

FUNDING COMMITTEE OF THE BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES BOARD
Monday, 12 June 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Funding Committee of the Bridge House Estates Board
held at Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 12 June 2023
at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Paul Martinelli (Chair)
Deputy Nighat Qureishi (Deputy Chair)
John Griffiths
Deborah Oliver
Jannat Hossain (Co-opted Member)
William Hoyle (Co-opted Member)

Officers:

David Farnsworth	- Managing Director of Bridge House Estates
Sacha Rose-Smith	- BHE Chief Funding Director
Samantha Grimmett-Batt	- BHE Funding Director
Geraldine Page	- BHE Funding Director
Tim Wilson	- BHE Funding Director
Amelia Ehren	- BHE Head of Strategy & Governance
Hannan Ali	- BHE Funding Manager
Caspar Cech-Lucas	- BHE Small Grants Programme Funding Manager
Ruth Feder	- BHE Head of Impact & Learning
Julia Megone	- BHE Charities Technical & Strategic Finance Manager
Lydia Parr	- BHE Funding Manager
Anne Pietsch	- Comptroller & City Solicitor's Dept.
Joseph Anstee	- BHE Governance Officer

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 declarations.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

John Griffiths declared a standing interest by virtue of his employment with Rocket Science, which had previously worked with City Bridge Trust (CBT).

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE*

The Committee received its terms of reference, as agreed by the Bridge House Estates (BHE) Board on 15 May 2023. The Chair drew Members' attention to the

amendments to the Committee's terms of reference, including the addition of functions in respect of social investments.

The Chair then welcomed new Members of the Committee John Griffiths and Deborah Oliver, following their appointment to the Committee by the BHE Board. The Chair then gave thanks on behalf of the Committee to outgoing Members Judith Pleasance and Alderman Alison Gowman, particularly noting Alderman Gowman's years of excellent service to CBT, including on the former CBT Committee as a past Chair.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 6 March 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

5. **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.

6. **CHIEF FUNDING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Funding Director providing an update on key areas of activity and outlining upcoming activities. The Chief Funding Director introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the key points, also updating the Committee on a recent visit to Lincoln as part of the LocalMotion Programme.

End to End Review

The Chief Funding Director advised that a Project Manager had been appointed and that focus so far had been on defining the scope and parameters of the review. Terms of reference for the core and advisory group were being developed alongside a detailed project plan, with a further update to be brought to the September meeting of the Committee.

In response to a question from a Member, the Chief Funding Director advised that working with other funders on best practice was within the scope of the review, and that the use of the phrase 'customer experience' could be amended to refer specifically to grantees.

Anchor Programme

The Chief Funding Director advised the Committee that 173 applications had been received as part of the programme, with 15 to be taken forward, adding that the high volume of applications demonstrated the demand for this type of funding. The Chief Funding Director added that officers were assessing the work so far for learning points in respect of the programme. In response to a question from the Chair, officers advised that CBT currently had 787 active grantees, although this was unusually high owing to the additional programme funding uplifts to support over 350 grant-holders with increased demand and increased costs.

Learning Visits

The Deputy Chair spoke positively about a learning visit that she had attended the previous week and encouraged Members to attend when they could, adding that there had been great feedback for CBT and very positive recognition of their work. The Chair added that he hoped the number of learning visits per year could be increased.

The Committee was advised that the intention was for 50 learning visits to take place during this year, jointly between Members and Funding Managers, with it aimed to approach the programme as equitably as possible, noting the previous experiences of some organisations. It was hoped that each Member of the BHE Board and the Funding Committee could attend one visit per year, with some having been scheduled.

CBT Audit

In response to a question from a Member, officers advised that CBT functions were captured within Crowe's audit of the whole of BHE, with planning work for the next audit of having started recently. CBT had also been audited by the City of London Corporation's internal audit function in the past, with another internal audit expected in the near future.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. **CBT DRAFT OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Funding Director presenting the latest CBT Operational Risk Register and seeking the Committee's review of the Risk Register and confirmation that the risks are comprehensive, scored correctly and that appropriate control measures are in place. The Chair commented that the assessment or measurement of what was considered success on the part of CBT would be a key issue for consideration going forward.

RESOLVED – That the Funding 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.

8. **SUMMARY OF BRIDGING DIVIDES***

The Committee noted a summary of the Bridging Divides programme.

9. **ALLIANCE PARTNERSHIP: FIGHT FOR SIGHT/VISION FOUNDATION**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Funding Director seeking approval of a grant of £500,000 to Fight for Sight/Vision Foundation towards the Vision Fund, a grantmaking programme aimed at reducing isolation and tackling mental health issues within the sight loss community. The Funding Director introduced the report and presented the proposal to the Committee. The Committee noted a correction to the report, that the overhead costs outlined within the budget section should read 8% of the overall cost, rather than 3%.

