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| <b>Committees</b><br>Streets & Walkways Sub Committee – For information<br>Planning and Transportation Committee – For decision<br>Policy and Resources Committee – For information<br>Cultural Hub Working Party – For information | <b>Dated:</b><br>27 <sup>th</sup> September 2016<br>4 <sup>th</sup> October 2016<br>6 <sup>th</sup> October 2016<br>17 <sup>th</sup> October 2016 |
| <b>Subject:</b><br>Cultural Hub - Look and Feel Strategy  | <b>Public</b>   |
| <b>Report of:</b><br>Department of the Built Environment  | <b>For Decision</b>   |
| <b>Report author:</b><br>Director of the Department of the Built Environment  |   |

## Summary

This report sets out a proposal to develop a distinct ‘Look and Feel’ Strategy for the public realm in the area covered by the City’s Cultural Hub, located in the north-west of the City (see map in Appendix 1).

Cities across the world are realising the importance of investing in their cultural infrastructure, from Hong Kong, to Los Angeles, to Paris, Berlin and across the UK. Against this backdrop, the positioning and unifying identity of the City of London’s Cultural Hub becomes increasingly important. The opening of the City’s new Crossrail stations in 2018, in particular, will present a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the Corporation and its partner institutions to capture new audiences.

The benefits of creating a coherent and unified scheme for lighting, greening, public art and other public realm improvements have been seen in the creation of cultural districts globally. The regeneration of Kings Cross is one recent, London-based example, in which public realm has contributed significantly to the economic regeneration of an area. The City’s ambitions for the Cultural Hub public realm will be given clear and demonstrable direction through a ‘Look and Feel’ Strategy, which will facilitate the delivery of change in the Cultural Hub area in the most efficient and coordinated manner.

The City has developed a vision for the Cultural Hub along with its four partners the Barbican, Guildhall School, London Symphony Orchestra and Museum of London, which states: ‘The City of London Cultural Hub – the creative heart of the Square Mile – is an internationally renowned, distinctive, vibrant and welcoming centre of arts, heritage and learning.’ That vision is now being developed with a branding and identity project to give the public communication of the Hub a clear focus, and this will inform the look and feel initiative. The Cultural Hub initiative comprises three main strands; Creative Content, Property and Public Realm; each will contribute to the public impact of the Hub.

The Cultural Hub vision and principles were used as the basis for developing a set of specific objectives to guide the look and feel of the Cultural Hub’s public realm during a key stakeholder workshop in April 2016. These objectives will provide the framework for a Look and Feel Strategy, similar to an Area Enhancement Strategy, which will guide a consistent design approach to public realm elements within the Cultural Hub area. The design approach will have regard to the adopted City policy

in the Public Realm SPD and technical guidance. Once completed, the Strategy will inform public realm works within the Cultural Hub. The key themes to be explored by the Strategy are:

- Lighting
- Way finding
- Public information
- Public art and place activation
- Greening
- Servicing, infrastructure and management
- Low Emission Neighbourhood (LEN)

A number of related activities in the Cultural Hub area will need the guidance provided by a Look and Feel Strategy within the next 12 months to align the City's preferred approach with the timing of key decisions on public realm design and projects such as Beech Street. This includes activities led by external parties (Crossrail Partnership), partner institutions (Museum of London) and activities within Department of Built Environment (Citywide Way-finding Review) and Town Clerks Department (Cultural Hub Identity and Branding Strategy).

In addition external partnerships are currently being scoped out with a range of organisations in the Cultural Hub area, and these will need to be involved in the roll-out of identity, wayfinding, and look and feel. This includes partnerships with neighbouring boroughs to ensure a consistent approach to the public realm and wayfinding- for example around Farringdon Crossrail station.

