

<p style="text-align: center;">Grants Determination (Cabinet) Sub-Committee Report</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TOWER HAMLETS</b></p>
<p><b>Report of:</b> Ann Sutcliffe, Corporate Director of Place</p>	<p><b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Grant to Toynbee Hall to deliver community engagement and cultural activities on Wentworth Street as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme</b></p>	

<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Councillor Eve McQuillan</b>
<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Michael Ritchie – Place Shaping Team Leader Anna Zucchelli – Heritage at Risk Project Officer
<b>Wards affected</b>	Spitalfields & Banglatown
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Forward Plan Notice Published</b>	
<b>Reason for Key Decision</b>	Impact on Wards
<b>Community Plan Theme</b>	<b>A Great Place to Live</b>

### Executive Summary

The Council was awarded £602,000 in April 2020 from Historic England as part of their High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) grant funding scheme. This funding contributes towards the cost of shopfront improvements on Wentworth Street as part of the Middlesex Street Regeneration Programme, managed by the Council’s High Streets & Town Centres Team. The funding also provides for community engagement activities, a cultural programme and a full-time programme manager. The HSHAZ scheme lasts for four years, from April 2020 to March 2024.

This report proposes that £93,000 of the total funding over three years for the programme manager resource is awarded to Toynbee Hall as a grant to provide community engagement activities and the cultural programme. Toynbee Hall, and not another external provider, is ideally placed to provide these activities and also offer better value than if the Council were to provide these activities itself.

The remaining funding would provide for a part-time programme manager to maintain fiscal and programme oversight., This part-time role will provide sufficient resource to deliver the remaining elements of the programme in support of the High Streets & Town Centres team who are leading on the capital works projects.

The proposal has been discussed with the grant provider, Historic England, who agree with this approach subject to our internal approval.

## Recommendations:

The Grants Determination Sub-Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Authorise the Corporate Director Place to offer a grant £93,000 to Toynbee Hall (£31,000 each year for 2021, 2022 and 2023) for the delivery of community engagement & cultural activities on Wentworth Street, under appropriate terms as are agreed with the organisation in consultation with Legal Services.
- 2) Authorise the Corporate Director Place to enter into the grant agreement and any such other agreements required to effect the grant and the use of the grant as detailed in paragraph 1.

## 1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 **Experience and expertise** – Toynbee Hall is a grassroots community-led organisation with extensive community engagement experience. They have excellent and existing connections with the local community around Wentworth Street. This local knowledge will enable the project to move forward quickly and enable engagement with residents that are harder to reach.
- 1.2 **Support from community and cultural organisations** - Toynbee Hall is the lead representative of the cultural consortium working group, who have been meeting regularly since September 2020. Members of this group include Arts Admin, the Swadhinata Trust, Numbi Arts, Whitechapel Gallery, London Metropolitan University, Aldgate Connect, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), Tower Hamlets Archives and the Community Engagement team at the City of London. Toynbee Hall is supported by the members as the lead representative and a recent cultural programme grant application was developed in full consultation with them.
- 1.3 **Empowerment of local community groups** - Research has demonstrated that communities with a greater 'stake' in their areas are more likely to feel a sense of engagement and participation. Enabling local community groups, run by local people, is an important tool to helping individual and group empowerment.
- 1.4 **Working partnership** - The HSHAZ programme manager has worked in partnership with Toynbee Hall to prepare the cultural programme grant application. The proposed cultural programme (project 6) contains a significant amount of community engagement and therefore there are overlaps with the other HSHAZ community engagement projects (4: Historic building maintenance advice & skills and 5: Memories, craft and project hub). This partnership has resulted in the realisation that Toynbee Hall would be better placed to provide community engagement and cultural activities than the Council given their excellent and existing community outreach.

