

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: The Economy, Arts, Sports and Public Realm Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 20/11/2023

Subject: **London Borough of Culture Bid**

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SUMMARY

This report provides the Committee with an update on the development of the borough's bid for the Mayor of London's Borough of Culture (LBoC) scheme 2025 / 2027.

Leveraging the insights and recommendations from across the Council's Arts Commission and Cultural Strategy, alongside extensive stakeholder engagement and consultative efforts, our bid is now being finalised ahead of its submission by 30th November 2023.

The bid seeks to accelerate delivery of the Cultural Strategy and transform the borough through arts and culture. This report highlights the background to the bid's development and its key themes. Members will be provided a draft of the bid document, so the Committee has an opportunity to review and provide feedback before its submission.

The collective ambition expressed in this bid reflects our commitment to celebrating diversity, fostering inclusion, and promoting artistic excellence for all in Hammersmith & Fulham.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For the Committee to note and comment on the report and draft bid submission.

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	The LBoC bid underlines the power of culture in stimulating economic growth, ensuring that the cultural economy is inclusive and benefits all residents
Doing things with residents, not to them	Our bid is built upon extensive collaboration with residents and stakeholders, representing a shared cultural vision for the borough.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	The LBoC bid is strategic, ensuring sustainability by seeking external funding and partnerships. Beyond expenditure it is a thoughtful investment in our cultural future.
Taking pride in H&F	Our bid embodies the cultural spirit of H&F, showcasing our unique heritage and artistry that define Hammersmith and Fulham.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	Our LBoC bid is conscious of our environmental responsibilities. Every event, partnership, and initiative will strive to be sustainable and contribute to the borough's net zero goals.

Background

1. The London Borough of Culture (LBoC) award was established by the Mayor of London in 2018 to acknowledge the cultural contributions of London's boroughs. This initiative was inspired by schemes like the European Capitals of Culture and UK City of Culture which saw cities like Liverpool and Hull benefit from transformative cultural endowments.
2. The Mayor of London's LBoC award comes with substantial financial investment with title award winners receiving an initial prize grant of £1.35 million. Additionally, a dedicated fund of £125k supports the Liberty festival, focused on D/deaf and disability arts, and another £500k is allocated for heritage-related initiatives. Hammersmith and Fulham will be bidding for 2025 to align with the launch of our new Civic Campus as well as the Lyric's 130th Anniversary.
3. Previous winners, including Croydon, Lewisham, Brent, and Waltham Forest, have not only elevated their cultural profiles but developed opportunities for additional external funding through a range of sources including grants, donations, and charitable trusts.

Cultural Strategy

4. The Council last submitted a bid in 2018 for the LBoC 2020 award when we placed second. Following this outcome, from 2019-2021 the Council convened an

independent Arts Commission, made up of residents, volunteers, arts experts and local arts organisations. The recommendations emerging from the Commission's work highlighted the need to develop a new Cultural Strategy for the Borough.

5. The strategy's development drew on an extensive stakeholder engagement programme with two distinct phases:
 - Phase 1: Established an evidence base of priorities and issues. (August – December 2022)
 - Phase 2 – Heard the 'word on the street', testing indicative priorities for the strategy and developed an action plan. (December 2022 – March 2023).
6. The activities undertaken during these two phases and the approaches taken – which were designed to be as inclusive as possible of all our communities – are detailed at Appendix One, alongside the organisations engaged. The Cultural Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 16th October 2023, and its implementation will be considered at a future meeting of this Committee.
7. Taking its cue from the Council's longstanding, strategic support for culture, the Cultural Strategy recognises the central role culture plays in the lives of our residents and how it supports and underpins a growing economy. Culture is a thread running through our thriving local start-ups in the creative sector, our flagship cultural institutions and our vibrant community arts scene. Culture also sits at the heart of our Borough's attractiveness as a place: a location for growing creative and cultural businesses with a thriving night-time economy; a visitor destination; and a home to exciting new developments – including our new Civic Campus, among others – built around culture. It recognises that culture has the potential to reduce social isolation and improve health outcomes and creates connections within and across all our communities.
8. The Cultural Strategy highlighted that a bid would be submitted for the LBoC award, and it would be informed by the opportunities identified within the strategy, aligned with the competition's evaluation criteria. It would also be developed in partnership with the many stakeholders engaged in the strategy's development.