The 'Look and Feel Strategy' is an essential tool to enable the delivery of change on street in the Cultural Hub area in the most efficient and coordinated manner. An officer-level working party is proposed to be established to help guide the delivery of the Strategy, to realise the benefits, to ensure the project is undertaken in collaboration with relevant City departments, and to agree priorities.

The Strategy is to be fully funded from money allocated for Cultural Hub funding, from 2015/16 corporate underspend.

#### **Recommendation:**

#### **Members are asked to: -**

- **approve the initiation of the Look and Feel Strategy, utilising up to £350k from the Cultural Hub funding allocation in the Town Clerk's local risk budget, derived from 2015/16 corporate underspend; and;**
- **note that the release of each phase of funding will be authorised by the Town Clerk on the recommendation of the officer level working party overseeing this programme.**

### **Main Report**

#### **Background**

1. The Cultural Hub, directed by a Cultural Hub Working Party and a Cultural Hub Programme Board, was initiated in 2013 and is guided by a vision and set of principles adopted by the Court of Common Council in 2015. The Working Party is exploring possibilities for the transformation of a place with outstanding arts institutions supported by the City of London Corporation, but which inhabits an underwhelming, tired and unwelcoming environment.
2. Much progress has been made over the past two years in exploring how to shape a distinctive, vibrant and welcoming cultural district for London. The core area of the Hub has broadly been defined and a “Vision for the City of London Cultural Hub” has been established. The Barbican and Golden Lane Area Enhancement Strategy has also provided a comprehensive analysis of the area, as well as developing outline principles for the Hub (see Appendix 2). A property strategy has been developed, and initial feasibility work on a priority project, improving Beech Street, is already being developed. Since the Area Strategy was completed, two major new potential projects have been initiated: a new Museum of London in Smithfield, and the possibility of a new Centre for Music on the present Museum site. Guiding all of this work is a governance structure for the Cultural Hub that utilises the in-house expertise of the City across the areas of creative content, property, and public realm. The public realm steering group has grouped its projects into four different work-streams, namely East-West Route, North-South route, Moorgate Quarter and the Cultural Hub Look and Feel (See Appendix 3). The full Cultural Hub programme is monitored and directed by the joint Member and Chief Officer-level Cultural Hub Working Party.
3. The arrival of Crossrail in 2018/19, bringing an estimated 1.5m additional people to within a 45 minutes journey of the City, will present an incredible once in a generation opportunity for the City of London Corporation and the core partners to capture new audiences. In order to welcome this new audience and attract it to the cultural offer, and to anticipate the future needs and provide coordinated approach for the public realm of this new cultural district, a strategy that clearly sets out the intended look and feel of the area is essential.
4. Accordingly, the need for a ‘Look and Feel’ strategy has been identified, led by the Department for the Built Environment, in collaboration with other relevant City departments in the Hub, and to be overseen by the Cultural Hub Working Party. This will plan and direct a range of improvements within the public realm, which are complementary to the approach adopted City-wide in the Public Realm SPD whilst allowing a distinctive, cohesive sense of place and sense of arrival to be created that will draw audiences to the cultural district. A look and feel workshop was attended on 20 April 2016 by key stakeholders from across the five core partner organisations in the cultural hub; with the purpose of establishing the main principles of the ‘look and feel’ of the area (see Appendix 4).
5. Since that workshop funding for the strategy stage of the project has been identified as part of a Cultural Hub funding provision from general underspend 2015/16.

