

<b>Committee:</b> Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee	<b>Date:</b> 29 January 2024
<b>Subject:</b> Report of Action Taken between meetings: Approval of Barbican Purple Hibiscus Project	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> The Town Clerk & Chief Executive	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Jayne Moore, Governance Officer	

### Summary

This report provides details of decisions taken under urgency procedures (in line with standing order 41A) since the last meeting of the CHL Committee.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

### Main Report

#### **BACKGROUND:**

At the meeting of the City Arts Initiative (CAI) on 07 December 2023, the CAI considered a proposal from Barbican Arts Centre for the site-specific public art installation 'Purple Hibiscus' by artist Ibrahim Mahama at Barbican Lakeside, to be in place for four months between February and August 2024.

The installation comprises approximately 2500 metres of bespoke cloth in pink and purple, woven by weavers and sewn together by hundreds of women from collectives in Ghana, and the fabric will be fitted around the Lakeside façade of the Barbican Centre.

The CAI has engaged with a wide range of relevant bodies including the Barbican Board, the Barbican Library, Barbican Gardeners, District Surveyors, Planning, City of London Girls School, GSMD, the Barbican Association, English Heritage, Gardens Trust and St Giles Cripplegate and numerous resident organisations.

The CAI (that includes 5 CHL Members) recommended that the application be approved by the CHL Committee subject to the obtention of the necessary listed building consent and planning permission. The installation would ideally be in place for the opening day of the exhibition 'Unravel: the Power and Politics of Textiles in Art' that opens on 13 February 2024 - link here: [Unravel | Barbican](#)

Further information, including visuals, are available here: [Barbican Arts Centre – temporary installation of a fabric woven artwork – Barbican Association](#)

The proposal was unable to go to the November 2023 CHL meeting as it was only submitted to City Arts Initiative on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

Had the proposal been submitted to the CHL meeting of 29 January 2024, there was a significant risk that any decision would have been too late to get the project started in time. The Barbican Team have been made aware of the risk and tightness of the timeframe and officers have since recommended that future project proposals be submitted at the concept phase.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

1. Strategic implications – Purple Hibiscus is a part of the Barbican Visual Arts Programme’s new strand of work which celebrates the value of art in the public realm by using the Barbican building to display high quality art to attract visitors to the City and Centre. This supports the City’s Destination agenda.
2. Financial implications - Funding for CAI projects/installations are funded externally by the applicant or project partner.
3. Resource implications – Apart from officer time handling enquiries and managing the installations, there are no resource implications other than where specifically noted.
4. Legal implications – No legal implications arise from the recommendations in this report.
5. Risk implications – Potential for adverse weather conditions to affect the structure of the installation which are included in the risk assessment
6. Equalities implications – Officers from Planning sit on the CAI where they provide access advice within their feedback to applicants.
7. Climate implications - No climate implications arise from the recommendations in this report.
8. Security implications - No security implications arise from the recommendations in this report.

### **APPENDICES: 4**

- Appendix 1 – Purple Hibiscus Artist Statement and Vision
- Appendix 2 – Barbican Purple Hibiscus City Arts Initiative Application
- Appendix 3 – Purple Hibiscus Summary of Planning Consultation
- Appendix 4 – Purple Hibiscus FAQs

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