In response to a question from a Member, the Chief Funding Director advised the Committee that Vision Foundation had done substantive work on minority representation, having made it a priority for the organisation and agreeing a strong Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy.

Noting that the end of the Alliance Partnership programme was approaching, the Chief Funding Director advised that officers would undertake an evaluation of the programme before bringing recommendations back to the Committee for a decision regarding next steps.

The Chair then drew Members' attention to the recommendations, which were agreed.

RESOLVED – That the Funding Committee, in discharge of functions for the City Corporation as Trustee of Bridge House Estates and solely in the charity's best interests, approve a grant of £500,000 over two years, as an Alliance Partnership, to Fight for Sight/Vision Foundation [charity no: 1111438 (formerly 1074958)] for running costs and onward grant making as part of the Vision Fund. A payment timetable will be drawn up in line with the launch dates of the four funding rounds, and the related payments to onward grant recipients.

10. **GRANT FUNDING ACTIVITY: PERIOD ENDED 24 MAY 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 Funding Committee in March 2023 through to 24 May 2023; the remaining 2023/2024 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; and seeking approval for 2 grant rejections and 7 grants between £250,000 and £1,000,001. The Chair introduced the item and commended officers for the substantive work and positive output of 110 grants for the year so far. The Committee also provided positive feedback on the revised format and model for the heat maps provided, noting that a report reviewing 'cold spots' would be brought to the September meeting of the Committee.

The Chair then drew the Committee's attention to the Bridging Divides grants recommended for approval and took each proposal in turn. With regards to the application from YMCA West London, the Committee noted that officers were following up on receiving a reference for the organisation from a previous funder and agreed the recommendation, subject to the receipt of a suitable reference.

A Member commented on the innovativeness of the project within the application from Carefreespace, adding that this model could be considered for application elsewhere. The Chief Funding Director responded that it had potential for use with social investment. The Member continued that the proposal represented an innovative and potentially exciting solution to what could be considered an issue with social care funding. The Committee noted its concern regarding the direction of the social care market in London, given possible issues in the future. The Chief Funding Director advised that CBT would be careful to provide support for the

sector as well as leverage the charity and City Corporation's position to provide an appropriate level of challenge where possible.

In response to a question from a Member, the Chief Funding Director advised that Carefreespace provided a referral pathway through community partners as well as a self-referral process, which would enable access for those with digital literacy issues.

The Chair then drew the Committee's attention to the applications recommended for rejection. A Member, noting the reasons for rejection given against applications considered under delegated authority, commented that many applications seemed to be rejected on the basis of a lack of eligibility, and queried whether the communication of eligibility criteria could be improved. The Chief Funding Director advised that this was regularly reviewed with it aimed for the application process to be as inclusive and accessible as possible. The Chief Funding Director added that officers were taking forward a suggestion from the Deputy Chair to make bitesize videos for the website to assist with areas in which applicants struggled.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Chief Funding Director advised that CBT's rejection rate was around 50%, which compared favourably with other funders, and that it was intended for the application process to be as sympathetic as possible. The Committee was assured that proposed rejections were given full scrutiny before the decision to reject was taken, before noting that additional points in respect of rejections would be discussed in non-public session.

RESOLVED – That the Funding 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) Receive this report and note its contents;
- ii) Approve the following grants as recommended;
 - You Make It - £560,000 over five years
 - British Refugee Council - £317,505 over five years
 - YMCA West London - £262,200 over three years
 - Aston-Mansfield - £262,785 over four years
 - The Health Forum - £270,000 over five years
 - Women's Health and Family Services - £269,725 over five years
 - Carefreespace - £500,000 over three years; and
- iii) Approve the rejection of grants as listed in the schedule appended to the report.

11. **CORNERSTONE FUND UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Chief Funding Director updating the Committee on Round 2 of the Cornerstone Fund and highlighting additional learning gleaned from Round 1. The Chief Funding Director confirmed that Round 2 was underway and was currently live.

RESOLVED – That the Funding 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, receive the report and note its contents.

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

There was no other business.

13. **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.

14. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting on 6 March 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

15. **OFFICER DELEGATION LEVELS**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Funding Director.

16. **SMALL GRANTS REVIEW**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Funding Director.

17. **PIPELINE OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES***

The Committee received a report of the Chief Funding Director.

18. **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.

The meeting ended at 12.29 pm

Chair

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