

CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LIBRARIES COMMITTEE

Monday, 18 March 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee held at Committee Room 3 - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 18 March 2024 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Munsur Ali (Chairman)	Deborah Oliver
John Griffiths (Deputy Chairman)	Judith Pleasance
John Foley	Deputy Alpa Raja
James St John Davis	Anett Rideg
Jason Groves	David Sales
Deputy Madush Gupta	Ian Seaton
Jaspreet Hodgson	Alethea Silk
Wendy Hyde	Mark Wheatley
Antony Manchester	Deputy Dawn Wright
Alderman and Sheriff Bronek Masojada	Irem Yerdelen
Andrew Mayer	Deputy Elizabeth King
Wendy Mead	Caroline Haines
Eamonn Mullally	Suzanne Ornsby KC

In Attendance

Officers:

Elizabeth Scott	- Head of Guildhall Art Gallery, Town Clerks
Damian Nussbaum	- Director of Innovation & Growth
Joanna Parker	- Principal Planning Officer, Environment
Rob Shakespeare	- Keats House, Environment
Jayne Moore	- Town Clerk's Department
Emma Markiewicz	- London Metropolitan Archives
Rachel Levy	- Community and Children's Services
Luciana Magliocco	- Innovation and Growth
Gregory Moore	- Town Clerk's Department
Philip Saunders	- Parliamentary Affairs Counsel
Judith Finlay	- Director, Community & Children's Services
Ian Thomas CBE	- Chief Executive and Town Clerk

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderwoman Jeanette Newman. These Members observed the meeting remotely: Deputy Madush Gupta, and Alethea Silk.

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

Wendy Hyde declared her chairmanship of Sculpture in the City.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, That the minutes of the meeting of 29 January 2024 be approved as an accurate record (subject to one amendment to the attendance record).

4. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Board considered the Terms of Reference, noting that positive discussions have taken place with three major City cultural assets: Museum of London, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and Barbican Centre, who will be providing updates twice a year each and working more closely with the Committee.

Members agreed that there was merit in postponing approval of the Terms of Reference given the criticality of the Destination City (DC) review.

5. **OUTSTANDING ITEMS**

The Committee noted the report of the Clerk.

On action point 5 (Folio 400) the Committee noted that options are currently being reviewed.

6. **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee noted the report of the Clerk.

7. **DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN - I&G**

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director, Innovation & Growth.

On point 9 of the report (delivery of DC reports) Members noted that the current governance system was likely to evolve following DC Review outcomes.

RESOLVED, That the 2024-25 departmental business plan be approved, subject to potential updates following decisions on the DC Review.

8. **CAI DELEGATED AUTHORITY PROPOSAL**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Innovation & Growth.

Referencing paragraph 14d of the report, a Member sought to emphasise that the financial value element referenced urgency procedures.

A Member noted that financial risk should not be a vehicle for a rushed approval.

A Member commented on an apparently high number of decisions taken under Urgency procedures, commenting on whether that was best practice – noting that three applications had been through the Urgency procedure in the last year and that messaging around timeframes has been clarified.

RESOLVED, That the Committee delegate authority on CAI applications that meet the agreed criteria (option 2, set out in paragraph 12 of the report) to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Committee (in line with standing order 41B) supported by the Chair of CAI, noting that any permanent public art applications, including blue plaques, would be subject to the current approval process.

9. **KEATS HOUSE FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25**

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Executive Director Environment.

On paragraphs 6 and 7 (discount passes covering a range of attractions) a Member asked whether other City of London assets were included in those schemes, or whether there was mileage in developing a City of London pass to promote City assets. The meeting heard that discount rates tended to be negotiated individually and that Keats House worked closely with Tower Bridge on the issue, and that a group negotiation could be arranged, noting that some discounts were in place for up to three years (see action point 14).

RESOLVED, That the Committee agree the proposed fees and charges for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

10. **LEVELLING UP AND REGENERATION ACT 2023**

The Committee noted the report of the Remembrancer that provided an overview of the provisions of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 relevant to the City's cultural, heritage and environmental interests.

11. **LONDON METROPOLITAN ARCHIVES UPDATE**

The Committee noted the report of the Town Clerk that provided an update on the activities of the London Metropolitan Archives and various reviews across all its areas of work.

A Member commented on the usefulness of a strategic rationale for use as talking points to stakeholders.

Members unanimously supported the proposed name change to The London Archives.

12. **DRAFT HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN 2023/24 - COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

The Committee noted the report of the Executive Director, Community & Children's Services noting in particular the factors taken into consideration in compiling the department's business plan as it related to libraries.

A Member sought clarification on whether there were any plans to cut library services in the City of London, and the meeting heard that investments were being made in libraries and that there were no plans to cut library services – though the CoLC would always continue to consider value for money.

RESOLVED, That the 2024-25 departmental Business Plan be approved as it relates to Libraries.

13. **KEATS HOUSE - TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

The Committee noted the report of The Chamberlain and the Interim Executive Director Environment setting out the Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 for Keats House (charity registration number 1053381).

14. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

A Member sought clarification on whether the City of London planning team had involved the Committee in a decision to remove public access to a roof terrace on a new development at Newgate Street that would give the public striking views of St Paul's Cathedral.

A Member asked whether the Committee has any interest in improving and maintaining access to culture centres noting that a recent development at Moorgate promised escalators and lifts to the Barbican Podium Highwalk, but that these do not work at the weekend sending out negative messages.

The Committee noted that the Committee has not been involved in either of these decisions.

A Member sought clarification on the degree to which the CoL executive had the latitude to vary decisions after they had been made, noting that that appeared to be a factor. The meeting heard that the issue had been discussed at the Policy & Resources Committee earlier the same day, and that Officers are empowered to take decisions in line with the scheme of delegation set by the Court of Common Council in which the relevant thresholds were set out to determine the level of Member involvement in decisions. Members were directed to the YouTube recording of that meeting (the discussion being at the 1h:28m mark).

In response to a question on whether a request could be made to amend the scheme of delegation to ensure CHL has oversight of any decision that impacts on cultural assets, the meeting noted that recommendations were being made ahead of likely revisions to the relevant scheme of delegation, to which Members would be able to contribute upon the submission of the proposed scheme of delegation submitted to the Court of Common Council.

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

There was no other business.

16. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED, that – under Section 100(A) 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 I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

The meeting ended at 1.30 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Jayne Moore
jayne.moore@cityoflondon.gov.uk

DRAFT