

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Culture, Heritage & Libraries	14 July 2014
Subject: City Arts Initiative	Public
Report of: Director of Culture, Heritage and Libraries	For Decision
<p>Summary</p> <p>This report presents the recommendations of the City Arts Initiative (CAI) which met on 24 June 2014. The group considered the following proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festival of Azerbaijan Arts • Shakespeare Night Art Trail (Barbican) • Light Night London 2015 • Whizz-Kidz in the City <p>Recommendations</p> <p>It is recommended that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional information be requested regarding the Festival of Azerbaijan Arts in order for a decision to be made at a future CAI meeting • Shakespeare Night Art Trail be approved subject to consultation with, and agreement by, Barbican residents and other relevant stakeholders • Additional information be requested regarding Light Night London 2015 once the project has been further developed • Additional information be requested regarding Whizz-Kidz in the City in order for a decision to be made at a future CAI meeting 	

Main Report

Background

1. The City Arts Initiative 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. Your Committee appointed your Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Barbara Newman to sit on the City Arts Initiative Group in the 2014/15 Committee year.

Current Position

3. The City Arts Initiative met on 24 June 2014 to consider four applications, as outlined in the summary.

4. Full details of the agenda and applications are available on request from the Director of Culture, Heritage and Libraries.

Proposals

Festival of Azerbaijan Arts

5. A proposal submitted on behalf of Buta Arts who have been actively promoting Azerbaijan arts and culture since 2004 and who organised the inaugural Festival of Azerbaijan Arts in London during 2009/10.
6. It is proposed that one, two or three newly commissioned pieces of artwork by Azerbaijani artists be positioned at locations, yet to be confirmed, in the City for a maximum of six months from October/ November 2014 to March 2015 as part of the London-wide Festival.
7. The Festival of Azerbaijan Arts has full funding from a private source and all costs would be covered. The commissioned work will be site specific, and are thus yet to be created, and there is flexibility as to the length of time that they are in situ. The Festival will also be putting on a series of events within the City, including the annual Caspian Corridor Conference.
8. The City Arts Initiative requested further information about the wider political context as regards Azerbaijan and this is to be investigated further by officers.
9. The City Arts Initiative noted that it was difficult to come to a decision without a better idea of the nature of the artwork or the locations proposed. It was also suggested that six months was too long a time for the artworks to be on-site.
10. Further information was requested from the event organisers, in addition to a better understanding of the political context, to be presented to CAI for decision at a future date.

Shakespeare Night Art Trail

11. A proposal from the Barbican's Head of Theatre, for the Theatre Department to work with video artists *Creatmosphere*, to create a Shakespeare Night Art Trail in Feb-Apr 2016 as part of the Barbican's wider commemorations of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death.
12. The trail will take audiences on a journey through a narrative and visual environment inspired by Shakespeare's work via a route along the Highwalks between the Barbican and Museum of London, an area of the City of London in which Shakespeare lived for a short period.
13. It was noted that in order for this project to succeed Barbican residents will need to be consulted and their approval gained, given the location and the night time nature of the event.
14. The City Arts Initiative recommended this for approval subject to approval from Barbican residents and other stakeholders such as Built Environment.

Light Night London 2015

15. This proposal is in the early stages of its conception. It is modelled on the 'Nuit Blanche' initiative inaugurated in Paris in 2002. For one night specially commissioned light installations, street art and video and live art performances will be shown in locations across London and galleries, museums and similar venues will be open until late.
16. It was noted that support from the GLA has yet to be ascertained and that this is likely to dictate the timing and success of the event.
17. The City Arts Initiative requested to be kept updated with progress with a view to a decision being taken at a future meeting.

Whizz-Kidz in the City

18. An art trail of wheelchair themed art installations is proposed for Summer 2015, as part of a six week celebration of diversity and inclusion in the City of London, by Whizz-Kidz, the UK's leading disability charity for young people.
19. Each artwork will be sponsored by a City partner and designed by leading artists, disability role models and Whizz-Kidz patrons. The exact number, locations and timings are yet to be confirmed and will be decided in liaison with the City Arts Initiative.
20. The proposal is related to a range of other activities proposed to take place in the same six week period including employability sessions and work placements for young people with disabilities, panel discussions and establishment of peer networks and mentor schemes.
21. The City Arts Initiative requested further information about the installations including a design brief, suggested locations and dates with a view to a decision being taken at a future meeting.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

22. The City Arts Initiative was formed to support the City's management of public art which supports the "vibrant and culturally rich" strand of the City Together Strategy and 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 24 June 2014.

Appendices

None

Background Papers:

Full details of the applications are available on request from the Director of Culture, Heritage and Libraries.

Emma McGovern

City Culture Executive, CHL

T: 020 7332 3567

E: emma.mcgovern@cityoflondon.gov.uk