- 1.5 **Value for money** - Toynbee Hall offer excellent value for money. They will be able to draw on their internal teams for outreach and consultation, event planning and support, comms, social media, fundraising and heritage learning & participation. It is estimated that the in-kind contribution of staff at Toynbee Hall to the project will be £300,000 over 3 years (330 hours per year).
- 1.6 **No cost to the Council** – the funding for the grant is obtained from Historic England through their High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) scheme. The community engagement & cultural activities on Wentworth Street will add value to the Middlesex Street Regeneration Programme. Fiscal and programme oversight will still be maintained by the Council, through a part-time post, fully funded by Historic England.
- 1.7 **Sustainability and legacy** – Good community engagement ensures better buy into the regeneration scheme, as local residents feel they have actively participated and feel pride in the cultural heritage of the street and that this goes beyond 3 years of the programme. Increased activity on the street will improve footfall and local businesses will benefit, as well as the potential for crime reduction.
- 1.8 **High Street Heritage Action Zone scheme** – the proposal supports the aims of the national High Street Heritage Action Zone scheme, namely in supporting local communities in deciding how the history of their high street is celebrated.

## **2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 **The Council deliver community engagement and cultural programme** – It will take time for a council officer to build up the same local community outreach, which is time lost to the project. This would be further delayed by the time required to recruit a new member of staff to the post. Toynbee Hall have been involved in community outreach in the immediate area (they are located on Commercial Street) for over 100 years and as a grassroots organisation will have existing networks into the local community, thus raising the potential of greater engagement, including by hard to reach groups. In addition, examples of other national High Street Heritage Action Zone schemes have proved that it has been difficult to find a project manager that has both good capital works management skills and good community engagement experience.
- 2.2 **Invite competitive quotes for the delivery of the project** – The community engagement and cultural programme elements of the programme were developed in partnership with Toynbee Hall and the acting HSHAZ programme manager. Because Toynbee Hall has the backing of the members of the cultural consortium, it is felt that inviting competitive quotes for the delivery of the project would not be required. The cultural consortium is made up of the same organisations that would otherwise apply for the delivery of the project. The delivery of the project over the three years will continue to be made in consultation with the cultural consortium with regular meetings and support.

### **3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

#### High Street Heritage Action Zone

- 3.1 The Council made an application to Historic England for funding for Wentworth Street as part of their High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) funding programme in December 2019, following a successful Expression of Interest application made in July 2019. Historic England confirmed an offer of grant of £602,000 in April 2020.
- 3.2 Match funding for the programme is provided mainly by the High Streets & Town Centres (HSTC) team through the Middlesex Street Regeneration Programme (MSRP), giving the HSHAZ programme an overall budget of £1,394,000 to be spent in four years from April 2020 to March 2024. Confirmation of a second grant of £120,000 from Historic England for a cultural programme is expected in January 2021. This would bring the budget to a total of £1,514,000.
- 3.3 The High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) programme aims to use investment in heritage as a catalyst for wider and social regeneration and involves high streets in 67 other local authorities in England. The overall goal of the programme is to make the high street a more attractive, engaging place for people to live, work and spend time. It does this through three complementary strands:
  - a) undertaking physical works to buildings, including repair, reinstating lost features, supporting the conversion of historic buildings for new uses, and improvement of shared spaces,
  - b) facilitating cultural activities and events celebrating the history of the high street and its importance to local communities over the generations and,
  - c) giving local communities a key role in deciding what works they want to see happening on their high street and what sort of place they want it to be