## Current Position

6. The City, having established the principal of transforming the area into a 'cultural hub', has built up considerable momentum in getting the project off the ground, which make the timing of the Look and Feel Strategy particularly pertinent now. There are currently a number of substantial projects being undertaken that will all contribute to the development of the area, in particular:
  - i. Crossrail, opening in 2018/19, will bring with it many more potential visitors to the area both from London and environs, and internationally with this area becoming connected quickly and easily to Heathrow. The City is liaising with Crossrail about a number of issues arising from this major development. Routes from Crossrail stations within and immediately outside of the City to cultural venues in the City will need to be fitting for a world class city. Crossrail is due to finalise its designs for its stations, public realm and wayfinding in the next year, with a considerable amount of work already undertaken to ensure the creation of distinctive and attractive arrival points with a sense of place that is beyond the functional requirements of moving people from A to B. There is now an opportunity to build on this work to deliver a wayfinding strategy and public realm design that is commensurate with the creation of a world class cultural destination.
  - ii. The Museum of London has recently announced the winner of the architectural competition for its new site, which is expected to be located on the western end of the Cultural Hub, at Smithfield Market. The designs for the site are now progressing and will have huge implications for the public realm in the area, as this site will bring many new visitors to that part of the City. Officers will work with the Museum to ensure that the spaces around the museum are fitting for its use and attractive to visitors whilst being sensitive to/aware of the operational needs of Smithfield Market and St Bartholomew's Hospital, and the Look and Feel Strategy will complement and enhance the Museum's plans. Equally, the plan for a Centre for Music on the current Museum site would involve improvements to the urban realm and transport infrastructure of the area, which would be aligned to the Look and Feel Strategy
  - iii. The City's Built Environment Department has Gateway 1 and 2 Member approval to undertake a Citywide Way-finding Review, which will investigate and deliver a fit-for-purpose signage system and complementary way-finding measures such as digital signage, lighting, and the use of cues and clues to aid navigation. This project includes a management system that enables future changes, and a funding stream for the ongoing maintenance of the City's signage. The Look and Feel Strategy will make recommendations on Cultural Hub-specific way-finding, which will dovetail in with the City's wider scheme, with the Cultural Hub work building on the Citywide Way-finding Review project.

- iv. Finally, funding for an Identity and Marketing/Communications Strategy was approved by Members in May 2016. This work will provide: a name for the Cultural Hub; a website; signage designs; a logo/ visual identity; and a detailed communications plan setting out the implementation of the new identity. This work has been progressing over the summer months and much of this will inform the Look and Feel Strategy.

## Proposals

7. Staff costs are included in the total to cover the costs of staff from the Transportation and Public Realm division; Open Spaces; Barbican Centre and others. This project will use the in-house expertise of a number of different departments across the City. It is also proposed that funding is provided to employ a specialist agency/ agencies to assist the City of London Corporation in developing an effective Look and Feel Strategy for the public realm in the Cultural Hub.
8. The Strategy will comprise: research, stakeholder engagement, design options, trials, and recommendations for a coordinated approach for design and implementation. Recommendations from the identity and branding exercise that are linked to the public realm – such as colour schemes, lighting and visual cues - will be developed in this Strategy. Work will be undertaken across a range of areas:
  - a) Lighting. Innovative, sustainable lighting technologies and alternative approaches designed to enhance the feeling of the place, and that can be altered to meet different functions, will be considered. Understanding the specifics of lighting spaces that are architecturally distinctive, whilst simultaneously linking them together into a coherent look and feel, will be crucial to this work.
  - b) Wayfinding. The wayfinding in the area is notoriously difficult. The Strategy will recommend new signage, but also consider a broader approach to wayfinding: suggesting a variety of methods to make movement around the area much more intuitive. This piece of work will inform the Citywide Wayfinding Review ‘clues, cues and themes’ workstream, which will be undertaken in partnership with the City Public Realm team.
  - c) Public information. Concentrating on how to deliver information about the Cultural Hub to visitors, across many different platforms, the Strategy will consider the way information is portrayed about the Cultural Hub in a holistic way- from digital information both remotely and on site, travel information and physical signage placed on the street, whilst respecting the area’s heritage assets.
  - d) Public art and place activation. An approach to public art and place activation in the Cultural Hub, to maximise the investment in the public realm by generating activity in public spaces, will be created. The Strategy will set out principles for public art and place activation in the area, from

management of spaces and curatorial strategy to understanding how the art programme will engage with the users of the streets. Professional expertise will be necessary to deliver this public art strategy.

