

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Culture, Heritage and Libraries – For Decision	Dated: 9 December 2024
Subject: Developing the Cultural Strategy – Terms of Reference	Public report: For Decision
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers on Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes 	Diverse Engaged Communities; Vibrant Thriving Destination; Flourishing Public Spaces; Providing Excellent Services.
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	PIF, agreed November 2024
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	Yes, via PIF application
Report of: Emma Markiewicz, Head of Profession (Culture)	
Report author: Omkar Chana, Project Director (Culture)	

Summary

This report defines the Terms of Reference and outlines the approach for developing a new Cultural Strategy for the City of London Corporation. Members are requested to approve the Terms of Reference (Appendix 1) which would be used for commissioning the development of the Cultural Strategy.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Approve the Terms of Reference to develop the Cultural Strategy (set out in Appendix 1 of this report).
- Approve that any updates to the Terms of Reference be made under Delegated Authority to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee.
- Note that during the development of the Cultural Strategy, the Culture team would be limited to projects where there are existing delivery commitments.

Main Report

Background

1. In April 2024, Members of the Policy and Resources (P&R) Committee and the Culture, Heritage and Libraries (CHL) Committee endorsed the 14

recommendations from the Destination City – Independent Review 2024, led by Paul Martin.

2. In May 2024, the Court of Common Council confirmed a recommendation from the Independent Review in terms of governance, that is:
 - *[To] align accountability for the refreshed Destination City Programme to the Policy & Resources Committee while noting that accountability for the Culture Strategy remains with the Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee.*
3. Also agreed as part of the Destination City – Independent Review 2024, two recommendations in terms of culture, that are:
 - *[To] 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.*
 - *[To] 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.*
4. The Martin Review referred to a culture strategy, but the terms of reference of that review did not include its development. The review was asked to “*consider how an Arts and Culture Strategy is both aligned, and distinct from, the leisure offer*”.
5. Since the Martin Review, Destination City has been recast as the Growth Strategy for the Square Mile; our ambition is to position the Square Mile as a magnetic destination – for business, workers and visitors. The programme will be delivered through a centralised hub, reporting to a new Senior Responsible Officer. The Policy and Resources Committee has purview over the strategic direction and funding for the new Destination City programme. Culture – and cultural attractions – is a key component of positioning the Square Mile as a magnetic place.
6. In August 2024, Emma Markiewicz, Director of The London Archives was appointed as the Senior Responsible Officer to lead as the Head of Profession for Culture. The role is to lead the delivery of the Cultural Strategy for the City Corporation, encompassing our institutions as well as other cultural and partner attractions in and around the Square Mile. This is a pivotal role, reporting to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee and links with the Destination City programme.
7. The Destination City – Independent Review 2024 recommended the reframing of Destination City as an opportunity for the City Corporation to create and deliver a world class cultural strategy. The review states “*if any local authority area needs a culture strategy, it is surely the City of London*”, with its unique depth and range of cultural and heritage attractions.
8. The Head of Profession for Culture has a principal task of creating the new Cultural Strategy for the City of London Corporation. This piece of work needs to be undertaken to fill a significant gap which has grown and to support Destination City

as positioning the Square Mile as a magnetic place. It will contribute to the City Plan 2024 and the Corporate Plan objectives, including to develop a vibrant thriving destination. The ambition is that the implementation of the Cultural Strategy will reposition the City Corporation as a leading cultural destination.

9. The previous Cultural Strategy ([public link](#), [internal link](#)) ran from 2018-2022 and has now ceased. It focussed on 10 strategic objectives:
 - a. Transforming City Spaces
 - b. Culture Mile
 - c. Delivering Cultural Excellence
 - d. Championing Cultural Learning
 - e. Unlocking Creative Potential
 - f. Promoting our Strengths
 - g. Widening Audiences
 - h. Engaging with Business
 - i. Cultural Connectivity
 - j. Cultural Leadership.

10. In 2024/25, the Culture, Heritage and Libraries (CHL) Committee received a budget of £21.481m, covering local and central risk across several departments. In 2024/25, the Culture team (previously known as the Destination City team) received £1.617m from CHL's budget for staff, operational and project-related expenditure.

Current Position

11. The investment the City Corporation makes in cultural institutions and heritage assets are of national and international significance – we have the potential to be exemplary. The heart of this is to enable priceless cultural assets within the Square Mile to be used and enjoyed by as many people as possible – Londoners, the wider British public and international visitors throughout the world. However, individual attractions need to be set within a wider context of an area that values, appreciates and cherishes its heritage and culture. The ambition for the new strategy is to elevate culture as an intrinsic tool to achieve the City Corporation's priorities and support and align with the wider vision for the Square Mile as set out in the Corporate Plan, Local Plan, Destination City Review, the Cultural Planning Framework and other key pieces of work.

12. The next five years will present many opportunities and include several unique moments, such as the opening of the new London Museum in 2026 and the Barbican renewal programme. There is an incredible opportunity for the City Corporation to leverage its exclusive position as a convenor across the Square Mile (and beyond) to bring together the different things that already exist and knit them together in a cohesive and cross-sector bond.

