



City of Westminster

Committee Agenda

Title:

Finance, Planning and Economic Development Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date:

Wednesday 14th June, 2023

Time:

7.00 pm

Venue:

Rooms 18.06 & 18.07, 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP

Members:

Councillors:

Md Shamsed Chowdhury
Paul Fisher (Chair)
Sara Hassan
Patrick Lilley

Alan Mendoza
Ian Rowley
Paul Swaddle



Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussion Part 1 of the Agenda

Admission to the public gallery is by ticket, issued from the ground floor reception. If you have a disability and require any special assistance please contact the Committee Officer (details listed below) in advance of the meeting.

If you require any further information, please contact the Committee Officer, Francis Dwan, Policy and Scrutiny Advisor.

**Email: fdwan@westminster.gov.uk
Corporate Website: www.westminster.gov.uk**

Note for Members: Members are reminded that Officer contacts are shown at the end of each report and Members are welcome to raise questions in advance of the meeting. With regard to item 2, guidance on declarations of interests is included in the Code of

Governance; if Members and Officers have any particular questions they should contact the Head of Committee and Governance Services in advance of the meeting please.

AGENDA

PART 1 (IN PUBLIC)

1. MEMBERSHIP

To note any changes to the membership.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations by Members and Officers of the existence and nature of any pecuniary interests or any other significant interest in matters on this agenda.

3. MINUTES

To approve the minute of the Committee's previous meeting held on the 4th May 2023.

(Pages 5 - 12)

4. PORTFOLIO UPDATE - CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND COUNCIL REFORM

To receive an update from the Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform, Councillor David Boothroyd

(Pages 13 - 22)

5. PORTFOLIO UPDATE - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To receive an update from the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development, Councillor Geoff Barraclough.

(Pages 23 - 24)

6. MEANWHILE ACTIVATIONS PROGRAMME (FORMERLY POP-UPS)

To receive an overview of the 'Meanwhile Activations Programme' (formerly known as Voids Activation and Pop-ups project). The Committee is invited to review and comment on the activation concepts for the third phase.

(Pages 25 - 62)

7. WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

To discuss and shape the Committee's work programme for the municipal year 2023/24.

(Pages 63 - 74)

**Stuart Love
Chief Executive
6th June 2023**



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

Finance, Planning and Economic Development Policy and Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Finance, Planning and Economic Development Policy and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Thursday 4th May, 2023**, Rooms 18.01 & 18.03, 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Paul Fisher (Chair), Sara Hassan, Patrick Lilley, Ralu Oteh-Osoka, Ian Rowley, Cara Sanquest and Paul Swaddle

Also Present: Councillor Geoff Barraclough (Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development) and Councillor David Boothroyd (Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform). Officers: Stella Abani (Director of Economy and Skills), Gerald Almeroth (Executive Director of Finance Resources), Deirdra Armsby (Director Place Shaping and Town Planning), Brandon Avery (Policy Officer - Planning), Francis Dwan (Policy and Scrutiny Advisor), Rebecca Gordon (Digital Lead), Aruj Haider (Chief Digital Innovation Officer), Martin Hinckley (Director of Revenues and Benefits) and Sarah Little (Policy Officer - Planning). External: Nick Bailey (Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Forum) and Simon Birkett (Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum).

1 MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 The Committee noted that Councillor Concia Albert sent her apologies for the meeting.
- 1.2 The Committee noted that Councillor Cara Sanquest stood in as substitute for Councillor Concia Albert.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES

- 3.1 The Committee approved the minutes of its meeting held on 9th March 2023.

3.2 RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th March 2023 be agreed as a correct record of proceedings.

4 PORTFOLIO UPDATE - CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND COUNCIL REFORM

4.1 The Committee received an update from Councillor David Boothroyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform, on priorities for the portfolio and updates that have arisen since the last meeting. The Cabinet Member referenced the successful launch of the Responsible Procurement Strategy and the sign-off of arrangements for the latest round of the Household Support Fund. The Cabinet Member then responded to questions on the following topics:

- Information sought: Members outlined a list of topics not covered in the Cabinet Member update which were requested for future Committees. The list of topics included analysis of population estimate surveys, Pimlico District Heating Undertaking (P.D.H.U), implications of insourcing, corporate property portfolio. Following this, Members also requested information on IT disaggregation, Council reform and updates on the Report It review.
- Ethical recovery process: the status of the £200,000 set aside for ethical recovery process and whether that would sufficiently cover the expected shortcomings. Members also asked whether there were considerations to totally write-off long term overdue payments for debts owed.
- Westminster green investors: whether any applicants for the Westminster green investors scheme had been rejected.
- Contact centres: whether there were areas for improvement or inadequately performing aspects of contact centres.
- Green bonds: whether there were set to be more green bonds offered going forward beyond the £1 million worth that was initially offered. Members asked what had driven the success and take-up of this initiative.
- Macroeconomic outlook: Members asked what the rate of inflation was and the ongoing impact this was going to have on the Council's costs such as those on building material.
- Cost-of-living board: Members asked who sat on the cost-of-living board mentioned in the report.
- Identifying those in need: Members asked how households in need could be identified and mapped out across the City. In addition to this, whether enough was done to identify child hunger in Westminster and how the Council could get a clearer sense of this to ensure it is prevented wherever possible.

4.2 Actions

1. Cost-of-living board, a specific breakdown of the people who sit on the board.

2. The Cabinet Member, through future Cabinet Member Update(s) to provide additional information on population survey statistics, P.D.H.U, implications of insourcing, corporate property portfolio, IT disaggregation, Council reform and Report It review.

5 PORTFOLIO UPDATE - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

5.1 The Committee received an update from Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development, on priorities for the portfolio and updates that have arisen since the last meeting. The Cabinet Member also took the opportunity to introduce Stella Abani, the recently appointed Director of Economy and Skills, to the Committee. The Cabinet Member then responded to questions on the following topics:

- Weekend markets: Members asked for information on how the baseline was determined for conclusions regarding the business of Berwick Street Market on weekends compared to during the week.
- North Paddington programme: whether progress had been made on the North Paddington programme and whether it was on schedule.
- Employment and skill board: detail on how the employment and skills board will work.
- Ebury works: Members asked whether local residents would be considered for the planned maintenance and sustainability improvements planned at Ebury. It was suggested that this project could be an opportunity to train local people and provide opportunities through the Council.
- Greening Westminster and small grants: how the greening Westminster and small grants work constituted a 'Fairer Westminster' and whether planters constituted a part of this.
- Providing updates: the Cabinet Member was asked to provide analytical updates of how schemes develop within his reports, which the Chair noted he would look out for. Additionally, the Cabinet Member was asked to address the issue of planning Committees running over time.
- Micro-logistics: clarity that cargo bikes are involved in the micro-logistics followed by a request to consider creating an opportunity for resident feedback on the initiative, particularly for road users to report any concerns.
- Activation strategy: detail was requested for future updates on the specifics of the activation strategy plan and the budget apportioned.
- Residential broadband voucher scheme: whether the scheme was still being developed given residential constraints when the cabling is considered uneconomical still exists.

- Major planning applications: understanding the fall in major planning applications and enquiring as to why the four applications that came to the Major Planning Applications Committee were deemed major.

5.2 Actions

1. The Cabinet Member, through his next Cabinet Member Update, to provide additional information on the digital connection vouchers scheme for residents.
2. The Cabinet Member was asked to provide the methodology behind the baseline comparisons suggesting an increase in Berwick Street Market trade on Community Saturdays vs a 'normal trading day'.
3. The Cabinet Member agreed to look into options facilitate resident feedback and complaints that might arise as a result of the micro-logistics schemes being developed.
4. The Cabinet Member invited Member feedback on the updates provided and agreed to consider changes based on Member preferences.

6 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

6.1 The report authors Sarah Little (Policy Officer – Planning) and Brandon Avery (Policy Officer – Planning) introduced the report, highlighting its covering of statutory requirements and identifying key aspects including engagement with neighbourhood forums. The external speakers were then invited to give comment. Simon Birkett of the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum spoke to their journey to date, impact of Government grants, their ongoing spends in terms of neighbourhood community infrastructure levy (NCIL) funding and expressed concerns about the uncertainty on national planning policy looking forward. Nick Bailey of the Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Forum spoke to their journey to date, difficulties faced, conservation areas in need of refresh, link to public realm supplementary planning documents (SPDs) before making suggestions on how the Council could better support the forums. Questions were then asked of both the external guests and the Cabinet Member regarding:

- Use of ward funding: whether ward funding could be used to improve and host dedicated websites for neighbourhood forums.
- NCIL funding spend: examples of the type of projects that neighbourhood forums have worked on and the degree to which the Council were involved.
- Need for consultants: whether the forums had required external consultants and how onerous the financial burden had been. It was then posited as to whether NCIL funding could be dedicated for consultant fees.
- Stumbling blocks: Members asked what challenges neighbourhood forums face once an initial plan has been made and prevents progress. The forums

were also asked what more they think the Council could offer to support them, in terms of meetings and check-ins.

- Management Plan: the level of engagement with the Council on the management plans that are formed. Members asked about the degree of consultation and engagement required.
- Understanding where the Council can help: Members asked officers to outline for the Committee the extent to which the Council could support neighbourhood forums in the ways that had been suggested, given some aspects may pass beyond what was possible within the statute. Ways of engaging and listening beyond writing plans.
- Level of engagement: Members asked for the turnout in the voting process for neighbourhood forums, specifically how many people participate in a typical vote.
- Neighbourhood planning statutory requirements: Understanding exactly what the statutory requirements are of the neighbourhood plan set-up.
- Policy review considerations: Whether the policy review is set to consider the burden of hiring consultants to advise on planning matters and whether this would be picked up within the City Plan.

6.2 In closing, the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development spoke to the decision-making process, benefits of localism in this context, the offer of NCIL funding for consultants, how they could be more streamlines and the nature of neighbourhood forums and the assembly of their hierarchy. The Cabinet Member took away a note to consider conservation area audits and thanked guests for raising it.

6.3 The external speakers were invited to comment. Simon Birkett spoke to the voting turnout, outlining that it should not be benchmarked against local government election turnout but in fact a would-be turnout on support for a city plan which would be more comparable. Simon encouraged the Council to consider support for an advisory role to help neighbourhood plans especially as they are starting out and performing monitoring reports. Nick Bailey spoke to neighbourhood plans needing to be better referenced in the City Plan to interlink at a strategic level, this would create much more harmony on streetscaping and some minor issues. Both guests thanked the work the Council does and the Committee for their time.

7 REPORT IT

7.1 The Chief Digital Innovation Officer, Aruj Haider introduced the report outlining that it has reviewed Report It in a more holistic way and identified four main areas across content, technology, data and organisational. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform, Councillor David Boothroyd, with the help of specialist officers then took questions on the following themes:

- Regular Updates: Members requested that the Committee receive regular updates on the progress of the review through the Cabinet Member updates.
- Strategic data collection: understanding how data will be collected, internally organised and strategically analysed. Particularly, in terms of demographics contributing feedback.
- Phone based app: understanding how a phone based app for Report It would look and feel different to the current website status. Later Members asked whether an app might form part of a wider Westminster City Council app with a wider berth of purposes.
- Bounce-back rate: After expressing concern that some residents have given up on Report It, Members heard that about 2000 reports are made each month and then asked how that figure compared to the number of people who visit the landing page and website, in an effort to try to work out the bounce-back rate of those who potentially give up on submitting a report.
- Cautious approach: Members recommended exercising caution on the relaunch, given there is only one chance to make an impression with any new offering.
- Existing capacity: whether Council services were sufficiently prepared should a new app generate a significant increase on demand for services.
- Addressing resident concerns: a recalibration of the system tool and website only addresses two of the eight most commonly reported concerns, there is a wider issue about the services being provided. A mobile app that works well but leads to the current outcomes, in terms of service, will still lead to a bad experience for users. Feedback was highlighted of significant importance.
- Working for ordinary residents: questioning whether an application was the most appropriate tool, particularly for a lot of residents who may just experience one particular concern at a certain point in time rather than routinely making reports. Questioning whether a mobile application was the most appropriate outlet for them.
- Care on the wording: Members highlighted some frustrations in the wording that is automatically issued such as “job closed” which can mean that it has been assigned and will be resolved within 28 days rather than meaning it is fixed, which could reasonably be misunderstood.
- Collaborative design: Members spoke both for and against the concept of collaborative design. For, in terms of engaging and receiving feedback from end users and involving residents in the process and against in terms of the risks of stifling innovation.
- Quick wins: Members asked what other ‘quick wins’ were in mind, following the improvements to the mapping tool and what the likely timelines would be for these.

- Communication improvements: Members suggested that the quality of information and level of communication sent out should be improved to detail exactly the process of what is set to happen.
- Structural changes: whether there were set to be significant officer restructuring to run alongside changes to the reporting system.
- Language: Ensuring that the system and particularly any plans for a chat box would be jargon-proofed in terms of issues like 'dockless bikes' which are more likely to be known by their specific brand (e.g Lime bike).
- Proactive action: Members were encouraged by comments regarding proactive approaches in the pipeline, however raised concern about issues whereby complainants of late-night noise, for example, would then be interrupted, at anti-social hours, by officers seeking to resolve or report back on the issue that has been managed.

7.2 Actions

1. The Committee heard that approximately 2000 reports are made each month, Members asked how much traffic the website attracts in total to gain an understanding as to the potential scale of people who wish to report something but may not due to the present system designs.
2. To consider changing the automatic wording of some of the reports such as "job closed" to improve communication and transparency for residents.

8 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

8.1 The work programme was briefly discussed and Members offered to provide a list of alternative topics for consideration by the Committee going forward.

8.2 Actions

1. To receive Member suggestions and consider amendments to the variety, form and purpose of some of the substantive items currently listed in the draft work programme.

There was no other business and the meeting ended at 21.21.

CHAIR: _____ **DATE** _____

This page is intentionally left blank



City of Westminster

Finance, Planning and Economic Development Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	14 June 2023
Portfolio:	Finance and Council Reform
The Report of:	Councillor David Boothroyd
Report Author and Contact Details:	Maria Burton, Portfolio Advisor, mburton@westminster.gov.uk

1. The following key decisions were made in the period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 04 May 2023:

- 28 April 2023: Writing off irrecoverable debt – Quarter 4 2022/23
- 04 May 2023: Household Support Fund April 2023 – March 2024
- 11 May 2023: Balmoral Castle and Darwin House: Phase 2
- 01 June 2023: Print Management and Mailroom Service

2. The following report includes my priorities and delivery progress to date. Following agreement with the Chair, only areas with significant developments or with actions from the previous meeting on 04 May 2023 are included.

2.1 Finance and Budget

Impact of Inflation

Revenue Budgets

2.1.1 Over the last year the Council has experienced significant inflationary pressures across its revenue budgets. Provision of £9.3m to cover pay and contract inflation was allocated at the start of 2022/23 when inflation was running at 5.4%. However, the actual cost of inflation across the year has been significantly higher at £20.2m. This additional budget pressure of £11m has been offset by increased interest earnings over the same period driven by higher than expected interest rates.

2.1.2 Additional inflationary provision of £6.4m or 5% for pay and £12.4m or 5.5% for contracts has been included in the 2023/24 service revenue budgets. However, given that inflation has remained higher than expected and many of the Council's large service contracts are inflated using measures of inflation

taken in April, there is a risk that this budgetary provision may be insufficient. An exercise is currently being carried out to review expected inflationary pressures for 2023/24 and beyond using Bank of England projections for CPI.

Capital Schemes

2.1.3 A review of the inflationary impact on the Council's major capital schemes was carried out last year with known additional costs reflected through the 2023/24 budget setting process. Impacts of continuing high inflation on the capital programme will be reviewed again during the Summer as part of the capital budgeting setting process for 2024/25.

Cost of Living Impact

2.1.4 Members and officers meet regularly to discuss the Cost of Living Crisis. These meetings do not have a fixed membership, with Cabinet Members and officers attending as needed, and do not constitute a formal board.

2.2 Procurement and Commercial Services

Insourcing

The Insourcing Framework developed after input from officers, Cllr Ormsby and the Leader has been adopted. A group of director-level officers has met to oversee 15 priority projects agreed by ELT. Services have found this collaboration and independent review helpful.



Date:	07 June 2023
Title:	Responsible Procurement and Commissioning Strategy Update
Portfolio:	Cllr David Boothroyd, Finance and Council Reform
Report Author and Contact Details:	Natalie Evans, Responsible Procurement Lead, nevans@westminster.gov.uk

1. Introduction to strategy

- 1.1 On 18 April Westminster City Council officially launched its [Responsible Procurement and Commissioning Strategy \(RPC\)](#), after approval by Cabinet last December. The strategy realigned the previous version, launched a year earlier, to the new 'Fairer Westminster Strategy'.
- 1.2 Three key documents accompany this new strategy and can be found at the bottom of [our webpage](#) under 'our publications':
 - The Modern Slavery Statement describes the council's current due diligence procedures, designed to prevent the recruitment of trafficked people or those working under forced labour conditions, or their involvement in our supply chains. It also sets out our action plan to increase levels of due diligence in procurement and contract management.
 - The Supplier Charter, previous known as the Supplier Code of Conduct, is a set of requirements on the technical and professional ability of contractors to deliver and report on our responsible procurement objectives.
 - The Ethical Procurement Policy now forms a part of our standard terms and conditions and covers workers' rights, pay and conditions including issues such as zero hours contracts and union representation.
- 1.3 This report details the launch event, how the strategy is being implemented and some of its key principles.