- e) Greening and Climate Resilience. There are opportunities for further greening, which will assist in reducing vulnerability to climate change, in the Cultural Hub. This work will assess how best to introduce trees, climate resilient planting and sustainable drainage (SuDS) to complement the cultural activities and increase the dwell time of visitors in the area. Working with the Open Spaces Department, an on-going management plan will also be developed to ensure the sustainability of the initiative, including for example the recent City Churchyards collaboration.
  - f) Servicing, infrastructure and management. The servicing, security, and other infrastructure required throughout the Cultural Hub public realm will be considered. Recommendations may consider timed closure of streets to accommodate different uses in weekdays, evenings and weekends. These developments will need to be managed alongside the needs of servicing residents, local businesses and the many audiences to key sites such as the Museum of London and the Barbican. Recommendations for the future management and operations specific to the Cultural Hub public realm will be put forward.
  - g) A Low Emission Neighbourhood (LEN) project has been approved that will include work-streams that crossover with the 'Look and Feel' Strategy. The LEN work will complement the broader, higher-level Freight Strategy and other strategic transportation initiatives being delivered by the Directorate of the Built Environment. Workstreams impacting the Cultural Hub area are expected to include: a 'zero emissions network' of local organisations; engagement with TfL about emissions from local buses; establishing a 'City Freight Forum' to reduce freight; new planning guidance and policies; new Non-Road Mobile Machinery emissions targets; a no idling zone set up; exploring access restrictions to Beech Street; possible loading bay restrictions; Electric Vehicle charging and cycle parking; a greening programme; the creation of an area-wide delivery and service plan; creation of a micro consolidation centre; new cycle quietways; and Zero Emission capable-only taxi ranks. Officers will consider the results of these workstreams and integrate them with the emerging Look and Feel Strategy.
9. The different workstreams will require a high level of technical knowledge in a wide variety of different subjects. Accordingly, the appointed consultants will be required to demonstrate their expertise across these areas, and sub-contracting or entering into partnerships with different consultants where appropriate. The work will be managed by the City Public Realm Team. In addition, other City departments will contribute their in-house technical knowledge where required – for example, the Barbican and Museum in relation to public art curatorial work, and DBE for highways/transportation issues.
10. An officer-level working party will be set up to guide the delivery of the Strategy. As a Cultural Hub project, the development of the Strategy is subject to the existing governance arrangements for the Cultural Hub, and therefore project

updates will be reported to the Cultural Hub Programme Board and Working Party on a regular basis.

11. The benefits of creating a coherent and unified scheme for lighting, greening, public art and other public realm improvements has been seen in the creation of cultural districts all over the world. The City's ambitions for the Cultural Hub public realm will be given clear and demonstrable direction through the Look and Feel Strategy.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

12. Work towards the transformation of the north-west of the City and the creation of a global cultural destination supports strategic objectives 2 and 3 of the City of London Corporate Plan 2015-19 and relates to one of the 'Key City Places' identified in the City of London Local Plan 2015. It further supports Key Policy Priority 5 within that document to 'Increase the output and impact of the City's cultural, heritage and leisure contribution to the life of London and the nation'.
13. The City has adopted a set of Area Strategies which set out the priorities for public realm projects. This Look and Feel Strategy is not an Area Strategy, but will sit alongside them, and will be linked to the Area Strategies which deal with the areas covered by the 'Cultural Hub'. For example, a number of the recommendations included in the City's approved Area Strategy for the Barbican and Golden Lane will be addressed through this Look and Feel Strategy. In addition, the West Smithfield Area Strategy, which is due to be reviewed, will be considered as part of the Look and feel work.

