

Committee(s): Culture, Heritage and Libraries – For Information Policy and Resources – For Information	Dated: 11 April 2024 11 April 2024
Subject: Destination City – Independent Review 2024 – Summary of Recommendations	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3, 5, 7 and 10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	Not at this stage. There would be a requirement from 25/26 to be factored into the medium-term financial plan.
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	Budgets approved
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Ian Thomas, Town Clerk and Chief Executive	For information
Report author: Omkar Chana, Project Director, Innovation & Growth	

Summary

Following a proposal initiated by the Town Clerk in September 2023, an independent review has taken place, led by Paul Martin. Extensive consultations from October 2023 to February 2024 engaged over 170 stakeholders, showcasing broad support for Destination City as a high-level concept. The review received significant external interest and cross-committee engagement, underlining a widespread level of interest. The Destination City – Independent Review 2024 proposes recommendations aimed at enhancing Destination City’s effectiveness and aligning it with the Corporation's strategy and vision. The recommendations from the review are presented to Members for a decision on the evolution of Destination City.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report on the summary of recommendations from the Destination City – Independent Review 2024.

Main Report

Background

1. In 2021, the Destination City report by Danny Lopez¹ and Kate Keating made recommendations for targeted interventions that seek to build the City's leisure offer. In the aftermath of the pandemic, the primary objective was to drive footfall that encourages spend.
2. The Policy and Resources (P&R) and Culture, Heritage and Libraries (CHL) Committees approved the Destination City programme as being vital for raising the City's leisure appeal to one that is worthy of its world-class business brand and befits a global city. It was endorsed by the Court of Common Council on 13 January 2022.
3. The Town Clerk sought to review Destination City's current plans to ensure they adhere to the previous vision and consider future plans in light of a Corporation-wide strategy.
4. In September 2023, the Town Clerk initiated an independent review of the Destination City programme. The aim of this review was to make recommendations to renew and reinvigorate the mandate in the context of a developing new Corporate Plan 2024-2029, identify additional goals to include under the Destination City umbrella and determine how strengthened cross-departmental working could contribute further to the City Corporation's ambitions.
5. The Destination City – Independent Review 2024 has been led by Paul Martin and was tasked with:
 - Considering how to meet the evolving expectations of the Destination City programme, and
 - Making recommendations on how the next phase of Destination City can best support the Square Mile to become a world-leading place for workers, residents, visitors, businesses and investors.
6. Paul Martin was selected based on his experience of having been a London borough Chief Executive in four different places - Sutton (2005/10); Wandsworth (2010/20); Richmond-upon-Thames (concurrently with Wandsworth in a shared service, 2016/2020); and Ealing (as interim Chief Executive, 2022). His experience and achievements in regenerating Battersea Power Station and the wider Nine Elms area are particularly relevant to this work. Paul worked on this for over a decade and led the council's officer team in the programme governance of the area's regeneration. A fuller version of Paul's credentials and expertise is provided in Appendix 3 of the background paper (link at end of this

¹ Founding CEO, London & Partners (2010-11); Former British Consul General to New York (2011-16); CEO Glasswall

report).

7. The CHL committee (on 20 November 2023) and the P&R committee (on 14 December 2023) endorsed the Terms of Reference for the review.

Current Position

8. The review generated significant interest from Members and externally beyond the Corporation. In-person and online consultations, including a week of drop-in Member sessions, took place from October 2023 to February 2024.
9. In February 2024, the Town Clerk extended this work and requested that more time be spent on the review and specifically on further engagement. The Town Clerk encouraged the review to leverage this opportunity to enhance the initial findings and use the extra time to enable more consultation with industry, residents and Members.
10. Paul Martin undertook a literature review and significant engagement with a broad range of stakeholders with over 170 one-to-one meetings, including Members, large and small businesses in the Square Mile, arts and cultural institutions, attractions, workers, visitors, residents, Livery companies and City Corporation employees. Some more detailed on the engagement is provided below:
 - One-to-one meetings with over 170 people in individual sessions (not counting multiple meetings) have taken place.
 - For industry, an additional engagement event took place at the Guildhall. The 24 external attendees represented businesses in the Square Mile across a range of sectors, including large businesses (in the financial and professional services sector), the property sector, hotels, hospitality, SMEs and the BIDs.
 - For residents
 - The Destination Review was briefly covered at the inaugural Citizens Forum meeting (January) which took place at the University of Chicago Booth Business School's London Campus (with Corporation officers attending the event).
 - Paul Martin presented at the Citizens Forum meeting (February) in City Wall at Vine Street which was attended by 40 individuals.
 - Paul Martin consulted with around 40 residents at the Golden Lane Residents Association (GLERA) meeting. This included the chair of the residents' association from the nearby Tudor Rose Court. Paul Martin also met with Golden Lane residents and carers at the Golden Social coffee afternoon.
 - At the request of ward Members, two consecutive meetings took place on Sunday 10 March in the ward of Portsoken including residents from the Middlesex Street and the Mansell Street Estates;

the invitation was circulated to residents via the various social media forums, estate notice boards and letter drops.

- For Livery Companies, an online meeting took place in March where all 111 Livery Clerks were invited to input to the review through an online meeting and live poll to capture views. The online meeting was attended by 32 Livery Company Clerks.
- An online survey reached out across multiple channels. It captured the views of City workers, businesses and residents. In total, there were 299 respondents, comprised of: 114 residents, 111 City workers, 70 visitors, and 4 Members.

