

GRANTS COMMITTEE OF THE BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES BOARD
Monday, 5 December 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Grants Committee of the Bridge House Estates Board
held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall and via Microsoft Teams on
Monday, 5 December 2022 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Paul Martinelli (Chair)
Deputy Nighat Qureishi (Deputy Chair)
Alderman Alison Gowman
Judith Pleasance
Jannat Hossain (Co-opted Member)
William Hoyle (Co-opted Member)

Officers:

David Farnsworth	- Managing Director of Bridge House Estates
Dinah Cox	- BHE
Hannan Ali	- BHE
Amelia Ehren	- BHE
Geraldine Page	- BHE
Tim Wilson	- BHE
Jenny Field	- BHE
Sandra Jones	- BHE
Natalie Jordan	- BHE
Helen Martins	- BHE
Julia Megone	- BHE
Anne Pietsch	- Comptroller & City Solicitor's Dept.
Fiona Rawes	- BHE
Joseph Anstee	- BHE

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming Members and officers, as well as any members of the public or stakeholders observing the meeting via YouTube.

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

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

Alderman & Sheriff Gowman declared her standing interest by virtue of being a Trustee of Trust for London.

Jannat Hossain (Co-opted Member) declared an interest in Item 12 by virtue of employment with The Baring Foundation and advised that she would not participate in this item.

David Farnsworth, Managing Director of BHE, declared an interest in Item 13 by virtue of his role as Chair of London Funders, 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 26 September 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

The Committee noted that the application in respect of Do It Now Now CIC had received additional scrutiny at the BHE Board meeting on 15 November, with a Member commenting that they had raised points relating to the governance of and engagement with the organisation that should also have raised at the previous Committee meeting. The Chair noted that the Committee's endorsement of the grant had been subject to conditions, and invited the Managing Director of BHE to comment.

The Managing Director of BHE assured the Committee that funding would not be released without certain criteria being satisfied, including that the CIC's Board had a minimum of 3 appointed directors in accordance with CBT's requirements for funding. The Managing Director of BHE added that legal advice had been sought from the Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department, and reiterated that all relevant inquiries would be made and all funding requirements and conditions would need to be satisfied before the funding was released. The Comptroller & City Solicitor confirmed that they were satisfied that the proposed activities of the funded organisation fell within the applicant charity's objects. The Chair thanked officers for their assurances, and asked that any relevant updates relating to the due diligence undertaken be reported to the Committee as appropriate.

The Chair then advised that the use of the term 'historic underinvestment' had been discussed at the BHE Board meeting, and that this would sometimes need to be evidenced and explained in a clearer way within reports, with officers to take this away for consideration going forward.

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS***

The Committee received a list of outstanding actions and noted the updates provided in respect of the items listed.

RESOLVED – That the outstanding actions list be noted.

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

The Committee considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE providing an update on key areas of activity and outlining upcoming activities. The Managing Director of BHE introduced the report, and the Committee discussed the updates provided. The Managing Director of BHE gave thanks to Members and officers for their contributions to recent successful events involving BHE, including the Media Trust Volunteer Films Showcase, and the Beacon Collaborative annual conference, before introducing and welcoming new colleagues appointed to funding roles within CBT through the 2027 programme.

The Committee then noted the intended recruitment exercise for Co-opted Members for the Committee and the BHE Board in 2023.

RESOLVED -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, note the contents of the report.

6. **UPDATING GRANT RECOMMENDATION REPORTS**

The Committee considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE reviewing the structure of grant recommendation reports, and recommending updates to support decision-making by highlighting matters of equitable leadership and finance. The Managing Director of BHE introduced the report and outlined the reasons for the proposed amendments, adding that officers would work with the BHE & Charities Finance team to ensure financial issues were treated appropriately. The Managing Director of BHE added that whilst this matter did not strictly require Committee approval, Committee consultation had been felt appropriate, and that the amendments were proposed alongside a wider review of the BHE Board's agenda and report formats.

RESOLVED - That the Grants Committee of the Bridge House Estates 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, agree that the format of grant reports is restructured so the funding recommendation is moved from the end to the top of the report and a new table is included below the recommendation setting out key issues relevant to equitable leadership and finance.

7. **CBT DRAFT OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER**

The Committee considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE outlining the findings and next steps of the CBT Operational Risk register review which was initiated in November 2022. The Managing Director of BHE introduced the report, which formed part of wider work on the charity's principal risk register.

In response to a question from a Member, the Managing Director of BHE advised that organisations across the UK had recently found recruitment difficult, due to a combination of factors, and that the issue was not specific to BHE. The Managing Director of BHE added that staff shortages made assessments, and consequently grant awards, more difficult, and therefore had a significant impact.

The Chair commented that risk CBT 04 in respect of IT Failure could be reviewed given this was a universal issue, and that the finance-related risks could be reviewed on the basis that they could be combined. The Chair further asked that officers consider current and target scores and their reflection of the charity's current and intended position.

