

MAYOR OF LONDON

Minutes - Virtual Mayor's Cultural Leadership Board Meeting

2 February 2021 | 10:00 – 11:30

Record of the Virtual Meeting

Chair: Ben Evans CBE, Director, London Design Festival

Vice Chair: Moira Sinclair OBE, Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries, Justine Simons OBE

Ambassadors

Ajay Chhabra, Director, Nutkhut

Alice Black, Creative Industries Representative

Amy Lamé, Night Czar, Mayor's Office

Bernard Donoghue, Director, Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA)

Claire Whitaker OBE, Bid Director, Southampton City of Culture 2025

Cllr Danny Thorpe, Leader, Royal Borough of Greenwich

Gaylene Gould, Independent Creative Director

Jennifer Crook, Independent Producer

John Newbigin OBE, Creative Industries Representative, LEAP Board

Dr Jo Twist OBE, CEO, UK Interactive Entertainment

Pam Alexander OBE, London Legacy Development Corporation

Ricky Burdett CBE, Professor of Urban Studies and Director of Cities and the Urban Age Programme at LSE

Sharon Ament, Director, Museum of London

Stuart Hobley, Director, The Linbury Trust

Madani Younis, Chief Executive Producer, The Shed

Additional Attendees

Amanda Decker, Senior Policy Officer, Culture and Creative Industries

Clare Lovett, Principal Project Development Officer, Culture and Creative Industries

Coral Flood, Principal Policy Officer, Culture and Creative Industries

Dianna Neale, London Councils Representative

Kirsten Dunne, Senior Manager, Cultural Infrastructure and Public Realm

Jezreel James, Projects and Policy Officer, Culture and Creative Industries (Secretariat)

Jackie McNerney, Senior Manager, World City and Operations

Jacqueline Rose, Senior Manager, Strategy and Programmes

Laia Gasch, Special Adviser to Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries

Lucia Masundire, Policy and Projects Officer, Culture and Creative Industries

Shonagh Manson, Assistant Director, Culture and Creative Industries

Will Holmes, Senior Cultural Policy Officer, Culture and Creative Industries

Ambassador Apologies: Madani Younis, Chief Executive Producer, The Shed; Gaylene Gould, Independent Creative Director.

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Agenda - Virtual Mayor's Cultural Leadership Board Meeting

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Item	Presenter	Timing
Part 1 - Welcome and Meeting Introduction		
1) Declarations of Interest 2) Minutes and Actions	- Ben Evans	10:00 – 10:05 (5 mins)
3) Outline of Meeting	- Ben Evans	10:05 – 10:10 (5 mins)
Part 2 - Items for Discussion		
4) Core Programme Update - Questions arising from pre-reading - Reopening Update and discussion	- Shonagh Manson - Bernard Donoghue	10:10 – 10:30 (5 mins) (15 mins)
5) Creative Freelancers Programme: Presentation and group discussion	- Will Holmes	10:30 – 10:50 (20 mins)
6) Commercially and politically sensitive	- Commercially and politically sensitive	10:50 – 11:10 (20 mins)
7) Review of the Year	- Justine Simons OBE - All	11:10 - 11:25 (15 mins)
8) AOB and Close	- Ben Evans	11:25 – 11:30 (5 mins)

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1. Welcome and Meeting Introduction

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He directed the Board to keep people at the centre of their conversations in the meeting, noting that whilst the vaccine rollouts have given hope during this third lockdown, it remains a very difficult time for many Londoners. Even more have lost relatives and friends to COVID-19 and many, particularly in the sectors the Board supports, are also feeling the economic impact caused by the virus.

He noted that whilst the Board will continue to support the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and team until the election in May, this was its final full board meeting under this administration.

The Chair was keen for the Board to share their thoughts on their experience as an Ambassador for the Mayor's Cultural Leadership Board over the past five years with the team, noting that the team were always looking for where they can improve the experience and effectiveness of the board and would value their feedback.

- 1.2. The Chair noted **apologies** received from Madani Younis and Gaylene Gould.