### **Key Risks**

14. The key risks are:
  - Public realm in certain parts of this area is tired and in need of repair. Doing nothing will mean the area falls further behind.
  - The 'Do nothing' option risks audiences being drawn away by the increasingly dynamic range of activities in existing and new areas across London. Without a distinct look and feel the proposed new developments at West Smithfield, London Wall and Beech Street risk lacking cohesion. This could lead to audiences feeling further confused, disconnected, and less attracted to the area.
  - The City of London is minded to guard against uncertainty derived from the EU referendum results. The lack of investment in attracting tourism and visitors could leave the City behind other national or international cultural destinations.

### **Financial Implications**

15. The estimated cost of developing and managing the programme is covered as part of the £350,000 (CoL staff costs and fees). This includes programme management, site surveys and assessments. The work is both wide-ranging and highly technical, and therefore a number of different consultants will be used, alongside a range of in-house expertise. It is anticipated that this extensive piece of work will be completed within approximately 12 months.

16. At this stage, indicative costs for the project are as follows:

| Item   | Estimated Cost (£) |
|--|--------------------|
| <b>External consultant fees</b>  |                    |
| Initial research, analysis, mapping, and consultation stage  | 35,000             |
| Development of Strategy for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Wayfinding</li> <li>• Public information Art and place activation</li> <li>• Greening</li> <li>• Street furniture</li> <li>• LEN</li> </ul> As detailed in Para.8 and 9. | 125,000            |
| Develop management guidelines for servicing, management, security  | 40,000             |
| <b>Total fees</b>  | <b>200,000</b>     |
| <b>Staff costs</b>   |                    |
| Including: City Public Realm (project management); Open Spaces; Barbican/ Museum; Other technical DBE advice. A number of partnerships across the City will be put in place to help deliver this work – see para. 8 and 9 above for detail.                        |                    |
| Research phase   | 30,000             |
| Development of the Strategy and consultation   | 65,000             |
| Development of management guidelines and consultation  | 55,000             |
| <b>Total staff costs</b>   | <b>150,000</b>     |
| <b>TOTAL COSTS</b>   | <b>350,000</b>     |

17. The consultant/s will be selected via a tender exercise overseen by the City of London Procurement Service. Given the wide-reaching scope of the project, tendering consultants will be invited to state how they plan to either sub-contract work or enter into partnerships with other consultants to present the right level of expertise in each distinctive area.

18. It is proposed that costs of up to £350,000 be allocated from the Cultural Hub funding allocation in the Town Clerk's local risk budget, derived from 2015/16 corporate underspend.. The release of each phase of funding will be authorised by the Town Clerk following recommendation from the officer level working party.

## Conclusion



19. The City of London's ambition is to create a new cultural destination that has his own character and is recognisable within the City. A specialist input is now needed to deliver a Look and Feel Strategy that will allow a coordinated approach to this work in tandem with the branding and identity work for the hub. It is therefore recommended that Members approve the proposals set out in this report.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Map of the Cultural Hub
- Appendix 2 – Cultural Hub Principles
- Appendix 3 – Cultural Hub Public Realm steering group programmes
- Appendix 4 – Key Principles of the Look and Feel Programme