In response to a question from a Member regarding risk CBT 06 on Staff capacity, the Managing Director of BHE advised that the charity's staff were part of the City of London Corporation's single employer model, but that opportunities arising from BHE's institutional status would be explored, with a specific Head of People

for BHE currently under recruitment. The Managing Director of BHE added that it was key to remunerate officers appropriately, and that the City Corporation were undertaking a wider review in this area, with a new Executive Director for HR now in post.

The Chair noted that the risk register would be brought back to the Committee for final approval in March 2023 and encouraged officers to seek any further comments or assistance from Members as needed.

RESOLVED - 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 process and outcome of the CBT operational risk review;
- ii) Provide comments as above as to whether the eight operational risks identified from this process are appropriate and scored correctly; and,
- iii) Note that a final CBT Operational Risk Register will be brought to the Grants Committee on 6 March 2023 for approval.

8. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR BHE FUNDING: PERIOD ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2022

The Committee received a report of the BHE & Charities Finance Director (representing the Chamberlain) providing a financial update on Bridge House Estates (BHE) Funding activities to 31 October 2022 and an updated forecast for the financial year ending 31 March 2023.

RESOLVED – 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, note the contents of the report.

9. BHE FUNDING BUDGET 2023/24

The Committee considered a report of the BHE & Charities Finance Director presenting for review and recommendation of the Grants Committee of the Bridge House Estates (BHE) Board, the BHE Funding budget for 2023/24. The BHE & Charities Finance Director introduced the report and advised that the budget would be referred to the BHE Board if endorsed by the Committee. The Committee was advised that inflation had been factored into the budget.

In response to a question from a Member, the Managing Director of BHE advised that application turnaround times were generally faster for onward grant-making programmes, and that officers were reviewing CBT processes with a view to bringing turnaround times down generally. A Member commented that the application portal seemed dated and suggested that officers review the process to see how it might be consolidated or streamlined. The Managing Director of BHE responded that the charity was currently reviewing the grant management system used for this purpose.

The Managing Director of BHE noted that there was a balance required, factoring in staffing levels and appropriate due diligence, but that the aim was for a user-friendly and flexible process for applicants, with less onerous ways of generating data, adding that work to build on the single point of entry model for applications would be continued through the Propel programme. The Committee was further advised that officers were liaising with other funders on due diligence processes, particularly in respect of finance.

The Chair asked that an update on work in respect of application turnaround times be brought back to Committee, before drawing Members' attention to the recommendations, which were agreed.

RESOLVED - 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) Review and recommend the proposed BHE Funding budget for 2023/24 for inclusion in the charity's overall Budget to be presented to the BHE Board in February 2023; and
- ii) Agree that minor amendments for the 2023/24 grants budget arising during the budget setting process be delegated to the BHE & Charities Finance Director.

10. SUMMARY OF BRIDGING DIVIDES*

The Committee noted a summary of the Bridging Divides programme. A Member requested that charity numbers be added to the key organisations referenced in reports going forward, in particular those under consideration for funding, for ease of reference.

11. STRATEGIC INITIATIVE - TOGETHER FOR LONDON (REF: 19887)

The Committee considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE requesting £852,500 over five months as a strategic initiative to support the London Community Foundation's (charity no. 1091263) emergency winter grants' programme Together for London. £800,000 would be deployed in early 2023 through a small grants programme for at least 80 community organisations, with a focus on core costs and the provision of emergency support. The Managing Director of BHE introduced the report and presented the proposals to the Committee, which would be submitted to the BHE Board under delegated authority if endorsed.

The Chair noted the organisation's impressive track record of fast-paced awards and invited comments from Members. A Member asked whether officers had considered a larger grant and suggested an uplift to the recommendation to £1million for onward grant-making, which would match the amount already raised by London Community Foundation and would further cover increasing need in this area. The Managing Director of BHE advised that the proposed uplift would be supported by officers if agreed, adding that there had been a significant volume of applications to the programme, and therefore sufficient demand to ensure that the uplift was appropriate and beneficial.

The Chair then sought Members' approval to recommend a grant of £1,065,000, made up of £1 million for onward grant-making, plus 6.5% to cover operational costs as per the initial proposal, and this was agreed.

RESOLVED – That that the Grants Committee of the Bridge House Estates 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, endorse to the BHE Board a grant of £1,065,000 over five months to the London Community Foundation for onward grant-making through the Together for London Winter appeal and the operational costs of same.

12. **ALLIANCE PARTNERSHIPS - THE BARING FOUNDATION (HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACHES) (19548)**

The Committee considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE seeking the Grants Committee's endorsement of a grant of £1.5 million towards a new programme run by the Baring Foundation (TBF) (charity no. 258583) to promote and develop the use of human rights-based approaches (HRBAs) for London based civil society organisations, using international and domestic human rights laws to support practical, real-world protections for individuals and communities facing discrimination and disadvantage. The Managing Director of BHE introduced the report and presented the proposals to the Committee, which would be submitted to the BHE Board if endorsed.

In response to a question from a Member as to whether the proposals could generate an issue of conflict with the City of London Corporation in its capacity as a local authority, the Managing Director of BHE advised that whilst it was right to highlight a potential area of conflict, this could be mitigated and managed as appropriate if necessary, adding that some work in this area had been done over the course of the governance reforms in respect of the charity.

