

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Policy and Resources Culture, Heritage and Libraries	18 February 2021 29 March 2021
<b>Subject:</b> Culture and Diversity Working Group(s) – approval of ToRs and phase 1 funding request	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>3, 7 and 10</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>£17,000</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>Policy Initiatives Fund</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Peter Lisley, Director of Major Projects	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Nick Bodger, Cultural and Visitor Development Director	

### Summary

This report responds to the recommendations of the Tackling Racism Working Party under its culture workstream, approved by your Policy and Resources Committee in January 2021.

Specifically, the report seeks approval of proposed and detailed terms of reference for the City Arts Initiative (CAI) Culture and Diversity Working Group which was tasked with undertaking due process for the removal and re-siting of the Beckford and Cass statues from Guildhall (appendix 1) as well as a series of other duties across research, content development and audits of the City’s public realm to identify and address issues pertaining to the representation, celebration and/or commemoration of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and diversity more widely.

The report also requests enabling funds of £17,000 to support the Working Group through the first phase of its work, with monies sought to cover essential research, communications for the requisite public (to inform and support an application for Listed Building Consent) and representation on the Working Group of curators and programmers working in the fields of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic arts and culture and/or equalities experts.

### Recommendation(s)

Policy and Resources Committee Members are asked to:

- Approve funds of £17,000 to support the first phase of work pertaining to the tasks highlighted in item 1, to be taken from your Policy Initiatives Fund (PIF) in the 2021/22 financial year categorised as “Research” and charged to City’s Cash.

Policy and Resources Committee Members and Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee Members are asked to:

- Approve the Terms of Reference for the Cultural Diversity Working Group(s) at appendix 1.
- Note that the temporary concealment of the Beckford and Cass statues may not be realisable until August 2021 but that the Guildhall will likely only offer restricted access to the public before that time, if at all.
- Note that, subject to the terms of reference and funding request being agreed at the Policy and Resources Committee meeting and work being started immediately on the consultation process required, it is likely that Listed Building Consent permitting the removal of statues will not be considered until August 2021 at the earliest.
- Consider whether a temporary concealment solution for the Guildhall statues is required from summer 2021, or whether the statues should be left exposed until permanent concealment, interpretation or re-siting is realised, noting to not install an interim solution will save significant cost and officer time.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. At your Policy and Resources Committee on 21 January 2021, the recommendations of your Tackling Racism Taskforce (TRT) were presented and approved. Under the culture strand of the TRT's proposals, appearing at item 86 (p99) in the report, the following actions were endorsed:
  - a. Approval be granted for the statue of William Beckford in the Great Hall to be removed;
  - b. The statue of Sir John Cass in the Guildhall be given back to the Sir John Cass Foundation;
  - c. A working group, which would be led by City Arts Initiative members, and which would report to the Policy & Resources and Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committees, be established to manage the transferal of these items with a recommended way forward by the end of April 2021. In the interim, the two statues be covered in some way (temporarily) with an explanatory note as to why, whilst the working group consider the way forward;
  - d. After removal of the Beckford statue, consideration would be given to an appropriate and relevant artwork to replace it;
  - e. Beyond April, the aforementioned working group to scope future public realm commissions which would mark the abolition of slavery and recognise the contribution of slavery toward the growth and expansion of the City of London;
  - f. Following this work, the working group to consider a process to audit and consider future commissions of street names and other cultural items that are associated with historic acts of racism such as the Transatlantic Slave Trade; and

- g. Research be commissioned by the working group to understand and learn of notable historic Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic individuals who could be celebrated as making a positive contribution to the City.