13. The Cultural Strategy needs to balance being bold and ambitious in its approach while recognising resource constraints; its recommendations should prioritise and leverage opportunities, while being audience-led.

14. The Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee will own the governance around the development and implementation of the Cultural Strategy.

Proposal

15. The Cultural Strategy would be developed based on the following approach.

- a. **Scoping** – the development of the Cultural Strategy would comprise,
 - i. desk-based (internal and external) review
 - ii. external audience analysis
 - iii. stakeholder engagement
 - iv. co-creation and development of the Cultural Strategy.

More detail on each is provided in Appendix 1.

- b. **Commissioning/delivery** – the target date for the desk-based review, the audience analysis, stakeholder consultation and an initial outline of the new Cultural Strategy would be 31 March 2025. At this stage the timetable for completion of the strategy would be established.

- c. **Transition to Implementation** – depending on the outcome of the Cultural Strategy, there may need to be a phased approach to get ready for full implementation (this is consistent with the approach post the Martin Review). It will only be possible to plan this once an initial outline of the strategy is available.

16. Members of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee will be given an opportunity to expand on the detail within the scope of the Cultural Strategy at the away day on 12 December 2024. Outputs from this workshop will be provided to the commissioned supplier to support the further shaping of this work.

17. Members are asked to note that during the development of the Cultural Strategy, the team would be limited to projects where there are existing delivery commitments. As the timing to commence the strategy development is coincident with the annual business planning cycle, it is proposed that the annual business plan update would take place after the strategy has been created and approved.

18. The development of the Cultural Strategy will be commissioned through a procurement process inviting written responses for Officer's to consider. To support an effective procurement process, an indicative budget range will be provided to help guide potential bidders when they are designing their approach.

19. The Terms of Reference for developing the Cultural Strategy are provided in Appendix 1.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

20. Strategic implications – the Cultural Strategy spans four areas of the Corporate Plan, Diverse, Engaged Communities; Flourishing Public Spaces; Providing Excellent Services and Vibrant Thriving Destination.
21. For the latter, culture is at its core and our Corporate Plan Outcome states that: *‘Attracting businesses and people to a safe, secure, and dynamic location is vital to our future. **A world-leading culture and leisure offer is integral to creating a vibrant, thriving destination where everyone prospers.**’*
22. The City Plan 2040 states that: *London has long been recognised as one of the world’s great cultural cities. The definition of culture in the context of the City is broad and inclusive; culture exists both in the buildings and heritage of the City’s institutions and in the streets and informal spaces in between. The City of London contains a huge concentration of arts, leisure, recreation and cultural facilities and spaces that contribute to its uniqueness and complement its primary business function. These include buildings, structures and spaces where culture is either consumed (culture consumption spaces) or produced (culture production spaces) such as creative workspaces, arts galleries, studios, museums, theatres, Livery Halls, libraries, music, sports, entertainment and performance venues; and complementary uses which contribute to the primary culture, leisure and recreation function such as restaurants, retail, hotels, open spaces and tourism facilities. The City’s night-time entertainment facilities – such as clubs, bars and event venues alongside traditional historic public houses – play a crucial role as cultural contributors. They enhance the City’s leisure, recreation and cultural offer, providing people with a wholesome experience and a sense of belonging. Community facilities, open spaces, places of worship, and heritage also provide important physical settings for a wide range of cultural.*
23. Financial implications – In November 2024, a bid of £45,000 to the 2024/25 Policy Initiative Fund, categorised as ‘Supporting the development of a Culture Strategy’ and charged to City’s Estate was approved. Any additional budget (for an expanded scope of work or implementation) would be funded from local risk allocations.
24. Resource implications – Based on skills and availability of resource, the approach would utilise a combination of working with the existing Culture team, augmented with external support where necessary.
25. Legal implications – None identified.
26. Risk implications – None identified.
27. Equalities implications – None identified. Any emerging work with equalities implications would be handled through the City Corporation’s existing equalities-related groups.
28. Climate implications – None identified.

29. Security implications – None identified.

Conclusion

30. The development of a new Cultural Strategy is a critical step in reaffirming the City of London Corporation's role as a leader in culture and heritage, both locally and internationally. By developing this strategy, the City Corporation has the opportunity to enhance its cultural offerings, strengthen partnerships, and position the Square Mile as a vibrant, world-class destination. The Committee's agreement to the proposed Terms of Reference and active engagement in this process will be pivotal in ensuring the success of this initiative.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Developing the Cultural Strategy – Terms of Reference

Background Papers

- Destination City – Independent Review 2024 - Summary of Recommendations, CHL & P&R, 11 April 2024 ([public](#))
- Destination City – Independent Review 2024 – Recommendations, CHL & P&R, 11 April 2023 (available on request)
- Destination City Governance, Court of Common Council, 23 May 2024 ([public](#))
- Departmental Budget Estimates 2024-25, CHL, 29 January 2024 ([public](#))
- City of London Cultural Strategy 2018-2022 ([public](#), [internal](#))

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