

CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LIBRARIES COMMITTEE

Monday, 20 May 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee held at London Metropolitan Archives, 40 Northampton Rd, EC1R 0HB on Monday, 20 May 2024 at 11.00 am

1. **APOLOGIES**

Ian Seaton moved that the meeting be chaired by its most senior Member Wendy Mead for items 1 to 4, seconded by John Foley.

Apologies were received from Sir William Russell, Alderman Bronek Masojada, Alderman Jennette Newman, Caroline Haines, Antony Manchester, Jaspreet Hodgson, Alpa Raja, Judith Pleasance, Mark Wheatley, Jason Groves, David Sales, Alethea Silk, and Aaron D'Souza.

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

Deborah Oliver and John Griffiths declared their membership of the City Bridge Trust (item 13, The Monument).

Wendy Hyde declared her chairmanship of Sculpture in the City.

3. **ORDER OF THE COURT**

The Committee received the Order of the Court dated 25 April 2024.

4. **ELECTION OF THE CHAIR**

RESOLVED, That Munsur Ali be elected as Chair for the ensuing year, a single expression of interest having been received.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR**

RESOLVED, That John Griffiths be elected Deputy Chair for the ensuing year, a single expression of interest having been received.

6. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, That the public minutes of the meeting of 18 March 2024 be approved as an accurate record of the proceedings, subject to checking an amendment to the attendance list.

7. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The Committee noted the report of the Clerk.

On action point 2 (the cultural calendar) Members noted the draft cultural calendar distributed prior to and at the meeting and were invited to forward comments and suggestions to a cultural calendar that would be continuously updated (see action point 2).

8. **APPOINTMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEES**

RESOLVED, That the Committee appoint these representatives to the Keats House Consultative Committee:

Munsur Ali (Chair of CHL)
John Griffiths (Deputy Chair of CHL)
Wendy Mead

A further representative will be sought at the next meeting of the Committee.

On the City Arts Initiative, the Committee noted the updated composition:

Wendy Hyde in her capacity as Chair of Sculpture in the City;
Judith Pleasance in lieu of Jason Groves;
Joanna Parker, Principal Planning Officer, as Chair of the CAI;

RESOLVED, That the Committee appoint these representatives to the City Arts Initiative:

Munsur Ali (Chair of CHL)
John Griffiths (Deputy Chair of CHL)
Wendy Hyde
Deputy Elizabeth King

Members noted that the refreshed CAI Terms of Reference have not yet been finalised and will be submitted to a later meeting of the CHL Committee during 2024.

RESOLVED, That the Committee approve the CAI delegated authority procedure as submitted to the Committee, noting that at the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee meeting of 18 March 2024 Members approved the CAI's recommendation to move to a delegated authority model for CAI applications. The Committee noted that the procedure will take effect from the next City Arts Initiative meeting of 6 June 2024.

9. **UPDATE ON LONDON METROPOLITAN ARCHIVES/GUILDHALL LIBRARY**

Members thanked the team at the LMA for hosting the meeting and arranging the tour before the meeting.

Members received an update on the LMA, including these points:

- The LMA is the second largest archive service in the UK behind Kew;
- The proposed new brand is 'The London Archives' with a soft launch to take place from 05 August 2024;
- A dedicated website will also be launched on 5th August 2024, with a reduced web presence remaining on the CoL website;
- The current lease on the Northampton Rd site expires in 2035;
- Storage at the Northampton Rd site and at Guildhall is nearing capacity;
- The organisation has enjoyed a beneficial rate in the last four decades on the current site of c. £250K pa, with significant rises expected after 2035 given the commercial value of the site (to around £4M pa);

- After securing £150k from the Finance Committee for some options appraisal research into costed options for the accommodation project, a range of options will be examined around income generation, growth models and alternatives for accommodation, to be presented later in the year;
- A strategic review of the Guildhall Library service is being undertaken by Michael Lewis of Lewis St Hill Consulting, with recommendations expected to be submitted to the July 2024 meeting of the Committee;
- Audience development initiatives include ensuring that archives are accessible to a wide audience through schools programmes, public engagement, and community initiatives;
- The schools programmes have been refreshed to include a core set of modules rolled out via an online booking system;
- As of September 2024 the public programme will include a core offer of daytime events alongside new evening activities including talks;
- Other community initiatives are under way to incorporate marginalised histories;
- The primary funding source is the City of London Corporation (approximately 80%), and grant programmes attract around £0.25M, with events generating some income.