Bid Evaluation Criteria

9. The bid must be a partnership bid, demonstrating the distinctiveness of the Borough, and putting culture at the heart of communities. It must:
 - show how local people, including young people, people with disabilities and people with diverse backgrounds will be involved in leading, delivering and experiencing culture.
 - clearly respond to the socio-economic needs and challenges identified and show how it embeds culture within the wider priorities for our community.
 - highlight the value of culture and be linked to a legacy plan demonstrating how the improvements in the cultural life of the Borough that are catalysed by the title can be sustained in the longer term, linked to the partners' cultural strategy.
10. The LBoC's evaluation process will therefore examine each bid across the following criteria:

- **Making an Impact:** measuring the transformative potential of the bid. It reviews how the bid addresses community needs, its ability to instigate positive change, and its strategies to engage the youth.
- **Celebrating Creativity:** delving into the bid's creative propositions. It reviews the cultural programs, their uniqueness, and ambition. It also examines plans to highlight local heritage and alignment with events, such as the Liberty Festival.
- **Deliverability:** the bid's feasibility is analysed here, covering its project management tactics, communication strategies, and risk mitigation plans. Commitment to equality objectives, sustainability, and enduring legacy are also essential components of this criteria.
- **Financial Management:** is centred on the bid's financial prudence. It reviews financial planning, budgeting, and potential funding avenues to gauge the bid's fiscal robustness.
- **Cultural Impact Awards:** highlights potential additional awards and funding opportunities. It evaluates the bid based on project details, overall impact, feasibility, and financial acumen.

11. Part of the evaluation will include a presentation of the bid in February 2024 if we are shortlisted before the award is announced in April 2024.

London Borough of Culture Bid Development

12. To ensure it is a true partnership bid, that demonstrates the distinctiveness of the Borough and puts culture at the heart of our communities, officers grounded the bid's development in the spirit of co-production.

13. The Cultural Strategy and the comprehensive input gathered for its development during 2022, (from residents, businesses, community, and cultural organisations) was used as the bid's foundation. To develop this work specifically for the LBoC bid a workshop involving over 15 cultural stakeholders took place in August 2023 that served as a forum to collaboratively explore and refine bid ideas which continued to be developed individually with partners. Through these dedicated sessions we embraced a truly co-produced approach, ensuring that our bid is both reflective of our community's aspirations and strategically aligned with our broader cultural vision.

14. In more recent weeks the programme of activities and themes included within the bid have been refined with a team of cultural partners including the Lyric Hammersmith, Bush Theatre, Riverside Studios, Imperial College, DanceWest, Artsfest, Turtle Key Arts, Irish Cultural Centre and others. Some of these partners (Lyric Hammersmith, Kindred Studios, and HQI) were present at the Cabinet Meeting on 16th October to support the strategy and the intention to bid for LBoC.

Bid Themes

15. The main message for our Year of Culture is "Where Culture Connects" which reflects our Cultural Strategy and consists of four main themes:

- **Connecting our communities** - we want to bring our communities closer, building stronger ties both within and between.
- **Connecting Talent to Opportunity** - to support our residents to use their creative potential to access the opportunities in our place, including those in our fast-growing innovation economy.
- **Celebrating our Connections** – by experiencing special events together we will strengthen our shared bonds, our sense of common humanity and shared identity, and
- **Connecting to the World** - ultimately, looking beyond our boundaries to be a beacon for West London culture and consolidate our role as a national and international destination for tourism and investment.

