

<b>Committees:</b>	<b>Dates:</b>
Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee Finance Committee Policy and Resources Committee	5 December 2016 31 January 2017 16 February 2017
<b>Subject:</b> Great Fire 350: Monitoring and Evaluation	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Culture, Heritage & Libraries	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Nick Bodger, Head of Cultural and Visitor Development	

### Summary

In April 2015, the City Corporation approved sponsorship of £300,000 for one of the country's leading creative companies – Artichoke – to develop a series of high-profile spectacles to commemorate the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great Fire of London.

This report covers the key findings of a monitoring and evaluation report by The Audience Agency, commissioned by Artichoke and the City of London Corporation, and should be read in context with the report submitted to the October meeting of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee “Great Fire350: top line findings” on which it builds, revising previously estimated figures. Both reports consider the Artichoke elements of the wider Great Fire programme.

The results of these reports show that, in all areas where it has been possible to measure impact, Artichoke has exceeded the expectations of our funding objectives, delivering a moment when the City shone, generating significant economic and international PR benefit for the City and City Corporation, positively changing perceptions of the City as a place to be and engaging new audiences across events, education and training. In the current political environment, the programme has also helped to demonstrate and support the Mayor of London's message to the world that London is open.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report

### Main Report

#### Background

1. The Great Fire of London, which devastated the City in September 1666 and led to its almost total reconstruction, is one of the most well-known events in the City's history. It is on the National Curriculum at Key Stage (KS) 1, (5- to 7-year-olds) providing a critical way of engaging children with London's history and drives significant visitor footfall to the City. 2016 marks its 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
2. In April 2015, your Finance, Policy & Resources, and Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committees approved a sponsorship package of £300,000 for one of the country's leading creative companies – Artichoke – to develop a series of high-profile spectacles to commemorate the anniversary amid a longer and more wide-ranging umbrella programme of activities delivered by City stakeholders. Under the terms of the agreement, the City Corporation was to be credited as Founding Sponsor. The Artichoke events ran from 30 August to 4 September 2016.

3. In addition to this activity and as part of our agreement, Artichoke provided a framework for the participation and promotion of 26 City providers delivering 68 events commemorating the anniversary.

### **Current Position**

4. In response to the above, your Culture, Heritage and Libraries department, working with Artichoke, compiled a headline report about funding, footfall, PR and audience reach for Artichoke elements of the programme which was submitted to the October meeting of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee.
5. Building on this and commissioned by both parties, a monitoring and evaluation report by The Audience Agency was also commissioned. The report examines audience profile and experience, their perceptions of the City in light of the events and the economic activity and impact generated by them. The key findings pages of this extensive report are available online at:  
<http://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/documents/s72423/Great%20Fire%20appendix%20-%20Artichoke%20Londons%20Burning%20evaluation%20report%20-%20executive%20summary.pdf>. The full report can be found online at:  
<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/Documents/londons-burning-evaluation-report-the-audience-agency-november-2016.pdf>
6. In relation to both reports, headlines include:
  - a. A total footfall of c. 90,000 to the Artichoke events, with the most prominent age group being the 25-34 year-old bracket (an untypical but target audience for City culture);
  - b. Of the total audience figure, 86% being from the UK with 79% from London, supporting the City Corporation's commitment to engage all Londoners in its cultural offer.
  - c. 96% of audiences agreeing that this event was good for the City's image with over a third (38%) of e-survey respondents saying their experience had positively changed their perception of the City a lot or to some extent;
  - d. Economic activity generated by the event estimated at £7.2m with an overall economic impact in the City of £2.5m;
  - e. Just under the £3m sponsorship target being achieved by Artichoke in support of the events, with £2.9m raised from 72 funders; this represents c. £9 raised for every £1 of City Corporation investment;
  - f. London & Partners secured as the lead Media Partner and a website featuring all partners' content hosted on [visitlondon.com/greatfire350](http://visitlondon.com/greatfire350) attracting 200,000 visitors and 881,000 page views;
  - g. 100,000 copies of a brochure detailing all partner events achieving a final pick up rate of 92% as calculated by London Calling (75% is regarded as a successful campaign);
  - h. Event Twitter feeds achieving a total reach of just under 91m, while the accompanying Facebook campaign achieved a 3.7m reach;
  - i. 6.7m views achieved across all platforms for the burning on the Thames event (includes live streams) and just under 10m views achieved for a film of the Saturday's *Dominoes* event hosted on *Time Out's* website;

- j. Over 1000 engagements with schoolchildren and young people through primary schools workshops, pre-engagement training sessions with local youth groups and employment centres, and design cutting and construction workshops;
- k. Two Construction Skills Certification Scheme trainees offered a job and nine directly connected with prospective employers as a result of the events, with five Trainee Assistant Producer placements undertaken and 356 volunteering opportunities;
- l. Significant international PR including 415 items of coverage, of which 55 were national articles and picture stories, 39 broadcast pieces, 66 London centric stories, 25 appearing in key arts titles, and 152 in the international press; together, these generated an international reach of 101.8m with an estimated AVE of £2.2m (AVE is a standard industry measurement used to estimate the equivalent advertising value of coverage generated and refers to the cost of buying the space taken up by a particular article, had the article been an advertisement).

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

- 7. As per the funding bid report received by your Committees in spring 2015, the City Corporation's funding of this event sought to:
  - a. meet the groundswell of expectation from local, London and national stakeholders for the City to mark the event and provide a framework through which they can contribute to a shared programme of activity;
  - b. ensure ownership of the Great Fire (our biggest cultural export)
  - c. provide a significant opportunity for the City Corporation to demonstrate its contribution to London as a world city on a global scale;
  - d. deliver significant economic benefits for local and London businesses;
  - e. provide an opportunity for the City's cultural providers to work together on a shared theme in a major way, delivering a legacy of networks across exponents, funders, retail and other businesses;
  - f. align with the City Corporation's own visitor, cultural and education objectives as stated in its related strategies; and
  - g. deliver legacy benefits that include:
    - i. reputational gain and a positive shift in perceptions about the City;
    - ii. profile for our education and related activities, driving audiences;
    - iii. skills for apprentices and on-going recognition of the City Corporation's contribution to the national curriculum;
    - iv. the furtherance of London's developing role as a "Smart City" and a leading voice for resilience matters; and
    - v. funding for our cultural activities through a legacy of networks and relationships.

## **Conclusion**

8. As the headlines in this report demonstrate, the comparatively modest investment the City Corporation has made in this project has returned significant dividends and delivered all objectives.
9. Without doubt, the Great Fire 350 commemorations have delivered a moment when the City has shone, and – in the current political environment – supported the Mayor of London’s message to the world that London is open.
10. Economic prosperity is driven by culture, and culture is an essential ingredient for world cities like London. The two are inextricably linked. People want to be in a place where culture happens, where imaginations are unlocked, minds inspired and lives enriched. The Great Fire 350 programme has helped enhance the City’s and London’s reputation as such a place and, if momentum to put on such events continues, will have a lasting legacy with tangible rewards in the years to come.

## **Background Papers**

- Great Fire 350: top line findings; submitted to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee on 24 October 2016

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