With regards to the focus of the project and any leverage arising from a contribution from BHE, the Managing Director of BHE advised that there were many funders in this space, including TBF, and that whilst this would be a sole partnership project, around 20 other organisations would be involved in consultation on and development of the programme. The Managing Director of BHE confirmed that the project would be London-focussed and that all organisations involved in the ultimate programme may not be London-based, with this being dependent upon the output of the development phase; however, BHE funding will be subject to conditions for its expenditure in Greater London. The Committee was further advised that, as an Alliance Partnership rather than a regular grant, the reserves held by TBF were not an issue in respect of the proposals.

The Chair then commented that the proposals insofar as they were supported by BHE funding were aligned with the aims, funding policy and objects of BHE and the Alliance Partnerships programme, before drawing Members' attention to the proposals, which were agreed.

RESOLVED – 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, endorse to the BHE Board a grant of £1.5 million over five years to the Baring Foundation (charity no. 258583) to develop and deliver a programme to promote and develop the use of human rights-based approaches (HRBAs) for London based civil society organisations.

13. LONDON'S GIVING: RESOURCE HUB PROPOSALS

The Committee considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE proposing the establishment of a Resource Hub for London’s Giving hosted by London Funders, for the benefit of place-based giving schemes in the capital. The Managing Director of BHE introduced the report and presented the proposals to the Committee, also advising that the proposals would be brought back to the Committee with a fully costed budget for final approval.

RESOLVED - 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) Receive this report and note its contents;
- ii) Approve, in principle, the establishment of a Resource Hub for London’s Giving hosted by London Funder’s in order to take the work of place-based giving schemes in the capital to a new level; and,
- iii) Instruct officers to work with London Funders to draw up a fully costed budget for the Resource Hub, noting the indicative costings provided for illustrative purposes at paragraph 17 below, and bring the proposal back to the next Grants Committee with a recommendation to fund.

14. GRANT FUNDING ACTIVITY: PERIOD ENDED 17 NOVEMBER 2022

The Committee considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE providing details of: funds approved and rejected under delegated authority since the last meeting of the Grants Committee in September 2022 through to 17 November 2022; the remaining 2022/2023 grants budget; grant spend to date and for this meeting by London Borough compared with the Multiple Index of Deprivation; any grant variations that have been approved under delegated authority; and seeking approval for 3 grant rejections, 5 grants over £250k and 1 grant under £250k.

In response to a question from a Member noting that consistency of grant-giving in some areas was not commensurate with the level of deprivation, the Managing Director of BHE explained that there were several factors in this, such as the strength of the civil society in that area and that it was not always possible to capture more local impacts where grants were given over larger geographical areas, and how officers continued to try and address such discrepancies. Noting that the infographic maps provided only accounted for Bridging Divides grants,

the Chair asked officers to review the infographic maps for any further opportunities to provide information in this area.

With regards to the applications recommended for approval, the Chair clarified a point in respect of the applications for Music of Life (charity no. 1102827) before drawing the Committee's attention to the recommendations for grant approvals, which were agreed. With regards to the applications recommended for rejection, the Chair drew the Committee's attention to the recommendations for grant rejections, which were also agreed.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the applications approved or rejected under delegated authority, the Managing Director of BHE confirmed that Ascension Community Trust (charity no. 1091887), to which a grant had been approved under delegated authority, were not connected to the Ascension Trust (charity no. 1127204), to whom a grant was proposed later on the agenda.

RESOLVED - 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) Receive this report and note its contents;
- ii) Approve the following grants as recommended:
 - One Westminster (295501) - £282,400 over 5 years
 - Voice4Change England (1140624) - £399,040 over 5 years
 - The Orchard Project (1139952) - £281,900 over 5 years
 - Music of Life (1102827) - £254,400 over 5 years
 - Lewisham Local (previously Rushey Green Time Bank) (1101616) - £282,076 over 3 years
 - Wandsworth Care Alliance (1110178) - £127,900 over 3 years;and,
- iii) Approve the rejection of grants as listed in the schedule appended to the report.

15. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

In response to a question from a Member, the Managing Director of BHE advised that it was hoped for internal testing of the new website to take place in December, before rolling it out for external testing in January 2023. The Managing Director of BHE advised that full details of the website rollout could be provided after the meeting.

The Committee then gave thanks to Dinah Cox on her last meeting of the Committee before moving on from BHE in January 2023. The Chair thanked Dinah on behalf of the Committee and officers for her wisdom, leadership and expertise during her interim role at the charity, to which she had been a great asset, and wished her well for the future.

16. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION – 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, it now be moved that 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.

17. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

18. **STRATEGIC INITIATIVE - THE ASCENSION TRUST (BRIDGEWATCH PROGRAMME) (REF: 19112)**

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

19. **PIPELINE OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES***

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

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

There was no other business.

21. **EXERCISE OF DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO THE MANAGING DIRECTOR**

The Committee received an update from the Managing Director of BHE.

The meeting ended at 12.57 pm

Chair

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