

TO: **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

22nd February 2018

FROM: **CULTURE MILE WORKING PARTY**

7th February 2018

CULTURE MILE REVENUE BUDGET

The Working Party received a joint report of the Chamberlain and Assistant Town Clerk/Culture Mile Director in respect of Culture Mile Revenue Budget, which would also be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee, for decision, on 22 February 2018.

During the discussion and debate, the following points were noted:

- Members were reminded of the current governance arrangements surrounding the Culture Mile Working Party; i.e. it has no decision-making powers and therefore cannot act under delegated authority from the Policy and Resources Committee, so this meeting of the working party was merely being asked for its views.
- Culture Mile represented a major initiative for the City, involving access and community engagement as well as “high culture” and spatial regeneration.
- Long term governance needed to be reviewed, and how long a working party would remain the appropriate mechanism.
- The Assistant Town Clerk/Culture Mile Director explained how underspends had been used to fund the Culture Mile to date. However, it was increasingly difficult to co-ordinate all the different workstreams associated with Culture Mile using this ad-hoc funding, which hampered forward planning and recruitment of staff. The funding sought was for a core level of support and activity. The bid was based on a model of minimising cost and achieving resilience by placing staff within departments, which already had experience in the different workstream areas, rather than setting up a centralised team.
- The proposal in the report, for £1.43m over two years, would be in addition to a capital sum of £5m allocated for implementation of the ‘Look and Feel’ Strategy. The Chamberlain advised that the funding requirement might reduce as more partners and community groups came on board. The former Chairman of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee quoted the success of ‘Sculpture in the City’ as an example of a successful partnership.
- In response to a suggestion that it would be better to re-define the £5m, the Director of the Built Environment clarified that, given the scale of ambitions already expressed for the public realm in the Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy (which had just finished public consultation), including improved signage, this sum would be required. The Director of the Built Environment advised that other built environment projects within Culture Mile, such as the scheme to support the Museum project, would also have considerable impact on this budget.

- The balance between staff costs and activity was questioned. The Assistant Town Clerk/Culture Mile Director said that this had been reviewed by the Officer Programme Board and sought to strike a balance between the increased need to co-ordinate the burgeoning activity of partners in support of Culture Mile and ensuring that there was capacity to deliver activity, such as marketing and events on behalf of Culture Mile. The Chamberlain advised that the figures had been fully scrutinised and, as the remainder of the £5m would be required in the future, the proposal within the report would need to change from utilisation of the £5m, to an additional £1.4m resource request for 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- The Chamberlain advised that an adjustment to the 2018/19 Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan would be required to reflect the proposals and undertook to seek the necessary approvals.

In concluding, the Chairman welcomed this productive debate and the working party had clearly shown a consensus of support for the bid. However, it had also been recognised that, as Culture Mile is an exciting and new concept for the future of the City of London Corporation, future consideration would need to be given to governance and budgetary controls. The Chairman asked for a detailed note of this debate to be reported to the Policy and Resources Committee, when the report is presented to them for decision on 22 February 2018.