2. Strategy Launch event

- 2.1 The official launch of the RPC Strategy, led by Procurement and Commercial Services (P&CS), took place at Grand Junction in Paddington, with over 200 suppliers and council officers in attendance. Contract managers across various functions came to support, as did theme leads responsible for key areas such as climate emergency, social value, employment & skills and modern slavery.

- 2.2 The launch was opened by Cllr Ellie Ormsby, who described how the initiative aligns with and will help deliver a Fairer Westminster for those who work in and visit the City, with a focus on how it will benefit our resident and business communities. Sarah Warman, Director of Commercial Partnerships, delivered an overview of the strategy and how it is being implemented across the council. Natalie Evans, the Council's Responsible Procurement Manager, detailed how the implementation of the Strategy will work in practice in our new procurement and commissioning processes, and what implications the RPC Strategy will have for suppliers going forward. She described how suppliers may go about making necessary changes to improve their responsible business performance supported by the council.
- 2.3 One of the most impactful sessions at the launch event was the presentation of eight supplier led spotlights, which illustrated how suppliers large and small can deliver social value and responsible business:
- Capita - sports sponsorship of one of our looked after young people who sought asylum in the UK
 - Look Ahead – a strong commitment to employing local people with a Westminster resident giving a testimonial about his career change and the fulfilling role he now plays in supporting vulnerable residents
 - FM Conway - innovative pilots on low and zero carbon technologies within their footways and carriageways contract
 - Fat Macy's - a social enterprise described their catering training initiative, which includes a grant to be used as a rental deposit for people at risk of homelessness
 - Matrix SCM - the employability work they do with our Adult Education Service
 - Bouygues ES & Construction - gave a joint presentation about their varied social value delivery for Westminster including at the Abbey Centre
 - Everyone Active - listed social value achievements including significant levels of employment of local residents
 - Unity Works - presented the aims of their social enterprise, to train and facilitate neurodiverse people and those with learning difficulties into the workplace, in both the horticultural and hospitality sectors.
- 2.4 Cllr Boothroyd closed the event highlighting how we can all work to together to see further examples of social value and responsible procurement for our residents and workforce.
- 2.5 Feedback from the event was universally positive and ten of our key strategic suppliers covering construction, highways, waste and housing have agreed to voluntarily adhere to the Supplier Charter and Ethical Procurement Policy requirements. Between them, their existing full contract values are worth over £1 billion.

3. Measuring Impact

- 3.1 P&CS recognises the importance of measuring our own team's performance in terms of implementing RPC, as well as the performance of our suppliers and the impact they are making on our resident and business communities. Two internal KPIs P&CS are now reporting on as part of the Fairer Westminster Delivery Plan are as follows:
- % spend with SMEs and VCSEs (target 25%)
 - % contracts over £100k with RPC integrated (target 100%)
- 3.2 In addition to these internal measures, the team will also collate P&CS performance indicators on:
- % RPC weighting attributed in tenders (mandatory between 10-30%)
 - % relevant tenders with carbon reduction commitments (target 100%)
 - % relevant tenders with modern slavery due diligence requirements
 - % relevant tenders requiring social value outcomes (target 100%)
- 3.3 In terms of measuring supplier performance, and effectiveness of the council's contract managers in facilitating RPC delivery, we are now starting to measure delivery of/adherence to:
- Contract-specific KPIs
 - Commitments made by suppliers as part of tenders (i.e. Social Value)
 - Supplier Charter requirements
- 3.4 The P&CS team is working closely with Responsible Economy's Social Value team to establish a Social Value framework, which includes a new, more effective process of identifying real, live community need in different areas of Westminster and engage VCSE partners that can help suppliers deliver longer term projects. This work also involves developing a new approach to measuring the impact of social value delivery by suppliers, so that we can more effectively communicate this impact and prioritise areas of future focus.
- 3.5 Responsible Procurement interventions when commissioning new contracts can significantly improve outcomes for residents and the environment. An example of this is the recent bi-borough led Community Equipment tender, delivering aids to daily living covering over half of London boroughs. The new contract now includes requirements and commitments, which the successful bidder, NRS, expanded upon. This includes two noteworthy achievements:
- Specific milestones were set on the development of modern slavery risk assessment processes and specific action plans for high-risk equipment and components. This led to the contractor affiliating with SEDEX, a supply chain data platform, meaning that consortium members will have access factory-level audits for equipment sourced under this contract. This is the first known contract under which the council will benefit from this level of transparency on human and labour rights due diligence.
 - A requirement for the contractors to achieve at least a 10% year on year reduction in emissions of particulate matter, NOx (local air quality related to respiratory diseases) and carbon (greenhouse gas exacerbating climate

change), which led to a commitment by contractors to use a significant proportion of electric vehicles from the outset. Those larger vehicles with a longer lead in time to procure electric models will be replaced within six months, at which point the entire fleet will be zero emission.

- 3.6 This bi-borough led procurement has set a good example for boroughs across London of what can be achieved through tailoring specifications and asking the right method statement questions.

4. Delivering the strategy

Before the launch

- 4.1 After the RPC Strategy was endorsed by Cabinet in December, extensive amount of work was undertaken to prepare for its launch in April. This included integrating new RPC requirements into governance and tender documentation and contract terms and conditions. Further training has taken place with P&CS team on RPC implementation. Written guidance has been provided and in-depth workshops held on new carbon reduction and modern slavery due diligence requirements with key suppliers, developing metrics by which we could measure performance.
- 4.2 This strategy is now embedded in our procurement approach with documents and processes updated. Responsible Procurement now sits in Procurement and Commercial Service’s Supplier Relationship function. This reflects the need to hold suppliers to account for delivery of impactful social, environmental and ethical outputs.

The next three months

- 4.3 There are key milestones over the next three months that will help the council deliver the RPC strategy with reporting planned in September and April 2024.

Refreshed Modern Slavery Statement 2023-24 published [4.4]	Jun 2023
Contract Management Framework updated [4.5]	Jul 2023
Additional capacity in place [4.6]	Sep 2023
Launch of sub £100k Buying Team [4.8]	Oct 2023
Half year update to Audit and Performance Committee [4.9]	6 Sep 2023
First annual report produced [4.9]	Apr 2024

- 4.4 The council’s current Modern Slavery Statement covers activity undertaken October 2021 – September 2022, with a 6-month action plan for work between October 2022 – March 2023. The new Modern Slavery Statement is currently being drafted and will be published by end of June 2023. The principal focus of this year’s action plan will be on the partnership work the team are undertaking with suppliers in high-risk sectors to map supply chains, identify risk hotspots and develop plans to mitigate those risks of modern slavery occurring.

- 4.5 The Contract Management Framework is being revised to fully integrate Responsible Procurement contract management and monitoring, with technical support provided to contract managers and suppliers. This will be shared in July with Contract Managers.
- 4.6 Procurement has allocated some additional capacity to oversee the key elements of the strategy including:
- Implementing the increased weighting for responsible procurement within tenders to up to 30%.
 - The roll out of Ethical Procurement Policy, Supplier Charter and enhanced modern slavery due diligence
 - Development of Fair Tax pledge liaising with providers
 - Strengthen commitments on tackling climate emergency – working with suppliers to reduce carbon associated for council projects with new specific commitment to baselining and reducing scope 3 (indirect, including supplier-related) emissions
- 4.7 The new focus on Community Wealth Building and broadening of target suppliers led to a successful bid from the UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Fund for 'levelling up'), administered on behalf of the Government by the GLA. This will fund the development of a small, local business directory and new capacity to help engage with, upskill, train and facilitate new target organisation entrants into our own supply chain and those of our existing contractors. These target supplier organisations include smaller, local businesses, those that support the local social economy (including social enterprises and VCSEs), women-led, global majority-led, disabled-led and other minority-led businesses, cooperatives, municipally owned companies.
- 4.8 P&CS has started recruitment for a 'Buying Team' to further increase the number of local, SME and minority led business in our supply chain. The small team will lead procurement projects below £100k, maximising opportunities to buy local via small businesses and local voluntary sector through active and regular market engagement and potential ringfencing of opportunities. The new, outward facing team will be in place by October.
- 4.9 We have had regular discussions and input from our Cabinet Member (Cllr Boothroyd) and Deputy who serves as Procurement Lead (Cllr Ormsby). The committee may wish to consider how to steer the delivery of the strategy and input into the RPC approach for high value, strategic contracts. Each year in April an annual report will be produced on the progress of the strategy. A shorter update section will be included in the annual Procurement update report to Audit and Performance Committee in September.

5. Key principles of the strategy

- 5.1 A core function of the procurement team is to ensure that the council is acting in the best interests of residents, our business community and wider stakeholders in securing best value for money goods, services and works.

This is in parallel to driving social, environmental and ethical benefits. These principles drive the strategy and its implementation as described below.

Ensuring social value benefits are value for money

- 5.2 Good quality suppliers have existing Corporate Social Responsibility / Social Value programmes. Westminster's new approach to achieving social value involves providing specific examples of genuine community need that suppliers can help address as part of their social value offer, whilst at the same time providing flexibility in what bidders can select, so that existing programmes can be expanded or tailored for the benefit of our residents and businesses. This decreases the outlay that the creation of new initiatives would imply, and bidders are free to choose projects, recruitment or training schemes that best fit their business needs and priorities and add value for Westminster.
- 5.3 Growth Planning & Housing's Economy & Skills team have dedicated staff to facilitate the delivery of social value by suppliers in terms of:
- Projects that benefit our community in terms of short and long term need (Responsible Economy)
 - Westminster resident candidates for apprenticeship schemes and job roles (Westminster Employment Service)
 - Trained and screened candidates with learning difficulties for ring fenced work placements, who are supported throughout their placements (Westminster Employment)
 - Residents in need of employability training and other skills (Westminster Adult Education Service)
- 5.4 These services, offered by the council, alongside others including Finance & Resource's digital inclusion programme, mean that suppliers can focus their social value efforts on core delivery, rather than spending time and resources on identifying projects or candidates.
- 5.5 Suppliers across all sectors are having to make concerted efforts to improve environmental performance in terms of emissions of greenhouse gases and local pollutants, waste management, and sustainable sourcing. Our strategic approach to driving environmental sustainability throughout the supply chain includes:
- Alignment of environmental criteria, targets and reporting protocols with UK Government requirements
 - Alignment of our requirements with those of other London boroughs, as part of our collaboration with the London Responsible Procurement Network (LRPN) and as co-chair of the Pan London Supply Chain Carbon Working Group. As well as reducing administrative and cost burdens associated with reporting, it also provides opportunities for joint projects with other boroughs, so that any costs associated with pilots using innovative clean technology can be shared across boroughs.

- Alignment of our environmental requirements with industry expectations and best practice. This has been achieved through the Supplier Charter and through supplier engagement and soft market testing, to gauge what is standard practice in each sector (for contractual requirements) and what distinguishes higher performing companies from their competitors (for award criteria).
- 5.6 For some contracts, minor costs may be incurred by suppliers to undertake increased due diligence to ensure modern slavery does not form a part of their supply chains. This likely minimal cost is insignificant compared to the potential reputational risk and the benefits that a transparent supply chain can offer (human / labour rights and supply chain agility). Contracts that will include more rigorous requirements are limited to high-risk sectors only.

Reducing barriers to SMEs

- 5.7 Procurement along with colleagues in Westminster Business Unit and Responsible Economy are dedicating more time to upskilling SMEs on RPC and other aspects that will help them win business with the council and other large clients to help them grow.
- 5.8 The Supplier Charter was actively consulted with 100+ suppliers, including a significant number of SMEs, in February 2022 and adapted following feedback. Only contracts over PCR thresholds include Supplier Charter requirements. All requirements only require evidence to be submitted 3, 6 or 9 months after contract commencement to give smaller companies / those with fewer resources time to prepare.
- 5.9 The new Buying Team will also encourage the participation of smaller organisations both SMEs and voluntary sector. More opportunities will be opened up to competition linking with One Westminster and Westminster Business Council to help develop the market.

Responsible Procurement weighting in tenders

- 5.10 Before 2022, Westminster had a required weighting of 5% for Social Value. This was amended to 10% to 20% when the previous RPC Strategy was launched on February 2022. The new policy is for contracts over £100,000 the intention of working towards an increase of a minimum 20-30% by 2025/26. A weighting of 30% may be used for specific types of contract, where nature of the contract provides the opportunity to make a significant impact to community wealth building and where we as a client have significant leverage, including high market competition.
- 5.11 RPC weighting within tender award criteria is not restricted to a single question. P&CS work with service leads to incorporate RPC aspects into standard award criteria, so that social, ethical and environmental considerations are embedded throughout the evaluation questions and suppliers understand our level of commitment. The proportion of each

question covering RPC aspects counts towards the overall RPC percentage weighting.

- 5.12 Every award criterion or aspect of a question related to RPC is tailored to the contract in question. Through market testing and extensive engagement with contract managers, the P&CS team strive to understand the context and priorities of both the sector and the department wishing to undertake the procurement/ commissioning exercise. This approach means that RPC evaluation is relevant to the contract.

Delivering social value

- 5.13 Procurement are working closely with the Social Value team in Responsible Economy to achieve the following:
- A Supplier Engagement in early 2023 to consulted key suppliers on our intended approach to measuring social value performance
 - A social value baselining exercise is currently underway for an impact report aimed at quantifying and communicating successful social value delivery, alongside case studies
 - A compilation of ward-based profiles and local social value priorities to share with bidders at tender stage, so that interested suppliers can focus their offers to meet specific community need.
 - A Social Value consultation panel is now being established to ensure that we are delivering optimum impact on behalf of residents facing a range of challenges.



City of Westminster

Finance, Planning and Economic Development Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	14 June 2023
Portfolio:	Planning and Economic Development
The Report of:	Councillor Geoff Barraclough
Report Author and Contact Details:	Maria Burton, Portfolio Advisor, mburton@westminster.gov.uk

- 1. No key decisions have been made in the period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 04 May 2023.**
- 2. The following report includes my priorities and delivery progress since my last report. Following agreement with the Chair, only areas with significant developments or with actions from the previous meeting on 04 May 2023 are included.**

Economy

2.1 Markets

Berwick Street – Community Saturdays

Following the Berwick Street Community Saturdays Event which is a series of events involving local businesses in the area, residents with business ideas and traders who fitted into the theme of art, fashion, music and culture participated in the events. Out of 24 event traders, 17 traders provided feedback. 2 additional traders are registered to trade on a Saturday in Berwick Street and also trade during the week and therefore participated in the event. All of the other event traders either have a business in Berwick Street such as Nissan Fabrics, are a resident in the local area or trade elsewhere during the week. The two traders who are licenced in Berwick Street during the week and participated in the event commented it was great to see the space activated on a Saturday, with one hot food trader noting a slight increase in sales. The other trader felt there was no change in terms of sales. Out of the 17 event traders who provided feedback, 2 of those were local businesses operating the area. Their experience was wholly positive.

The data does not suggest that trade (measured in terms of customers and sales/takings) has increased compared to weekday trading on Berwick Street. Instead, the data asks each individual event trader to comment and provide feedback whether they experienced more customers or generated more sales/takings than when compared to a typical trading day wherever this may be. This is subjective, with each individual performance being measured against their own parameters of success and expectations for market trading.

The goal has been to measure the success of a varied offer on Berwick Street and whether it is commercially viable for traders. As we know the Monday to Friday market has a high dominance of hot food and feedback suggests these events running on the first Saturday of each month show that Berwick Street is viable in terms of providing alternate commodities. The main aim of our Community Saturday Events is to bring together businesses and residents in the area and offer stakeholders a non-food offer as opposed to drawing more visitors to Soho. As part of Berwick Street Community Saturdays we have two further events taking place on 3/06 and 01/07.

Planning Policy

2.2 Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD

The POAH SPD must respond to a series of commitments in the City Plan that it will include guidance on a number of issues, such as carbon offsetting and income thresholds for intermediate housing. SPDs can only provide guidance on areas of policy covered in the City Plan and cannot create new areas of policy.

Under the previous administration a Draft of the SPD was consulted on in March 2022. It has subsequently been redrafted in response to feedback from the consultation and Cabinet Members, as well as to align with the Fairer Westminster Strategy and Future of Westminster Commission.

The new Draft SPD has been viability tested to ensure the planning obligations do not make development unviable, and officers have worked with the Greater London Authority to ensure the SPD is in line with the Mayor of London's policies and guidance. Following further internal steer, a new consultation period will take place, with the final sign-off of the SPD expected in Autumn 2023.



Finance, Planning & Economic Development Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	14 June 2023
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Meanwhile Activations Programme
Report of:	Stella Abani, Director of Economy and Skills
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	Fairer Economy – A reimagined and revived Oxford Street and West End that delivers a World class offer and experience to residents, businesses and visitors supporting a diverse, resilient, and successful economy that delivers growth in Westminster. Westminster Cultural Strategy (2021 – 2025)
Report Author and Contact Details	Gaurav Choksi, Enterprise and Meanwhile Space Programme Manager gchoksi@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview and update on the City Council's Meanwhile Activations Programme (formerly known as Voids Activation and Pop-ups project).
- 1.2 The Meanwhile Activations Programme was originally envisaged as a pilot scheme to enliven the empty retail units and rapidly address the negative impact that empty properties had on visitors' perception of the West End.
- 1.3 To date, the programme has activated 12 void units in the West End, supporting over 43 brands, emerging artists, social enterprises, and start-ups.
- 1.4 The Cabinet Member Report (CMR) of 21st September 2022 outlined a strategy and approach for phase 3 of the programme and gave approval to apply NNDR Localism Relief to ratepayers of eligible premises, who meet certain criteria, for a minimum period of six months and a maximum period of two years from the date of activation and to end for each premises when the property ceases to be part of the programme e.g. if the landlord finds a suitable long-term tenant.

