

Committee:	Date:
Barbican Centre Board	20 November 2019
Subject: Barbican Strategic Plan	Public
Report of: Nicholas Kenyon	For Approval
Report author: Laura Whitticase	

Summary

This report presents for approval the revised draft Strategic Plan.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- i) note the factors taken into consideration in compiling the Barbican's revised draft Strategic Plan
- ii) approve, subject to the incorporation of any changes sought by this Committee, the draft Strategic Plan and associated processes

Main Report

Background

1. The previous Strategic Plan was developed in 2015/16 and approved by the Board in 2016. It was developed in part as a response to the City of London's Savings Based Review and Efficiency Savings exercise carried out in 2013/14, following acknowledgement that in addition to making savings, the Barbican should be framing its work within a more strategic context, which led to the development of five new strategic goals.
2. In 2019 Directors held two away-days in April and July to review the previous Strategic Plan and to agree a methodology to develop a revised Strategic Plan for the Barbican, within the context of the City's Corporate Plan, the evolving Fundamental Review process and the Barbican's own business model development.
3. The revised draft Strategic Plan has informed the development of the high-level summary Business Plan which has now been to the Finance Committee for approval as part of the City's wider business planning process.

Process

4. At the first Directorate away day in April, it was acknowledged that the Barbican is in a strong position to build on the momentum gained during delivery of the

previous Strategic Plan and to develop a robust business model that will support the organisation through a challenging economic, political and social landscape, whilst ensuring we remain competitive within the cultural sector in London, the UK and internationally by capitalising on new opportunities for growth.

5. It was agreed that a small cross-cutting group made up of Directors and representatives from Management Team would take this forward, resulting in a set of workstreams to build on and develop the ideas that came out of this session and to develop a roadmap to design and refine a revised Strategic Plan.
6. This group identified some key priority areas for development including a set of initiatives which were developed following staff input, divisional away-days and from working groups tasked to consider some specific areas for strategic development.
7. Potential models for monitoring and managing the performance of the organisation were also researched by this cross-cutting group and it was agreed that using a combination of Key Performance Indicators for monitoring the overall health of the organisation coupled with Objectives and Key Results for measuring progress of change-focused work would be a suitable approach.
8. At the second Directorate away-day in July, six new strategic priorities were agreed, along with a proposed structure for the revised Strategic Plan.
9. Alongside this process, the Barbican underwent a holistic brand health-check which interrogated the existing brand within this new context and tested proposals for refining and updating it with Directors, staff and the public. Although findings demonstrated that the previous brand was strong, it required an updated approach to better reflect our changing positioning and focus. This resulted in a new brand conviction, proposition and set of values, which informed the development of a framework for a revised Strategic Plan.

A revised Strategic Plan

10. The revised plan is structured in a similar way to the previous one. However, we have a new brand conviction, values and strategic priorities, plus a new approach to measuring the performance of our business as usual. In addition, our commitment to organisational development and change has now been focused into three distinct areas, which are reviewed annually and monitored internally quarterly.

11. The structure is as follows:

A new brand conviction -

To create space for people and ideas to connect

which in turn enables us to deliver our proposition of being committed to -

Arts without boundaries

This is underpinned by four new values, which help us to articulate how we think and approach our work -

Brave - Breaking new ground, doing the things others wouldn't

Open - Always striving to be of, by and for all

Connected - Reflecting today's world, building meaningful partnerships

Sustainable - Being smart about doing business, embracing future ways of working

Our six new strategic priorities for the next five years demonstrate our commitment to those things we have agreed are the most important -

Destination - Deliver an exceptional experience

Audiences - Build lasting relationships

Artists - Enable artists to realise their vision

Income - Create sustainable growth

Culture Mile - Be a lead partner

Learning - Develop creative skills for life

These six priority areas are not a complete move away from the previous five goals, but more of a refinement and focus into a more specific articulation of our strategy and the cross-cutting nature of each area.