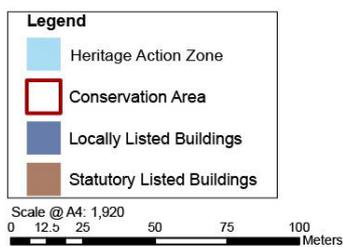
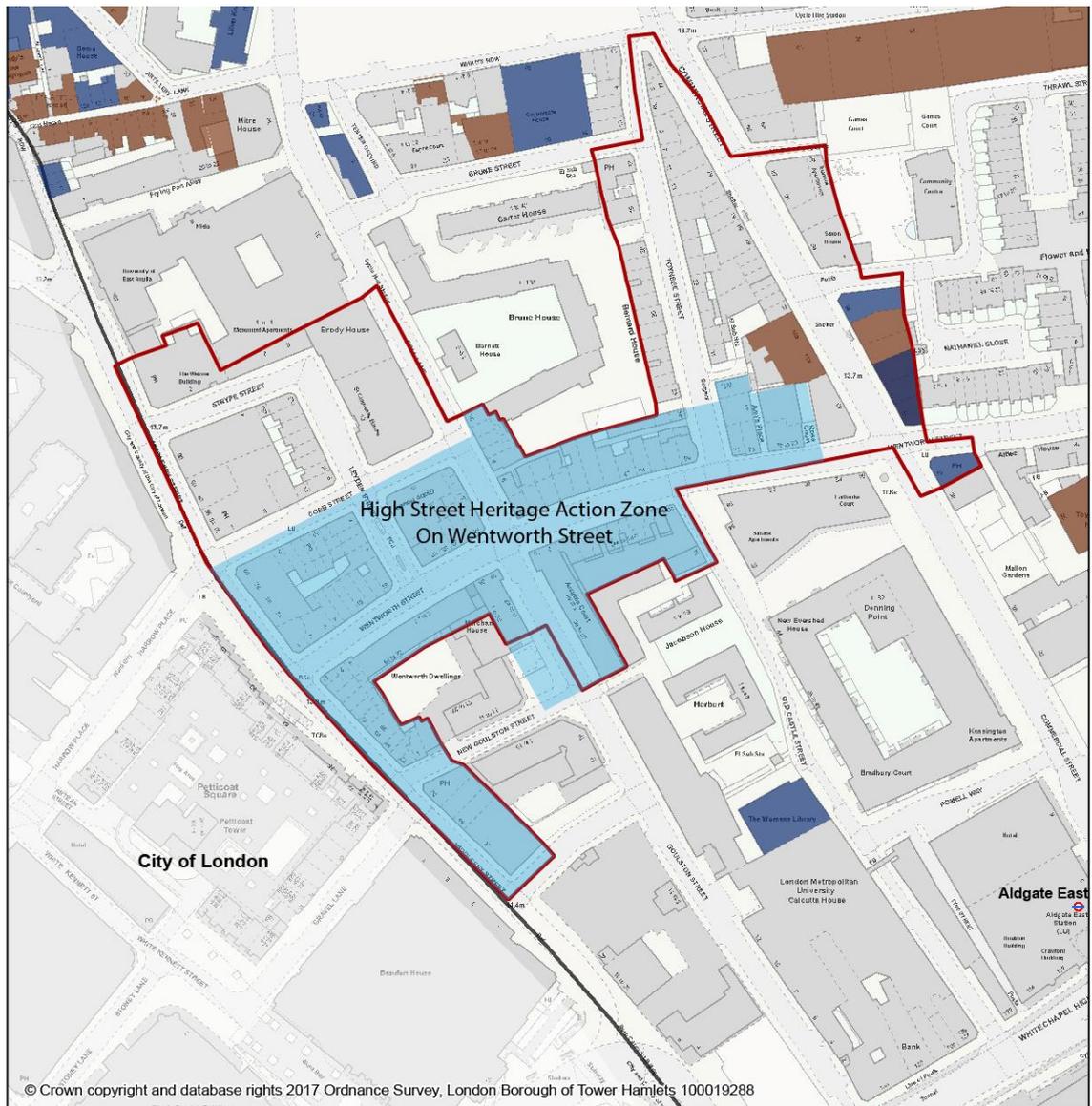
#### Wentworth Street conservation area

- 3.4 Wentworth Street is located within a conservation area at the east of the borough and is the site of the famous Petticoat Lane Market, shared with Middlesex Street, at the boundary with the City of London. The conservation area is in a poor condition and is currently on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register due to issues such as loss of historic details, inappropriate change and lack of maintenance. In addition, considerable developmental pressure from neighbouring areas such as Bishopsgate, Spitalfields and Aldgate and from within the conservation area threaten the special historic character of the conservation area and put it at risk of losing its designation. Paradoxically, it is this lack of investment in the conservation area has meant that Wentworth Street has retained much of its historic quality and charm of mainly 19th century low rise, narrow frontage, fine grain buildings and the market stalls, creating a continuous, harmonious and charming townscape.
- 3.5 The street offers fashion, bric-a-brac, luggage, souvenirs, hairdressers, cafés and hot food. Many businesses are independent family-run; the street is free of chain stores. Shops and markets serve mostly local residents, budget-conscious customer base or niche business, as well as office workers from nearby areas. The pandemic has hit local businesses and market stall holders hard and has exacerbated further

decline in the street as business income is reduced and some businesses are forced to close. The High Streets & Town Centres team are providing some business support at the present time.

