

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>	<b>Item no.</b>
Culture, Heritage & Libraries	28 May 2012	
<b>Subject:</b> City Arts Initiative	<b>Public</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Town Clerk	<b>For Decision</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <p>This report presents the recommendations of City Arts Initiative Group which met on 10 April to discuss five art applications: BT ArtBox, the Pillar, Red Ball, Wild Wonder and Aldgate Walk of Art.</p> <p>The Red Ball application is recommended as it is felt to be a lively and interesting concept.</p> <p>Due to concerns about the scale and artistic merit of the BT ArtBox proposal, and the frequency at which the City is receiving these types of applications, a reduced scale scheme is recommended. Having considered a reduced list of locations, officers are recommending 3 locations: New Change, Newgate Street and Bishopsgate (subject to TfL approval). The applicant also proposes place an ArtBox on Ropemaker but as this is private land the approval of this Committee is not sought.</p> <p>The Pillar of Friendship is not recommended due to the concern about the appropriateness of the proposed location, artistic merit and maintenance concerns.</p> <p>The Wild Wonder application raises a number of very difficult issues including obstruction of the highway and concerns about advertising and is therefore not recommended. It would however remain open to the applicant to submit a planning application to host the exhibition on private land rather than Public Highway.</p> <p>The Aldgate Walk of Art application is not recommended due to concerns that it looks like adverting, could come to look tatty and the concerns raised by the Barbican and Guildhall Art Gallery about art institutions surrendering control of their promotion methods.</p> <p><b>It is recommended that:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the Red Ball application be approved</li><li>• a reduced scale BT Art Box scheme be approved with ArtBoxes located at New Change, Newgate Street, Bishopsgate (subject to TfL approval), subject to Planning Permission and resolution of technical issues to the satisfaction of the Director of the Built Environment</li><li>• the application to place the Pillar of Friendship in the green space at the junction of Little Trinity Lane and Queen Victoria Street be refused</li></ul>		

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the Wild Wonder application be refused</li><li>• the Aldgate Walk of Art application be refused</li></ul> |
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## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The City Arts Initiative was established to improve the management of public art in the City. It provides advice to your Committee and service Committees as appropriate on proposals for new public art, maintenance of the City's public art and if necessary, decommissioning.

### **Current Position**

2. The City Arts Initiative panel met on 10 April and considered five art applications: BT Art Box, The Pillar of Friendship, Red Ball, Wild Wonder and the Aldgate Walk of Art.
3. As previously agreed by your Committee, full details of the applications are available in the Members' Reading Room or at request from the Town Clerk.

### **Proposals**

#### **RedBall**

4. RedBall UK is a project with Kurt Perschke to bring his 15 foot inflatable RedBall to the UK. The RedBall is located playfully in unexpected locations, and there has been an application to place the RedBall on the Millennium Bridge for 7 hours on 30 June 2012. The ball would rest in the void where the footbridge forks and descends and the southern end.
5. The RedBall has toured internationally and its UK tour is being funded by the Arts Council England.
6. The City Arts Initiative Group felt that this was an excellent and interesting proposal which they were happy to recommend to your Committee. The group noted that the applicant should inform both Southwark and the Tate of the proposal. It was also suggested that it would be preferable for the RedBall's visit to coincide with the Celebrate the City Weekend on the previous weekend. This was explored with the applicant, but unfortunately the RedBall is already booked to be exhibited elsewhere on that weekend.
7. It is recommended that the RedBall application be approved.

#### **BT ArtBox**

8. The BT Art Box proposal was submitted by SML Marketing and Events Ltd on behalf of BT and Childline. The proposal is for a London wide art exhibition which uses the iconic BT phone box as a basis for art – creating unique "ArtBoxes". At the end of the month long exhibition, the company

will auction the ArtBoxes with 50% of the money raised donated to Childline. They aim to raise over £1 million. The application stated that they were intending to place 80 ArtBoxes across London with 20 located within the City.

9. In considering the application, the City Arts Initiative noted the good cause but expressed some concern about the number of these types of applications which have been received, and the fact that the art produced is not always of the highest quality. This is of a particular concern when non-professional artists (such as celebrities) create the pieces, as is suggested for some of the ArtBoxes.
10. The Group also discussed a number of technical issues which needed to be resolved:
  - How the ArtBoxes will be anchored / fixed to the ground. They will need to be secure but concern was expressed that some types of fitting would entail a lengthy installation and take down time.
  - Some of the locations proposed conflict with other events
  - Size of the logo on the final pieces as this could conflict with the City's policies on advertising
  - Some of the proposed locations are on TfL highway
  - It was confirmed that Planning permission will be required
11. Given the nature of the proposal, it was felt that it did not offer anything new artistically and that there are a number of technical issues which need to be resolved, the group were not inclined to recommend the proposal for approval wholesale. Rather than recommending refusal, it was agreed to recommend a small scale project with a number of caveats:
  - A reduced number of ArtBoxes at agreed locations, with New Change, Newgate Street and Bishopsgate (subject to TfL approval). The applicant would also like to place an ArtBox on Ropemaker but as this is private land the approval of this Committee is not sought.
  - Professional artists rather than celebrities to curate the ArtBoxes in the City. This has been confirmed by the applicant.
  - Resolution of the technical issues highlighted to the satisfaction of the Director of the Built Environment, and an application for Planning Permission.

