

Committee	Dated
Culture, Heritage & Libraries	11/07/2016
Subject: City of London Festival: planning the future	Public
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Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Members on planning to fill the gap left by the City of London Festival. As agreed, a consultant has been appointed to investigate options and develop recommendations, including costed delivery models. A further report will be brought to the October meeting. Members wishing to input ideas or comments to the consultant are asked to indicate their interest.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the contents of the report
- Inform the Director of Culture, Heritage & Libraries by 22 July if they would like to input directly to the consultancy exercise.

Main Report

Background

1. The Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee's budget includes provision of £355,825 p.a. for the City of London Festival, previously given as a grant to the City Arts Trust. Following the decision in March 2016 to award no more funds to the Trust, it was agreed in May that this sum should in principle be dedicated to a replacement activity, to fill the gap left by the Festival.
2. It was further agreed that more work was needed to scope out the options for this, and to develop properly costed and sustainable models for potential future operations. Without precluding any possibilities, the Committee agreed that any successor to the Festival should meet some key criteria: enlivening the Square Mile, opening up spaces and buildings, and broadening audiences.
3. The Committee recommended that the Finance Committee should approve the use of up to £20,000 from the balance returned to the Corporation from the 2016 City Arts Trust grant, once their wind-up costs have been accounted for, to commission further work on modelling the replacement activity. Finance Committee approved this on 7 June.

Current Position

4. Following this approval, a tender document for a consultancy exercise to undertake this work was drawn up and issued via City Procurement. Six potential candidates were contacted (having taken soundings with the Managing Director of the Barbican Centre, and the Culture Team at the GLA), and on 23 June Caterina Loriggio was appointed. She has now commenced work and we intend to bring a report with recommendations to the October meeting of the Committee.
5. Ms Loriggio will contact many of the stakeholders in the City's cultural landscape as part of her work, and take into account any ideas which have already surfaced around the successor to the Festival. Members may wish to input to this process directly and anyone who would like to do this is asked to indicate their interest to the Director **by Friday 22 July**. Depending on diaries and the level of response, a workshop or individual meetings may be organised..

Conclusion

6. The demise of the City Arts Trust was widely regretted, and concerns have been expressed about the potential reputational damage to the City and the Corporation if nothing is put in place to succeed the Festival. The key purpose of this report is to provide assurance that plans are well in hand to develop future options and address those concerns.

Background Papers

City of London Festival – the future – Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee, 23 May 2016, item 22

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