11. There was encouraging interest externally and from Members outside of the CHL and P&R committees, which underlined the intent for a collaborative and cross-departmental approach. The Planning & Transportation committee held a dedicated drop-in session for Members to discuss the review. Two sessions were held to provide an opportunity for all-Members to provide feedback on the review. Paul Martin actively engaged with Members to listen to feedback at committee and other informal meetings, and responded to all Member queries and comments.
12. In terms of the Destination City advisory governance, the Destination City Chief Officer Steering Group was given the opportunity to provide feedback on draft recommendations. The City Envoy Network and the City Attractions and Institutions CEO/Director Group will also be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the review recommendations.

Proposal

13. The independent review is approaching a conclusion and the report was discussed in private session with Paul Martin in attendance at both P&R and CHL committees on 18th March 2024. At its meetings in April 2024, Members will be asked to make a decision on the recommendations. Some recommendations are business sensitive so the discussion would need to take place in the confidential session of committee.
14. The independent report makes 14 core recommendations and these are grouped by the following headings: (a) vision, (b) governance, (c) delivery, and (d) culture.
15. The following table provides a summary of each independent recommendation. Please note that any business sensitive matters have been edited in order to make this report available in public. The recommendations presented here may change and are subject to Member approval.

VISION

1. Destination City should be redefined as the growth strategy for the Square Mile as a destination.

2. Recast Destination City as a partnership approach to making the Square Mile a magnetic destination by:

- a) Prioritising improving pedestrian connectivity between places.
- b) A consistently lively and animated ground floor experience.
- c) A premium concierge service for relocating businesses.
- d) A particular focus on driving footfall between Fridays and Mondays.

GOVERNANCE

3. Align accountability for the refreshed Destination City programme to the Policy & Resources committee while aligning accountability for the culture strategy to the Culture, Heritage & Libraries committee.

4. Create a new Destination City Board to build on, and succeed, the current City Envoy network with the proposed terms of reference and membership set out in the independent review report.

DELIVERY

5. Create a Destination City Hub, reflecting the responsibilities and capabilities described in the independent review report.

6. Request the Town Clerk/Chief Executive to consider the future organisational location for the Destination City Hub, including the possibility that it should be relocated to the Town Clerk's department to enable cross-departmental delivery.

7. Future events programmes to be commissioned by the cultural and heritage organisations in the Square Mile including the City's Barbican Centre, Museum of London and Business Improvement Districts, businesses and relevant community interest companies.

Events that are supported by the City of London Corporation should support the strategic priorities and goals (e.g. driving Friday/Monday footfall), be regular (for example, monthly) and likely to be smaller scale than those run by Destination City to date.

8. Establish a Destination City dashboard using the targets and measures set out in the independent review report.

9. Commission future insights programme jointly with Business Improvement Districts having ensured that the data materially adds to the

Destination City dashboard and focusses on market research on visitor originating area, attitudes and quality of experience.

10. Reevaluate the social media strategy and the possible partnership approaches to this where duplication currently exists, focus effort on a comprehensive calendar of events, and achieving an enhanced sense of the City of London as the capital's 'Old Town'.

11. Ensure lease conditions in relevant commercial areas reflect a curated and appealing visitor experience.

12. Encourage relevant services working with children and young people to prioritise school visits that align with the Destination City priorities and the development of skills and employment opportunities in the hospitality industry.

CULTURE

13. Request the Town Clerk/Chief Executive to consider options for the future Head of Profession for Culture as described and make an appropriate appointment to progress the cultural strategy.

14. Align the new culture strategy with the Destination City vision in an approach that is collaborative, develops new partnerships and sets its sights on the City of London as an international cultural and heritage destination.

16. Members are asked to note the summary of recommendations for the Destination City – Independent Review 2024.

17. After the P&R and CHL committees decide on the recommendations, the subsequent phase involves officers planning for the transition to implementation.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

18. Strategic implications – includes alignment with the Corporate Plan across outcomes 3, 5, 7 and 10. The recommendations align to the new Corporate Plan 2024-29.

19. Financial implications – the financial considerations are dependent on the recommendations that Members endorse for implementation. Further planning will be required before there is a clear view on the financial implications.

20. Resource implications – the resource options and implications are business sensitive and presented to Members in a confidential paper in April 2024.

21. Legal implications – none identified.

22. Risk implications – given the high profile of the programme for the Corporation, there are reputational risks if implementation of the recommendations is significantly delayed.
23. Equalities implications – the recommendations are in-line with the Corporation’s equalities priorities.
24. Climate implications – sustainability has been one of the considerations of the Destination City programme and implementing the recommendations from the independent review would take this into account.
25. Security implications – whilst it is not possible to identify any specific security implications at this stage, the implementation plan would continue to keep security as a key consideration.

Conclusion

26. The Destination City – Independent Review 2024 has demonstrated a thorough and inclusive process, resulting in a set of recommendations to guide Destination City's evolution. The engagement of stakeholders, cross-departmental collaboration, and transparent approach bode well for the continued development and success of the Destination City initiative. Members are encouraged to note the summary of recommendations and proceed with decision-making in April 2024.
27. We extend our gratitude to all Members and stakeholders who contributed to this process and helped shape the recommendations, and of course Paul Martin for bringing his expertise and diligence to this review. Everyone’s input has been invaluable in guiding our path forward. With collective endorsement and concerted efforts, we are confident in our ability to realise the full potential of Destination City and create a vibrant, inclusive, and thriving environment for all who live, work, and visit the Square Mile.

Appendices

- None

Background Papers

- [Destination City Review 2023-24, Item 13](#), Culture, Heritage and Libraries, 20 November 2023.
- [Destination City Review 2023-24, Item 7](#), Policy and Resources, 14 December 2023

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