

GRANTS COMMITTEE OF THE BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES BOARD
Monday, 6 March 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Grants Committee of the Bridge House Estates Board
held at Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 6 March
2023 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

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

Officers:

David Farnsworth	- Managing Director of Bridge House Estates
Sacha Rose-Smith	- BHE Chief Funding Director
Catherine Mahoney	- BHE Communications & Engagement Director
Anne Pietsch	- Comptroller & City Solicitor's Dept.
Amelia Ehren	- BHE
Samantha Grimmett-Batt	- BHE
Tim Wilson	- BHE
Geraldine Page	- BHE
Lily Brandhorst	- BHE
Khadra Aden	- BHE
Clara Espinosa	- BHE
Helen Martins	- BHE
Julia Megone	- BHE
Shegufta Slawther	- 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

Apologies for absence were received from William Hoyle.

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

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

David Farnsworth, Managing Director of Bridge House Estates (BHE), declared his standing interest by virtue of his role as Chair of London Funders.

At this point, David Farnsworth introduced and welcomed Sacha Rose-Smith, the charity's Chief Funding Director, to the Committee on her first meeting.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 5 December 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS***

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

The Chief Funding Director provided the Committee with additional detail regarding measures undertaken to mitigate the application backlog and improve application turnaround times, advising that the backlog was now almost fully allocated.

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 drew Members' attention to the key points. The Managing Director of BHE advised Members to provide any feedback on the Committee or the charity's governance arrangements to officers ahead of the scheduled review to be considered at the 27 March BHE Board meeting. The Committee then noted the deadline for applications for Co-opted Member positions on the Committee later that day, with a number of applications having been received.

The Managing Director of BHE also reminded Members that City Bridge Trust's (CBT) Funded Organisations Networking and Learning day would take place on 20 March 2023 at the Barbican Centre, with Members encouraged to attend and take part if available.

Foundation Practice Rating (FPR)

The Managing Director of BHE advised that CBT were pleased to be part of the FRP scheme having recently been assessed, receiving a score of AAC and an overall score of B. As CBT had scored lowest on diversity, officers were now addressing the findings to see where improvements could be made to achieve a rating of A. The Managing Director of BHE advised that a Lead Member for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) had now been appointed and officers would seek their support in this work.

A Member commented that they were aware that the issue had been raised at a recent fundraising event, adding that as the charity was under scrutiny, it was important to uphold standards on diversity, particularly insofar as particular standards were expected of others. The Managing Director of BHE confirmed that one of the Funding Directors had been present at the event where this had

been discussed and that officers had been open and transparent in their response.

Another Member commented that they felt that was not necessarily an issue for CBT to expect higher standards of organisations it worked with whilst working to improve its own standards concurrently, adding the framing of EDI issues was sometimes wrong across the sector, which replicated many of the issues seen across wider society. The Member added that it was preferable to make progress as part of a shared journey than risk delaying required actions.

The Chair commented that some elements such as staffing were limited in the rate at which they could be affected, adding that whilst the charity had made great progress, focus could be increased in areas requiring more attention.

Responding to Funding Enquiries

The Managing Director of BHE reminded Members that approaches to them regarding CBT funding should be directed to the website to check matters such as eligibility prior to beginning an application. The Managing Director of BHE added that a suggested response would be circulated to Members to note and for use when responding in writing.

Anchor Programme

The Committee received a briefing on the Anchor Programme, setting out its aims and requirements ahead of a dedicated report to be brought to the next meeting. It was noted that information on the programme was expected to be accessible on the CBT website imminently.

The Chair then gave thanks to Stewart Goshawk on his last meeting of the Committee before moving on from BHE in April 2023. The Chair thanked Stewart on behalf of the Committee for his incredible longstanding service to CBT and to BHE, and for his invaluable expertise and leadership, wishing him well at WNST and for the future.