- 1.5 This new phase of the programme will primarily focus on tackling the proliferation of low-quality retail on prominent high streets, with an initial focus on Oxford Street. It is seeking to secure units for up to 2 years and incubate brands from pop-up occupiers into long-term, rent paying tenants, creating a pipeline of high-quality future tenants.
- 1.6 Expanding the programme beyond the West End neighbourhoods into local high streets and district centres is a longer-term aspiration. Activations here will have a greater focus on arts and culture with a local feel.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1 The committee is invited to note and comment on the contents of this report and appendices. This is a highly visual / experiential programme as such, we have included an accompanying slide deck (See Appendix A and B) to help bring it to life, provided case studies and to assist with visualising the activation concepts for Phase 3.
- 2.2 The committee is particularly invited to review and comment on the activation concepts for the Phase 3.
- 2.3 The committee is also asked to input to help shape early thinking on the longer-term aspiration to expand the programme to other key high streets in the borough.

3. Background & overview of the first two phases of the programme

- 3.1 In early 2021, West End faced retail vacancy rates of over 30%. As lockdown lifted, footfall remained at an all-time low as commuters and visitors stayed at home. This presented an opportunity to utilise empty shops, support some of the UK's most exciting start-ups and artist and draw people back into the West End.
- 3.2 Working with property owners and Business Improvement Districts, the City Council rapidly developed an innovative approach that secured vacant units rent-free, applied NNDR Localism Relief on business rates to remove rates liability, and provided grant-funding for the high-quality fit-out of spaces. Curation strategies were developed with partners and identified the types of brands and activations that could make a positive impact on each locality and set out the requirement for each occupier to have a link to Westminster. This ensured the project opened opportunities to residents who have traditionally been unable to access the wealth and prospects that the West End presents.
- 3.3 The first phase sought to enliven vacant premises and test innovative concepts through a curated programme of cultural activations delivered by UK-based emerging artists and local organisations. The cultural activations performed as experimental platforms for a different demographic of businesses. These unique spaces, where art was produced and consumed, encouraged property owners and visitors to use vacant spaces in different ways, diversifying the existing offer and creating opportunities for in-person interactions. A total of 6 activations were delivered as part of this phase. To ensure that Phase 1 was financially viable, NNDR Localism Relief of 100% of the net NNDR liability was awarded to pop-up ventures in the borough during a fixed period of four months, comprised between 1st July and 31st October 2021, with the 30% cost to the council of the localism relief being offset by a project partnership fee payment from the property owner.
- 3.4 The second phase sought to attract up-and-coming local and UK-based small businesses to deliver experiential retail – transforming larger vacant stores on Oxford and Regent Streets into mini-department stores. This included a store dedicated to sustainable brands and another focused on inclusive fashion, bringing together businesses that complemented each other, and aligned with consumer demand. This

phase delivered 6 activations and combined with Phase 1, supported a total of 43 small brands who would not have had the capital to be able to operate from the West End. To ensure viability during this second phase, the previous NNDR Localism Relief of 100% of the net NNDR liability was extended for a period of 5 months comprised between 1st November 2021 and 31st March 2022. In addition, New West End Company (NWECC) and Heart of London Business Alliance (HOLBA) BIDS waived the BID levy for participating brands during previous phases. Ahead of the third phase, NWECC and HOLBA have agreed they would move to offering 70% reduction in levy for activated units.

- 3.5 To date, the programme has activated 12 void units in the West End, supporting over 43 brands, emerging artists, social enterprises, and start-ups. Most pop-up brands supported were pleased with the sales performance during their participation, with at least 3 securing permanent residencies elsewhere and several seeking long-term premises, having proven concept of retailing in the West End.
- 3.6 The programme is recognised externally winning Best Programme of Business Support in London' – Federation of Small Businesses Awards 2022 and was a key contributor to the City Council winning 'Best Arts Project' – Heart of the Arts 2022 (National Campaign for the Arts).
- 3.7 Below are a couple of quotes from the brands that participated in phase 1 and 2. See Appendix C for more case-studies.

We're thrilled we took part in The Regent Street Edit and learned a lot from this invaluable experience. Having a space in The Regent Street Edit allowed Petit Pli to host events with long term academic and industry partners in which our users could attend. Along with this, it gave Petit Pli's team the opportunity to expand, test and iterate Petit Pli's brand identity in a physical space. Through these experiences, Petit Pli's team were able to gain a stronger resolve of its expansion plans and future landscape if it were to continue expanding its physical retail presence.
- Arabella Turek, Petit Pli

It was a really great opportunity to meet like-minded creatives and brands and share a space together - bringing an alternative shopping experience to the general consumer. Personally, as a brand we really enjoyed putting on events and workshops within our space, we found this brought a brilliant energy and onlookers / customers were really keen to get involved. General shoppers came in to have a look at the workshop, which was amazing as they got an insight into how our designers work and to see the process behind the brand. This is something really pivotal and important to us and the space worked perfectly for facilitating such events.
- Shannen Samuel, Bleaq

4. Lessons learned

- 4.1 The programme started as a pilot scheme which meant there were a few teething problems at the beginning. Below is a summary of some key lessons learned from the earlier phases:

Security – One of the early lessons learned was that security is going to an issue on a busy street like Oxford Street. A couple of brands reported thefts during earlier

phase of the programme. As an initial response, security was hired to prevent thefts and to ensure safety and security of staff and visitors. Going forward, security is now one of the key considerations in selecting premises for activation.

Trading during Christmas period – Some brands wanted to take time off and were refusing to trade during the holiday period. In earlier phases, brands were offered to activate the units on a rent and rate free basis. Moving forward in phase 3, we will select brands who have the resources and are able to commit for the duration of the activation. We will also seek contribution from the brands towards rates liability which will mean only brands that are serious will apply to participate in the programme.

Managing brands expectations – In early stages of the programme, brands were shortlisted before units were secured. Whilst this was communicated as part of the application process for brands to participate in the programme, brands still assumed that units will be made available to them straight away and this led to some frustration. We will make this very clear in the application call out to brands for phase 3 so they have realistic expectations around timescales. We have already started discussions with BIDs and will work with them to secure units early for initial activations in phase 3.

5. Scope for future Phase 3

- 5.1 For phases 1 and 2, the project's focus centred around short-term activations (maximum tenancy duration of three months). However, during phase 2 the direction changed as we were offered larger units and longer leases, with the following three spaces being made available:
- 12 Piccadilly Arcade: this unit was activated for a period of one year by "12|12" (a working studio welcoming a new brand each month).
 - 127 -131 Regent Street: this immersive space sold goods made of recycled materials to raise awareness of climate change and was operational for a period of nine months.
 - 23-25 & 27 South Molton Street: these units had become available for a period of one year and has been turned into a sustainable department store, the first of its kind.
- 5.2 Pivoting the programme into more meanwhile use activations enables us to provide a quality, credible alternative to the rapid growth of low-quality occupiers along Oxford Street in particular, as well as other key high streets across the borough. This repetition and proliferation of such businesses are impacting upon the attractiveness of the borough and have, in many cases, been found to be evading the payment of business rates or undertaking illegal activity. Some property owners agree to leases with such businesses as part of a rates mitigation strategy, but the subsequent non-payment of business rates shifts the burden from the private sector to the public purse.
- 5.3 Moving to a focus on meanwhile activations enables the programme to address concerns of property owners who have expressed willingness to allow us to activate their premises on a rent-free basis, however, they have raised concerns around rates liability and the costs that they will have to incur to activate their units, especially in the case of listed buildings, where rates are not payable if the property remains empty. Property owners would like to secure high quality occupiers and are open to terminating agreements with these low-quality occupiers, however, they cannot risk losing a tenant that covers their rates liability for a 3-month occupancy as the owner would become liable for full rates if the premises remains vacant after a short pop-up occupation. As such, Phase 3 offers property owners certainty around business rates

through the application of NNDR Localism Relief for any new activations we take forward.

- 5.4 This shift enables brands to test their ideas for a longer period, with the aim of making our high streets more experiential by delivering tactical activations driven by the most innovative up and coming brands which otherwise could not afford the costs of operating in the West End and supporting them through the transition into long-term tenants.
- 5.5 The above considerations have led to a change in direction of the programme from the initial focus on short term pop-up activations to a more longer-term activation approach and change in name from West End Voids Activation and Pop-up project to Meanwhile Activations programme.
- 5.6 Phase 3 has been envisioned to deliver two clear objectives; the first one being to tackle the rapid proliferation of low-quality occupiers on key high streets, with a focus on Oxford Street as the most prominent example. At present, the City Council has a key focus on undertaking enforcement activity to address illegal activity taking place within these businesses and a co-ordinated approach will see property owners afforded the opportunity to participate and offer these units to the Meanwhile Activations Programme. The second objective will seek to incubate brands that have the potential to become long-term occupiers in the future.
- 5.7 Throughout phases 1 and 2, we prioritised applicants who had been able to demonstrate clear links to Westminster, had the potential to create a high-impact or make a meaningful contribution within the borough and align with core values such as local recruitment, diversity, inclusion, sustainability, and ethical practice. Phase 3 would look to uphold these principles and prioritise applicants who have the potential to deliver on these.

6. Oxford Street Delivery Model

- 6.1 Although the longer-term aspiration will be for the programme to deliver across key locations throughout the borough, a priority focus is required for Oxford Street, where, as mentioned, the proliferation of low-quality occupiers is particularly evident.
- 6.2 We have worked in close collaboration with New West End Company Business Improvement District (BID) to identify units in strategic locations along Oxford Street whose property owners may be open to being part of the programme.
- 6.3 The City Council will apply the NNDR Localism Relief to units that form part of the programme. A cost neutral position will continue to be realised whereby the City Council's costs of granting the proposed NNDR Localism Relief to vacant units designated to the programme will be met from a contribution by the property owners and end occupiers. Property owners who agree to participate in our programme will still realise significant savings on their full business rates liability.

7. Westminster-wide delivery

- 7.1 It is proposed that the scope of the project will also look to re-invigorate other key high streets across the borough whether void or occupied by low quality tenants. Where established, we will work with other BIDs or business associations to develop localised strategies and anticipate a greater focus on arts and culture to achieve the highest impact.
- 7.2 It is acknowledged that we will need to explore options to secure further funding to expand the programme's geographic scope. In the instance that further funding was secured, or in the event of Phase 3 resulting in an underspend and the project

expanded, a condition covering this has been included in the contract with the appointed space operator, and we will not need to go through a separate procurement process.

- 7.3 The committee is asked for input to help shape this early thinking on the other areas beyond the West End and give suggestion on areas to consider for the programme going forward.

8. Phase 3 Activation concepts and financial models

- 8.1 The following activation concepts have been developed to ensure the activations are driven by the most innovative up-and-coming, independent UK brands. The intention is to offer unique in-person experiences that cannot be replicated online. Activations are envisaged to fall into but are not strictly limited to the following concepts:

Invention and Production Spaces – turning units into a highly creative, experimental, and futuristic hive of activity where the consumer journey becomes a visual and tangible experience on advanced methods of design, manufacturing, and fabrication. These spaces will give visitors an insight into the full production chain enabling them to buy the goods created on site in front of a live audience. Brands will be on the pulse of research, innovative creation, and invention, giving consumers insight into their processes, linking design, science, prototyping, sampling through to end products.

Intersectional Spaces – these cutting-edge spaces will blur the boundaries between reality and the metaverse by combining digital fashion and virtual design with physical production whilst incorporating immersive experiences and technologies such as augmented or virtual reality. Digital native brands will be able to showcase and sell digital pieces with the opportunity to create physical products on-site to help consumers delve into the concept as well as having something physical to relate to.

Hyperphysical Experiences – these settings aim to rethink the purpose of brick-and-mortar stores and appeal to the senses by elevating the in-store experience via the creation of powerful multi-sensory experiences around a brand's concept. Developed by experiential businesses who transact through retail and/or by brands who are looking to solidify their presence; these stores will perform as beautiful backdrop/playgrounds where people can socialise, shop, have fun and share their experience.

Practised Places – these spaces are designed for like-minded individuals and organisations to work in close proximity and co-design participatory experiences. An interactive workshop, where people can gather, participate, enjoy an experience, and purchase items. These spaces will create an ecosystem that supports entrepreneurial innovation whilst fostering encounters between individuals and groups via the creation of communal experiences that combine workshops, installations, talks and participatory exhibitions to improve the way in which people from different backgrounds communicate and interact.

- 8.2 Four categories have been defined based on the size as well as on the spatial configuration of units.

Concept Boutiques (up to 500 sq. ft) – Single tenancy space for emerging brands which are changing the way we shop by offering unique in-store experiences and services. These boutiques have a strong visual identity and a selection of goods to evoke a particular lifestyle.

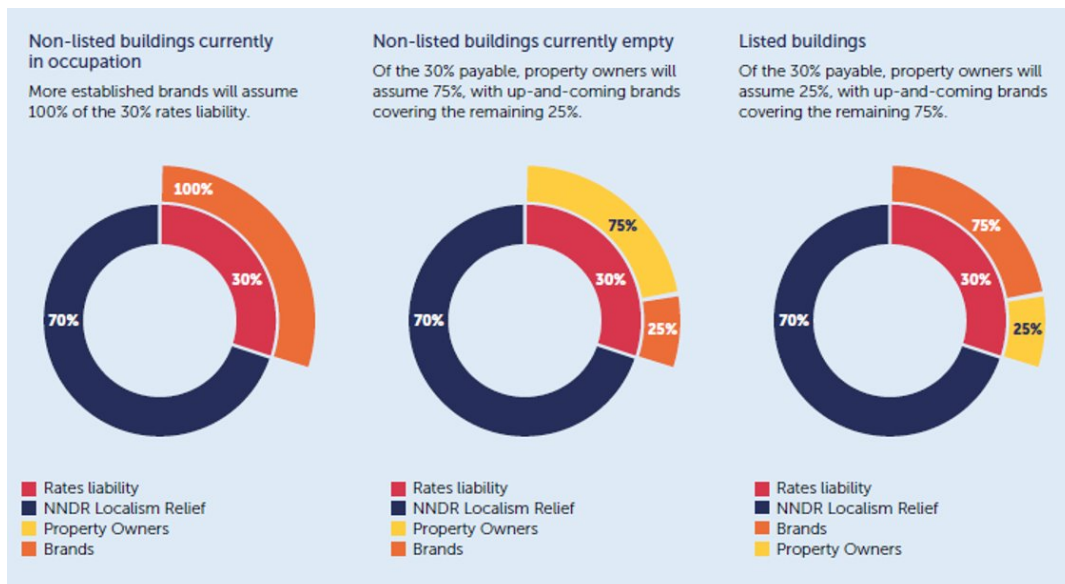
Design Labs (up to 2,000 sq. ft) - Cluster of up to 3 brands with a strong focus around invention that work together to develop more efficient/cleaner design

processes. These spaces will showcase the production chain through its different phases.

Concept Stores (up to 4,000 sq. ft) – A place for up to 8 brand interactions that features an eclectic mix of designers who share a mission, all convening to tell a story to appeal a specific target audience. A highly curated space where design, material, performative, and technological qualities envelop visitors within a particular concept.

Microcities (up to 10,000 sq. ft) - Multilevel spaces for 10+ brands that enable customers to meet most of their needs under the same roof by making accessible services and spaces that the area lacks such as activity rooms, hangout hubs and areas dedicated to children's play and engagement. Whilst we are not actively seeking this space category, should an opportunity arise, we will assess scope on a case-by-case basis.

- 8.3 For delivery of phase 3, we have developed a tiered financial model as well as the creation of incubation support for brands who have the potential to sustain tenancy beyond the activation period. For example, brands could receive a short, rent-free period at a designated activation space, then move into a meanwhile unit where a nominal rent contribution will be determined, then depending on level of success, brands would progress on an incremental route toward paying full rent and thus securing permanent or longer-term occupancy.
- 8.4 Eligible premises will receive the proposed NNDR Localism Relief for a maximum period of two years from the date of activation and to end for each premises when the property ceases to be part of the programme.
- 8.5 National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) are a statutory tax levied by central government on those responsible for commercial property. These rates are also referred to as Business Rates. The application of the NNDR Localism Relief is granted under Section 47 of the local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended by Section 69 of the Localism Act 2011. Under this scheme, a relief of 100% of the net NNDR liability is awarded to eligible premises for the duration of any participation as part of the programme. This relief is provided after all other applicable reliefs have been applied first, such as Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Business Rates Relief.
- 8.6 Technically, applying the NNDR localism relief has financial implications as the City Council would be liable for paying 30p of each pound of any relief granted. However, a cost neutral position will continue to be realised whereby the City Council's costs of granting the proposed NNDR Localism Relief to vacant units designated to the programme will be met from a contribution by the property owners and end occupiers, equalling 30%. The contribution from the property owners and end occupiers will depend on the type and current situation of the units - as shown in the charts below:
- 8.7 The programme relies on property owners willingness to participate in the programme and to offer their premises for activations on a rent free basis. They have raised concerns around rates liability and the costs they will have to incur to activate their units, especially in the case of listed buildings, where rates are not payable if the property remains empty. The financial model has been developed to ensure the offer is affordable to up and coming brands whilst also attractive for the property owners.