16. A successful LBoC bid will accelerate the delivery of the aims and objectives of the Cultural Strategy, resulting in an enduring legacy. Such alignment ensures the LBoC bid reflects the community's wishes and is designed to offer consistent and enriching cultural experiences for all. The aspirations for the bid can be summarised as:

- **Residents** - will feel a stronger connection to H&F as a place; they will feel better able to influence and access the skills, resources and networks that enable them to plan, develop and deliver a range of locally based cultural activities that are meaningful; they will be better equipped to access work in the local creative and innovation economies; they will enjoy life and feel positive about their future.
- **Partner Institutions** - will have increased capacity for delivery and a stronger network for sharing, developing and delivering cultural activities; they will share responsibility for a thriving cultural life in H&F through the Cultural Compact (i.e. joint decision making board); they will cement their reputations and the reputation of the Borough as a destination for high quality culture; they will be part of a high-functioning system that nurtures and draws on local creativity.
- **Artists** – will be better supported and have more opportunities for work.
- **Borough** - will be known as a destination for culture; we will feel like a coherent cultural place with an identity that is owned and celebrated by our residents; we will be better placed to welcome new investment and ensure that local talent is well-placed to access opportunities for work in the new economy; we will be a Borough to be even prouder of.

17. The draft bid document (Appendix 2 – Exempt Appendix) will be provided to Members separately because of the competitive process for the award. The bid is to be submitted by 30th November 2023, so the version provided continues to be fine-tuned with input from our partners and the expertise of an external bid writer to ensure the response fully reflects the evaluation criteria. Members will be briefed on any significant changes at the Committee and any suggestions made by the Committee will be considered when drafting the final submission.

18. In addition, we continue to engage with a representative of the GLA who is providing informal feedback on the contents of the bid. For example, we know that:

- A standout feature of the bid is its firm alignment with the overarching Cultural Strategy.

- The bid's global ambition is appreciated.
- The partnership with Joy/Liberty is particularly commendable and adds value to the proposal.
- It needs to be clear how the bid will support the Council's teams to work more closely together with each other, and how the Council can work more collaboratively with the cultural sector, to fully embed culture in our wider plans.

Bid Launch and Promotion

19. To celebrate the new Cultural Strategy and the submission of the LBoC bid, a launch event featuring cultural entertainment and speeches in support of the bid from the Council and cultural partners is being organised for 30th November 2023 at the Sands End Arts and Community Centre.
20. The launch event signals publicly that Hammersmith & Fulham has entered the LBoC competition and with the results of the completion not expected until April 2024, the campaign will use the intervening period to galvanise support for the bid in advance of the bid presentation in February 2024. The Council's communications team are working in partnership with the marketing teams from key cultural partners, led by the Lyric Hammersmith, to develop a marketing and communications programme that all partners can help to deliver over the next few months to demonstrate community support and engagement with the bid. This includes production of a promotional video containing highlights of the bid and launch event to promote support on media. The bid motto, "Where Culture Connects" captures the essence of Hammersmith & Fulham's cultural aspirations and serves as the foundation upon which the marketing campaign is built.

Conclusion

21. Anchored by a clear vision and guided by robust strategies, the Where Culture Connects bid to the Mayor of London's Borough of Culture scheme for 2025 (or potentially 2027) encapsulates a shared aspiration to accelerate delivery of the cultural strategy and transform the Borough's cultural landscape. Through extensive consultations, stakeholder engagements and a co-production approach, we have curated a bid that resonates with the diverse voices of our community and reflects our overarching theme of "Connection."
22. The bid is submitted by the Council on behalf of a wide partnership, and if successful will be delivered through the Cultural Compact that is an early action of our Cultural Strategy. The Council, however, is required to underwrite the bid and ensure that 30% match funding is secured.
23. As we approach the official submission of our bid, it is evident that the collective effort, dedication, and passion poured into this initiative will leave an enduring legacy for Hammersmith & Fulham's cultural future. Irrespective of the outcome, the journey itself has strengthened the Borough's cultural relationships, fostered unity and celebrated diversity.