#### High Street Heritage Action Zone on Wentworth Street

- 3.6 Current regeneration plans will use the built historic environment on Wentworth Street to act as a catalyst to support local businesses by developing its distinctive identity and the social vitality of the street. Identifying the distinctive architectural interest and historic character of the townscape will inform sustainable future development and protect it from inappropriate development through effective management. Wentworth Street and Middlesex Street/ Petticoat Lane market are defined as a 'Destination High Street' in the High Streets & Town Centres Strategy - investment on the street and an enhanced public realm aims to drive up footfall, improve visitor experience and dwell time, both local and from outside the area, and support local businesses. The capital works should see the conservation area removed from the Heritage at Risk Register.
  
- 3.7 In addition, an ambitious three-year cultural programme will follow the capital works programme. Led by Toynbee Hall and overseen by the cultural consortium, it will support, train and encourage local communities in deciding the content of monthly events and annual festivals as part of the cultural programme. The wide range of participatory community activities, cultural and training events will enable residents, businesses, academic institutions and visitors to have an enriched understanding of the value and role of heritage, beyond the end of the programme, and enable local communities feel a sense of ownership with the scheme.



**Wentworth Street  
High Street Heritage Action Zone  
LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

TOWER HAMLETS  
GIS for  
Place Directorate  
LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS  
Date: 16/06/2017



- 3.8 The HSHAZ programme is currently being led by the Heritage at Risk Project Officer in the Place Shaping team in a part time role (0.5) since July 2020 until such time that a permanent officer is recruited to the position. This is likely to be in spring 2021.
- 3.9 The six projects of the HSHAZ on Wentworth Street the objectives set out for the programme are given in the table below.

	<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>PROJECT TYPE, BUDGET &amp; LEAD</b>
1	<p><b>Planning guidance documentation</b></p> <p>Historic Area Assessment, updated Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Guide, Shopfront guidance (for the entire borough)</p>	<p>Planning</p> <p>Budget: £70,000</p> <p>Project lead: HSHAZ programme manager</p>
2	<p><b>Leyden Street underground toilets refurbishment &amp; conversion</b></p> <p>Derelict Victorian toilets are an undesignated heritage asset, and in the current condition blight the appearance of the conservation area. The toilets will be sensitively refurbished with additional public realm improvements on Leyden Street.</p>	<p>Capital works (shared with the Middlesex Street Regeneration Programme)</p> <p>Budget: £337,000</p> <p>Project lead: HSTC programme manager</p>
3	<p><b>Shop front &amp; upper floor enhancement scheme</b></p> <p>Traditional shop fronts, repair to corbels and hand-written fascia, plus upper floor front elevation enhancement to priority 1 buildings (worst condition and/or prominence)</p>	<p>Capital works (shared with the Middlesex Street Regeneration Programme)</p> <p>Budget: £622,500</p> <p>Project lead: HSTC programme manager</p>
4	<p><b>Historic building maintenance advice and skills</b></p> <p>Practical workshops and advice on planning and traditional construction and repair of historic buildings.</p>	<p>Community engagement</p> <p>Budget: £64,000</p> <p>Project lead: Toynbee Hall</p>
5	<p><b>Memories, craft and programme hub</b></p> <p>Empty shop unit as hub for the project, where workshops, meetings, exhibitions, etc. can be held.</p>	<p>Community engagement</p> <p>Budget: £69,657</p> <p>Project lead: Toynbee Hall</p>
6	<p><b>Cultural Programme</b></p> <p>Monthly themed events and annual festival, designed by a Community Decision Making Group of local stallholders, businesses, creatives and residents. Supported by an experienced Cultural Consortium with training, mentoring &amp; skills-building to ensure that they can continue the programme beyond the funded period.</p>	<p>Community engagement</p> <p>Budget: £120,000 TBC</p> <p>Project lead: Toynbee Hall</p>
	<p><b>HSHAZ programme manager</b></p> <p>Grade K [£44,373 to £47,274] = total salary cost is £58,357 to £62,250 – 0.5 post over 4 years</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Budget: £117,093</p>
	<p><b>Toynbee Hall grant</b></p> <p>Delivery of the Cultural Programme and other community engagement activities over 3 years</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Budget: £93,000</p>

