

BARBICAN CENTRE BOARD

Wednesday, 24 January 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Barbican Centre Board held at Frobisher Rooms,
Barbican Centre on Wednesday, 24 January 2024 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Tom Sleigh (Chair)	Zulum Elumogo (External Member)
Tobi Ruth Adebekun (Deputy Chairman)	Mark Page (External Member)
Michael Asante (External Member)	Despina Tstatsas (External Member)
Farmida Bi (Ex-Officio Member)	Irem Yerdelen
Tijs Broeke	

Anne Holmes (The Chief Commoner)

In Attendance

Jens Riegelsberger (via MS Teams)

Officers:

Claire Spencer	- Barbican Centre
Udhay Bhakoo	- Barbican Centre
Jackie Boughton	- Barbican Centre
Jackie Ellis	- Barbican Centre
Cornell Farrell	- Barbican Centre
Julie Fittock	- City Surveyor's Department
Barbara Hollingsworth	- Barbican Centre
Karina Johnson	- Barbican Centre
Ali Mirza	- Barbican Centre
Eve Scott	- Barbican Centre
James Tringham	- Barbican Centre
Sarah Wall	- Barbican Centre
John Cater	- Town Clerk's Department
Matthew Cooper	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Munsur Ali, Deputy Randall Anderson, Alderman Sir William Russell, and Wendy Mead.

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

There were no declarations.

3. BOARD MINUTES

The public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on Wednesday, 15th November were approved as a correct record.

4. **SUB-COMMITTEES**

a. ***Finance and Risk Committee**

The Chair of the Finance and Risk Committee of the Barbican Centre Board provided an oral update on the public elements of the meeting held on Monday, 8th January 2024.

b. ***People, Culture & Inclusion Committee**

The Chair provided an oral update on the public elements of the meeting of the People, Culture, and Inclusion Committee of the Barbican Centre Board held on Tuesday, 9th January 2024.

5. ***FORWARD PLANNER**

Members noted the Board's Forward Planner.

6. **CEO REPORT BY THE BARBICAN'S DIRECTORS**

The Board considered a Report of the CEO, Barbican Centre concerning updates from across the Centre's activities.

In response to a query concerning the comparative reduction in footfall for gallery shows over 2023, the CEO assured the Board that work was being undertaken to increase footfall this year; there had been a step change in programming recently, with the current Ranjani Shettar show in the Conservatory an example of the progress in this area.

In parallel, the CEO emphasised that achieving the level of footfall seen pre-pandemic would remain challenging for some time to come, and officers would exercise prudence when projecting potential footfall levels.

RESOLVED – that the Board noted the Report and endorsed Management's approach to future activities.

7. **MARKETING ANNUAL STRATEGIC UPDATE**

The Board received a Report of the CEO, Barbican Centre concerning the plans for marketing the Barbican Centre over the next 12 months.

In response to a query, the CEO emphasised that, externally, there was no lack of appetite for use of the Centre and departments were co-ordinating effectively to ensure that the right choices were being made to select from this pipeline.

In addition to the regular programme, the CEO was also encouraged by the additional events such as the UK premier of "*Poor Things*", the related exhibition of costumes from the film on Level G, which had been highlighted recently by BBC London News, and the screening of "*Maestro*" organised by Netflix UK. These types of events epitomised the Centre's popularity in the wider arts marketplace.

A Member commended officers on the retail output in the run-up to Christmas; the range and quality of the products were excellent. The CEO thanked the Member for these comments and informed the Board that the preparations for Christmas 2024 were now beginning.

It was remarked that the HR team were coordinating with the marketing and communications teams when it came to recruitment, this was in an effort to boost the employer brand of the Centre, a key strand of the People Strategy.

In response to a query around whether, when it came to marketing impact, the Centre was measuring itself against its competitors, officers assured the Board that the Centre compared well when examining marketing spend. A marketing dashboard would be presented regularly to the Board later in 2024 with further detail.

In response to a query, officers informed the Board that the comprehensive audience research and branding project work had begun, this would provide the new Director of Audiences with the ability to hit the ground running when they join the Centre in the spring.

