

Committee: Policy and Resources	Date: 16 July 2015
Subject: Charges for Filming in the City	Public
Report of: Director of Public Relations	For Decision

Summary

The purpose of this report is to recommend updated and increased administration charges levied by the Film Team for managing filming requests on the public highway and on City of London Corporation private property. These fees are levied direct to the filming industry and the proposed increase is to bring them into line with central London boroughs that have recently raised their administration charges substantially, and in certain cases by as much as 55% . It is also to contribute to the increased expense of running the Film Team at a time when the number of film shoots in the City has more than doubled in the last decade and the Team now require additional help, particularly during the busiest months.

Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to approve the increases in administration charges by the Film Team for managing filming requests, as set out in paragraph 8 of this report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Film Team, as part of the Public Relations Office, has been in place since 1998. In 2001, the Team took on a second member to cope with increasing filming requests. Since then, filming in London as a whole has increased hugely and in the last decade alone the amount of filming coming into the City has more than doubled. In a survey of borough and other film offices carried out by Film London last year, (the government agency for supporting the film industry in London), location managers voted the City Film Team the best in all categories including lead-in times, helpfulness and speed of responses. Location managers working on the largest TV productions and feature films regularly say that, if they can, they come to the City because of the service they receive here.

2. Statistics published by the British Film Institute's Research and Statistics Unit show production spend in the UK last year reached record breaking levels. Combined UK spend from international film and television productions reached £1.5bn, significantly boosting the economy and job creation. Over £1.2bn of this was generated from 36 inward investment feature film titles, many of which filmed extensively in the City.
3. As well as boosting the UK economy, filming brings substantial revenue into the City Corporation. Filming managed by the Film Team in the financial year 2014 – 2015 brought in over £400,000 of gross income directly into the City Corporation. In February this year, a one-day shoot in Mansion House brought in £13,000. More recently, the James Bond production: *Bond 24: Spectre*, currently filming in the City, brought £115,000 of gross income directly into the City Corporation for locations, parking, licences and policing for seven nights of filming alone. Both these shoots were managed by the City Film Team.
4. The Film Team provides a one stop shop in the City for the film industry which, as well as providing a consistent, efficient and united face to the industry, also alleviates the considerable pressure that would be placed upon individual departments, such as City Surveyor's, Markets and Consumer Protection, and Built Environment (Traffic Management, Parking, and Highways), as well as the City of London Police.
5. The Team started charging one-off administration fees for the larger shoots in 2004. Since then small scale filming has increased rapidly due to the influx of digital channels and we subscribed to an online application system in order to process small applications fast. In 2012 we started charging a set fee for online applications. These fees were agreed by your Committee in May 2012.
6. The underlying goal of this responsibility is to generate and maximise revenue whilst ensuring the City's reputation and image is in no way compromised.

Current Position

7. In May 2012 your Committee agreed a charging policy for the Film Team to charge small production companies an administration fee. The current rates are as follows:

* APPLICATION FEES - ONE OFF	ALL FEES PLUS VAT
Small crew – up to 10 people, camera and tripod only	£40
Large crew – more than 10 people and/or parking	£150
Charity and Students	£15
ADMINISTRATION FEES	
Start being incurred once administration runs over one hour (the first hour is covered by the application fee).	£150 per hour

These charges generated a total gross income of £61,930 in 2014 (January – December), which is included in the Public Relations Office local risk budgets for 2014/15 and 2015/16 respectively. .

Filming in the City has more than doubled in the last ten years, whilst the Film Team has remained a two-person team throughout. Increasingly, it has been necessary to bring in additional cover to support the Film Team during the busiest months to facilitate this increase in filming, thus raising the cost of running the Team. Additionally, the cost of employing our online application system is increasing this year. In order to contribute to covering these costs, it is timely and necessary to increase our administration fees.

Proposals

8. It is proposed that our fees should be increased as per the table below. This will bring them into line with the range of fees set by the central London boroughs. The table sets out, where applicable, the new fee levels and introduces certain new fee categories to make the arrangements more flexible.

It is proposed that the following schedule of fees is approved:

* APPLICATION FEES - ONE OFF	ALL FEES PLUS VAT
Charity, Students and at discretion (eg. local businesses, government agencies such as Visit London promoting London)	£25
Small crew - up to 10 people, camera and tripod only	£75
Medium crew - 11-24 people and/or parking or added equipment requirements	£150
Large crew - 25 + people and/or multiple parking or added equipment requirements	£250
Very large crew - 75 + people	£300
ADMINISTRATION FEES	
Start being incurred once administration runs over one hour (the first hour is covered by the application fee).	£150 per hour
One-off administration fees for commercial filming on non strategic route City Bridges (strategic routes are managed by Transport for London)	£250 for up to 2 hours £450 for up to 4 hours
SITE MEETING	
Location Site Meetings	£150 per hour
Guildhall booked room meetings	£200 per hour
LOCATION FEES FOR PRIVATE PROPERTY	
This will remain dependent upon the location, scale, type and requirements of each shoot. Each application would be negotiated individually, based on these factors and the fee agreed in liaison with the City Corporation department responsible for the location and agreed in advance of filming with the production company.	Variable

* In very rare cases, and by discretion, an application fee may not be charged, for example, if there has been a failing in service on the part of the City of

London Corporation or if an application comes in at very short notice and it is deemed necessary to process it for internal departmental notification purposes (it should be noted that small crew applications are generally made as good practice only and are not generally enforceable or a legal requirement).

Implications

9. Based on financial statistics, we anticipate a minimum annual increase in our gross income of £15,000 from raising our fees. Small productions applying to film, do so as good practice. It is not enforceable or a legal requirement and there is a possibility that some smaller productions may decide to go 'under the radar' and not apply. In general, this is already current practice with news crews and some small productions and the risk of increased problems on the highway is small. Larger productions will in general always need to apply and would not be able to pass under the radar.

It is planned that, with the additional funding raised from these costs, the Film Team will be able to fund additional assistance during busy periods in order to continue to provide the current level of service.

Conclusion

10. The Committee is recommended to increase the City of London Corporation Film Team administration fees in line with central London boroughs and to raise the necessary funds to contribute to the increased costs and running of the City Film Team.

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