The Chair also thanked officers for their work undertaken in awarding over 300 grants in short space of time in the form of funding uplifts to assist funded organisations in tackling inflation and cost of living issues.

RESOLVED – That the Grants Committee of the BHE Board, in the discharge of functions for the City Corporation as Trustee of Bridge House Estates and solely in the charity's best interests:

- i) Note the contents of the report; and
- ii) Approve the recommendation, in relation to London's Giving, not to proceed with proposals to establish a Match Fund for place-based giving schemes in London.

6. **CBT OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER**

The Committee considered a report of the Managing Director of BHE presenting the complete CBT Operational Risk Register, following a review of all of BHE risks in 2022.

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 and solely in the charity's best interests:

- i) Approve the revised and complete CBT operational Risk Register; and,
- ii) Note that operational risk register will be reported to Committee twice per year in line with the BHE Risk Management Protocol 2023.

7. **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR BHE FUNDING ACTIVITIES: PERIOD ENDED 31 JANUARY 2023**

The Committee considered a report of the BHE & Charities Funding Director (representing the Chamberlain) providing a financial update on BHE Funding activities to 31 January 2023 and an updated forecast for the financial year ending 31 March 2023.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the underspend against the current year's budget, the Managing Director of BHE advised that an anticipated spend for the current year had been agreed during the Covid-19 pandemic, adding that whilst trends in respect of forecasting were improving, there was further work to do. The BHE & Charities Finance Director added that figures relating to the Propel programme had been added to the figures since the previous meeting. The Member responded that whilst they understood the reasons, there was a degree of disappointment, noting that overhead costs were also proportionate to the total amount granted and were therefore more cost-effective as funding increased.

The Managing Director of BHE further confirmed that the charity had access to the City Corporation's Internal Audit function, and advised that the underspend partly related to the timing of uplift funds, with most main grant funding work delivered to target. The Member commented that it was worth considering whether underspending on the charity's grants budget should be considered as a formal risk, as it may encourage a higher level of scrutiny. The Managing Director of BHE advised that this would be taken away for consideration by officers.

The Chair commented that it was also key to distribute funding as efficiently as possible, noting the increasing long-term nature of grants awarded, and the likely impact of the Propel programme. With regards to operational costs, another Member encouraged officers to consider the relational impact surrounding the use of consultants, as this risked a more distant relationship between funder and grantee.

The Managing Director of BHE noted Members' comments and reiterated officers' commitment to meeting the ongoing challenge, also advising that there

had been positive work on the BHE budget for next year, which had been approved by the BHE Board at its February meeting and would be submitted to the 9 March Court of Common Council meeting. In response to a question from a Member, the Managing Director of BHE confirmed that the charity had access to the City Corporation's internal audit function and that grants expenditure was picked up as part of risk management.

The Chair thanked Members for their comments, which would be taken into account and Members' concerns noted.

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 and solely in the charity's best interests, note the contents of the report.

8. **SUMMARY OF BRIDGING DIVIDES***

The Committee noted a summary of the Bridging Divides programme.

9. **PROPEL FUNDING ROUND ONE**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Funding Director presenting seven applications for decision as part of the first round of the Propel programme, a funder collaboration stewarded by London Funders which iterated the successes of the London Community Response, a pioneering and widely celebrated vehicle for funder collaboration in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The programme was also intended to extend collaboration beyond the emergency context, to provide strategic and long-term funding at scale, continuing to test and learn from progressive approaches to funding. The Chief Funding Director introduced the report and presented the Propel programme, also outlining the proposals for consideration by the Committee.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the number of proposed grants relative to the number of proposed applications, the Chief Funding Director explained the process by which applications had been prioritised and then assessed with regards to their eligibility, with it being aimed to aware around £15m in this round of funding. The Chief Funding Director added that there would be further work undertaken to ensure that organisations understood the criteria, particularly around being user-led and doing systems change work, for future rounds. The Committee was advised that officers had noted applications which had not been progressed, but which may be approved for regular Bridging Divides funding, and would communicate with these organisations to have their applications redirected.