### Toynbee Hall grant

3.10 Historic England’s grant funding provides for the cost of a full-time HSHAZ programme manager. Through recent close partnership working with Toynbee Hall, in consultation with other local community and cultural groups, however, it has become evident that Toynbee Hall would be better placed at and offer better value for money for delivering community engagement activities and the cultural programme (projects 4, 5 and 6) than a council officer would be. This would leave sufficient resource for a part-time HSHAZ programme manager to manage planning project 1 and have managerial and fiscal oversight of the overall programme. The High Streets & Town Centres team would lead on projects 2 and 3.

3.11 This would require a reallocation of the budget, so that the £93,000 of the funding for a full-time HSHAZ programme manager is awarded as a grant to Toynbee Hall. The remaining funds would be for a part-time HSHAZ programme manager (0.5 FTE, grade K, £58,357 - £62,250) at a cost £117,093 until March 2024.

3.12 Delivery of the HSHAZ will be divided as follows:

<b>HSHAZ PROGRAMME MANAGER (LBTH)</b>	<b>TOYNBEE HALL</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide oversight of the programme, including managing budget, grant administration, managing risks and issues, monitoring progress against plan and reporting internally and to Historic England</li> <li>- As a conservation professional, provide conservation input to the High Streets &amp; Town Centres team who are leading on capital works, attending working group meetings, etc. (Projects 2 &amp; 3)</li> <li>- Manage the planning guidance documentation project, producing briefs for external consultants and working with Place Shaping colleagues (Project 1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recruit a Community Organiser (Arts &amp; Heritage) for 3 years</li> <li>- Write a Community Engagement Plan and Communications Plan</li> <li>- Form the community decision making group (CDMG) and support them to collectively design, curate and deliver a Cultural Programme of art experiences, monthly themed activities &amp; the annual Festival of Petticoat Lane (Project 6)</li> <li>- Facilitate Cultural Consortium meetings (Project 6)</li> <li>- Manage the Community, Crafts &amp; Project Hub (Project 4)</li> <li>- Organise workshops and skills-sharing events on historic building maintenance (Project 5)</li> <li>- Provide monthly monitoring reports and quarterly spend claims to the HSHAZ programme manager</li> </ul>

3.13 This approach was discussed with and supported by the Place Shaping team leader, the Strategic Planning Manager, the Director of Planning & Building Control, the High Streets & Town Centres team and Historic England. With the grant, Toynbee Hall will competitively recruit a Community Organiser (Arts and Heritage) on a 3 day a week basis. In addition, Toynbee Hall will provide additional staff management and expertise (outreach/ consultation, events planning, communications/ social media) and staff overheads (space, insurance, HR, training, etc.). If the grant is approved

by the GDSC in February, Toynbee Hall will begin recruitment for the post in spring 2021.

- 3.14 The Council's Procurement colleagues was approached to discuss if there was a way to contract for this service with Toynbee Hall without securing competitive quotes as it is a partnership project, developed with other local community and cultural groups. These are the same organisations that would otherwise apply for the delivery of the project and therefore a competitive process is considered not appropriate. It was recommended that the scheme should be routed through the Grants Determination Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee recently approved a grant of up to £100,000 to the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park for a project to develop an unusable area of open space into public space at Fairfoot Road on the basis that the project had been developed in partnership with the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park and the borough's Biodiversity Officer.
- 3.15 If the grant award is approved by the GDSC, it would be necessary to involve the Council's Legal colleagues in order to draw up a grant agreement contract.