- 1.3. No conflicts of interest were declared.

2. Minutes and Actions

- 2.1. The Chair noted that the minutes from previous meetings will be circulated for ratification and published on the Mayor of London website.

- 2.2. There were no outstanding actions.

3. Outline of Meeting

- 3.1. The Chair outlined the items for the meeting:

- 3.1.1. **Item 4 Bernard Donoghue** will update the group on current issues around the reopening of culture in our capital.

- The Chair thanked Bernard for all the work he has done advocating for the sector and for being 'a relentless champion'.

- 3.1.2. **Item 5 Will Holmes**, Senior Cultural Policy Officer will give a presentation on the on the Culture and Creative Industries Unit's Creative Freelancers Programme.

- 3.1.3. **Item 6 Not minuted**

- 3.1.4. To close, **Deputy Mayor of Culture and the Creative Industries, Justine Simons OBE** - achievements in a very difficult year.

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4. Core Programme Update and Culture Reopening Update (Shonagh Manson and Bernard Donoghue)

4.1. Shonagh Manson asked if there are any questions arising from any of the pre-reading materials.

4.2. No questions arose.

4.3. Bernard Donoghue reminded the group of his remit as Director of ALVA and what other Boards and groups focused on recovery that he sits on where issues around 'Reopening' are the focus.

4.4. He reminded the group that currently all visitor attractions, bars, hotels and other tourism businesses are not open and there is no agreed formula or date for when they can. After the national lockdown it's unclear if the country will be back into a tier system.

4.5. Sector is focused on the Budget on 3 March mean and would like three things:

4.5.1. The reduced VAT rate to be maintained at 5 per cent.

- It has had limited effect because of lockdowns and tiers. Would like it to be extended for the whole financial year (or calendar year). If not, this would mean prices would go up 24 hours before the start of the Easter Holiday which is that start of the holiday season in the UK.

4.5.2. Extend Business Rates holiday for one year.

4.5.3. Would like local and regional funding from Government to support the domestic tourism market to attract, local, national and the inbound overseas visitors

- Attractions like Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral have lost 90 per cent of their income as the majority comes from inbound overseas market.
- Central London, particularly the City of London have lost all three tertiary markets.
- The money spent on food and drink by inbound tourists to the UK in any normal year is greater than UK exports of food and drink in any normal year.
- 30 per cent of the Scotland's inbound tourists come via London.

4.5.4. The sector wants to be considered in the same in the same light as non-essential shops, making the case that there is no epidemiological reason why they couldn't, given the stringent COVID-19 measure attractions can put in place.

4.5.5. Freelancers who provide the content for the sector still haven't been supported.

4.5.6. The London Tourism Cooperative are doing tactical marketing with the support of UK Hospitality and ALVA.

4.5.7. London & Partners and Visit Britain are working together on a brand campaign to encourage visitors back to London.

4.5.8. The biggest stumbling block to tourism recovery is still consumer confidence in coming back to London and city centres generally. GLA and TfL commissioned Imperial College to do forensic research on the transport network which didn't find any evidence of the virus on the network.

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4.5.9. ALVA conducting nationwide consumer confidence report, free for organisations to participate in, to gauge what would encourage or deter them from coming back to London.

4.6. The Chair thanked Bernard Donoghue and opened the floor for questions. Questions included:

4.6.1. Has consumer spending and activity been displaced?

- BD - There will be a staycation boom for coast and countryside but you can't book at the moment because the sector doesn't know when they can open.
- AL - There are also hotels that need to honour bookings that were not able to take place.

4.6.2. Many people are on furlough or have been made redundant; is the visitor attractions industry ready to reopen?

- BD - There is a big problem with workforce. There are 700,000 fewer people are here in London than this time last year. They were mostly from the EU and 35 – 40 per cent of them worked in hospitality and front of house staff at visitor attractions.
- BD – Front of house staff were some of the first to be made redundant and many of these are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups and / or have second or third language skills making or attractions less diverse and potentially less welcoming to overseas visitors.