The Chief Funding Director further advised that timelines for the programme had been adjusted during 2022 in response to the passing of Her Majesty the Queen, but officers had minimised the impact of this and had given organisations as much time as possible to submit their applications. The Chief Funding Director confirmed that CBT's timescales compared reasonably well to other funders within the programme.

In response to a question from a Member, the Chief Funding Director gave the Committee further explanation around what funders expected with regards to

being an equity-led organisation, and how this had been assessed and used to prioritise applications.

The Chair then thanked officers for their work in getting the programme to this stage, 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 and solely in the charity's best interests:

(i) Endorse to the BHE Board the recommendations for funding of the following four grants (totalling £4,128,000):

- a. £1,073,400 over three years to the Bridge Renewal Trust (charity no. 1131941);
- b. £989,600 over three years to Inclusion London (charity no. 1157376);
- c. £1,216,600 over three years to The Ubele Initiative (company no. 09035399); and,
- d. £848,400 over three years to Young Westminster Foundation (charity no. 1169255).

(ii) Approve the following three recommendations (totalling £1,398,000):

- a. £398,000 over three years to Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network (charity no. 1058631);
- b. £500,000 over three years to Race on the Agenda (charity no. 1064975); and,
- c. £500,000 over three years to Women's Environmental Network (charity no. 1010397).

(iii) Approve the rejection of one grant to Community Barnet (charity no. 1071035).

10. **ALLIANCE PARTNERSHIP - SMALLWOOD TRUST**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Funding Director requesting funding of £864,283 over three and a half years be awarded to the Smallwood Trust to establish the Women's London Resilience Fund, a collaborative place-based grants programme to tackle the root causes of gendered poverty, identify approaches that can be scaled and help foster resilient community networks to transform social and economic outcomes for women. The Chief Funding Director introduced the report and presented the proposal to the Committee, noting that it would be referred to the next meeting of the BHE Board if endorsed.

RESOLVED - That the Grants Committee of the BHE Board, in the discharge of functions for the City Corporation as Trustee of BHE and solely in the charity's best interests:

- i) Endorse a grant of £864,283, as an Alliance Partnership, for onward approval by the BHE Board, to the Smallwood Trust [charity no: 205798] for onward grant making as part of the London Women's Resilience Fund.

11. **STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: LONDON CLIMATE ACTION WEEK AND THE LONDON CLIMATE CLUSTER - ASHDEN CLIMATE SOLUTIONS**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Funding Director requesting £159,760 over 18 months as a strategic initiative to support the establishment of the London Climate Action Week Secretariat as an independent organisation, with a contribution to the costs of the LCAW 2023 event. The Chief Funding Director introduced the report and presented the proposal for Members.

A Member, also Lead Member for Climate Action for the BHE Board, sought assurance that the funding would not be used towards the City Corporation's planned Net Zero Delivery Summit, as this would effectively be subsidising the City Corporation's own work, and suggested BHE consider hosting its own event during London Climate Action Week. The Chief Funding Director confirmed that the funding would be entirely separate to the City Corporation's work, although mutual opportunities to promote the event would be utilised. The Chief Funding Director added officers would welcome consideration on hosting a BHE event, noting that there had been funder events in previous years.

In response to questions from Members, the Chief Funding Director advised that officers would seek to take advantages of any learning opportunities, and that the debrief report on last year's event could be shared with the Committee following the meeting. The Committee noted that whilst this proposal was within the scope of Bridging Divides, the BHE Board also held a designated fund for climate action which could be used for additional related work which was not suitable or eligible for funding through CBT.

Noting the financial information provided in respect of Ashden Climate Solutions, the BHE & Charities Finance Director explained officers' approach to organisations with deficits, which was considered in context on a case-by-case basis.