#### **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This project will allow engagement with a wide audience, including hard to reach groups to offer. Toynbee Hall is a grassroots community-led organisation with extensive community engagement and outreach experience. They have excellent connections and existing networks with the local community around Wentworth Street and therefore can enable that all voices are heard. The cultural consortium will be able to provide further community connections, including those hard to reach and BAME.
- 4.2 This project will actively promote the involvement of local residents, businesses, students, etc. in deciding how local heritage is celebrated on the street. It will also provide understanding, knowledge and skills which will help protect the built environment beyond the duration of the programme.

#### **5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Best Value**

- 5.2 Toynbee Hall offer excellent value for money. They will be able to draw on their internal teams for outreach and consultation, event planning and support, comms, social media, fundraising and heritage learning & participation, which will be in excess of the 2.5 days that would otherwise be allocated to one council officer. It is estimated that the in-kind contribution of staff at Toynbee Hall to the project will be £300,000 over 3 years (330 hours per year).

##### **Environmental**

- 5.3 The capital works projects will improve the appearance of the street, whereas engagement and cultural activities will encourage visitors to the street, to spend time and enjoy the experience, as well as to support the local businesses on the street.

#### **Risk management**

- 5.4 Toynbee Hall are a charity with a long-standing presence in this location and have a proven track record of offering advice services, youth and older people's projects and financial inclusion work. They have over 10 members of staff. Over the three-years, the work plan will be monitored with regular reports expected from Toynbee Hall. There will be an option for termination should they fail to deliver what has been agreed upon in the annual plan. The HSHAZ Programme Manager within the Council will continue to have oversight and will also need to regularly report to Historic England.

#### **Crime reduction**

- 5.5 Increased activity on the street will reduce the opportunities for anti-social behaviour and crime. Improved appreciation and understanding of local heritage will result in buildings that are better cared for, resulting in reduction in enforcement action.

#### **Safeguarding**

- 5.6 Staff at Toynbee Hall is an organisation that requires its staff to have DBS checks and to comply with best practice in safeguarding and other applicable legislation.

### **6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

- 6.1 The Council were awarded grant funding of £625k in April 2020 (subsequently revised down to £602k) from Historic England as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone grant funding scheme. This funding contributes towards the cost of shop front improvements, community engagement activities, cultural programmes and a programme manager at Wentworth Street as part of the Middlesex Street regeneration programme. £243,500 of the grant is capital and £358,500 is revenue.
- 6.2 The grant is a combination of revenue and capital funding, with the capital element contributing towards the cost of the wider Middlesex Street regeneration for which there is separate budgetary provision of £2.567m within the three-year capital programme.
- 6.3 The grant covers a period of four years from April 2020 to March 2024. This report is seeking approval to enter into the grant agreement and to use £93k of the revenue element of this grant with Toynbee Hall to provide community engagement activities over the next three years (cost of £31k per annum). This would result in £265,500 revenue remaining.
- 6.4 Funding from Historic England is to be paid in quarterly instalments in arrears until March 20204. This funding will then be used to pay Toynbee Hall in a similar manner – quarterly in arrears, therefore having no cashflow or general fund revenue budget implications for the Council

6.5 There are no other budget implications from entering into this grant agreement. The activity and spend will be managed and monitored by a part time post paid for from the grant

## **7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

7.1 The Council has the legal power to make this grant.

7.2 The Council will ensure that this grant satisfies the statutory Best Value Duty through monitoring the use of the funds and ensuring that they are used for the purposes for which they have been given.

7.3 The monitoring will be supported by appropriate agreement terms which will also reflect the terms under which the Council has received the grant from Historic England

7.4 There are no immediate legal equality issues arising from this report

---

## **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

### **Linked Report**

- NONE

### **Appendices**

- NONE

### **Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012**

- NONE

### **Officer contact details for documents:**

Anna Zucchelli - [anna.zucchelli@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:anna.zucchelli@towerhamlets.gov.uk) - 0207 364 6602