9. Working with Partners

- 9.1 The programme delivery team has worked closely with the relevant BIDs right from the start of the programme. They have played a major part in bringing property owners on board with the programme, carrying out audits of their respective areas to identify units which are suitable for the purpose of the programme and property owners who would be amenable to participation. This is a key aspect of programme delivery and partnership working with BIDs as the programme relies on property owners' willingness to participate in the programme and to offer their units for activations on a rent-free basis.
- 9.2 The team has also worked closely with BIDs in developing activation strategies and selection of brands for activations in their areas so that specific activations can be delivered in line with an area's brand pillars. BIDs have also helped to promote the launch of the programme and open applications via their networks to expand reach, forming part of the brand selection panel and ongoing promotion of store launches and activities via social channels.
- 9.3 In Phases 1 and 2 of the programme, BIDs have waived BID levies entirely for the end occupiers. For Phase 3, they are still prepared to provide a 70% discount on BID levies for the end occupiers, in line with the NNDR localism relief applied.
- 9.4 The experimental feature of the project has seen a successful trialling of new frontage and a new approach to the high street, with participating property owners now looking to accommodate the successes highlighted through the project and re-evaluate the type of brands housed within their units.
- 9.5 The project has seen a more collaborative effort between the City Council, BIDs and property owners and has evolved into not only addressing voids within the borough but has brought about real change in terms of diversity in activity which in turn has allowed audiences to have meaningful input on the narrative moving forward, outlining preferences for the types of business, services and practices which should take precedence in high profile locations. Property owners and BIDs have participated with an openness, showing ongoing support to young start-ups and creatives who would not have the capital to be able to afford tenancies at prime locations.

9.6 The project has successfully navigated the need of both the BIDs and property owners but has done so in a way which has been in-theme with each district's narrative whilst also continually bringing something new and exciting to the area.

10. Delivery Framework

10.1 The current delivery framework is divided into two key roles: Operations & Leasing, which will be delivered by the appointed space operator and the programme management and curation led by WCC's Business & Enterprise Service.

10.2 The City Council will continue to deliver the programme under the current operational framework whereby a space operator enters into a standardised lease agreement directly with the property owner and licenses each premises to one or various end occupiers.

10.3 A back-to-back agreement between the City Council and the space operator will ensure the space operator confirms the commitment of the property owner and end occupier to 30% of the net business rates liability specific to each unit after expanded retail relief, where applicable.

10.4 The programme seeks to help rebuild a Fairer Economy through the activations. It prioritises local brands and those with a clear association with the borough whilst still meeting the calibre of activation required. Throughout phases 1 and 2, we prioritised applicants who had been able to demonstrate clear links to Westminster, had the potential to create a high-impact or make a meaningful contribution within the borough and align with core values such as local recruitment, diversity, inclusion, sustainability and ethical practice. Phase 3 would look to uphold these principles and prioritise applicants who have the potential to deliver on these.

10.5 The City Council has carefully curated activation concepts, and will run an application process, and alongside a selection panel comprising representation from WCC, BIDs and property owners, plus industry experts. The panel will select the most appropriate brands who meet the specific criteria, but have the potential, through participation in the programme and incubation, to go on and become longer-term tenants of the West End.

10.6 The application process has been designed to be transparent, clear, timebound and to maximise the opportunity to support local and up-and-coming businesses. All applications are assessed against the following scoring criteria:

- 1) Concept originality and inventiveness
- 2) Context and connection to site
- 3) Feasibility and delivery
- 4) Preparedness and scalability
- 5) Applicant's track record and mission
- 6) Brand/entrepreneur story
- 7) Audience engagement
- 8) Applicant's connection to Westminster

10.7 In addition to brand's own marketing activity, the City Council will support with consumer-focused campaigns to increase awareness amongst relevant audiences to drive footfall and spend. Participants will also benefit from free promotion through the various partner channels including BIDs, property owners and the space operator.

11. Programme Funding

- 11.1 Costs associated with the delivery of the activations during phases 1 and 2 such as delivery team staff, space operator fees and white boxing and fit-out costs were funded through the Additional Restrictions Grant.
- 11.2 In September 2022, a Cabinet Member decision approved the allocation of £2.45m to support delivery of phase 3. £2.39m is from the existing Stimulating the Economy capital programme and £60k from the Thriving Economy revenue budget will cover insurance costs. The capital budget is non-replenishing and so delivery and the number of activations will not exceed this allocation.

12. Programme update and Next Steps

- 12.1 With the news that HMV will be returning to their original site on Oxford Street, and with some new brands also set to make an entry this year, there is a feeling that this will start the much-anticipated revival of Oxford Street. The revaluation of business rates has also certainly helped with that. Although it is encouraging to see the likes of HMV returning later this year, there is still a long way to go with vacancy rate at the end of Q1 2023 at 16% and 60+ empty shops or unfavourable retailers still on the street. There are some void units, where property owners are not able to offer the lease terms that brands require, whilst they are waiting for investment. There is also still lot of work to be done to tackle the problem with units which are cycling through the candy/souvenir/luggage/currency exchange rotation and avoidance schemes. There are potential occupiers/investors who are declining to invest due to the current condition of the street.
- 12.2 We continue to work closely with the BIDs, building momentum around our programme and targeting units that are currently vacant or have/had low-quality occupiers. Our programme is bold in its endeavours as although it looks to return Oxford Street to its “former” glory, we are not looking to bring back the “same old”, instead seeking to diversify the offer and harbour in a new, relevant generation which will attract existing and new audiences. Our activation concepts are generating a lot of excitement among partners, recognising the need for collective stewardship of Oxford Street in particular.
- 12.3 It is also worth noting that the programme is flexible, and the intention is to be “meanwhile” and enliven units either vacant or in current, low-quality occupation, not to block negotiations with any viable, long-term occupiers. If successful, tenants who come through the programme could themselves become long-terms occupiers..
- 12.4 NVEC have given us a list of around 20 units along Oxford Street which could potentially form the basis for the programme, all of which are owned by parties who would be amenable to negotiating and taking part in the programme. Along with our appointed space operator, we have shortlisted a total of 7 units which we would like to prioritise initially. These units have been prioritised based on their location, condition as well as their current occupancy situation. There also a couple of units that are on the radar of our enforcement team.
- 12.5 There is lot of interest in our programme as we are getting ready to launch phase 3 very soon. We will however continue to monitor market conditions and have purposefully built in flexibility to adjust the focus of the programme as needed.

13. Long-term benefits of the scheme

- 13.1 This programme is helping to curate and influence the future of the West End. It is doing so whilst enabling our local residents and businesses to access the opportunities the West End can provide.

- 13.2 Void units have a detrimental effect on the attractiveness of the West End. Visitors seeing voids will lose confidence in the West End as a destination and this will impact their likeliness to visit again in the future. Pop-up brands and meanwhile occupiers offer a new experience and attract a new audience to their stores, bringing vitality in the short-term and act as an incubator for potential long-term occupiers. Many brands will have a large following online and the short-term nature of the pop ups mean these audiences are drawn to visiting them. The programme is supporting the creation of experiential high streets, adding value to the shopping experience to give visitors a reason to come to the area.
- 13.3 New companies contribute to Westminster's balanced and mixed economy, raise the level of enterprise to even greater levels, retain and grow the skills base, make communities more dynamic and aspirant, and create new opportunities for residents.
- 13.4 Pop-up and meanwhile occupiers are testing a business model that could then be applicable for a longer-term occupation. Property owners and brands are both given a low-risk opportunity to test the viability of the offer before making a longer-term decision – this supports both brand and property owner.
- 13.5 The programme has allowed us to explore alternative business models that enabled the creation of mixed-use facilities for example blending retail with culture to harness culture as a driver of footfall and spend booster.
- 13.6 Phases 1 and 2 of the programme supported a diverse range of businesses and founders, including 58% being female-led businesses and 19% being Black, Asian or minority ethnic-led.
- 13.7 The activation at 500 Oxford Street saw a highly curated mix of brands who celebrated inclusion and inclusivity. This community of like-minded businesses took the opportunity to showcase gender neutral and empowering pieces, for example, as well as running workshops and hosting talks, opening the debate around fashion, sustainability and equality in the industry. Phase 2 activations created social value and employment opportunities for residents.
- 13.8 Phase 3 of the programme will continue to hold this inclusive ethos and support a diverse range of business owners and brands.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact Report Author Gaurav Choksi
gchoksi@westminster.gov.uk

APPENDICES:

- Appendix A – Meanwhile Activations Programme Phase 1 & 2
- Appendix B – Phase 3 Activation Concepts and Financial Model
- Appendix C – Case-studies – Benefits Realisation

BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

Meanwhile Activations Programme

Appendix A - Phase 1 & 2 Update

Programme Summary

The City Council's award-winning Pop-Up and Meanwhile Activations Programme at Westminster City Council was initially focused on addressing the high retail vacancy rates in the West End as a result of the pandemic and associated lockdowns. The aim was to bring life and vibrancy back.

Working collaboratively with our Business Improvement Districts, property owners and a space operator, the Council developed a framework to secure units and created area-specific activation concepts based on Westminster values around diversity, inclusivity and sustainability, to name a few, which would look to bring meaningful, on-trend and fresh experiences, creating a buzz for new and returning audiences.

The project offered an incredible rent and rate-free opportunity in prime locations for local emerging artists, up-and-coming brands, social enterprises and start-ups who, otherwise, would not have been able to receive a showcase in the West End. To date, the programme has supported over 43 brands, emerging artists and social enterprises and start-ups across 12 activated units, some of which have since gone on to establish flagship stores.

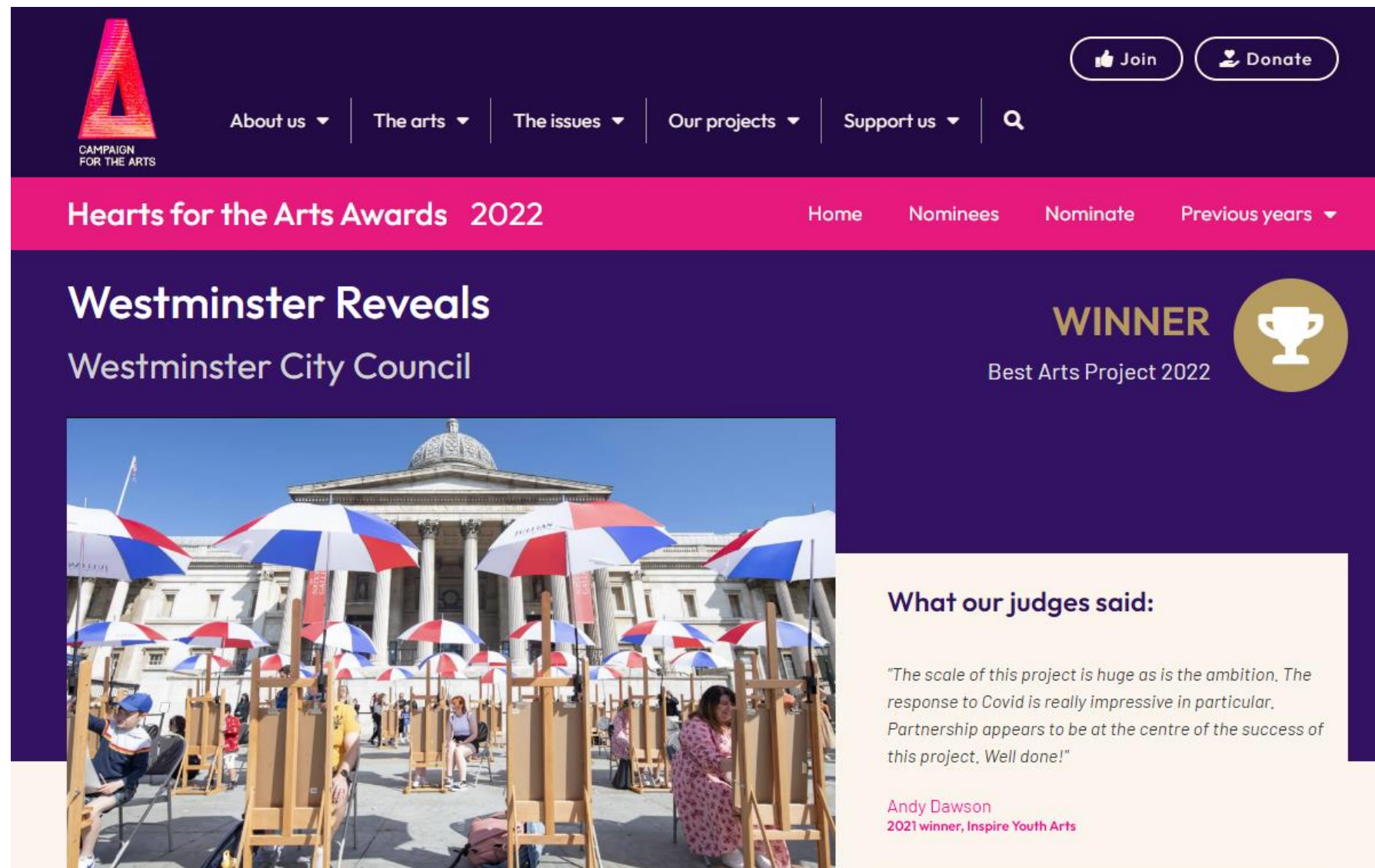
Moving forward the programme will tackle the widespread proliferation of low-quality retail currently blighting Oxford Street and beyond whilst continuing to support high-quality up-and-coming brands who, throughout their tenancy, will build their way up to becoming longer term, rent paying tenants. We are looking to deliver up to 9 activations and support over 35 brands in this next phase of the programme.



Awards

Heart for the Arts 2022 Winner:
Best Arts Project -
Awarded by National Campaign for the Arts

