

Art Galleries Committee

Minutes of a meeting held on 7 February 2018

Present:

Councillor Rahman– In the Chair

Councillors Craig, Flanagan, Leese, N Murphy, S Murphy, S Newman and B Priest

Also present:

Councillor Bridges, Dar, and Sheikh

AG/18/01 Minutes

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2017.

AG/18/02 Manchester City Galleries' report and Revenue Budget 2018/19

The Committee considered a joint report of the Interim Director of Manchester City Galleries and the City Treasurer which outlined overall performance during 2017/18 as well as delivery proposals for 2018/19 within the context of City Galleries strategic plan. The Committee was invited to endorse the report, including the draft gross budget and recommend it to the Executive for approval as part of the Council's wider budget setting process.

The Interim of Manchester City Galleries introduced the report highlighting its main themes with particular reference to the continued upward trend in visitor numbers and increased diversity of gallery audiences. She outlined the main features of the 2017/18 exhibition programme and its growing national and international media profile. Members congratulated staff in achieving yet another successful year of growing and widening audiences through its broad and inclusive exhibition programme. The Committee also congratulated staff for their nomination for Citylife exhibition of the year. It also particularly welcomed the impact of the Baby Stay and Play sessions (aimed at engaging young mothers in a comfortable and inclusive setting). Members recognised the important role such initiatives play in the engagement of vulnerable and / or hard to reach groups and welcomed the ongoing development of a progressive and ground-breaking engagement programme. With regard to the delivery of the 2018/19 programme, Members also welcomed the range of exhibitions that celebrate the centenary of the campaign for women's suffrage.

There was a discussion about the recent media coverage about the temporary removal of the painting 'Hylas and the Nymphs'. The Committee recognised the importance of stimulating discussion and provoking debate about the city's public collection and registered its thanks and support for staff and the positive and innovative work they do in delivering and arts and cultural offer that is distinctive and widely recognised for its quality and impact.

Decisions

1. To welcome the successful performance in 2017/18 and register the Committee's thanks and support to staff in building on its diverse and ambitious programme of works.
2. To approve the contents of the report, including the draft gross budget for 2018/19 of £3.476m, with cash limit budget contribution from Manchester City Council of £2.132m.
3. To recommend the budget to Executive for approval as part of the Council's budget setting process.
4. To approve the transfer of archaeological material to Manchester Museum as set out in the report.
5. To approve the Strategic Plan, Environmental Strategy and four policy documents as required by Arts Council England under the terms of the Museums Accreditation scheme as set out in the report.