They each support our commitment to delivering the City's Corporate Aims to:

- 1) Contribute to a flourishing society – *Audiences, Learning, Destination, Culture Mile*
- 2) Support a thriving economy – *Income, Culture Mile, Destination*
- 3) Shape outstanding environments – *Destination, Culture Mile, Audiences*

Greater detail of how the revised Strategic Plan supports the City's Corporate Plan will be provided upon completion of the City's business planning workbook which aligns specific areas of Barbican work with the proposed KPIs that the Corporate Performance Team are defining.

12. In-line with Corporate business planning processes, recommendations from an internal audit into our approach to strategic planning, and in order to define and measure our progress across the core business as usual, we have agreed to use ten high-level KPI areas – each with granular targets and measures which inform the overall indicator. These aim to account for around 80% of our total activity.

The detail of these areas, the associated targets and measures is still being refined and tested, but our draft KPI areas are as follows:

- i. Visitors
- ii. Income
- iii. Expenditure
- iv. Brand Health
- v. Accessibility
- vi. Return on Investment
- vii. Sustainability
- viii. Impact
- ix. Staff Satisfaction
- x. Culture Mile

A focused workstream consisting of senior staff across Incubator, Marketing, Comms, Finance and other teams as needed will finalise these areas and the associated measures and reporting mechanisms in the coming weeks to ensure they are useful and accurately reflect our work across the whole organisation.

13. In order to define and measure step-change across the organisation we have agreed on three annual Objectives along with associated Key Results, which we will measure quarterly.

These objectives should make up around 20% of our focus, ensuring we do not jeopardise our core business output in the process of delivering change.

The detail of the headline objectives is still being tested and refined, however the areas that they will focus on are:

- 1) Produce a five-year business plan for sustainable growth
- 2) Become a sector leader in organisational culture and ways of working
- 3) Become one of the most visited cultural destinations in the UK

These will potentially expand to include an additional Objective in response to the City's Fundamental Review process, but this is still to be confirmed.

Key results are still being developed but will be used as a mechanism for tracking clear progress (and identifying challenges) across the year.

To facilitate delivery of the key results and objectives, a set of project initiatives are being finalised. These have been informed by staff ideas, the Directorate away-days and following Management Team input.

A process is now underway to prioritise, clarify and initiate these projects ready for final sign-off.

Process for delivery, monitoring and reporting

14. In order to track progress against our Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) a workstream is underway to develop a new cross-organisational methodology which will include a new project initiation process for all new initiatives – which is another recommendation from the aforementioned strategic plan audit, a timetable for reporting at Management Team, Directorate and the Barbican Board, a risk management system and project evaluation process.

The new system will be finalised at the end of 2019, to ensure roll-out of the new process is available in 2020. Key considerations are to ensure alignment with the City's own reporting processes (which are still being defined) alongside ensuring a small cross-working group is responsible for overseeing progress at an active level throughout the lifecycle of the plan.

Progress on OKRs and KPIs will be made accessible to staff, ensuring accountability and transparency across the organisation, whilst supporting staff to understand and demonstrate how their work contributes to the overall health and development of the organisation.

15. During delivery of the existing Strategic Plan and through the development of the revised Strategic Plan and high-level Business Plan, we have identified and acted on areas of our operation that require adjustment to ensure greater effectiveness. This process is still ongoing and will form part of the new plans (particularly expressed in our topline Organisational Culture/Ways of working objective).
16. We have not decided to reduce or stop specific workstreams. Rather we have reviewed existing workstreams and updated them following prioritisation and refinement within the new context of the Fundamental Review and wider business model development for the Barbican.

As referenced above, we have been careful to ensure that our change programme does not outweigh the focus on delivering activities that run core to our fundamental business purpose, mitigating against running into issues around resource and capacity.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

17. Following approval of the revised Strategic Plan and agreement of the next steps following the Fundamental Review outcomes we will complete the work on alignment with the Corporate Plan and associated objectives.

Although the Strategic Plan has been developed within the context of the Corporate Plan, we are yet to detail each new initiative and workstream (which are still being defined) against specific Corporate Plan outcomes. We anticipate this will be completed in January 2020.

Conclusion

18. This report presents the draft revised Strategic Plan for the Barbican for Members to consider and approve, including approval of next steps to finalise KPIs, OKRs and initiatives.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft Strategic Plan

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