2022 Greater London Regional Winner:
Programme of Business Support -
Awarded by the Federation of Small Businesses

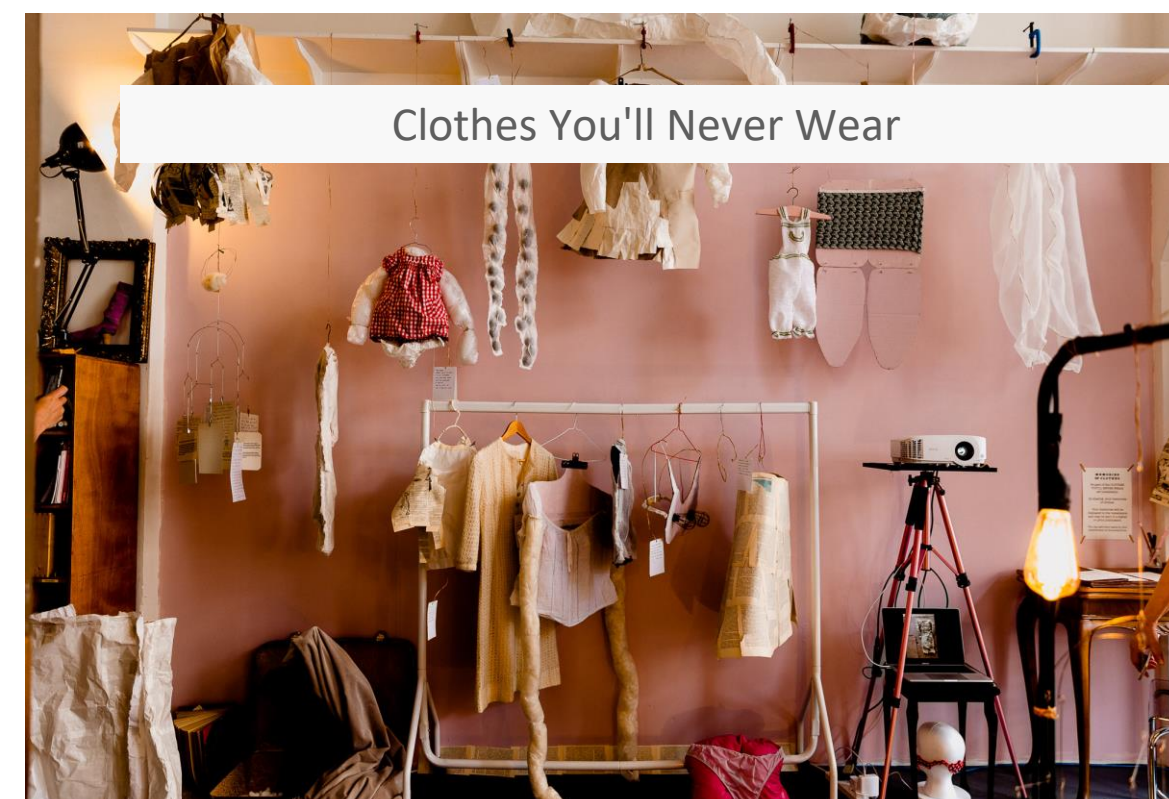
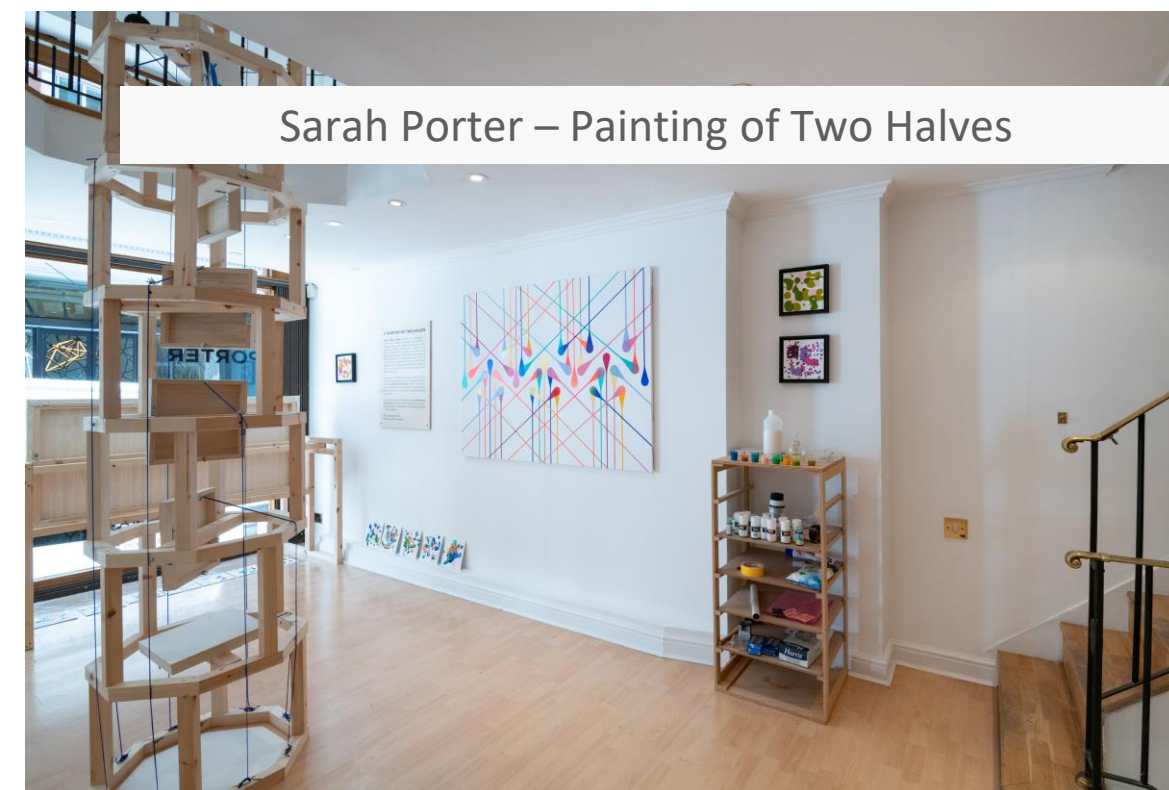
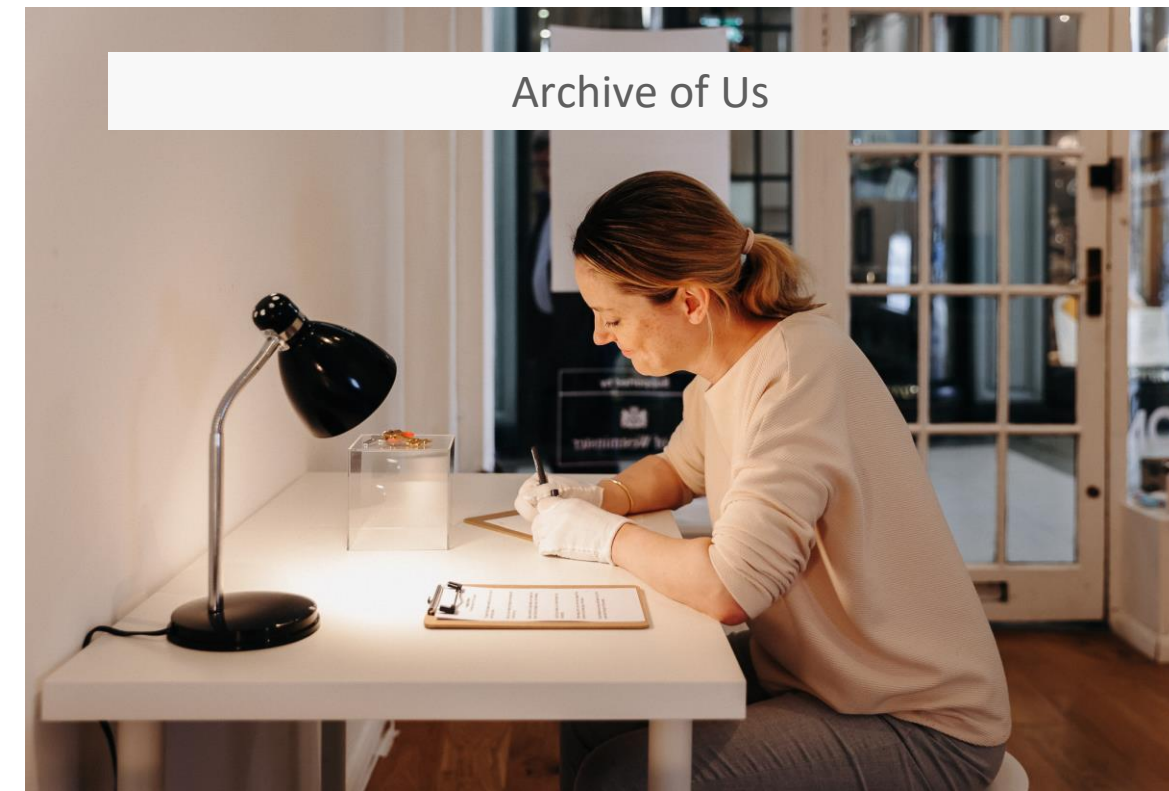


Phase 1

Leicester Sq. & Piccadilly

- 6 void units activated
- Tenancies up to 1 month
- Supported local artists and entrepreneurs

Phase 1 pop-ups explored themes based around arts & culture and were in theme with “Art of London” activities taking place in the area during Summer ‘21.



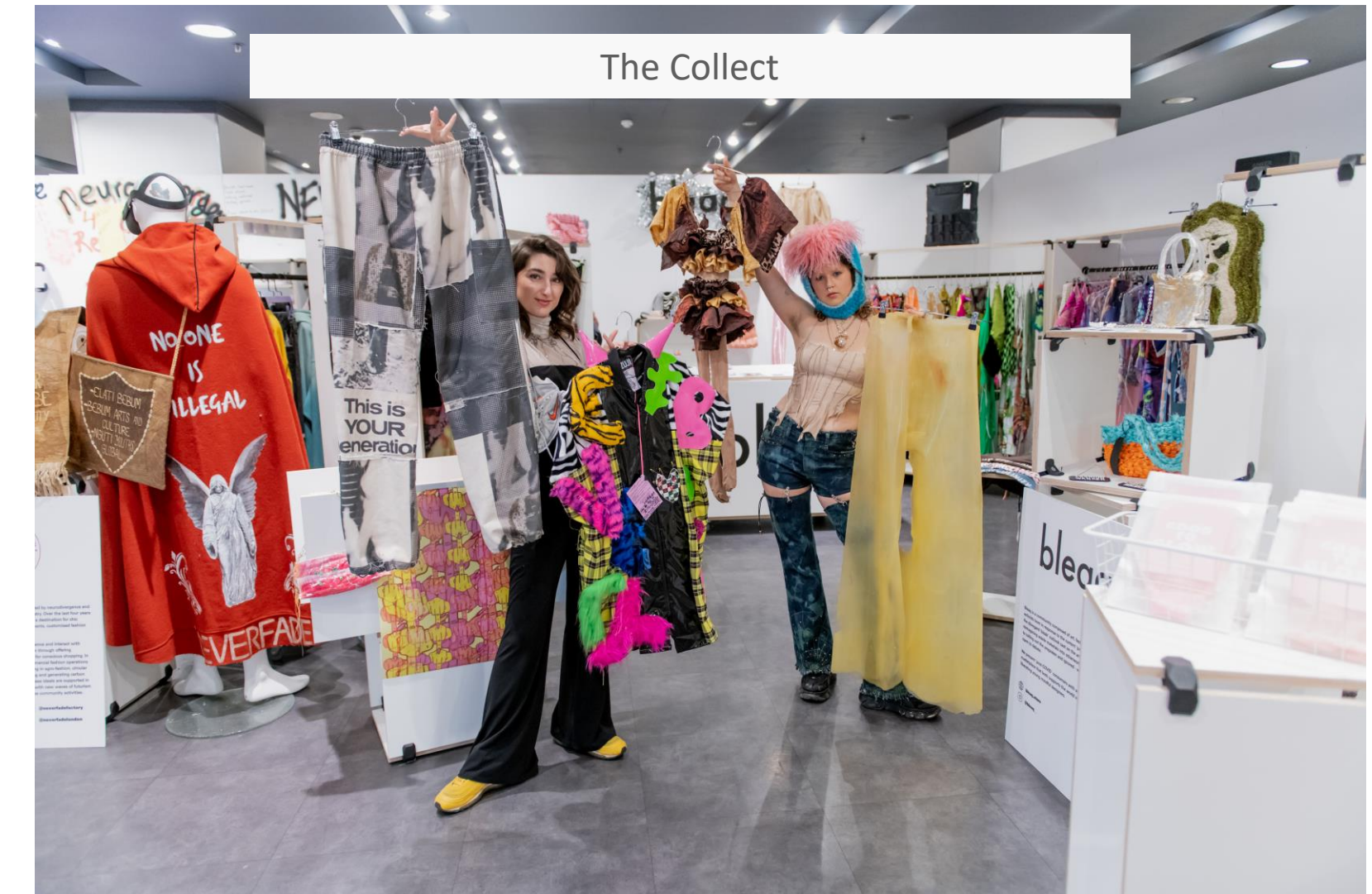
Phase 2

- 6 void units activated
- Tenancies up to 4 months
- Focus on experiential retail and supporting up-and-coming sustainable UK brands
- Created social value and employment opportunities
- Expanded project reach with global marketing and promotion plans

The Regent Street Edit & The Collect

The Regent Street Edit and The Collect represented the evolution of the programme and were both carefully curated projects with all participating brands underpinned by sustainability and ethical practice; providing an exciting, experiential retail experience for visitors.

We saw themes anchored around addressing environmental issues, pre-loved and vintage items, re-imagined waste materials, conscious shopping and "otherworldly non-binary pieces", to give just a few examples.



Case Study 1

**The Regent Street Edit
(88 Regent Street)
Sept 2021 – Dec 2021**

A curated brand mix bucking the “fast-fashion” trend.

The Regent St. Edit saw a total of 8 complementary fashion and wellness brands focussed around themes of sustainability all housed in a sustainably designed store.

They not only offered limited edition, made-to-order goods but gave a live window into their processes as well as giving consumers the opportunity to meet the founders.

Brand List: Petit Pli, Saywood Studios, 4969.rec, Lr.d, Butress & Snatch, Lab Tonica, The Good Neighbour, Diaphane Candles



Case Study 1

The Regent Street Edit continued

In the evenings, the store transformed into a space where the brands could host and invite audiences to topical events and workshops.



September 2021 - Vanish x BFC Generation Rewear Screening - highlighting change makers within sustainable fashion



CISL Fashion Innovator Reunion & Forum on Sustainability



Viola Jardon
Programme Manager of CISL



Dina Khalifa
CISL research fellow



Leanne Elliott-Young
CEO and Co-Founder of the IoDF



Ryan Mario Yasin
Founder and CEO, Petit Pli



Dulma Clark
Head of Livebarefoot Fund



Christian Layolle
Head of UK at The Mills Fabrica



Deborah Luffman
Product Director, Finisterre

October 2021 - CISL Fashion Innovator Forum – panel-led discussion on sustainability, innovation and climate change.

Media Coverage Examples

The Regent Street Edit








Sustainability focused fashion and wellness pop-up launches in Regent Street

TOM SHEARSMITH
CREATIVE DIRECTOR



REGENT STREET

Share this page      0 shares

An exciting sustainable pop-up has opened on Regent Street

Take a stroll down Regent Street to discover something special this autumn. Introducing the Regent Street Edit at 88 Regent Street; a unique collection of six sustainability focussed brands from the local area.

You're invited to learn about sustainable fashion and discover a plethora of experiences as you move through each area of the concept store. Create your own clothing through upcycling and learn about the art of slow tailoring as you browse innovative designs from fashion brands including Saywood Studio, Lab



Regent Street sees six-brand fashion and wellness pop-up in time for LFW

It's been a busy period for stores with strong sustainability credentials opening in London. And joining the roster is a retail pop-up on Regent Street with a difference. It combines six independent brands founded in the local area and all championing sustainability.



Called 'The Regent Street Edit', the combined platform has been orchestrated by Westminster City Council (WCC), The Crown Estate and New West End Company (NWECC), which chose the six retailers following a competitive selection process. They include LR.D, Petit Pli, Lab Tonica, Saywood, Buttress & Snatch and 4649.REC who will share the space until 31 October, opening seven days a week.

The timing of the Regent Street Edit also coincides with London Fashion Week and NWECC's own sustainable fashion month.

<https://uk.fashionnetwork.com/news/Regent-street-sees-six-brand-fashion-and-wellness-pop-up-in-time-for-lfw,1332786.html>

<https://www.theindustry.fashion/sustainability-focused-fashion-and-wellness-pop-up-launches-in-regent-street/>

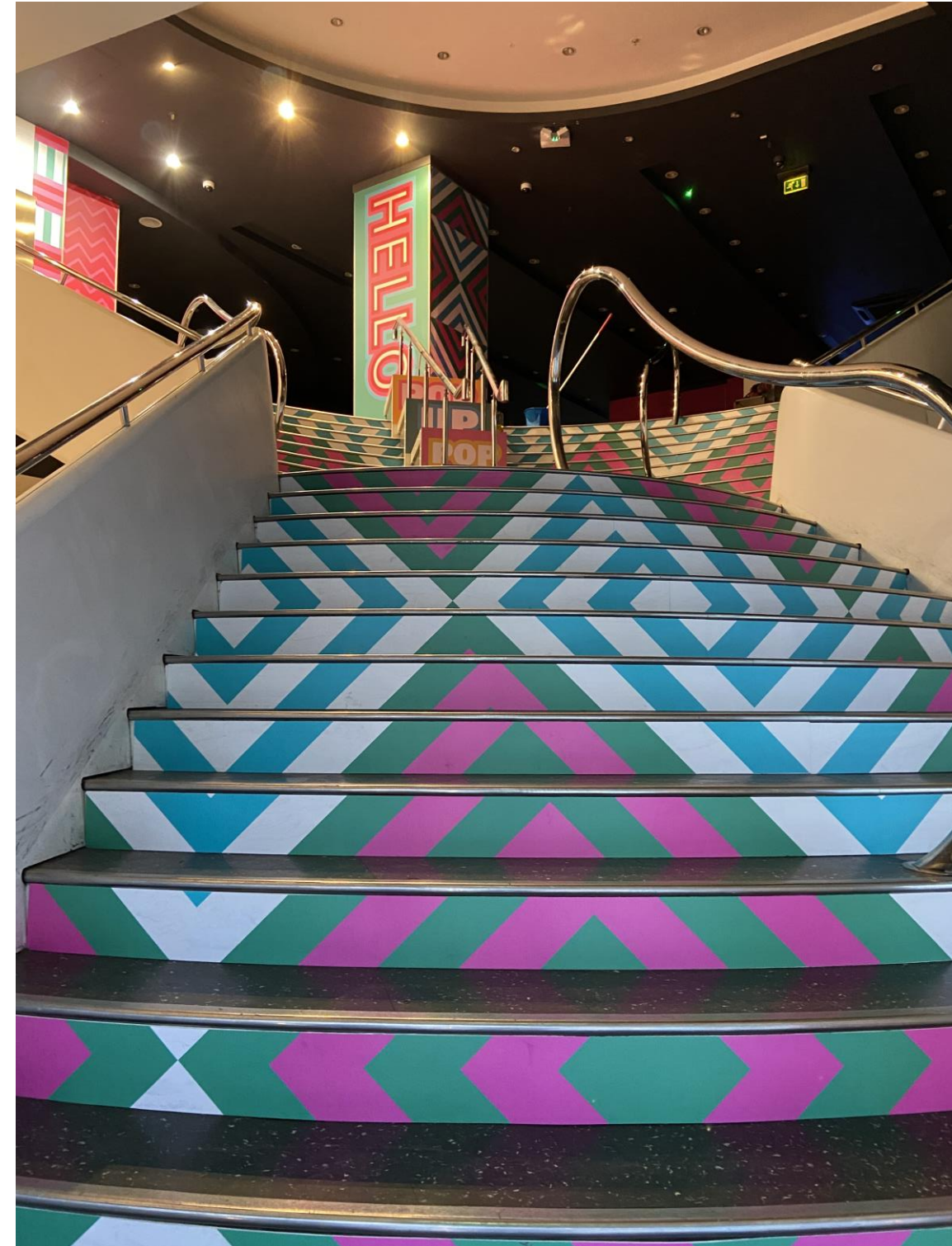
Case Study 2

The Collect
(500 Oxford Street)
Nov 2021 – Jan 2022

The Collect incorporated 9 outspoken brands who use design as a tool to address social, political and environmental issues.