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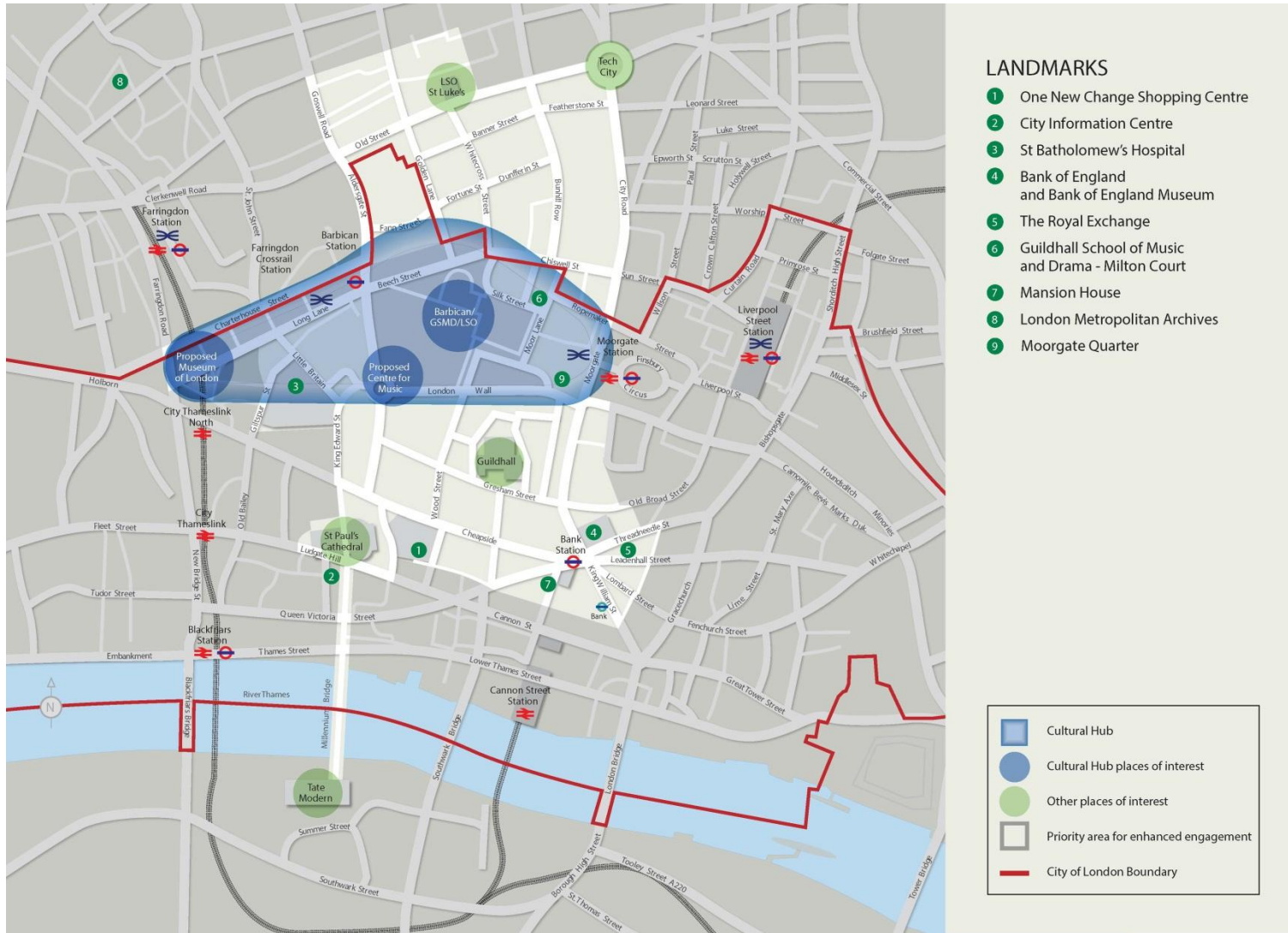
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## Appendix 1 – DRAFT Map of the Cultural Hub