RESOLVED – That the Grants Committee of the BHE Board, in the discharge of functions for the City Corporation as Trustee of BHE and solely in the charity's best interests:

- i) Approve a grant of £159,760 over 18 months to Ashden Climate Solutions (charity no. 1104153), towards the costs of establishing the London Climate Action Week Secretariat as an independently registered organisation, with a contribution towards the costs of LCAW 2023.

12. **GRANT FUNDING ACTIVITY: PERIOD ENDED 16 FEBRUARY 2023**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Funding Director providing details of funds approved and rejected under delegated authority since the last meeting of the Grants Committee in December 2022 through to 16 February 2023; the remaining 2022/2023 grants budget; grants 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. The report also sought the Committee's approval for 3 grant rejections and 8 grants between £250,000 and £500,000, and the endorsement to the BHE Board of 1 Bridging Divides application over £500,000. The Chair introduced the item, commending the breadth of work and increased rate of funding.

In response to a question from a Member, the Managing Director of BHE assured the Committee that officers would continue to be mindful of potential issues such as dependency, noting the trend towards the awarding of longer-term grants.

With regards to the application from The Garden Classroom, the Chief Funding Director advised that the environmental sector was generally less diverse in comparison to other areas of the sector, and that officers would seek to pick up any concerns about the ability to achieve the desired reach of the proposals, with CBT able to offer assistance in enhancing the organisation's outreach and relationships work.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the diversion of funding away from London, the Managing Director of BHE commented that it was important for BHE as a London funder to continue to use and share the evidence it saw, adding that the profile of poverty in London was as high in London as it was elsewhere in the UK.

The Chair then drew the Committee's attention to the proposals and took each recommendation in turn, all of which were agreed.

Members further highlighted and commended the proposals in respect of Mind in Croydon and Kanlungan Filipino Consortium, as well as encouraging officers to further consider the 'heat map' graphs with a view to assessing whether these were providing the right information or could provide any additional context.

RESOLVED – That the that the Grants Committee of the BHE Board, in the discharge of functions for the City Corporation as Trustee of Bridge House Estates and solely in the charity's best interests:

- i) Receive this report and note its contents;
- ii) Endorse to the BHE Board a grant of £585,125 to the Media Trust (charity no. 1042733);
- iii) Approve the following grants as recommended in:
 - The Garden Classroom (no. 1168587) - £276,120 over five years
 - Mind in Croydon (no. 1073880) - £271,000 over five years

- Katherine Low Settlement (no. 1081248) - £425,325 over five years
- Choice in Hackney (no. 1077287) - £294,400 over five years
- Bromley Homeless CIO (no. 1186655) - £298,000 over five years
- Hackney Co-operative Developments CIC (company no. 1673378) - £365,090 over three years
- No.1 Performing Arts (NOPA) (no. 1182507) - £355,360 over five years
- Kanlungan Filipino Consortium (no. 1077224) - £270,500 over five years; and

iv) Approve the rejection of grants as listed in the schedule appended to the report.

13. 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 regarding public and grantee attendance, officers advised that this had been discussed and it was intended to agree a form of invitation for the next civic year, noting that the public part of the meeting was open to attendees as well as streamed on YouTube. The BHE Communications & Engagement Director then outlined the intended provision for promoting recent funding on the new BHE website, which would include a dedicated page, and confirmed that detailed funding information was shared with 360Giving. A Member asked that officers to ensure that Community Infrastructure Levy grants were not being wrongly attributed to CBT due to overlaps in staffing resource.

The Managing Director of BHE then set out the details of upcoming LocalMotion visit events, which were taking place across the country, and advised that these would be circulated to the Committee, with Members encouraged to participate where possible.

14. 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.

15. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting on 5 December 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

16. PIPELINE OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES*

The Committee received a report of the Chief Funding Director.

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

There was no other business.

18. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the confidential minutes of the meeting on 5 December 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

The meeting ended at 12.36 pm

Chair

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