### **Current Position**

2. In response to item 1c above, a Culture and Diversity Working Group has been assembled and detailed terms of reference (ToRs) drawn up to reflect the approved recommendations listed above. These ToRs act as a “job description” for the group and appear in appendix 1.
3. The work specified falls into two distinct areas across overlapping timeframes:
  - a. Logistics and research
  - b. Content and strategy
4. It has therefore been proposed that two concurrent and overlapping working groups be established to enable manageable meetings and effective use of officer time, and to drive focus. The logistics group will comprise relevant officers only and the strategy group a mixture of officers, Members and external consultants and experts.
5. The groups, it is proposed, shall be known as the Culture and Diversity Logistics and Research Working Group (LRWG) and the Culture and Diversity Content and Strategy Working Group (CSWG).
6. The inaugural meeting of the LRWG took place on 3 February 2021. At that meeting, the ToRs were agreed and a series of key tasks identified that would enable the process for the removal of the Guildhall statues to begin along with an estimation of the funds needed to support this work. These funds total £17,000 and are detailed in the proposals section below.
7. It should be noted that this funding request is the first in a series and supports work only up to an application for Listed Building Consent being made (noting that permission to proceed will be sought from your Committee(s) ahead of an application being submitted). The temporary and/or permanent concealment or removal and re-siting of the statues along with the other key tasks listed in item 1 will need to be costed separately as the viability and scope of the wider project is identified.
8. For information, it is anticipated that funding will need to be sought incrementally for a further two phases:
  - a. Phase 1: consultation and research costs (presented to your Committee as part of this report)
  - b. Phase 2: temporary concealment costs (April 2021)
  - c. Phase 3: removal and re-siting, interpretation or permanent concealment costs and costs related to other tasks identified in item 1 (September 2021)
9. At the 3 February meeting of the LRWG, the following issues and parameters for phase 1 were identified:
  - a. Listed Building Consent (LBC) is likely not required for temporary concealment of the statues if the mechanism is freestanding and not attached to the fabric of the building or the statues to be covered. Risk

assessments and method statements will however be required to ensure the structure is stable and safe and that no work would be carried out which would affect its character, or that of the Guildhall, as a building of special architectural or historic interest, listed Grade I.

- b. Temporary concealment of the statues may not be realisable until August 2021, given the need to research, cost, commission and install a solution fitting to the Guildhall's function as a business and ceremonial events venue as well as the complexity of covering Beckford, noting its size (5.5m high by 3.3m wide) and position in front of a stained glass window and air ventilation unit.
- c. "Throwing a cloth over the statues" would not be appropriate given the above and would, in any case, pose a potential risk of damage to the statues.
- d. The Guildhall Complex is closed to the public under current lockdown restrictions and a building repairs and maintenance programme is scheduled for the spring and summer of 2021 further prohibiting public access. In addition, even if the works programme does not take place, higher tier restrictions will likely limit use of the Guildhall as a public events venue until summer at the earliest. Immediate concealment is therefore not urgent.
- e. The best solution for temporary concealment is likely to engage a stage/film set designer, noting the skills of those working in this field to deliver a freestanding solution that will conceal the statues in a way that both disguises the concealment itself and responds to the character and appearance of the Guildhall, so providing a fitting solution in relation to the function of Guildhall. It is also recognised that those working in this profession have been hard hit by the pandemic and that this engagement may provide – in a small way – an opportunity to support freelancers working in the sector.
- f. Any temporary or permanent concealment solution for the statues will need to consider the space required for functions/events at Guildhall and not impede capacity noting that, if it did, this may have a negative impact on hire revenues..
- g. While subject to the ToRs and funding request being agreed and work being started immediately on the consultation process required ahead of seeking LBC, it is unlikely that consent would be granted until August 2021.
- h. Thereafter, and subject to the outcome of the LBC application, a permanent solution for concealment, removal and re-siting or interpretation will need to be identified and costed, and funds sought. Such a process suggests that whatever outcome is agreed may not be realised until end 2021 to early 2022.
- i. Initial soundings with London and national museums show that there is no appetite to display and explain the Guildhall (or any other) statues should they be removed. This is – in part – because it is anticipated that many more statues may require the same over time and setting a

precedent now may see museums inundated. An offer of storage has, however, been received.

## **Proposals**

10. In order to begin the process of the requisite consultation ahead of seeking Listed Building Consent; to enable progress against the need to define and install a temporary concealment solution; and to inform other workstreams highlighted in item 1, the following tasks will need to be funded:

### **Research estimated at a total cost of £11,000:**

11. An independent researcher should be appointed to write up the history of Beckford and Cass in relation to the Transatlantic Slave Trade with balanced arguments for and against their continued representation within Guildhall to inform the consultation process (£2,000).
12. Independent researchers should be appointed to research the artistic merits of the statues, exploring their relationship in the Guildhall context (notably in relation to other statues), as well as identify their historic significance, planning history and relevant conservation principles to inform the consultation process. Applications for Listed Building Consent are required to be supported by these details and a Heritage Statement (£3,000).
13. Independent research should be commissioned to identify the people, sites and events from the City's past that have positive associations with the abolition of slavery, the advancement of inclusion, or which provide role models for the City's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. This will deliver a data bank of potential subjects for celebration on any concealment mechanism or as replacement solutions and inform content for rebalancing representation within the public realm (£6,000)
14. Audits of the City's street names, building names, and monuments and statues identifying negative and positive references to the Transatlantic Slave Trade, racism and diversity, should be undertaken to inform other tasks within the remit of the Working Group as specified under item 1. This work is currently underway and is being progressed by City Information Centre staff during lockdown, working with colleagues in the Department of the Built Environment (no cost).

