


<p>Grants Determination (Cabinet) Sub-Committee report</p> <p>Wednesday 9 March 2022</p>	
<p>Report of: Ann Sutcliffe, Corporate Director Place</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Grant increase to Toynbee Hall to support the production of an updated Plan for the Wentworth Street Conservation Area.</p>	

Lead Member	Councillor Asma Islam, Cabinet Member for Environment & Planning
Originating Officer(s)	Anna Zucchelli, Heritage at Risk Project Officer
Wards affected	Spitalfields & Banglatown
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
Forward Plan Notice Published	01/02/22
Exempt information	N/A
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in

Executive Summary

As part of the Petticoat Lane High Street Heritage Action Zone, the Council has committed to update the Wentworth Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP). In January 2022, the Grants Determination Sub-Committee approved a grant of £40,324 to Toynbee Hall to work with the local community to carry out thematic surveys and archival research to feed into this updated CAAMP.

It is now proposed to increase the grant by £7,500 from £40,324 to £47,824. This will allow for effective evaluation of the project to be carried out with the community appraisers, with professional support, through a series of participatory workshops and training sessions. To release the additional grant funding to Toynbee Hall, authorisation is required from Grants Determination Sub-Committee.

Recommendations:

The Grants Determination Sub-Committee is recommended to:

- Approve an increase in grant of £7,500 to Toynbee Hall from £40,324 to £47,824 to support updating the Wentworth Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.
- Authorise the Corporate Director Place to enter into the grant agreement and any such other agreements required to affect the grant and the use of the grant as detailed in paragraph 1.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 A grant to Toynbee Hall for this project has already been approved by the Grants Determination Sub-Committee on 12 January 2022.
- 1.2 As the project evolved, it was realised that greater evaluation on completion of the project would be beneficial and would therefore require an increase in the grant of £7,500. It was not possible to amend the report for the Grants Committee in time for the January 2022 meeting so a new report was prepared for the March 2022 meeting for this increase in grant.
- 1.3 This will allow the community appraisers to gain additional skills in evaluation of data, report-writing and presentation skills, with professional support and training. The report produced by the community appraisers will be in a better format to be presented to Council officers writing the CAAMP document. The thematic surveys will also be evaluated and improved.
- 1.4 There will be an opportunity to evaluate the successes and challenges of the project and if the project could be rolled out to other conservation areas in the future.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Without evaluation at the end of the project and there will be no means of assessing the success and value of the project to the Council, Historic England, Toynbee Hall and local people who participated.
- 2.2 There is a light-touch evaluation by the project officer at the end of the HSHAZ programme in March 2024. The scale of this evaluation would be

limited by resources and would be unlikely to capture the opinions of the community appraisers in a truly meaningful way. The community appraisers would also miss out on the opportunity to learn additional skills.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

Petticoat Lane High Street Heritage Action Zone

- 3.1 The High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) programme, managed by Historic England, is a nationwide initiative designed to secure lasting improvements to 68 historic high streets in England for the communities who use them.
- 3.2 Tower Hamlets Council has been awarded approx. £800,000 HSHAZ funding, which contributes towards high street improvements as part of the Middlesex Street Regeneration Programme. Other projects include a heritage trail, building maintenance workshops, a 'Memories, Craft and Community Hub' in a vacant shop unit, the Petticoat Lane Cultural Programme, a borough-wide shopfront guidance and an updated Wentworth Street Conservation Area and Management Plan (CAAMP).
- 3.3 Toynbee Hall have been involved in the delivery of community engagement and cultural activities as part of the Petticoat Lane HSHAZ since April 2021 and have been awarded three grants for this purpose, outlined below.
 - 1) January 2021: To deliver community engagement and to manage a cultural programme as part of the Petticoat Lane HSHAZ
 - 2) September 2021: For a wide range of participatory community activities, cultural events and training events within the Petticoat Lane Cultural Programme.
 - 3) January 2022: To support the production of an updated Wentworth Street CAAMP with the local community
- 3.4 In March 2022, it is proposed to offer an increase in grant to Toynbee Hall for the Wentworth Street CAAMP project to allow for evaluation of the CAAMP project, with professional support, through a series of participatory workshops. The funding from these grants is from the HSHAZ and there is therefore no cost to the Council.
- 3.5 In addition, in March 2022, it is proposed to offer a fourth grant to Toynbee Hall for a 'Memories, Craft and Community Hub' – this is subject to a separate report presented at the Grants Determinations Sub-Committee meeting for approval.