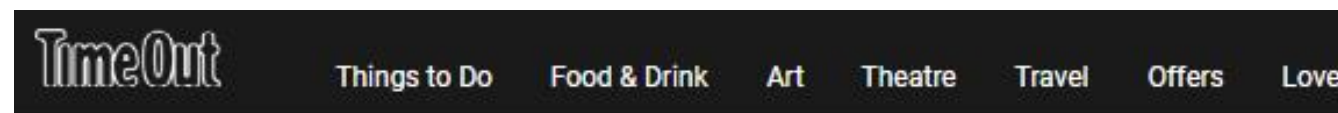
The community, composed of artists, fashion designers and activists showcased gender-neutral and empowering pieces and used the opportunity to run workshops and open the debate around fashion, sustainability and equality.

Brand List: Carson Parkin-Fairley, Loop Generation, Archive Six Vintage, Lofte, Moonlight Motel, Rebel Blends, Lone Design Club, Bleaq, Never Fade Factory



Media Coverage Examples

The Collect



The Collect Sustainable Pop-Up Store

Shopping, Markets and fairs



The Collect

Buy ticket

Time Out says

Revamp your wardrobe at The Collect, London's newest pop-up shop taking over vacant retail space on Oxford Street. Discover eight emerging brands, all bound together by their passion for sustainability and inclusivity, each using design as a tool to inspire change. Support local creative talent and explore designs by [Archive Six](#), [Bleaq](#), [Moonlight Motel](#), [Löfte](#), [Lone Design Club](#), [Loop Generation](#), [Never Fade Factory](#) and [Rebel Blends](#) at 500 Oxford Street until January 26.

Written by [Ellie Muir](#) Thursday 6 January 2022



4. Shop sustainably in the West End

Stop by The Collect pop-up concept store on Oxford Street to browse the quirky collections of eight emerging independent brands, from female-owned Archive Six which specialises in second-hand clothes and vintage items, to one-of-a-kind pieces from Lone Design Club and sustainable beauty products from Rebel Blends. Support local businesses and up-and-coming entrepreneurs as they encourage consumers to change their shopping attitudes and behaviours. Don't miss the vibrant installation by artist Carson Parkin-Fairley at the entrance.



RETAIL

What Role Do Independent Retailers Play In Driving Footfall?

Catherine Erdly Contributor @
Small business retail expert and founder of The Resilient Retail Club

Dec 6, 2021, 10:24am EST



With footfall being slow to recover in key retail districts, can independent retailers and pop-ups ... [+]
PHOTO CREDIT BLEAQ, WINDOW DISPLAY AND MODEL - CARSON PARKIN-FAIRLEY, VIN ROCKINS

The traditional high street has been changing for many years, with the pandemic accelerating the pace of change. Bricks and mortar shops, especially big retailers and department stores, are having to rethink what the high street looks and feels like today.

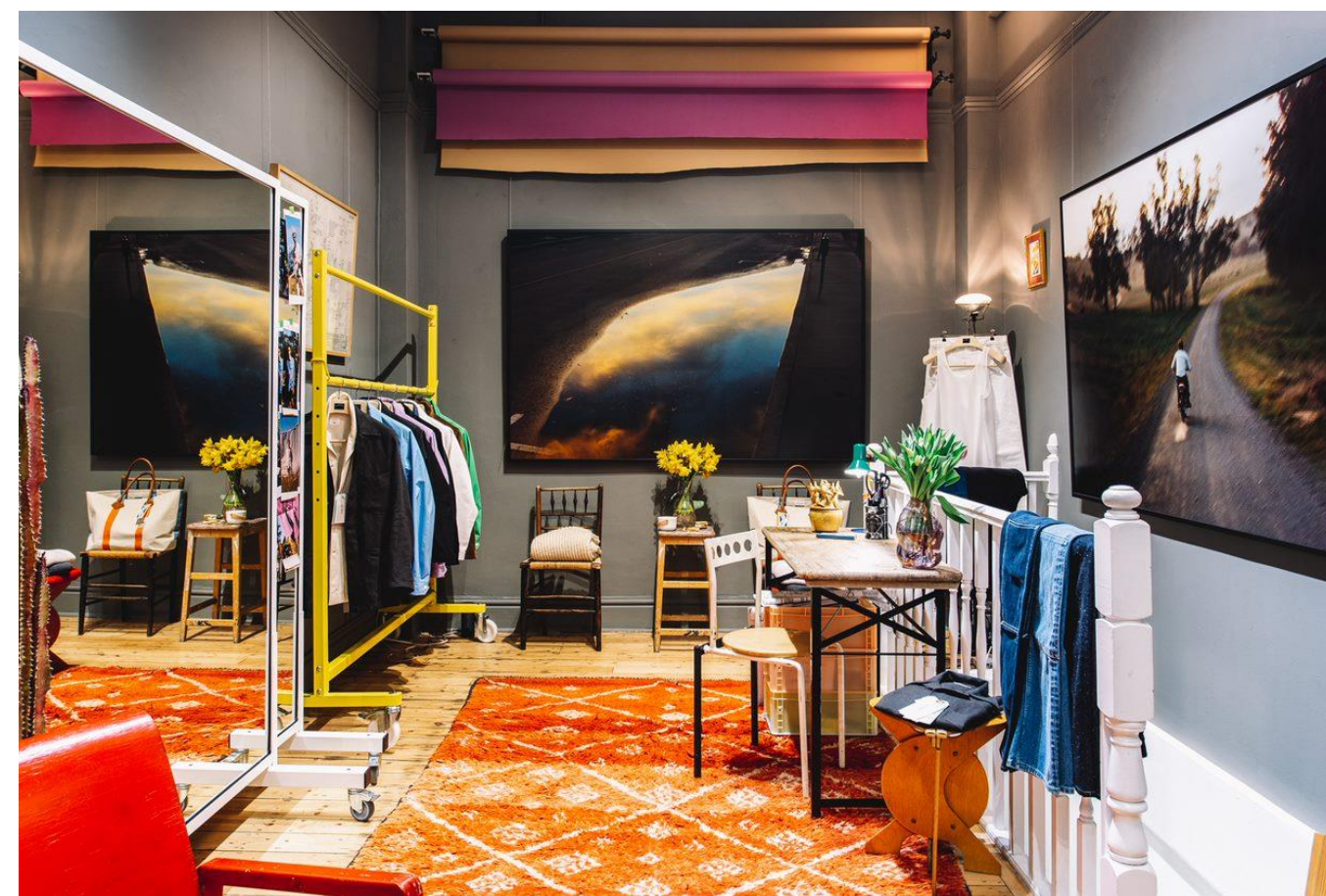
Case Study 3

12 | 12
(12 Piccadilly Arcade)
Jan 2022 – Dec 2022

12|12 represented a living laboratory, a working studio and a hive of activity for a new and exciting brand each month.

The unit acted as a revolving and evolving space showcasing 12 separate and unique start-ups who are masters of their respective craft and are re-inventing the wheel – merging innovation, science, technology, culture, fashion and people.

Brand List: L SAHA, LEJ London, Lone Design Club, CQ Studio, Angie Power, Supernaturae, TSAU, Typical Freaks, Clio Peppiatt, Hagen Hinderdael, Hood London, George Trochopoulous



Media Coverage Examples

12 | 12

Page 46



FEEDING THE CURIOUS SINCE 2010



12 PICCADILLY ARCADE

What's On

Westminster City Council has taken over unit 12 in Piccadilly Arcade and turned it into a pop-up boutique, where a range of emerging and indie brands across sustainable fashion and homeware are able to take up residence, using it as a shop, working studio and living lab. You'll be able to check out the likes of Lone Design Club, Angie Power, CQ Studio, L Saha, TSAU and Supernaturae, with more brands still to be announced.

WEBSITE UNTIL DECEMBER 2022 12 PICCADILLY ARCADE, LONDON SW1Y 6NH, UK
 APRIL 11, 2022 BY LOTI



FASHIONUNITED

Just In News Jobs Marketplace Lookbook

Home / News / Retail / Westminster Council opens pop-up for emerging independent businesses

Westminster Council opens pop-up for emerging independent businesses



Image: 12 Piccadilly Arcade

By Danielle Wightman-Stone
 11 Apr 2022



Westminster City Council is teaming up with Heart of London Business Alliance, GPE, and Appear Here to open a pop-up boutique for 12 emerging independent businesses to "give them the opportunity to be part of the West End's retail offer".



The Edit: The Best Things to do in London This Weekend

Shop the Clio Peppiatt Pop-Up at 12 Piccadilly Arcade

Piccadilly

Throughout September



Clio Peppiatt's stunning designs will be available to ogle (and buy, if you're looking to treat yourself) in London throughout September at the new 12 Piccadilly Arcade pop-up.

Case Study 4

The Good Store
(23-25 & 27 South Molton Street)
Jun 2022 – Dec 2022

The Good Store at South Molton Street was an exciting new retail concept: a sustainable department store, bringing sustainable options to a mainstream audience to create a premium experience with a new approach to retail on the high street, the first of its kind in the UK.

Everything sold was either a sustainable/circular alternative, re-used/refurbished product or a service to support more sustainable lifestyles.





City of Westminster

FAIRER

WESTMINSTER

Fairer Communities

Fairer Housing

Fairer Economy

Fairer Environment

Fairer Council

westminster.gov.uk/fairer-westminster
#FairerWestminster

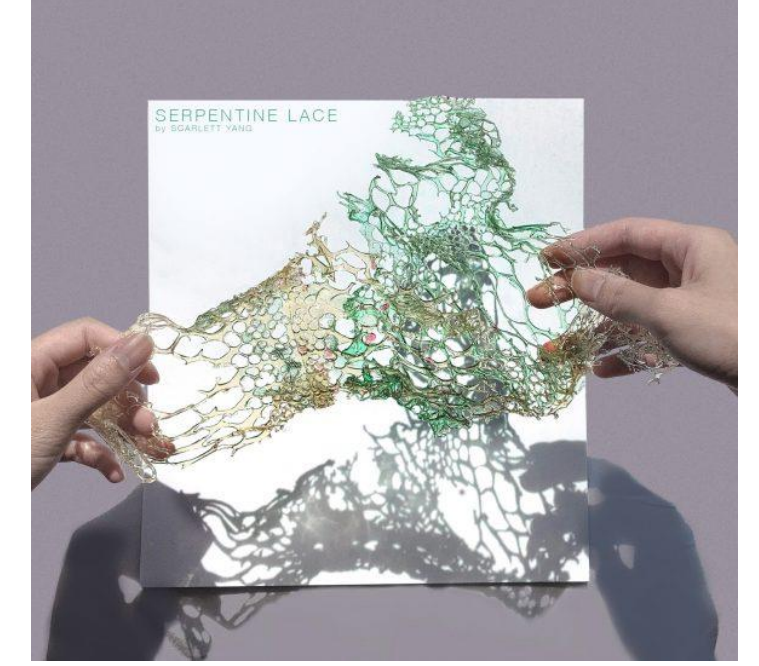
Meanwhile Activations Programme

Appendix B - Phase 3 Activation Concepts and Financial Model

Activation Concepts

Invention & Production Spaces

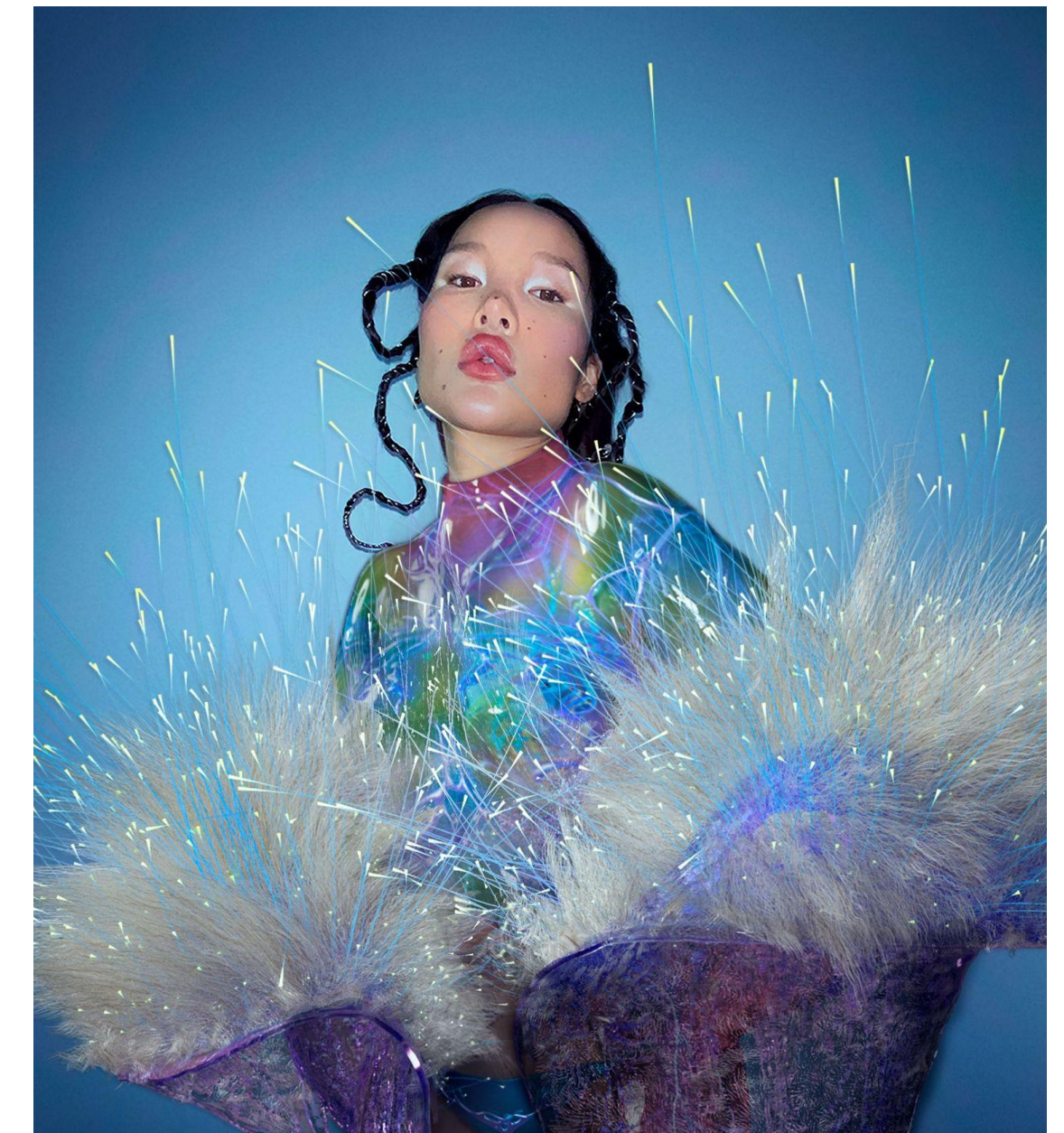
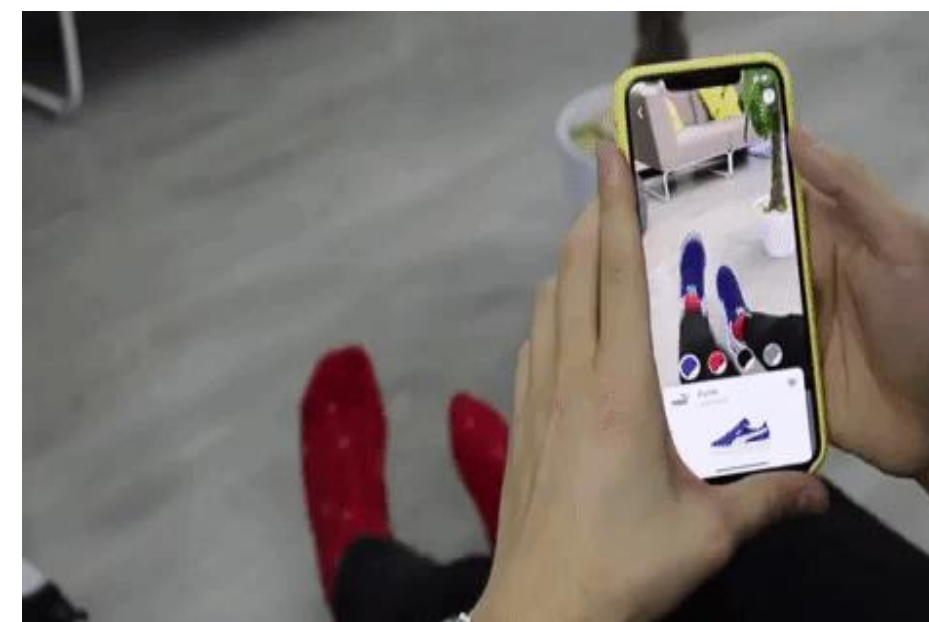
- Turning units into a highly creative, experimental, and futuristic hive of activity, where the consumer journey becomes a visual and tangible experience on advanced methods of design, manufacturing and fabrication. These spaces will give visitors an insight into the full production chain enabling them to buy the goods created on site in front of a live audience.
- Brands will be on the pulse of research, innovative creation, and invention, giving consumers insight into their processes, linking design, science, prototyping, sampling through to end products.