Officers assured Members that close coordination was taking place with the Trust; a key discussion currently was around how to transition Barbican Centre Members to become Patrons. In addition, it was confirmed that dynamic pricing was currently being tested and data would be presented to the Board in due course.

RESOLVED – that the Board noted the Report.

8. THE BARBICAN CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023

The Board considered a Report of the CEO, Barbican Centre concerning the Centre's Annual Report for 2022/23.

Members commended officers for the quality of the Report and for the accompanying video that was shown during the meeting.

RESOLVED – that the Board noted the Barbican Annual Report 2022/23 and approved its onward submission to the Court of Common Council for noting.

9. ETHICS STRATEGY UPDATE

The Board considered a Report of the CEO, Barbican Centre concerning the Barbican Centre's Ethics Code.

Members were in agreement with the CEO that the optimal governance channel for matters pertaining to the Ethics Code was via the Finance and Risk Committee of the Barbican Centre Board.

Alongside regular reporting, issues which required escalation would be submitted by the Ethics Code Working Group to the Committee. The Working Group which would be chaired by the Director of People, Culture, and Inclusion; the Director was best placed to chair the Working Group as, as well as being in

in an arms-length position from the day-to-day operations across the Centre, they were also accountable for EDI policies at the Centre - a key focus when it came to the Code. It was clarified that escalation was a judgement call as opposed to having a check list or triggers. It was also highlighted that further escalation beyond the Committee i.e., to the Board, would be available if necessary.

It was confirmed that the controversial programming risk register will now include things that the Working Group has said no to.

The CEO emphasised that when decisions were required the Working Group would be trying to reach a consensus (as opposed to a vote), when this was not possible, the matter would be escalated to the Finance and Risk Committee.

In response to a query, the CEO was keen that a level of confidence about the effectiveness of the Code was established before it was published, but hoped this could be achieved later this year. In parallel, the Chair requested that an update about the Code be provided to the Board later in 2024 and asked the clerk to add this to the Board' Forward Plan.

RESOLVED – that the Board approved the Barbican Ethics Code and noted the plans for implementation.

10. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD

There were no public questions.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other public business.

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

13. NON-PUBLIC BOARD MINUTES

The non-public minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 15th November were approved as a correct record.

14. SUB-COMMITTEES

a. *Finance and Risk Committee

The Chair of the Finance and Risk Committee of the Barbican Centre Board provided an oral update on the non-public elements of the meeting held on Monday, 8th January 2024.

b. ***People, Culture & Inclusion Committee**

The Chair provided an oral update on the non-public elements of the meeting of the People, Culture, and Inclusion Committee of the Barbican Centre Board held on Tuesday, 9th January 2024.

15. **CEO REPORT BY THE BARBICAN'S DIRECTORS**

The Board considered a Report of the CEO, Barbican Centre concerning updates from across the Centre's activities.

16. **BUDGET 2024/25**

The Board considered a Report of the CEO, Barbican Centre concerning the Centre's Budget for FY 2024/25.

17. **CREATIVE COLLABORATIONS - PHASE TWO RESTRUCTURE**

The Board considered a Report of the CEO, Barbican Centre concerning the Creative Collaborations Team.

18. ***ARTS PROGRAMMING & BUSINESS EVENTS RISK REGISTER**

The Board received a Report of the CEO, Barbican Centre concerning the Arts Programme and the Business Events Risk Register.

19. ***ANNUAL PLAN FOR CWP AND MAINTENANCE**

The Board received a Report of the CEO, Barbican Centre concerning an overview of the maintenance and cyclical works activities planned for 2024.

20. *** BARBICAN CWP AND CAPITAL PROJECTS - UPDATE REPORT**

The Board received a Report of the CEO, Barbican Centre concerning the progress and financial position of live Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) refurbishment and maintenance projects, Capital Projects and the groups of Climate Action Strategy (CAS) projects.

21. ***BARBICAN BUSINESS REVIEW: NOVEMBER 2023 (PERIOD 8)**

The Board received a Report of the CEO, Barbican Centre concerning the Period 8 accounts for the Barbican Centre.

22. **QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**

There were no non-public questions.

23. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no other urgent non-public business.

The meeting ended at 1.05 pm

Chair

Contact Officer: John Cater
john.cater@cityoflondon.gov.uk