

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Culture, Heritage and Libraries – For Information	30/05/2017
<b>Subject:</b> City Corporation support of London Borough of Culture	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> The Assistant Town Clerk and Cultural Hub Director	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Nick Bodger, Head of Cultural and Visitor Development	

### Summary

The Mayor of London is set to launch a new competition this summer to find the London Borough of Culture (LBOC). The project, which aims to promote culture within the community, will see two winning boroughs, one in 2019 and one in 2020, awarded funding to lead an innovative programme of cultural activities. In addition, up to six other boroughs will receive support to deliver bespoke cultural projects.

Over recent months, your officers have been working closely with the Mayor of London's Culture Team to identify how the City Corporation may best support this initiative, noting its ambitions accord with our commitment to serve London's communities and build on its reputation as a cultural destination of global significance.

This has resulted in the City Bridge Trust pledging £300k over two years as part of the LBOC funding award, and an officer working group, chaired by your Head of Cultural and Visitor Development, being established. The group will explore how your resources may most appropriately be used in-kind to assist the winners and the competition achieve success. These resources include your cultural assets as well as other areas of the City Corporation's business operations.

A letter outlining the City Corporation's in-principle commitment to support the LBOC has been sent from your Chairman of Policy and Resources to the Mayor of London.

### Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. The Mayor of London has launched a new competition inviting London's 32 boroughs to apply for funding to lead a game-changing cultural programme. The competition will see two winning boroughs named London Borough of Culture,

one in 2019 and one in 2020, and up to six other boroughs receiving support to deliver bespoke cultural projects.

2. Inspired by the UK City and European Capital of Culture Programmes, London Borough of Culture will put culture at the heart of the community, celebrating the unique and distinctive creativity, character and diversity of London's people and places. The aim is for boroughs to be bold and imaginative, working collaboratively across their communities and with artists to deliver against local priorities and ambitions, while exploring new ideas and piloting new partnerships.
3. The programme is being developed with a range of strategic partners who haven't yet been announced. These partners will support the programme and/or winning boroughs financially and through in-kind support.
4. Your City Bridge Trust has already pledged £300,000 to the programme over two years. This will form part of the prize fund offered to the winning boroughs.

### **Current Position**

5. In addition to this support, your officers have been working closely with the Mayor of London's Culture Team to explore how the City Corporation may offer in-kind support for the competition, aligning with its commitment to serve London's communities through the provision of culture and a wide range of other services, and to grow London's reputation on the world stage as a leading cultural destination.
6. This has resulted in a pan-organisational officer group being formed, chaired by your Head of Cultural and Visitor Development. The group currently comprises representatives from your London Metropolitan Archives (LMA), Guildhall Art Gallery, Remembrancer's Events Team, Cultural & Visitor Development Team, City Information Centre and Barbican Centre, as well as your Central Grants Unit. It is expected that representatives of other City Corporation assets and services will be invited to join as discussions progress.

### **Options**

7. It is unlikely that the specifics of the City Corporation's support will be known until the winning boroughs are announced later this year, as what is offered may not be desired by the borough or may need adaptation. Conversely, City Corporation ambitions across some services may align more readily with one destination than another.
8. That said, ideas discussed to date and which give some flavour as to what may be offered include:
  - a. The LMA delivering in-kind archival services for the competition and/or research services for the winning borough;

- b. The Remembrancer discounting hospitality space for the winning borough should that borough be seeking a central London location for an event or reception;
- c. The Barbican Centre working with the winning borough in an advisory (artistic) capacity; or
- d. The City Information Centre being “taken over” by the winning borough for two weeks to drive international visitor footfall to the borough’s programmes and events.

## **Proposals**

- 9. A letter outlining a commitment in-principle has been sent by your Chairman of Policy and Resources to the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan. The letter states that “support will need to be negotiated and agreed with appropriate City of London officers and will be subject to the resources available to them”.
- 10. A further report will be returned to your Committee once the full package of support has been agreed.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

- 11. City Corporation support of the London Borough of Culture strongly aligns with its Corporate Plan and in particular Key Policy Priority 5 by *increasing the outreach and impact of the City’s cultural, heritage and leisure contribution to the life of London and the nation.*

## **Implications**

- 12. Wherever proposed benefits cannot be offered freely under delegated authority, relevant permissions will be sought from the appropriate Member group to sanction the value and extent of the offer.
- 13. These, and all other proposals for benefit-in-kind support, will be collected by your Central Grants Unit who will check compliance with City Corporation protocols and ensure appropriate reporting to the Finance Grants Oversight and Performance Sub-committee.

## **Conclusion**

- 14. The City Corporation is committed to supporting London’s communities through the provision of culture, education, green spaces, and a wide range of other services. The London Borough of Culture provides a significant opportunity for it to demonstrate this commitment and bring real benefit at a grassroots level where need is greatest.
- 15. Furthermore, the programme supports the City Corporation’s ambition to promote London as a leading cultural destination by showcasing the wealth of cultural activities taking place in every corner of the capital.