Activation Concepts

Intersection Spaces

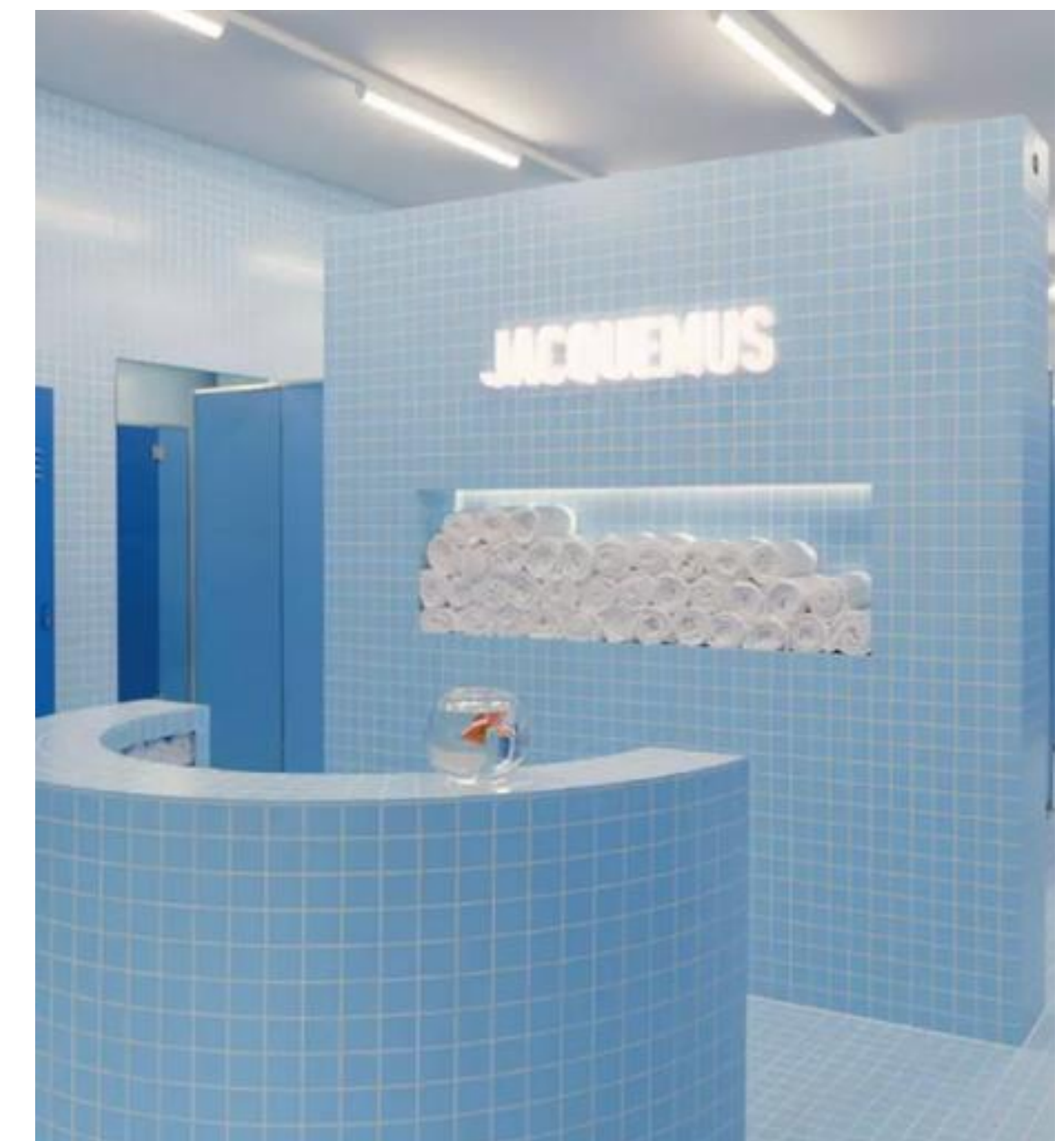
- These cutting-edge spaces blur the boundaries between reality and the metaverse by combining digital fashion and virtual design with physical production; whilst incorporating immersive experiences and technologies such as augmented or virtual reality.
- Digital native brands will be able to showcase and sell digital pieces with the opportunity to create physical products on-site to help consumers delve into the concept as well as having something physical to relate to.
- These spaces will speak to and accommodate multiple generations, invoking curiosity into the future and the possibilities available to them now. They will perform as platforms where the virtual realm meets the consumer, inviting them to explore physical spaces that perform also as virtual showrooms where they can interact and transact.



Activation Concepts

Hyperphysical Experiences

- Hyperphysical settings aim to rethink the purpose of brick-and-mortar stores and appeal to the senses by elevating the in-store experience via the creation of powerful multi-sensory experiences around a brand's concept. Developed by experiential businesses who transact through retail and/or by brands who are looking to solidify their presence; these stores will perform as beautiful backdrop/playgrounds where people can socialise, shop, have fun and share their experience.
- A destination where technology, art, commerce and creativity confluence to engage with visitors, making them want to spend their time in these spaces and create lasting memories.



Activation Concepts

Practised Places

- These spaces are designed for like-minded individuals and organisations to work in close proximity and co-design participatory experiences. A place where socialising becomes a form of brand engagement and the perfect arena to give life to projects and extend their message whilst sharing different points of view.
- A much more interactive workshop, where people can gather, participate, enjoy an experience and purchase items. These spaces will create an ecosystem that supports entrepreneurial innovation whilst fostering encounters between individuals and groups via the creation of communal experiences that combine workshops, installations, talks and participatory exhibitions to improve the way in which people from different backgrounds communicate and interact.



Space Categories

Microcities (up to 10,000 sq. ft.): 10+ brands/services/activities

Multilevel spaces that enable customers to meet most of their needs under the same roof by making accessible services and spaces that the area lacks such as activity rooms, dedicated play-tail areas and hangout hubs.

Concept Stores (4,000 sq. ft.): 6 brands

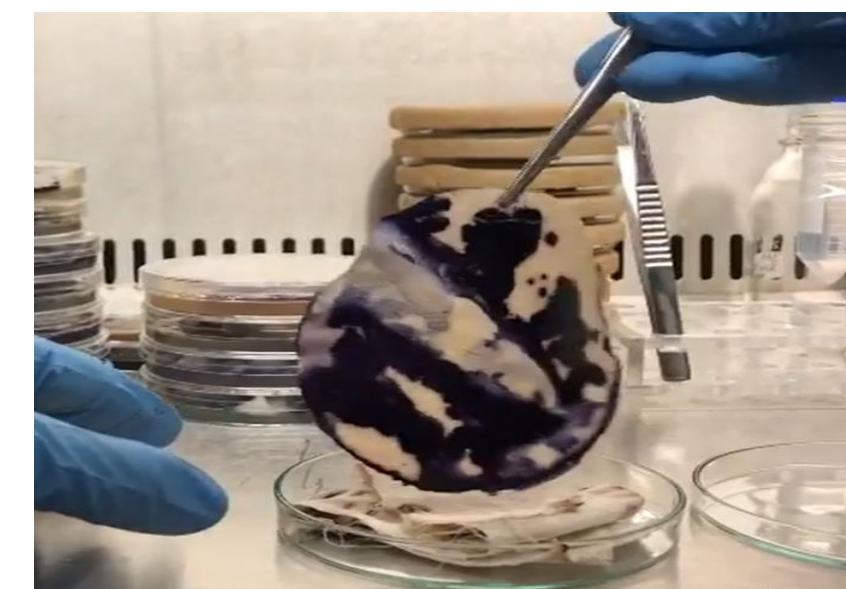
A place for brand interactions that features an eclectic mix of designers who share a mission, all convening to tell a story to appeal a specific target audience. A highly curated space where design, material, performative, and technological qualities envelop visitors within a particular concept.

Design Labs (2,000 sq. ft.): 3 brands

Cluster of brands with a strong focus around invention that work together to develop more efficient/cleaner design processes. These spaces will showcase the production chain through its different phases.

Concept Boutiques (500 sq. ft.): Single tenancy

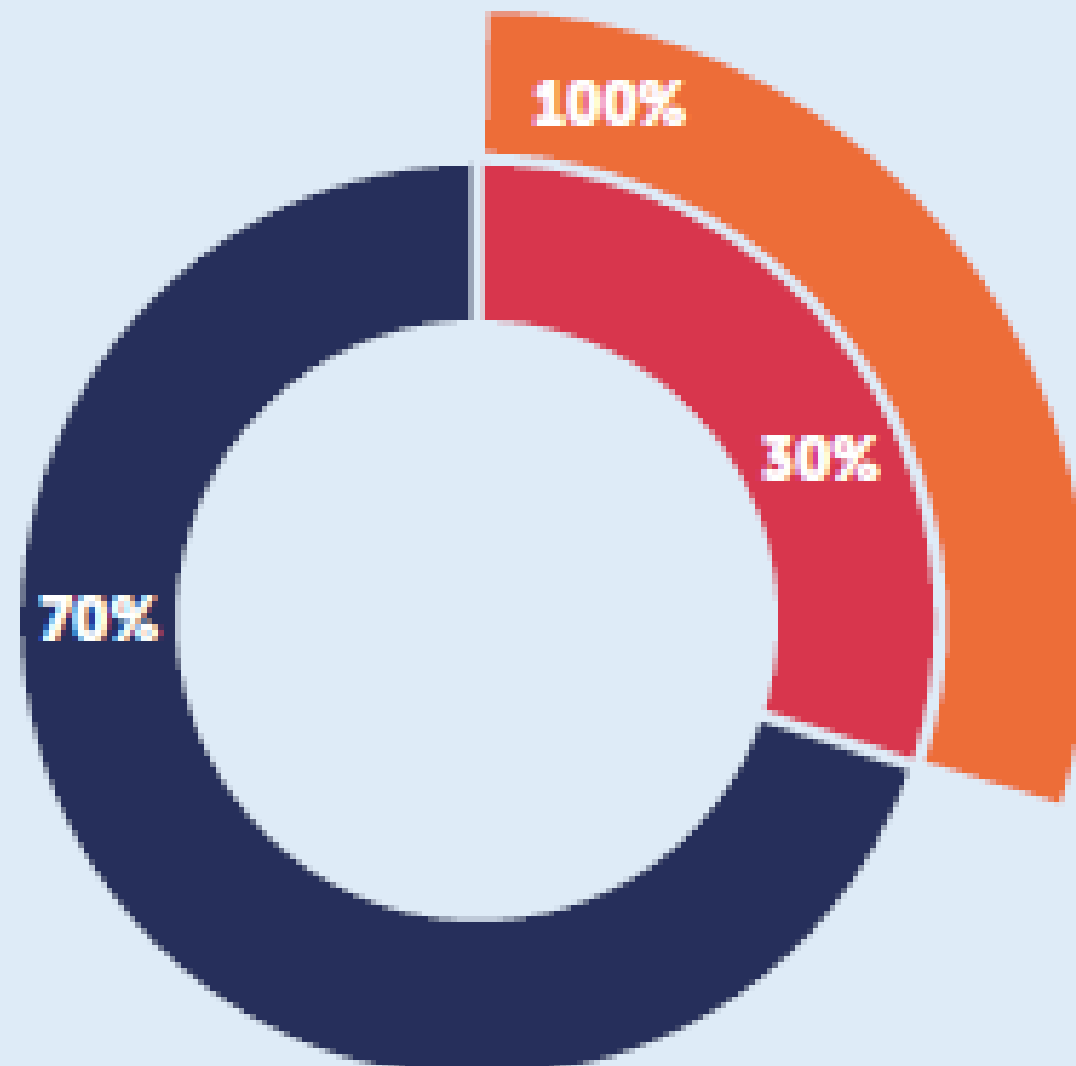
Spaces for emerging brands which are changing the way we shop by offering unique instore experiences and services. These boutiques have a strong visual identity and a selection of goods to evoke a particular lifestyle.



Financial Model

Non-listed buildings currently in occupation

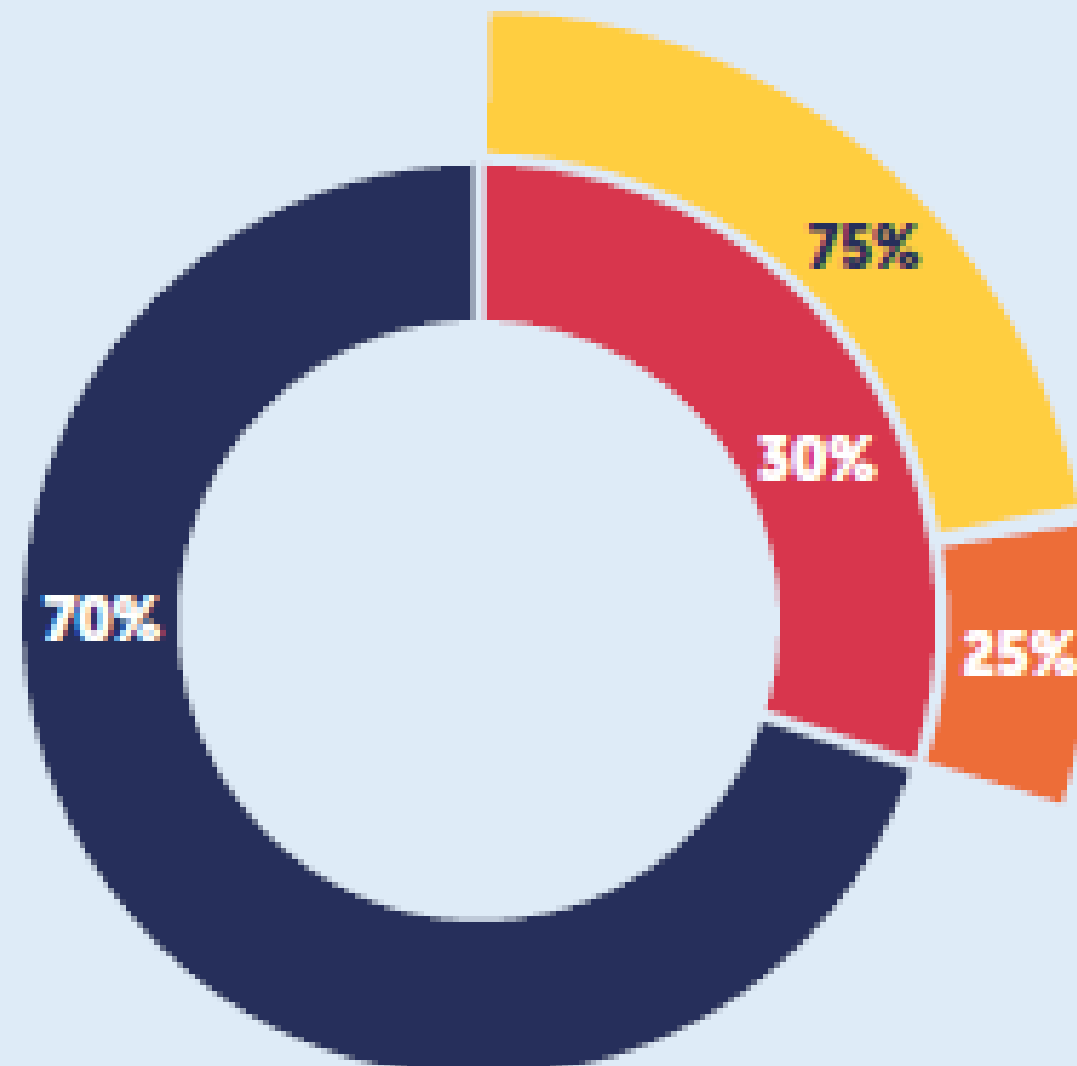
More established brands will assume 100% of the 30% rates liability.



- Rates liability
- NNDR Localism Relief
- Property Owners
- Brands

Non-listed buildings currently empty

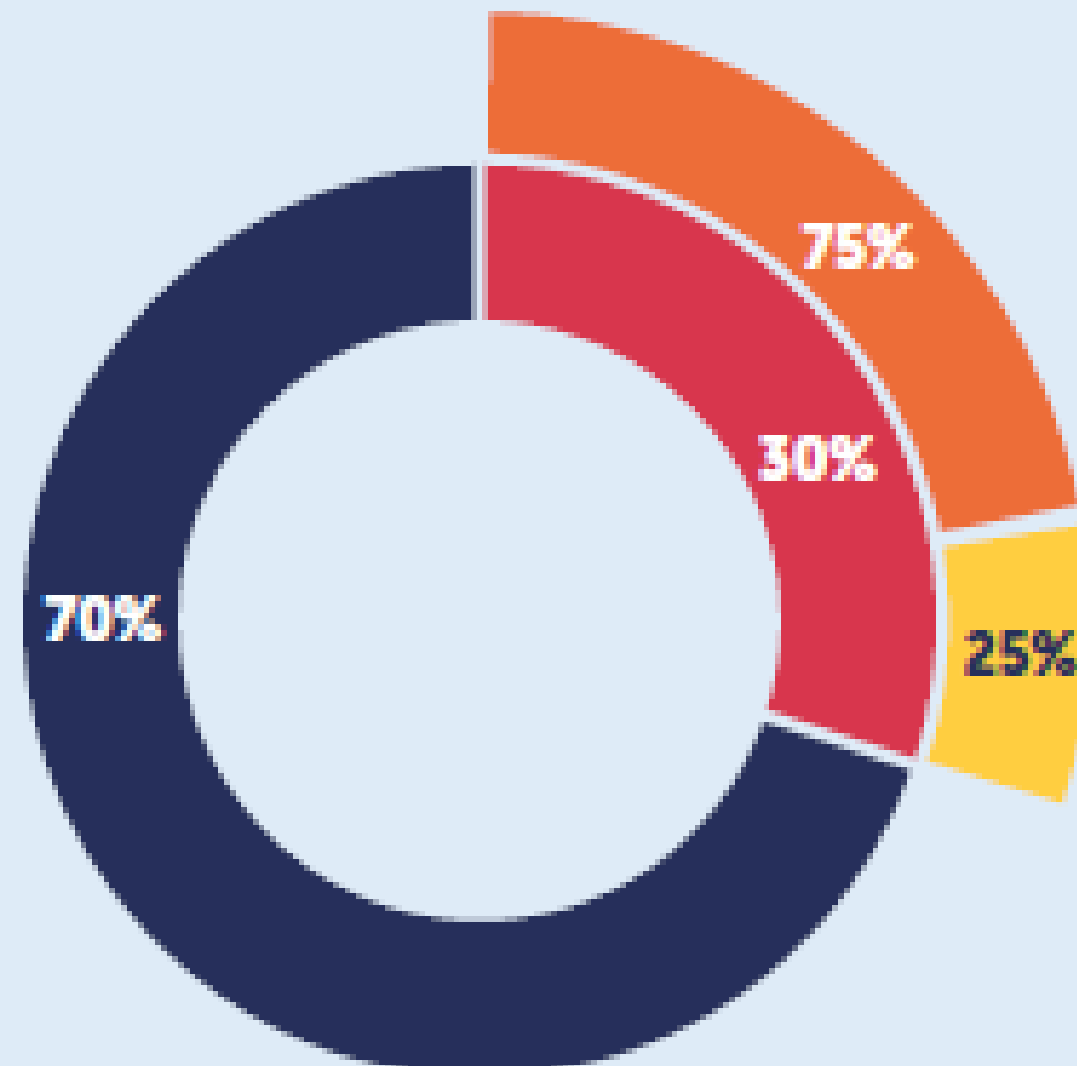
Of the 30% payable, property owners will assume 75%, with up-and-coming brands covering the remaining 25%.