## The Pillar of Friendship

12. The Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths have applied to locate their Pillar of Friendship at the junction between Little Trinity Lane and Queen Victoria Street. The Blacksmiths have previously applied to have this piece located in the City, and this request was turned down. This application advances on the previous application by offering a clear proposal on the location and making some suggestion as to the maintenance of the piece.
13. The City Arts Initiative had three concerns about the application: artistic merit, location choice and maintenance arrangements.
14. The piece was created as a part of an international project with the British Artist Blacksmith Association to bring together blacksmiths across the world together in friendship. While undoubtedly a laudable aim, the group did not feel that the final piece was artistically excellent nor conveyed its intended message in a way pertinent to the proposed City location or the City more generally.
15. As illustrated in the photomontage bellow, the structure does not suite the proposed location as it appears cramped and crowded:



16. The application suggested that there would be no maintenance requirements due to the materials used, and that in regard to periodic maintenance required (such as painting), they “are sure this could be dealt with jointly by the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths and the British Artist Blacksmith Association”. This was felt to be a concerningly woolly suggestion, and one that did not take into account the possibility of damage or graffiti.

17. Due to these considerations, the proposal to locate the Pillar of Friendship at the junction between Little Trinity Lane and Queen Victoria Street is not recommended.

### Wild Wonder

18. The company Life Exhibitions have applied to locate the Wild Wonders exhibition at Paternoster Square and St Paul's Churchyard. The exhibition is a touring series of large format wildlife photographs which is funded through a combination of grants and sponsorship. Members of the City Arts Initiative had seen the photographs elsewhere, and it is apparent that photographs are high quality.
19. There are two key in regards to this application: location and sponsorship/advertising. Issues of sustainability, practicality and exhibition condition were also discussed. Due to the scale of the exhibition and the fact it would be in place for three months, it was confirmed that planning permission will be required.

### *Location*

20. The proposed location was considered in its two distinct parts - Paternoster Square and St Paul's Churchyard. Paternoster Square is privately held while St Paul's Churchyard is an area of public highway. As Members will be aware, the remit of the City Arts Initiative and your Committee relates to art applications on City land – not privately owned land as in the case for Paternoster Square. Setting aside Paternoster Square for a moment, as St Paul's Churchyard is public highway, this raises very serious issues of obstruction (as was the case with the Occupy London Protest in the same location), and also of maintaining views of the Cathedral. Officers therefore concluded that St Paul's Churchyard was not an appropriate location for the exhibition.
21. As Paternoster Square is privately held land, it is within the remit of the landowner to apply for planning permission should they want to host the exhibition. The determination of a Planning Application is a matter for the Planning and Transportation Committee. The City Planning officer advised that in considering the application the balance between art and marketing of the sponsoring companies would be considered in line with the City's policies on advertising as discussed below. The obligations of the landowner to provide public space and the impact on the exhibition on this provision would also be considered.
22. The group noted that due to the scale of the exhibition proposed and the size of the photographs the applicant would find it difficult to find a suitably sized location within the City.

### *Sponsorship / advertising*

23. The information accompanying application included information on the sponsorship packages which include co-branding, a marketing tent, exhibition partner boards measuring 180cm x 120cm and the main partner logo on each exhibition display board. It would be important for the applicant to demonstrate an appropriate balance between art and sponsorship, and to ensure that the exhibition complied with the City's policies on advertising.

### *Other issues*

24. In considering the application, the City Arts Initiative also discussed a number of other issues. It was noted that a power supply is required for each display board and concern was raised about the practicality of this. Given the environmental focus of the exhibition, the group were disappointed by the lack of information on the sustainability of the project. Given that the exhibition has been touring since 2010, it was suggested that it would be appropriate to seek reassurance as to the condition of the exhibition by the time it arrived.
25. Due to the significant issue of highway obstruction at St Pauls Churchyard, this application is not recommended. It remains open for applicant and landowner to submit a planning application to host the exhibition on privately held land.

### Aldgate Walk of Art

26. The City Arts Initiative considered an application developed with the London Metropolitan University for the Aldgate Walk of Art. The Walk of Art would be made up of jet washed graphic markings on the pavement which would like together a series of coloured stencilled chalk markings designed by East London artists. The proposal focuses predominately on Aldgate and East London with only a few locations within the City:
  - Barbican Art Gallery and Curve
  - Museum of London
  - Goldsmiths' Hall
27. It was noted that while the Guildhall Art Gallery had not been included at all, Barbican had not been consulted with. Both institutions expressed some concern about not having the ability to control their own marketing and promotion techniques.

28. The Director of the Built Environment expressed serious reservations about promoting these kinds of markings on street as the City has already had to remove various attempts at guerrilla marketing in this format. Concern was also expressed that the markings could deteriorate and come to look tatty. Overall it was felt that much more effective methods could be employed to encourage visits to arts venues in the City and East London. For these reasons, the Aldgate Walk of Art is not recommended.

### **Implications**

29. The City Arts Initiative was formed to support the City's management of public art which supports the "vibrant and culturally rich" strand of the City Together Strategy and the delivery of the Cultural Strategy.

### **Conclusion**

30. This report summaries the discussions of the City Arts Initiative and presents recommendations in relation to the public art applications considered on 10 April 2012.

### **Background Papers:**

Full details of the applicants are available in the Members Reading Room or at request from the Town Clerk.

### **Contact:**

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