### **Consultation estimated at a total cost of £3,000:**

15. A small budget should be provided to enable promotion of the requisite public consultation (to inform and support an application for Listed Building Consent) and so ensure all appropriate parties have the opportunity to comment (£3,000).

### **Content development estimated at £3,000:**

16. Expert curators attending the Content and Strategy Working Group (CSWG) who will help guide proposals for curated content within solutions should be paid a fee, noting that the cultural and creative sectors have been hard hit by the pandemic and that it is best practice to pay for freelancers' time (£3,000).
17. It is therefore proposed that your Policy & Resources Committee approve a total sum of £17,000 to cover the itemised costs above, to be taken from your

Policy Initiatives Fund (PIF) in the 2021/22 year categorised as “Research”. Any unused funds will be returned to the PIF by August 2021.

18. It is all proposed that Members consider and approve the attached terms of reference for the Working Group(s) noting these are detailed so as to provide a clear roadmap of the scope of tasks required for serving members. All names have been removed from the membership lists within this document to enable this report to be heard in the public session of your meeting(s) today.

### Options

19. All itemised costs are required if progress is to be made against the task list in item 1. There are therefore no options on cost.
20. Members may wish to consider whether a temporary concealment solution for the Guildhall statues is required from August 2021, or whether the statues should be left exposed until permanent concealment or re-siting is achieved, subject to Listing Building Consent being decided. To not install an interim solution will save significant cost and officer time.

### Corporate & Strategic Implications

- **Strategic implications:** the recommendations outlined in this report align with the following outcomes of the Corporate Plan:
  - 3. People have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential.
  - 7. We are a global hub for innovation in finance and professional services, commerce and culture.
  - 10. We inspire enterprise, excellence, creativity and collaboration

- **Financial implications:** it should be noted that, if Listed Building Consent is granted, it is envisaged that the removal of statues and commissioning of replacement artwork will be costly. Costed proposals for all elements of the process will be presented to your Committee(s) as these are scoped and the viability of initiatives has been tested.

It is proposed that the required funding of £17,000 is to be drawn from the Committee's 2021/22 Policy Initiative Fund categorised as “Research” and charged to City's Cash. The current uncommitted balance in the 2021/22 PIF is £776,365, prior to any allowances being made for any other proposals on today's agenda

- **Resource implications:** all officers cited on the terms of reference in appendix 1, will be required to undertake an agreed set of tasks to progress the project, as described within the document.
- **Legal implications:** legislation regarding the proposed removal or removal of any historic unlisted statue, plaque, memorial or monument is to be changed by the Government. The Working Group is committed to following all relevant legal processes, and carry out consultations, seeking the advice and guidance of relevant bodies such as Historic England as appropriate.
- **Risk implications:** noting the sensitivities around this topic, representatives of the Director of Communications will play a pivotal role within the Working Group to ensure clear, open, positive and responsive communications.

- **Equalities implications:** the proposals within this report comply with our Public Sector Equality Duty 2010 and will help deliver a positive impact for all communities the City Corporation serves, noting the formal consultation processes undertaken as part of the Listed Building Consent process.
- **Climate implications:** none
- **Security implications:** none.

## **Conclusion**

21. The removal of the Beckford and Cass statues from Guildhall is a complex and sensitive issue. The establishment of a Working Group comprising officers and other members with relevant expertise and tasked with a clear and agreed remit will help ensure the best outcome for the City Corporation and the communities it serves, enabling due process across legal, planning, heritage, content and consultation principles.
22. A modest request for funds to enable this process to begin is requested in this report noting that – should Listed Building Consent be granted and the statues be removed and re-sited or permanently concealed – further requests will be received by your Policy and Resources Committee and that it is anticipated that these will be costly.
23. A second report will likely be presented to your Committees in April, updating on progress, requesting funding and seeking approval for the design and installation of a temporary concealment solution.
24. The Working Group has no decision-making powers and will recommend ways forward to your Committees as the work progresses. This will ensure Members are regularly updated and that the project is aligned with their views and ideas.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Culture and Diversity Working Group – Terms of Reference

### **Nick Bodger**

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