4.6.3. The Deputy Mayor outlined how vital reopening is for tourism, culture, the creative industries and night time sectors. She stated that the Mayor has given his unwavering support in all his messages and lobbying. The health of Londoners is his top priority, so he is asking the Board to support him with continued evidence and ideas to help navigate the challenging space of balancing the health of Londoners with the survival of the sector.

5. **Creative Freelancers Programme (Will Holmes, Senior Cultural Policy Officer)**

5.1. The Chair introduced Will Holmes and offered thanks to Jennifer Crook who supported the Unit on the commissioning research from Centre for London on the freelance (self-employed) workforce.

5.2. Will outlined the issue relating to how freelancers have been badly impacted by the pandemic which has exacerbated existing issues for the creative sector.

5.3. In addition, he outlined the work we funded by the Centre for London and Community Union to do research on the future of freelancing, particularly on the issue of low pay. The goal is to produce a list of recommendations to outline how we can improve the position of creative freelancers in the future.

5.4. The report, as it was commissioned before the global pandemic, won't address the immediate issues brought on by the pandemic but the Mayor is lobbying government to put measures in place to better support for the nearly £3 million self-employed people who have been excluded from Government provision.

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5.5. The report is likely to deal with how we ensure that creative freelancers have the security, the support, the voice and the opportunities they need to drive the growth of the creative industries in London. This includes better access to skills training, for the government to put in an enforcement body for late payment, and better safety net for tax and welfare. There are five areas of potential work that could follow:

- A freelancers' charter or guidance for employers on how to engage with freelancers better;
- Business literacy skills (IP, Tax etc..) for freelancers as this has been identified as missing skills separate to that of specific trade training.
- Lobbying and advocacy by working in partnership with organisations like Creative industries Federation to champion the rights of freelancers.
- Identifying and monitoring freelancer job opportunities and finding ways to ensure fair access to them.
- Convening a Creative Freelancers 'taskforce', focussing on performing arts freelancers, looking at the civic role they play in the sector.

5.6. Will asked if there were any questions following his presentation. The group asked:

5.6.1. Are unions involved?

- Yes, at least four including: Prospect, Musicians Union, BECTU, Community.

5.6.2. Will you look at clearly defining what a freelancer is?

- This is part of a research brief by the Centre for London we have co-commissioned.

5.6.3. What will be the incentive for companies and organisations to sign up to the charter or adopt the guidance?

- This is part of the development work of the charter, we know that for the Good Work Standard, and the Women's Night Time Safety Charter, the voice of the Mayor does lend weight and organisations want to be associated.

5.6.4. How will you connect to a diverse ethnic mix of the taskforce?

- This will be part of the brief.

5.6.5. Questions and reflections to consider in the development of the broader programme:

- What about diversity of class? Who are the freelancers that want this? How can you ensure it is not an echo chamber of people from similar backgrounds? Need to ensure it's not the same people we always engage.
- Need to get Arts Council England, Jerwood Arts and other funders behind the charter so that they can consider embedding it as part of their issuing of funding especially to organisation who engage freelancers.
- Need think about administration skills in addition to business literacy.

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6. Item 6

6.1. The item was not minuted due to commercial sensitivities.

6.2. The Chair thanked the group for their contributions and handed over to the Deputy Mayor for the final discussion item.

7. Review of the Year (Justine Simons OBE, Deputy Mayor for Culture and the Creative Industries)

7.1. The Chair handed over to the Deputy Mayor who presented a review how the Board's strategic support had helped the Culture and Creative Industries Unit to deliver its priorities during the year. A summary of the presentation is below:

7.2. Slide 1

- 'This has been an unprecedented time of challenge for London's cultural sector. No one has been unaffected.
- When the pandemic hit and lockdown started, the London Borough of Culture in Brent quickly pivoted online – and engaged with 7m people through its cultural programme.
- After just a fortnight after lockdown was announced, the London Games Festival also had to scramble to go online – but still managed to pull off a successful finance market that has leveraged £16m in new investment.
- In April we launched the Mayor's £2.3m Emergency Culture at Risk Fund – probably the fastest creation of a brand new fund in GLA history(!) This has supported 11,500 creative workers and 122 independent cinemas, grassroots music and LGBTQ+ venues and creative workspaces.
- In the same month, we expanded our Culture at Risk office - which has supported nearly 700 cases this year.
- And when lockdown continued through the summer, we launched two further funds: Make London and Community Spaces at Risk to support our vulnerable creative workforce and cultural spaces.
- Our creative industries partners pulled out all the stops. All the major festivals went ahead: Games; London Design Festival, London Fashion Week and London Film Festival – throwing a lifeline to creative businesses in desperate need of vital opportunities to make sales, trade and investment.
- And Film London produced the UK-wide COVID-19 guidance that got £1bn of filming shooting again – the first industry to be able to get back to work. Sadiq recently met with creative industries partners to show his support for the programme.'

7.3. Slide 2

- 'This has been an unprecedented time of challenge for London's cultural sector. No one has been unaffected.
- We also published new research, lobbied Government relentlessly and held over a dozen industry roundtables. All this while planning for a new budget, a new election, and Brexit!
- During lockdown we held the first digital World Cities Culture Forum - with the Mayor leading the first international Mayoral panel about cultural leadership through crisis.

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- The global Black Lives Matter protests in May put the spotlight on injustice and representation. Following this, we announced the Commission for Diversity in the Public Realm which will have its first meeting later this month.
- And as part of the London Borough of Culture programme, young people published the 'Seen & Heard' public realm charter which sets out to ensure that they are integral in the development of our public spaces.
- We were able to secure £8m in Government capital funding to invest in 3 Mills and Dagenham East film studios. And Dagenham Studios secured a US operator, guaranteeing its future.
- We continue to lobby Government to support culture and the 24 Hour Economy. And we even took Charles and Camilla to visit the 100 club and Soho Theatre to highlight the impact of COVID-19 on our sector.
- And finally, we unveiled, after a COVID compliant installation, the 13th Fourth Plinth commission, 'THE END' by Heather Philipson.'

7.4. Slide 3

- 'The team have worked hard to raise funds to support the sector. During the pandemic we've increased our internal culture budget from £8.9m to £12.2m by making the case that recovery funds should support culture and night time - and levered in millions of pounds of support from Government and foundations.
- We have also embedded the creative industries into the Adult Education Budget for the first time. And a funding call will go out later this month inviting bids from the creative industries with screen skills a key focus due to the huge job potential in screen - paving the way for a new Creative Academy next year.'

7.5. Slide 4

- 'We await our final budget but with your help we continue to develop our programmes and projects for the future.
- We have been given the go head for our High Street Innovation Zones Pilot which builds on our Night Time Enterprise & Creative Enterprise Zones models.
- The team also continues on our Diversity and Inclusion work including the Diversity Accelerator and a pilot connecting JobCentres and the film industry.
- The impact of COVID-19 on our citizens - especially older people - is also driving us to push the health and wellbeing agenda.
- In May 2021, in a new partnership with The Alzheimer's Society, we will launch a Dementia Friendly Charter - to create a new network of venues across London committed to supporting people with dementia and their carers. In the past few weeks alone, over 40 major cultural organisations in London have come on board.
- We will continue to engage with Londoners - and we have the London Boroughs of Culture in Lewisham in 2022 and Croydon in 2023 and to look forward to.

7.6. The Chair thanked the Deputy Mayor for the presentation.

7.7. Members echoed the Chair's sentiments and congratulated the team on their achievements.

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8. **AOB and Close of Meeting (5 minutes)**

8.1. No other business was raised.

8.2. The Chair thanked his Vice Chair Moira Sinclair, the Deputy Mayor, Justine Simons OBE and the Board Ambassadors for committing to supporting the Mayor for an additional year.

8.3. The Chair closed the meeting.