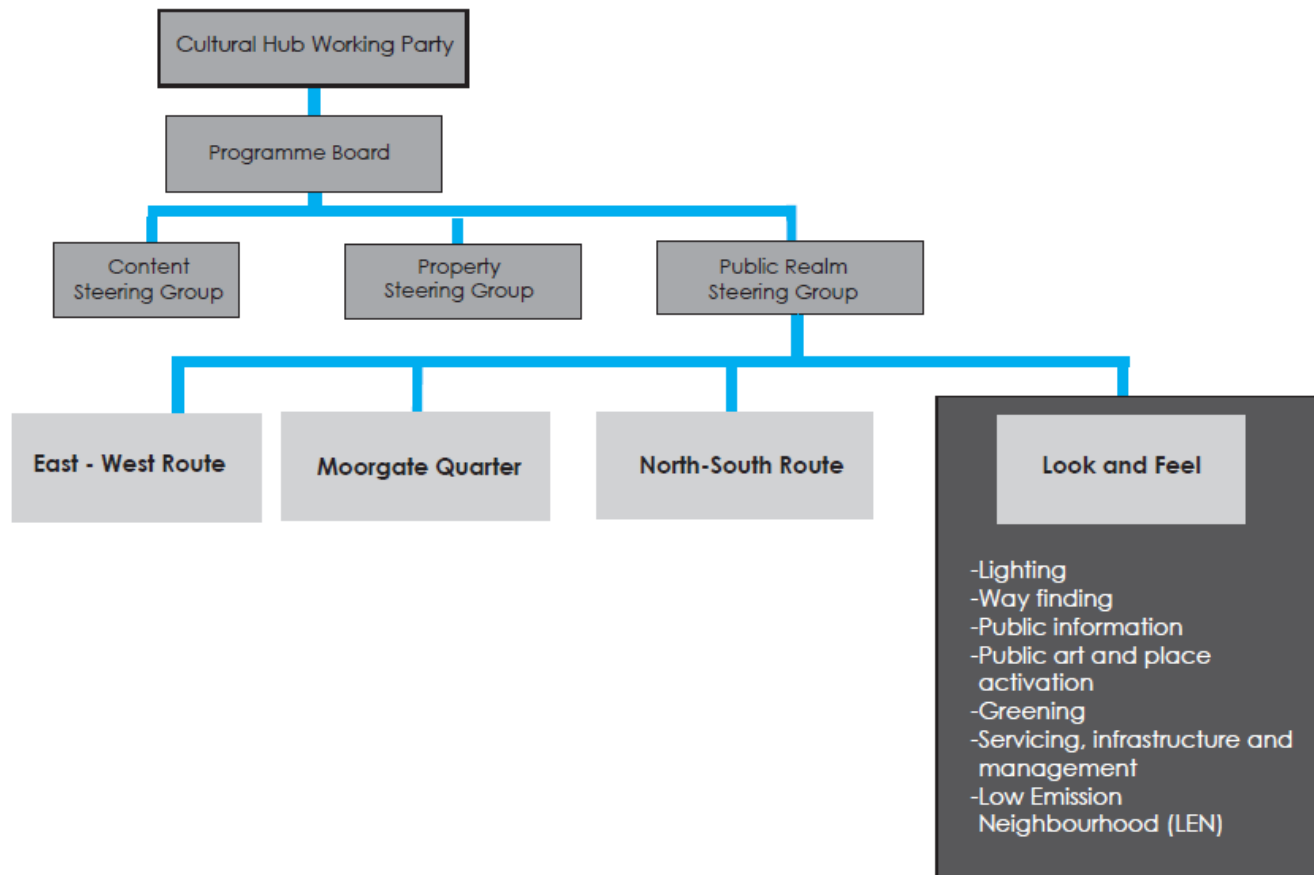
## Appendix 2 – Principles of the Cultural Hub (Barbican Area Enhancement Strategy - 2015)