A Member asked for clarification on the extent to which the LMA works with the London Museum. The meeting heard that the organisation has a good relationship with the London Museum via a range of initiatives, including Culture Mile Learning, which is now discontinued, and that there are synergies with the proposed new direction for 'The London Archives'.

A Member commented that there is merit in having an online archive of past exhibitions, including 'Unforgotten Lives'.

A Member sought confirmation that engagement was ongoing with the City's digital team to ensure consistency and cyber safety for the new website project. The meeting heard that the organisation is working with the City of London Police on digital security, and has commissioned the City's web developer, Zengenti, to develop the new website.

Members asked for further information on alternative locations and the extent of the involvement of other CoL senior decision-makers. The Committee heard that the new London Museum (at Smithfield) would be an example of an ideal site, and that other sites in development such as the London Wall West site and Barbican sites would be considered through the options appraisal, and the planning process in conjunction with City Surveyors.

Members asked on what basis the expected rent increase after 2035 was calculated, noting that there might be opportunities for the Committee to make a representation to the relevant planning authority on the premise's use, particularly in view of the cultural character of the LMA and the City Plan 2040 (notwithstanding that the Northampton Rd site is in the London Borough of Islington). The meeting heard that the increased figure was based on City Surveyor evaluations on a commercial basis.

The Committee agreed that a small group of CHL Members should examine the City Plan 2040 with a view to the Committee making a representation by 31 May 2024 to ensure that CHL's objectives are met as part of that Plan.

10. **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee noted the forward plan, commenting that updates on BIDs would be welcome on the forward plan in future, and that the attendance of a BID representative at a future meeting would be beneficial.

11. **VERBAL UPDATE ON DESTINATION CITY**

The Committee received an update on Destination City, noting the following points:

- Officers are supporting the Chief Town Clerk in planning the transition to implementation;
- A Destination City governance report submitted to the Court of Common Council meeting of 23 May 2024 recommends that the Court of Common Council agree to align accountability for the refreshed DC programme to the Policy & Resources Committee, noting that accountability for the culture strategy remains with the CHL Committee.

Members commented on the importance of moving the cultural strategy and vision forward imminently and ahead of any senior cultural policy appointments, that could take some time, so that the strategy could be progressed via informal meetings in the first instance - noting the already stretched resources within the DC team.

Members reflected on how differing views on any issue held by P&R and CHL might be resolved given the overlap between the refreshed DC programme and the culture strategy, noting also the clarifications set out in the Paul Martin review.

12. **CITY ARTS INITIATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LIBRARIES COMMITTEE**

Members noted a verbal update provided at the meeting: there are now 7 new artworks and 3 tentative artworks (the pieces 'Temple' shown on p56 and 'Everything Before, Everything After' on p58 are now confirmed new artworks). The London Festival of Architecture has been working with four BIDs and will open in late May 2024, and Bloomberg's Asphalt Art programme will involve a 3-year installation with a maintenance programme attached to it. Neurodiverse elements are now considered, and Health & Safety reviews are now routinely taking place.

RESOLVED, That the Committee approve the CAI proposals set out in the report of the Director of Innovation & Growth.

13. **END OF YEAR UPDATE REPORT FOR ACHIEVEMENTS AT THE MONUMENT, 2023/24**

The Committee noted the report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment.

Members expressed great disappointment at the information set out in sections 8 and 9 of the report (closures due to staff shortages), commenting that complaints had been received about unplanned closures of such an important historical landmark.

The meeting heard that the Environment Department is the client for the Monument with its day-to-day operation being delivered by Tower Bridge. Options are being explored to ensure that the factors leading to the short-notice closure of the Monument are mitigated while recommendations on the Monument's future governance and operation are prepared for Member decision later in the year.

14. **UPDATE REPORT FOR KEATS HOUSE CHARITY, 2023/24**

The Committee noted the draft report of the Executive Director, Environment, noting the continued recovery of visitor numbers and income since the pandemic.

15. **DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING OF KEATS HOUSE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE OF 03 MAY 2024**

The Committee noted the draft minutes of the meeting of the Keats House Consultative Committee of 03 May 2024.

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

There were no questions.

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

The Chair thanked Members who were no longer part of the Committee:

- The two ex-officio Members Graham Packham and Tom Sleight
- Eammon Mullaly
- Deputy Madush Gupta

The Chair welcomed new Members to the Committee:

- Aaron D'Souza
- Sir William Russell (ex-officio, Chair of Barbican Centre Board)

as well as the return of Brendan Barns to the Committee, noting also that a further ex-officio appointment was expected to be made at the meeting of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama Board later that day.

18. **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 1.20pm

Chairman

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