

Committee(s)	Dated:
Culture, Heritage and Libraries – For Decision	11/12/2018
Subject: City Arts Initiative: recommendations to the Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee	Public
Report of: Peter Lisley – Assistant Town Clerk and Culture Mile Director	For Decision
Report author: Nick Bodger, Cultural and Visitor Development Director	

Summary

This report presents the recommendations of the City Arts Initiative (CAI) which met on 8 November 2018. At this meeting, the CAI considered the following public art proposals:

1. **Green Finance Sculpture:** a new permanent sculpture is proposed by the Green Finance Sculpture Project to be situated in Greyfriars Churchyard (application for public art on private land);
2. **Tideway:** Black Stages – final approval of the designs for permanent artworks for the Blackfriars Bridge Foreshore site is sought; and
3. **Tideway:** approval for poetry to appear on the three signature ventilation columns on the Blackfriars Bridge Foreshore site is sought

The CAI also discussed your Committee's request to explore commissioning a permanent artwork recognising the role of women in the City.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the application for the **Green Finance Sculpture** acknowledging that the CAI may not recommend, and your Committee may not approve or decline applications for public art on private land.
- Ratify the City Arts Initiative's recommendations in relation to the other two proposals as follows:
 - **Tideway, Black Stages:** approve
 - **Tideway, Poetry:** approve, subject to confirmation of the final font and font size being received by the CAI for comment.

Main Report

Background

1. The City Arts Initiative (CAI) was established to improve the management of public art in the City. It provides advice to your Committee and other service Committees as appropriate on proposals for new public art, the maintenance of the City's existing public art and, if necessary, decommissioning.
2. The CAI comprises elected Members drawn from your Committee and relevant officers across planning, highways, open spaces, and cultural and visitor development, as well as those with specific expertise in the visual arts.
3. At your Committee in May this year, Members confirmed that those occupying the roles of Chairman and Deputy Chairman on the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee, and the Chairman of the Sculpture in the City Partner Board should have permanent seats on the City Arts Initiative. Your Committee also elected Mrs Barbara Newman and Mr Jeremy Simons to serve on the CAI for the 2018/19 committee year.
4. Apart from officer time handling enquiries and managing the installations, there are no resource implications other than where specifically noted.

Current Position

5. The CAI met on 8 November 2018 to consider the proposals outlined below.
6. Full-colour visual representations of the proposed artworks are circulated electronically with this report and available in appendix 1. Full details of all the applications to the CAI are available on request from the Assistant Town Clerk and Culture Mile Director.
7. The CAI also discussed your Committee's request that the group be tasked with exploring the commissioning of a permanent artwork recognising the role of women in the City. Your Deputy Chairman was nominated to appoint and lead a task group of six to eight experts to advance this request, working with the Cultural and Visitor Development Director to identify and invite appropriate members.

Proposals

Green Finance Sculpture

8. The CAI received a proposal for placing a new permanent sculpture on private land in Greyfriars Churchyard. The land is owned by the Diocese of London but maintained and managed by the City Corporation's Open Spaces Department.
9. The new commission will aim to raise awareness of the transformative power of green finance, seeking to change attitudes and actions, and influence present and future investors and decision makers in their financial response to environmental challenges.

10. A selection panel has met and reviewed a long list of artists for this project, agreeing on five who will be invited to respond to a brief. As part of that response, artists will be required to consider the opportunities and constraints of the site and follow the City Corporation guidance in this regard.
11. The CAI may not recommend, and your Committee may not approve or decline applications for public art on private land. However, noting this land is managed and maintained by your Open Spaces Department, the CAI has requested sight of the final design of the sculpture for comment ahead of planning being approved; it has also asked that a suitable endowment figure (for maintenance of the permanent sculpture) be agreed with City Surveyor.

Tideway, Black Stages

12. Blackfriars Foreshore is one of Tideway's largest sites, and one of a small number located in the heart of central London. It is located on the north side of the river and extends from Temple Stairs, under Blackfriars Bridge to the west of Blackfriars Rail Bridge. It includes sections of the Blackfriars Bridge westbound off-ramp and areas of pavement along Victoria Embankment and Paul's walk. The majority of the site falls within the Whitefriars Conservation Area and the western section falls within the Temples Conservation Area. The site is a key focus of the Thames Tideway project.
13. The Artist Nathan Coley has developed a bold approach to the public realm development of this site with the Main Works Contractor FLO (Ferrovial Agroman and Laing O'Rourke Joint Venture) and their architects Hawkins\Brown, as well as the Client, Tideway.
14. Entitled 'Black Stages', the installation is a series of different shaped 'stages' positioned through the site to create a lyrical 'happenstance' – spaces where people can sit, view, play, meet and gather. The sculptures work together as a gathering, or family, creating playful interactions and inviting different ways of experiencing and viewing the space – whether standing on the foreshore, Blackfriars Bridge or a Blackfriars Station platform, or looking across from the South Bank.
15. The material proposed is a high-quality black concrete (Techcrete limestone concrete with a black aggregate (basalt/quartz)), which will allow for the casting of forms and achieve a finished surface that is case concrete, appearing monolithic with a texture.
16. This project is fully funded by Tideway.
17. The CAI recommends that this proposal be approved.

Tideway, Poems

18. Tideway has also commissioned poet Dorothea Smartt to write poems for nine of the Tideway's London sites where signature Tideway Tunnel ventilation column/s are accessible to the public and are likely to see them pass close by. The theme for the poems is the 'Lost Rivers' of London.
19. There are three such signature ventilation columns on the Blackfriars site (for location details see item 12 above). These are 5.1 metres high and made of cast iron to reflect the design of the new public realm in which they are located. The poems will run, in a single line, up the narrow, polished strip on the side of the columns to a height of approximately 3.5m.
20. The poems for the Blackfriars site (informed by the Lost River Fleet) are as follows:
 - The furious Fleet flows red with Roman blood, Boudica battles bravely. (64 characters)
 - St. Barbara's defended, lost. Buried beneath you Bazalgette's workers, tunnelling mudlarks swathed by the forgotten rivers of this town. (137 characters)
 - The stillness of refuge seeps from old St Pancras Church, soothing this troubled mind to recovery, a tranquillity sourced from the buried river. (146 characters)
21. The CAI recommended that this proposal be approved subject to confirmation of the final font and font size being received by the CAI for comment.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

22. The City Arts Initiative was formed to support the City's management of public art which supports the delivery of the City's Cultural and Visitor Strategies.

Conclusion

23. This report summarises the discussions of the City Arts Initiative and presents recommendations in relation to the public art applications considered on 8 November 2018.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: CAI Images, 8 November 2018

Background Papers

Full details of the applications received by the City Arts Initiative are available on request from the Assistant Town Clerk and Culture Mile Director.

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