

Art Galleries Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 17 February 2021

Present: Councillor Rahman – in the Chair

Councillors: Akbar, Bridges, Leech, N Murphy, and Richards

Apologies: Councillor Leese

AG/20/1. Minutes

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2020.

AG/20/2. Manchester City Galleries' report and revenue budget 2021/22

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Manchester City Galleries and the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that detailed the performances of the galleries in the past year. The COVID-19 pandemic had a severe impact on Manchester Art Gallery in 2020, with prolonged forced closures. The gallery had been able to reopen for a period in August, September and October. The gallery had faced a critical financial challenge through lost commercial income but had been able to limit the harm by means of a successful application to the Cultural Recovery Fund from the Treasury.

The report also set out other areas of work that had been undertaken in 2020/21, such as work on the Our Town Hall project, Platt Hall and the Manchester Together Archive.

In the past year a review of the Collection Development Policy had been undertaken. That had included detailed research into the history the collection. An updated policy was now being proposed to set out collection development priorities over the next three years. The focus was to better understand the existing materials, how they could be best used through a series of collection reviews of discreet collection areas, working with different stake holders and partners. A copy of the proposed new policy was appended to the report, and it was adopted by the Committee.

The report set out a proposed budget for 2021/22 which the Committee endorsed.

Budget Area	Proposed gross revenue budget 2020/21 £000
Expenditure	
Staffing	2,627
Premises	57
Transport	61

Supplies and Services	877
Internal charges	30
Total Expenditure	3,652
Income	
MCC cash limit	2,270
ACE National Portfolio Organisation (NPO)	489
Art Galleries Trust (fundraising)	365
Earned income	357
Esmee Fairbairn Collection Fund	38
Internal recharge (OTH Project)	133
Total Income	3,652

Following the report, Councillors gave their thanks to all Gallery officers and staff for their continued efforts throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, commenting that their continuation via the digital medium has had a positive impact on the mental health of Manchester residents and provided strong links with the education service.

Councillors raised questions on when the Manchester Together Archive would re-open and on potential budget impacts for Platt Hall.

Senior Gallery Officers, addressing the Manchester Together Archive, commented that funding had commenced last week and that volunteers would continue to work under current Covid-19 restrictions, where possible. Addressing Platt Hall, it was mentioned that there would be Capital funding to continue to evolve Platt Hall with a focus on efforts to improve residents' health and wellbeing and education.

Decisions

1. To note the report, including the draft gross budget for 2021/22 of £3.65m, with cash limit budget contribution from Manchester City Council of £2.27m, and to recommend the budget to the Council as part of the 2021/22 budget setting.
2. To note that the budget will be approved by Executive as part of the Council's budget setting process.
3. To approve the revised Collection Development Policy 2021-2024.