### PRINCIPLES OF THE CULTURAL HUB

- 1 The cultural hub acts a cultural leader and pioneer; it explores, researches and experiments, promoting and showcasing new cultural forms and understandings of culture, as well as the highest international standards of cultural production and curation
- 2 The cultural hub recognises and celebrates the unique character and heritage of the area in which it is located
- 3 The cultural hub values and promotes the processes of cultural production, providing a supportive environment for artists, dancers, actors, musicians, designers, technicians, curators, and all of those involved in the creative industries
- 4 The cultural hub is committed to delivering the highest quality education, outreach and learning for all
- 5 The cultural hub is committed to enabling access to culture for all, and to providing a welcoming environment for the widest possible range of visitors, residents and workers
- 6 The cultural hub functions as a unified group of organisations, institutions and individuals, working together towards shared goals and subscribing to a set of shared values. (The cultural hub recognises that, through collaboration, its whole can be greater than the sum of its parts)
- 7 The cultural hub is an open-minded place, which willingly embraces new ideas and opportunities
- 8 The cultural hub is a physically accessible and connected place
- 9 The cultural hub explicitly communicates its vision and aims beyond the hub, and informs visitors about its events and facilities
- 10 The cultural hub celebrates the diversity of its partners, recognising their extensive range of skills, experience, viewpoints and resources that contribute to the hub's unique character

### Appendix 3 – Public Realm steering group programme

#### Cultural hub - Public Realm steering group programmes



## Appendix 4 - Cultural Hub - Look and Feel programme principles

| Look     |  |
|----------|--|
| LO1      | That the Cultural Hub area will be the focus for a distinctive 'look and feel' across public realm, property and cultural content with key landmarks identified and promoted.  |
| LO2      | That new development and upgraded properties are designed to be welcoming and open, when cultural and public uses are proposed.  |
| LO3      | That information relating to cultural activities is visible and accessible to the public using the most appropriate media.   |
| LO4      | That the right type of lighting is provided in the right location at the right time.   |
| LO5      | That more high quality and greener public space exists for people to move through, dwell and enjoy.  |
| LO6      | That the brand strategy is represented in the aspects of the public realm including lighting and colours, digital infrastructure, street furniture, gateway entry points, intuitive way-finding, greening, public arts and events.                                   |
| Feel     |  |
| FO1      | That the area is a recognised part of London, known for its cultural activity nationally and internationally (also see LO6).   |
| FO2      | That the look and feel of the area successfully harnesses the distinct characteristics of places within it, highlighting attractive architecture and spaces and creating complementary 'zones' of cultural activity  |
| FO3      | That visitors want to come to the Cultural Hub area just to 'be' and experience the atmosphere, not simply to come in for a show and then immediately leave.   |
| FO4      | That the local economy is enhanced as a result of changes to the look and feel of the Cultural Hub area.   |
| Function |  |
| CO1      | That a high quality network of public spaces is identified, enhanced and where necessary created to provide the location for positive, shared cultural experiences.  |
| CO2      | That the largest public spaces provide the focal point for congregation and are seen as the welcoming face of the area.  |
| CO3      | That unique and curated on-street cultural and learning programmes exist that successfully connect the content between the institutions and attracts a broad demographic, including local workers and residents.   |
| CO4      | That transport nodes are recognisable 'gateways' into the Cultural Hub and that information on the Cultural Hub is provided from platform to the door of the cultural institution (from platform to performance)   |
| CO5      | That first time visitors can find their way from key arrival points to the cultural institutions and main public spaces quickly and easily and that anyone in the Cultural Hub knows where they are or where they can find information to help at any point in their |

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|                        | journey.   |
| CO6                    | That a comprehensive and modern digital infrastructure exists to improve the interactive experience in the Cultural Hub.   |
| CO7                    | That the Cultural Hub is actively managed to ensure high quality environment at all time (cleansing, servicing, highways safety, security and air quality).  |
| CO8                    | That the design of public realm, whilst distinctive, remains consistent with City wide design policy and supports the need for robust maintenance and cleansing regimes.   |
| Funding and governance |  |
| GO1                    | That retail and leisure spend and ticket sales increase in the area resulting in a ring-fenced income stream to support on-going cultural activities in the area and higher level of active management (maintenance, cleansing and security) where this is required. |
| GO2                    | That all partners agree to participate fully and developing and implementing look and feel in the area and actively break down silos that lead to better outcomes.   |
| GO3                    | That principles and tasks identified by partners in respect of look and feel in the Cultural Hub are priorities, owned, implemented and reported in a timely manner.   |