialled on future grant recommendation reports for feedback and improvement.

6. LocalMotion - LocalMotion is a collaboration between CBT and five other funders, joining forces to tackle economic, environmental, and social inequality in six places, utilising the resources of all six funders and places to have an impact which is greater than the sum of its parts. Following recent work on the communications and branding, the [official website](#) launched in July. It has also recently been agreed that CBT will provide Bridge Programme access (capacity building support) to core group members of the LocalMotion place based in London (Enfield), mirroring other involved funders which will also be providing their own "funder plus" support to LocalMotion core group members. The next learning summit is taking place in Lincoln on 1st November 2022.
7. Anchor Programme - Following the Grants Committee's endorsement of a £20m allocation from the designated grants fund in June 2022, progress on the Anchor programme continues. The programme aims to support anchor voluntary sector organisations to deliver systemic change by supporting their ongoing sustainability long-term. The usual City Corporation procurement process was used to recruit a learning partner, The Social Innovation Partnership (TSIP), which were also the facilitators for the Design Group (the group of sector organisations providing advice to CBT on the design and delivery of the fund). Due to TSIP's other commitments and delays during the procurement process the work will now start in earnest in October with the establishment of an Advisory Group of voluntary and community sector organisations, mostly with an equity focus (focused on communities facing the most barriers). The group will then work with officers to finalise the criteria and priorities, to support the launch of the first round of funding in Autumn.
8. Alliance Partnerships - On 6 July, the [Racial Justice Fund](#) and [Disability Justice Fund](#) launched, which are CBT Alliance Partnerships with Trust for London distributing a total of £7m in the Capital. CBT contributed a total of £2m towards the Racial Justice Fund and £1.5m towards the Disability Justice Fund.
9. Levelling Up Report - On 29 June, Centre for London released phase one of its [Levelling Up Report](#), which was funded by both CBT and the City of London Corporation. The launch event was attended by Alderman and Sheriff Gowman and CBT officers. The report sets out what London's Levelling Up needs are, how Londoners are affected by the Levelling Up agenda, and the challenge of getting a hearing for these issues.
10. Impact Investing for the Capital - BHE have been co-sponsor to Centre for London's ["In London and for London: Impact Investing for the Capital"](#). This research looks at the role impact investment could play to address London's challenges over the coming years. Key findings include: the importance of early stage, catalytic capital for projects with high potential impact but lower potential financial returns; the value of investment readiness grants and blended finance;

the need for an explicit equity focus to tackle bias and discrimination in the market. The report is expected to be published in mid-November.

11. Bridge Programme - An update report is included on today's agenda on the Bridge Programme and proposed next steps.

Philanthropy

12. The joint BHE and City Corporation Philanthropy Strategy aims, to support and raise awareness of high quality giving in the capital. Long-term support for place-based giving schemes through the London's Giving strategic initiative is a key part of this work, with £7m having been earmarked to further support the work of London's Giving and place-based giving schemes in September 2021.
13. In addition to the careful stewardship of the resulting funding bids from various Giving Schemes, five of which are included for discussion on today's agenda, there has also been significant work undertaken by externally commissioned bodies to shape thinking around a potential Resource Hub for London's Giving, and to scope the merits or otherwise of promoting a challenge/Match Fund to enable local schemes to leverage funding from new donors. The conclusions of these research exercises will be presented to the December Grants Committee meeting.
14. More broadly, the Corporate Volunteering Manager has played a key role, supported by the Philanthropy Director, in the recruitment, training and mobilisation of Royal Event Supporters from across the City Corporation. These RES have operated with consummate professionalism to support stewardship of the public at City-based events both for the Jubilee, and for the Service of Reflection at St Paul's Cathedral and the Proclamation of the King at the Royal Exchange, following the announcement of the death of Her Majesty the late Queen Elizabeth II.

Communications and Events

15. Media Coverage – Since the last Grants Committee meeting on 20 June there have been 97 items of media coverage referencing City Bridge Trust and other City Corporation charitable giving. This included a feature-length article on Bridge House Estates by Giles Shilson in *Fundraising.co.uk*, coverage in the *Daily Mirror* and *My London* of a grant to the Barnet Foodshare scheme and television coverage of a grant to music charity Joy of Sound on *London Live*.

Impact and Learning

16. End of Year 4 Bridging Divides Review - Renaisi have completed their review of CBT's progress during year 4 of the Bridging Divides period (April 21 – March 22). The full report is attached for information at **Appendix 2**. The aims of the review were informed by the CBT Management Team and Chairs of the BHE committee and BHE Grants committee. These were:
 - a. The impact that CBT funding and non-financial support has had on funded organisations over the last twelve months
 - b. A temperature check of CBT team views on the progress made towards becoming a learning and values-led team – to build on team consultations in previous mid- and end-of-year reviews.

17. Methods included:

- a. A team survey completed by 41 of the 55 CBT staff members (approximately 75%). This is almost double the response rate achieved in previous mid- and end-of-year reviews;
- b. A survey completed by 167 funded organisations;
- c. Six interviews with funded organisations, of varying size from four grant programmes; and
- d. Regular conversations with the Heads of Impact and Learning

18. Overall, CBT has played an important role for funded organisations through building trust, maintaining open communication, and being flexible. Such ways of working, alongside funding, have enabled organisations to adapt and continue their services in the face of the pandemic. However, responses show both funding and accessible Funder Plus support remain essential for funded organisations.