Appendix One: DETAILS OF PHASES OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT UNDERTAKEN FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE CULTURAL STRATEGY

Phase 1: Consultation and Engagement (August – December 2022)

Purpose	To establish an evidence, base of priorities and issues including other council strategies.
Activity	Starting point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the Hammersmith and Fulham Arts Commission 2020 recommendations. • Review of H&F Council Strategies. • Discussions with H&F Council elected members.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 meetings/sessions with individuals and small groups including. • H&F council elected members and senior managers. • Arts Commission members, • Local networks, arts culture and heritage organisations, • Commercial arts venues and partners, • Higher Education partners, • Funders and local charities, • Hammersmith and Fulham Business Improvement District. • Arts Council England.
	Three 3 group sessions with H&F Council officers on the following themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination – boosting the local economy by developing and promoting a thriving borough for the arts. • Creation – supporting people to create and produce excellent art of all kinds.’ • Inclusion – giving residents from a wide range of backgrounds more opportunity to experience and participate in artistic and cultural activity.
Outcomes	Identified the main themes for the strategy to tackle – the opportunities and the challenges.

Phase 2: Consultation and Engagement (December 2022 – February 2023)

Purpose	To capture direct feedback from residents on the street, test the priorities for the strategy and develop an action plan.
Activity	The delivery team attended King Street market (3 December ‘22) and North End Road market (17 December ‘22) and asked people what they thought was important about the arts, culture and heritage in the borough.

	6 workshops based on the themes that emerged through previous consultation events to develop the vision and outcomes people want to see.
	Public survey about participation in arts, culture and heritage.
	Action for Culture conference (1 March '23) with 40 local organisations to develop the action plan.
Outcomes	The members of the public who talked to us and responded to the public survey are proud of their borough and believe that arts, culture and heritage are important to them. There was broad agreement about the purpose of the strategy, its scope and the themes it needs to tackle. Developed the Action Plan.

Participation in consultation and engagement activities

Alongside the 528 people who engaged in the strategy's development at King St and North End Road Christmas markets in December 2022, and the 159 people who responded to the online public consultation exercise, the following organisations supported the development of the strategy:

- Action on Disability • H&F ArtsFest • Masbro • Anti-Tribalism Movement • H&F Youth Council / Parliament • Mates in Mind H&F • Arts Council England • Hammersmith, Fulham, Ealing & Hounslow Mind • New White City Youth Centre • The Bhavan Centre • The Hammersmith Society • Nubian Life • Bush Hall • Hammersmith United Charities • Olympia London • Bush Theatre • Hammersmith & Fulham Arts Commission • Petit Miracles • Charing Cross Hospital • HQI Foundation • POSK Polish Social and Cultural Association • Dance Attic • Imperial College London • Riverside Studios • Dance West • The Irish Cultural Centre. • Royal College of Art • Earls Court Development Company • John Lyon's Charity • Sands End Arts & Community Centre • EdCity • Joy Festival • Shepherds Bush Families Project & Children's Centre • Eventim Apollo • Kindred Studios • This New Ground • Flora Gardens School. • Koestler Trust • Tri-borough Music Hub • London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA) • Turtle Key Arts • Friends Of The Japanese Garden • London Culture Forum • UKTV • Fulham BID • Lyric Hammersmith Theatre • Upstream • Fulham Cross Federation • Mark Baldwin (choreographer and former Rambert Artistic Director) • West London College • Fulham Palace • Mitsui Fudosan • Westfield London • Fulham Symphony Orchestra • Music House For Children. • White City Youth Theatre • Greater London Authority • NAZ Project • William Morris Society • Hammersmith BID • Next Door Records • Yoo Capital • Young Hammersmith & Fulham Foundation

Appendix Two: EXEMPT APPENDIX – DRAFT BID DOCUMENT – circulated to Members only.