

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Nominations, Effectiveness and Inclusion Committee of the Barbican Centre Board	28 June 2023
<b>Subject:</b> Review of Board Effectiveness and Skills	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>7, 8</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Town Clerk	<b>For Discussion</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Ben Dunleavy	

### Summary

The Nominations, Effectiveness and Inclusion Committee of the Barbican Centre Board is responsible for undertaking periodic evaluations of the performance of the Board, with the last such review taking place in 2021.

Members may consider it to be both timely and prudent to assess the effectiveness of the Board and the balance of skills and expertise, alongside the emerging and evolving key issues facing the Barbican Centre. This report sets out the Board's previous thoughts on this issue and invites Members to consider whether it would wish to instigate a formal review of skills and effectiveness.

### Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- consider the effectiveness of the Board;
- consider the balance of skills and expertise on the Board; and
- determine whether this is an appropriate time to undertake a review of the Board's effectiveness and skills, and what form this may take.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The Nominations, Effectiveness and Inclusion Committee is responsible for undertaking 'periodic evaluations of the performance of the Board collectively and of individual Members as appropriate, to inform the ongoing work of the Board and guide Members' decisions on whether to seek reappointment or re-election'. These evaluations have, in practice, taken the form of formal reviews of the effectiveness of the Board in carrying out its functions the skills of Board Members, interviews conducted by the Chair and informal sessions among Board Members and officers.
2. During previous reviews, undertaken in 2013, 2017 and 2021, Members were asked to comment on various aspects around the work of the Board and the management of meetings. These included Members' understanding of the Board's role, the quality of meetings and the governance and clerking support received by the Board. The reviews also assessed personal attributes such as the interaction of Members with the Barbican Centre, its senior management and its affiliates outside of formal meetings, and the skills that Members felt they brought to the Board.
3. These reviews identified a number of areas where Members felt the effectiveness of the Board could be improved, including the management of Board business, the length and format of Board reports, and the mandate and agenda of the Board. The results of the skills section provided views from Members on how the Board might benefit from enhanced expertise, such as finance, commercial, digital and unreached audiences, and a desire to ensure that the Board benefitted from the contributions of a diverse collection of Members, both in terms of background and outlook.
4. An example of a previous survey is included at Appendix 1.
5. In 2021, a new system for advertising and recruiting External Members was also agreed, with members agreeing that an external search firm would be recruited to undertake the recruitment work. It was felt that this would ensure an impartial, inclusive and transparent process, and provide the ability to reach diverse candidate pools so as to address diversity concerns that had been raised by Members. It was also agreed in 2021 to appoint Tobi-Ruth as an informal Board observer

### **Current Position**

6. The responses to the findings of the reviews have included:
  - Streamlining Board agendas into 'main' and 'information/appendix' packs, to help with the size of agendas;
  - expanding the remit of the two sub-committees to allow these to focus in more depth on key areas of business and for the Board to focus on strategic areas;

- hosting sub-committee meetings at the Barbican Centre to try and address suggestions that meetings at Guildhall could be alienating and not conducive to proper debate;
  - more focused recruitment of External Members, including recruiting an external search firm to undertake this work, to address some of the skills gaps identified and to address concerns over both process and Board diversity
  - changing the Board's composition to reduce its Membership, reflecting recommendations for Committee sizes made in reviews conducted by the City Corporation.
7. Members are invited to consider the effectiveness of the implemented practices listed above, and to also consider the effectiveness of the Board and its Members more widely.
  8. Some suggested areas of consideration are the ordering of items on the Board's agenda, the levels of duplication of reporting and information from the sub-committees to the Board, and the relationship between the Board and the Centre's senior management, especially given the changes at this level since the last review.
  9. Members are also asked to consider the balance of skills and experience on the Board, and whether they feel it would be timely to conduct a fresh skills audit, and what format such a review should take. In light of the desire, referenced above in paragraph 3, to ensure that the Board benefits from a diverse collection of Members, Members are advised that it may be useful to request information from Board Members regarding equality, diversity and inclusion. It is also important for Members to bear in mind that any request for personal data such as this must be precise in what information is being requested, what exactly it will be used for and how it will be saved.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

### **Strategic implications**

There are no strategic implications.

### **Financial implications**

There are no financial implications to the recommendations to consider the Board's effectiveness.

### **Resource implications**

There are no resource implications to the recommendations.

### **Legal implications**

There are no legal implications to the recommendations of considering the Board's effectiveness. However, should Members wish to run a new review, and request personal information as part of this, there would be implications with regards to usage and storage of personal data.

## **Risk implications**

There are no risk implications to the recommended consideration of a skills review.

## **Equalities implications**

Under the Equality Act 2010, all public bodies have a duty to ensure that when exercising their functions they have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and to take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people and encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low. The proposals contained in this report do not have any potential negative impact on a particular group of people based on their protected characteristics.

## **Climate implications**

There are no climate implications to the recommendations.

## **Security implications**

There are no security implications to the recommendations.

## **Conclusion**

10. Members are asked to consider the effectiveness of the Barbican Centre Board and to determine whether a formal review should be undertaken and, if so, the format they would wish such a review to take and the information it would request

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Skills and Effectiveness Survey

### **Ben Dunleavy**

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