19. Responses to the staff survey suggest satisfaction with the progress CBT is making towards being values-led and praised working groups for helping push values up the agenda. There is still room for improvement before CBT is truly values-led.

20. Responses over 3 years show a marked improvement in staff members' perception of the learning ethos at CBT, with progress in all areas, particularly internal sharing of learning. Sharing of learning externally shows the greatest perceived improvement over time and more progress still to make.

21. Learning Visits - Thank you to Members and Co-opted Members of the BHE Grants Committee who contributed time and feedback to a trial of Learning Visits with CBT funded organisations between March and July. Feedback included:

*"Visits [...allow] us to understand how some of the **macro changes** happening around us are **impacting the work of organisations** in specific sectors."*

Co-opted Member of the BHE Grants Committee

*"Julia Mirkin has always worked hard to establish a balanced relationship with us and we have a good solid, mutually respectful relationship. This visit was no different. **This type of relationship engenders trust, honesty and collaborative working. This is a lesson for other funders.**"*

Funded Organisation

22. The learning has informed a new approach which the Impact and Learning team are implementing. Officers believe the new approach will create useful learning for all stakeholders, support trusting relationships, help the ongoing journey to balance power between CBT and funded organisations, bring to life intangible benefits of funding, and enable CBT to role model for other funders.

23. In the coming weeks, the Grants Committee will be asked to complete a short survey with their availability, areas of interest and skills to share, which officers will use to match them to a suitable learning visit from November 2022 onward. There will be pre-visit briefings and debriefs.

24. Research Update - CBT commissioned Lancaster University and the Work Foundation to conduct independent research to explore hybrid working for disabled people. There are a number of enduring structural barriers and disadvantages to disabled people accessing and thriving within the labour market. There is much evidence for this but the area is not widely researched. However, government has a goal to see one million more disabled people in work between 2017 and 2027 and mainstreaming hybrid working is an area of much debate post-pandemic. With inflationary pressures, the needs for hybrid working may shift again.
25. The research consisted of a large national survey of disabled people in employment, interviews with disabled people and 2 policy roundtables of employers and support/advice organisations respectively. A Research Advisory Group of independent experts within the field of disability was attached to the research from design to delivery.
26. The [final research report](#) was published on 11 July and a panel launch event was held on 19 July, with Grants Committee Chair Paul Martinelli providing the keynote speech. Shani Dhanda, Disability Specialist & Accessibility Consultant, who was on the panel, described the research as “ground-breaking”.
27. The research found that the majority of disabled workers who took part in the research valued the opportunity to decide where they worked, and this had positive impacts for them and their organisation. There were clear benefits to working from home, including having more control, autonomy and better able to manage health and wellbeing.
28. However, of all survey respondents who requested additional support or new adjustments while working remotely, close to 1 in 5 (19.1%) had their request refused. Many interviewees pointed out that although they had access to specialist equipment and software, they had purchased this themselves, using their own money.
29. Recommendations for employers included investing in training and support for line managers, explore wider forms of staff flexibility and ensure Workplace Adjustment Passports for all. Recommendations for government included making flexible working the default position for all employees, require large employers to publish information on their approach to flexible and hybrid working, increase funding for the Equalities and Human Rights Commission to enforce and protect disabled workers’ rights, reform Access to Work and refresh the Disability Confident scheme.
30. The researchers also produced an internal-facing research report setting out a series of specific recommendations for CBT and BHE in terms of future policy and practice, including:
- a. To work with London’s disabled people’s organisations and charities to embed inclusive practices and develop a strong pipeline of potential grantees.
 - b. Facilitate sharing best practice among existing grantees.
 - c. Embedding inclusive employment practices within CBT and BHE.

31. The researchers are discussing the findings with the Department for Work and Pensions (Employers Health and Inclusive Employment team), the department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, and the Cabinet Office's Disability Unit.
32. A CBT staff lunch and learn session to debate the policy and practice recommendations set out in the report is scheduled for 21 September. Saida Bello, Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the City Corporation will be attending.
33. Learning Case Study – A CBT learning case study is provided at **Appendix 3**. The case study is about Hopscotch Women's Centre, a user-led organisation providing culturally appropriate support for "easy to ignore" women from racialised communities experiencing abuse and/or social exclusion.

Conclusion

34. This report provides a high-level summary of CBT activities since the Grants Committee last met in June 2022. The Grants Committee is asked to note the content of the report. Further information on any of the updates given in this report can be provided to the Grants Committee verbally in the meeting or in a written format in advance of or as a follow-up to the meeting.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – 2022/23 Expected Grants Spend
- Appendix 2 - City Bridge Trust: Annual Review of Bridging Divides, Year Four, 2021/22
- Appendix 3 - Learning Case Study: Hopscotch Women's Centre

David Farnsworth

Managing Director of Bridge House Estates

E: David.farnsworth@cityoflondon.gov.uk