Wentworth Street CAAMP

- 3.6 The CAAMP project will involve a series of thematic surveys which will be used by paid local, trained volunteers as 'Community Appraisers' to appraise the character of the conservation area, which will include including basic condition reports and recent photographs of each asset type within the conservation area – character, shops, street scene, architectural features, open space, designated heritage assets, views, etc. A Heritage Officer has been employed by Toynbee Hall to support delivery of the project from November 2021 to October 2022. A Heritage Consultant will support the Heritage Officer in training and the execution of the surveys. A Place Shaping officer will then use the collated results and research to prepare the CAAMP document and bring it to adoption by March 2024.
- 3.7 The existing grant approved of £40,324 by the Committee in January 2022 will be used for
- A part-time Heritage Officer employed by Toynbee Hall on a one-year contract (and associated recruitment and supervisor costs)
 - Paid Community Appraisers to carry out thematic surveys and archival research
 - Training for Community Appraisers
 - Uploading of archival research findings to the Survey of London Whitechapel map
- 3.8 The additional grant funding of £7,500 now proposed will be used for:
- Data evaluation with community appraisers
 - Working with Evaluator to Determine report structure, quote gathering & testament writing time, report proofing & feedback as 3 x 2-hour workshops
 - Participatory review of data, prepare in accessible way to examine conclusions, make recommendations for final report & write up finding in charts
 - Writing Report, editing and running writing workshop x 5 days
 - Design & printing of report redesign
 - Launch Event (room booking, screen hire & refreshment costs)
- 3.9 The evaluation will enable the community appraisers to gain additional skills in data analysis and report-writing. The evaluation will help determine if the project met the aims and objectives, as well as looking at challenges that were faced, as required by Historic England. Data will also be presented in a report format which will be easier to incorporate into the final CAAMP document. If successful, the project could be a template for other conservation areas, both within Tower Hamlets and beyond.

3.10 The additional funding comes from the High Street Heritage Action Zone funding programme and there is, therefore, no cost to the Council. The grant will be administered by a Council officer whose post is funded by the same programme.

3.11 Payment of the £7,500 would be added as a final instalment of the grant to be paid at the end of the project in October 2022.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 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, guided by a Community Engagement Plan.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications

N/A

- Consultations

There has been consultation with Toynbee Hall on the development of this project before grant application was made to Historic England. As the project developed with Toynbee Hall, it became apparent that additional funding would be required for evaluation of the project. Historic England were consulted and have agreed to this additional spend on the project.

- Environmental (including air quality)

N/A

- Risk Management

The risk of the new Covid variants may impact how some of the project is carried out. Fortunately, some of the training and all surveys will be carried out outdoors in groups of 2-3 people and is therefore considered low risk in terms of covid spread. Other training can occur online. Archival research may have to occur online on individual laptops with home-based working rather than at the Archives themselves. Toynbee Hall will be expected to manage this risk.

- Crime Reduction

N/A

- Safeguarding

N/A

- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment

N/A

- 5.2 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 a wide range of participants in the project, including those hard to reach and BAME.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 The Council has been awarded grant funding of c£800k 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.
- 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 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 £47,824 of the revenue element of this grant with Toynbee Hall to provide community engagement activities between January 2022 and October 2022. This represents an increase of £7,500 from that previously approved. There is sufficient grant funding available to meet this cost in full.
- 6.4 Funding from Historic England is to be paid in quarterly instalments in arrears until March 2024. 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 implement this grant funding increase.
- 7.2 The grant increase does not otherwise impact on the reasons for the original grant decision. The increase in grant will be included in the initial grant agreement and monitored in the same way to ensure that the funds are used for the reasons they have been given and deliver best value in line with the original report
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- Grant offer to Toynbee Hall to support the production of an updated Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan for the Wentworth Street Conservation Area – presented at GDSC on 12 January 2022

Appendices

- NONE

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

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

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