

Committee(s): Culture, Heritage and Libraries – For Decision	Dated: 18/09/23
Subject: City Arts Initiative Recommendations to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3, 7 and 10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	n/a
If so, how much?	n/a
What is the source of Funding?	n/a
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	n/a
Report of: Damian Nussbaum, Director of Innovation & Growth	For Decision
Report author: Will Gompertz, Artistic Director, Barbican Luciana Magliocco, Destination Director	

Summary

This report presents the recommendations of the City Arts Initiative (CAI) which met on 24 August 2023. At this meeting CAI considered blue plaque proposal 1 and public art proposal 2.

1. The Furniture Makers’ Company – Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) Blue Plaque Application
2. Gillie and Marc – Wild About Babies Sculptures

Recommendation(s)

Members of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee are asked to:

Approve the City Arts Initiative's recommendations in relation to proposals 1 and 2:

1. The Furniture Makers’ Company – Blue Plaque Application for the RNLI’s first offices – approve or reject.
2. Gillie and Marc – Wild About Babies – approve subject to background checks on funding of the project, more clarity on the overarching campaign and planning permissions gained.

Main Report

Background

1. The CAI met on 24 August 2023 to consider the proposals outlined below.
2. Further background information is circulated electronically with this report and is available in appendices 1 and 2. Full details of all the applications to the CAI are available on request from the Cultural Policy & Partnerships Officer.

Proposals

The Furniture Makers' Company – Blue Plaque Application for RNLI's first offices

3. The CAI received an application from The Furniture Makers' Company for a blue plaque to be placed at 12 Austin Friars EC2N 2HE to commemorate the site of the first Royal National Lifeboat Institution office. This is a grade II listed building. See appendix 1 for more details.
4. There is a tight timeframe on this application as the ribbon cutting ceremony for the plaque has been scheduled in the diary of the incoming Lord Mayor. This is due to take place in March 2024 on the 200th anniversary of RNLI. We have been advised that if approved the process to gain listed building consent, plaque manufacture and installation could take up to 8 months. Therefore, installation is unlikely to be in March.
5. The proposal outlines that the RNLI was first established by individuals who had links with the slave trade. The RNLI is transparent about this on its website and no longer has these associations.
6. CAI officers will be creating a contested heritage checklist. The checklist will be developed with external experts in this field and relevant CoL teams. This will be used to guide future decision making on applications with such associations.
7. Due to the time pressures of the RNLI application, CAI recommends the process for this specific plaque is expedited alongside the development of this work in order to meet the March deadline.
8. The CAI recommends that this proposal is considered by members for approval or rejection.

Gillie and Marc – Wild About Babies

9. The CAI received an application from Gillie and Marc for Wild About Babies which comprises of 6 x 'Wild Baby' sculptures and 1 x 'Mother Gorilla' Sculpture. See appendix 2 for more details.
10. The proposal is for the Wild About Babies Sculpture to be placed in Paternoster Square from November 2023 – November 2024. This would replace Gillie and

Marc's popular 'Wild Table of Love' Sculpture which was previously displayed in Paternoster Square.

11. The aim of the sculptures is for education purposes and to drive awareness of animal conservation. Each individual sculpture will have a QR code for further information about the campaign. CAI recommends all information in the overarching campaign be shared for review by CAI prior to installation.
12. The proposal has gained consent from CoL Highways teams. CAI recommends that the applicants should work with CoL planning officers to gain required planning permission and clarify the precise location of the sculptures in Paternoster Square, this will also include a review of sculpture weights and plinth heights to ensure there are no obstructions on accessibility and safety.
13. As the project is funded by a private artist, CAI recommends a review of funding/fundraising streams to ensure no reputational risk or conflict.
14. The CAI recommends this application is approved by members subject to the aforementioned conditions.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications – none

Financial implications - funding for CAI projects/installations are funded externally by the applicant or project partner.

Resource implications – apart from officer time handling enquiries and managing the installations, there are no resource implications other than where specifically noted.

Legal implications - none

Risk implications – There may be reputational risk in relation to the RNLI blue plaque application (see proposal 1).

Equalities implications – Officers from Planning sit on the CAI where they provide access advice within their feedback to applicants.

Climate implications - none

Security implications - none

Conclusion

15. This report summarises the discussions of the City Arts Initiative. It presents recommendations in relation to the public art applications considered on 24 August 2023.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Furniture Makers' - RNLI Blue Plaque Supporting Documentation
- Appendix 2 – Gillie and Marc – Wild About Babies Supporting Documentation

Background Papers

Full details of the applications received by the City Arts Initiative are available on request from the Artistic Director.

Will Gompertz

Artistic Director, Barbican

Luciana Magliocco

Destination Director, Innovation & Growth

E: will.gompertz@barbican.org.uk
luciana.magliocco@cityoflondon.gov.uk