- Rates liability
- NNDR Localism Relief
- Property Owners
- Brands

Listed buildings

Of the 30% payable, property owners will assume 25%, with up-and-coming brands covering the remaining 75%.



- Rates liability
- NNDR Localism Relief
- Brands
- Property Owners



City of Westminster

FAIRER

WESTMINSTER

Fairer Communities

Fairer Housing

Fairer Economy

Fairer Environment

Fairer Council

westminster.gov.uk/fairer-westminster
#FairerWestminster

Appendix C

Benefits realisation

Case Study 1: Creating a pipeline of local businesses.

One of the original aims of the voids activation and pop-up project was to allow up-and-coming brands who would not have had the capital to be able to operate from high profile locations in their infancy to benefit from a rate and rent-free period to trade and test their business' viability. As a direct result of the project, we have enjoyed success in creating a pipeline of local businesses with 4 brands now looking to expand and find a home within the West End after their tenancies.

Petit Pli and Lab Tonica looked to make the most of the opportunity afforded and navigated the challenges associated with running a shared space at 88 Regent Street with differing models, coming out as the highest sales performers from the store.

Petit Pli made use of their unique product range, cutting-edge design, online following and industry connections to create networking opportunities and events to maximise their offer and attract footfall. Since ceasing trading in what was their first physical location, Petit Pli have embarked on using their learnings from the experience to launch a bid for what will become their flagship store on Chiltern Street, Marylebone.

Lab Tonica honed in on the success of their sensory retail experience and price point to generate the most sales of all tenants at 88 Regent Street. The founder & owner of Lab Tonica, Kitty McEntee, used store specific limited-edition items to attract footfall and reached out to local residents and businesses with strategically timed offers. Their products are now stocked in Selfridges on Oxford Street including many other shops, hotels and cafes around the UK.

Lab Tonica are now looking at growing their business in Westminster. The Crown Estate are keen to support further by looking into an accommodating and tiered financial model and the formation of a support lifecycle for brands following this particular route into the West End.

Never Fade Factory, by nature, pride themselves on enterprise and influence. The collective used their pitch at the experimental 500 Oxford Street to test ideas with on-site workshops, talks on trends and fashion-based events and were one of the highest performing brands during an Omicron disrupted 2-month period of trading. Their passion for keeping abreast of the latest innovations, inclusivity, a collaborative and educational approach shone through and their tenancy at 500 Oxford Street inspired the decision to source a base for current and future ventures. Their CEO is now in conversations with our Investment Service to secure a location in Westminster.

L.Saha used their award-winning niche product range, process and retail experience to come away from their 2-month tenancy at Piccadilly Arcade and go directly into negotiations with Great Portland Estates on finding a permanent home for the brand.

Case Study 2: The Collect - Exploring alternative business models and mixed used facilities.

The Collect at 500 Oxford Street proved a unique proposition in that success impinged on creative use of a difficult space to navigate with limited visibility. This resulted in a multi-faceted approach to the designation of space, using design as a technique to embolden and direct consumers.

The chosen approach looked at using an on-site artist with bold artwork to enliven the ground floor, pique the interest of passers-by, and direct them to the activity of the 8 separate retail brands located on the first floor.

This mixed-use approach allowed the space to offer something different to the high street, successfully blending culture and retail to attract a broader audience and communicate a powerful message to consumers whilst in a location synonymous with fast-fashion behemoths such as Primark.

The Collect now opens the conversation into re-thinking business models to consider flexible approaches to a space, evolving from static models to something more fluid which is relevant to the area and meets the needs of more diverse audiences.

Case Study 3: The Good Store - Social Value.

As a concept, The Good Store will be providing a far-reaching social value to local businesses, residents, the borough and beyond. From the offset, The Good Store have worked with Westminster Employment Service and prioritised Westminster residents for in-store managerial and sales assistant position, with x3 Kickstarter roles ring-fenced for Westminster residents.

As part of the offering, Groundwork will be looking to continually source and reach out to local, sustainable businesses to host and stock within the store. The premise is to act as a hub of activity in a high-footfall area with product designation, dedicated space for businesses who provide a service and hybrid spaces for companies who can provide an on-site demonstration and referral service, such as Westminster Wheels or Rework, who both encompass social value through training programmes and opportunities.

Case Study 4: Culture and entertainment as a driver of footfall and spend booster.

Coming at an opportunistic moment, 'Take a Moment' will look to take advantage of the world returning to a form of normality after a socially isolating and mentally challenging pandemic for many by launching a huge, celebrity endorsed campaign in Piccadilly Circus, one of the busiest intersections in the world.

The campaign will run over the course of a month, with a high-impact and high-profile promotional campaign on the Piccadilly Lights accompanied by public engagement activity in the form of an exhibition and gallery below.

The far-reaching announcement of the evolution of the already established mental health campaign and subsequent online social rollout will attempt to encourage active participation and drive footfall as 'Take a Moment' offers the public the chance to be included as part of the display on the Piccadilly Lights.

The involvement and appearance of celebrity photographer Ray Burmiston is a driver in itself, creating a prominent link between the public and celebrity names whilst also addressing the need for greater involvement in practices which better mental health, a topic which continues to dominate.

Case Study 5: Clean Power pop-up & flag campaign - improving the attractiveness of the West End with marketing and promotion.

Partnering with Togetherband will see the West End serve as the base for Clean Power's global movement, the biggest series of interconnected artworks ever produced, spanning cityscapes all over the world with the aim of spreading a united, vital message informing of the need for cleaner, renewable energy in the fight against climate change.

The movement pushes the boundaries on what can be achieved in the public realm, moving beyond a physical and educational location into a prominent and vocal campaign using London's world renown and iconic locations to drive home their message, inevitably attracting footfall into the area for a glimpse and photo of the incredible display, akin to the Christmas lights.

Case Study 6: 12 Piccadilly Arcade - supporting the creation of experiential highstreets.

12 Piccadilly Arcade will act as a revolving and evolving space showcasing 12 separate and unique start-ups who are masters of their respective craft and are reinventing the wheel - merging innovation, science, technology, culture and people.

The space will be a living laboratory, a working studio and a hive of activity for a new and exciting brand each month, all focused on providing a window into and offering the opportunity to speak on the process behind their sustainable practices and hand-made offerings, incorporating the customer into the story.

As established with prior activations, the experiential element adds another dimension to the shopping experience, engaging and bringing the public closer to the people and processes behind their purchases.

Case Study 7: 88 Regent Street - adding value to the shopping experience and giving visitors a reason to visit the West End.

Customers to The Regent Street Edit highlighted their preference for and the importance of having services or experiences which cannot be obtained online, singling out praise for the bespoke customisation provided by 4649.REC, which allowed for on-site customisation at point of purchase.

As mentioned previously, Lab Tonica worked creatively to provide customers with products that could not be purchased online or anywhere else by creating limited edition items that were only sold at The Regent Street Edit.

Buttress & Snatch reported to have had many of their customers make special trips in to see them from all over the country. One of their favourite stories is of an 87-year-old customer on a short trip from the US who bought a lingerie set they had seen displayed in the window and asked to have it made to measure. The set was made, fitted, and adjusted for her to pick up just in time for her journey home.

Petit Pli in particular helped diversify the overall offer not only in-store but in the surrounding area in the evenings, using the space to host networking events and panel talks on issues around innovation and sustainability.

This page is intentionally left blank



Finance, Planning & Economic Development Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	14 June 2023
Classification:	General Release
Title:	2023/2024 Work Programme
Report of:	Head of Governance and Councillor Liaison
Cabinet Member Portfolios:	Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform and Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development.
Report Author and Contact Details:	Francis Dwan fdwan@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

1. This report asks the Committee to discuss topics for the 2023/2024 work programme. The proposals set out in Appendix 2 have been developed in consultation with Members, senior officers and members of the Executive (Cabinet) on their plans for the year ahead to ensure scrutiny is focused on those areas where it may have most impact.

2. Meeting Dates for the 2023/2024 Municipal Year

- 2.1 The Committee is advised that the next scheduled meeting dates for the 2023/2024 year are:
 - 20 July 2023;
 - 26 September 2023;
 - 12 December 2023;
 - 04 March 2024; and
 - 02 May 2024.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Policy and Scrutiny team has been supporting the Chair and Committee Members to consider the work programme for the next municipal year. The process for this included; consultation with the Cabinet Members, consultation with Executive Directors and relevant Heads of Service, following up on previous items and commitments from previous meetings, consideration of forward plans in the Cabinet Portfolios and challenges identified across the Directorates.
- 3.2 The aim of this process has been to culminate in a work programme which:
- Focuses on what is important;
 - Focuses on areas where performance might be improved;
 - Focuses on services which are important to residents;
 - Focuses on where scrutiny can make a difference and add value;
 - Proactively feeds into policy development by contributing to pre-tender considerations or strategy development for example; and
 - Uses the insight of backbench Members to act as critical friend to services of the City Council and our partners thereby enabling good governance and excellent services.

4. Work Programme for 2023/24

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to consider the work programme for the municipal year, 2023/2024, set out in Appendix 2. The Committee is requested to discuss the proposed topics listed as well as provide comments and suggestions.
- 4.2 When considering the work programme, and agreeing an overall programme of scrutiny activity, the Committee should have regard to whether the work programme is achievable in terms of both Officer and Member time, taking into account that the Committee is scheduled to meet six times per year. Members are also reminded that it is advisable to hold some capacity in reserve for any urgent issues that might arise.
- 4.3 Each Committee has discretion to establish Task Groups to examine key issues in more detail and also to commission Single Member Studies. The Committee is asked to consider whether they would like to establish a Task Group or commission a Single Member Study. The Committee should be advised that both Members and Officers will only be able to successfully take part in and support a finite number of Task Groups at any one time.

If you have any queries about this report or wish to inspect any of the background papers, please contact Francis Dwan.

fdwan@westminster.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference
Appendix 2: Work Programme
Appendix 3: Action Tracker

FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COMPOSITION

Seven (7) Members of the Council (four (4) Majority Party Members and three (3) Opposition Party Members).

TERMS OF REFERENCE

(a) To carry out the Policy and Scrutiny functions, as set out in Chapter 4 of the Constitution in respect of matters relating to all those duties within the terms of reference of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform.

(b) To carry out the Policy and Scrutiny function in respect of matters within the remit of the Council's non-executive Committees and Sub-Committees, which are within the broad remit of the Committee, in accordance with paragraphs 18.2 and 18.3 as well as section 19 of Chapter 4 of the Constitution.

(c) Matters, within the broad remit of the Cabinet Members referred to in (a) above which are the responsibility of external agencies.

(d) Any other matter allocated by the Westminster Scrutiny Commission.

(e) To have the power to establish ad hoc or Standing Sub-Committees as Task Groups to carry out the Scrutiny of functions within these terms of reference.

(f) To scrutinise the duties of the Lead Members which fall within the remit of the Committee or as otherwise allocated by the Westminster Scrutiny Commission.

(g) To scrutinise any Bi-borough proposals which impact on service areas that fall within the Committee's terms of reference

(h) To oversee any issues relating to Performance that fall within the Committee's terms of reference.

(i) To have the power to scrutinise those partner organisations that are relevant to the remit of the Committee.

(j) To consider any Councillor Calls for Action referred by a Ward Member to the Committee.

This page is intentionally left blank

Finance, Planning and Economic Development Policy and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24

ROUND 1 7th June 2023		
Agenda item	Purpose	Responsible Cabinet Member and Executive Director
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the Committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities.	Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Debbie Jackson, Executive Director for Growth, Planning and Housing
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the Committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities. This update will include an 'in-focus' paper on the launch of the responsible procurement strategy.	Councillor David Boothroyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform Gerald Almeroth, Executive Director for Finance and Resources
Meanwhile Activations Programme formerly Pop-Up Programme	To receive an overview of the success of the first two stages of the programme that have now been completed. As well as a look at the third phase which is set to commence.	Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Debbie Jackson, Executive Director for Growth, Planning and Housing
Work programme	To review the work programme considering recent events and discussions.	n/a – Francis Dwan, Policy and Scrutiny Advisor

ROUND 2 20th July 2023		
Agenda item	Purpose	Responsible Cabinet Member and Executive Director
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the Committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities.	Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Debbie Jackson, Executive Director for Growth, Planning and Housing
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the Committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities.	Councillor David Boothroyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform Gerald Almeroth, Executive Director for Finance and Resources

Discussion Item – Budget Scrutiny Task Group	To review the impact of the Budget Scrutiny Task Group in February 2023 and how this can be improved.	Discussion piece led by Cllr Paul Fisher – Chair of the Budget Scrutiny Task Group
Participatory Budgeting	To review proposals to adopt participatory budgeting and involving communities in decision making on how money is spent.	Councillor David Boothroyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform Gerald Almeroth, Executive Director for Finance and Resources
Work programme	To review the work programme considering recent events and discussions.	n/a – Francis Dwan, Policy and Scrutiny Advisor

ROUND 3 26th September 2023		
Agenda item	Purpose	Responsible Cabinet Member and Executive Director
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the Committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities.	Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Debbie Jackson, Executive Director for Growth, Planning and Housing
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the Committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities.	Councillor David Boothroyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform Gerald Almeroth, Executive Director for Finance and Resources
Oxford Street Programme	To review the Oxford Street Programme and proposals for its future following publication of the business case and further information on the Programme's costs.	Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Bernie Flaherty, Deputy Chief Executive Westminster City Council
Work programme	To review the work programme considering recent events and discussions.	n/a – Francis Dwan, Policy and Scrutiny Advisor

ROUND 4 12th December 2023		
Agenda item	Purpose	Responsible Cabinet Member and Executive Director

Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the Committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities.	Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Debbie Jackson, Executive Director for Growth, Planning and Housing
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the Committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities.	Councillor David Boothroyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform Gerald Almeroth, Executive Director for Finance and Resources
Lessons learnt from insourcing	To review lessons learnt from insourcing, using contact centres as a case study, twelve months on from them being brought back in-house.	Councillor David Boothroyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform Gerald Almeroth, Executive Director for Finance and Resources
Economic Development Plan	To review proposals for the Economic Development Plan.	Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Debbie Jackson, Executive Director for Growth, Planning and Housing
Work programme	To review the work programme considering recent events and discussions.	n/a – Francis Dwan, Policy and Scrutiny Advisor

ROUND 5 4th March 2024		
Agenda item	Purpose	Responsible Cabinet Member and Executive Director
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the Committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities.	Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Debbie Jackson, Executive Director for Growth, Planning and Housing
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the Committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities.	Councillor David Boothroyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform Gerald Almeroth, Executive Director for Finance and Resources
Place-Shaping Schemes	To review place-shaping schemes of note in Westminster.	Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development

		Debbie Jackson, Executive Director for Growth, Planning and Housing
Planning Policy Changes and City Plan Review	To review proposed changes to planning policy and how this ties in with the City Plan review.	Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Pedro Wrobel, Executive Director of Innovation and Change Debbie Jackson, Executive Director for Growth, Planning and Housing
Work programme	To review the work programme considering recent events and discussions.	n/a – Francis Dwan, Policy and Scrutiny Advisor

ROUND 6 2nd May 2024		
Agenda item	Purpose	Responsible Cabinet Member and Executive Director
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the Committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities.	Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Debbie Jackson, Executive Director for Growth, Planning and Housing
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the Committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities.	Councillor David Boothroyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform Gerald Almeroth, Executive Director for Finance and Resources
Westminster Employment Services	To review the outputs of the Westminster employment services.	Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Debbie Jackson, Executive Director for Growth, Planning and Housing
Corporate Property Portfolio	To receive a report on the Corporate Property Portfolio with regards either the operational estate or the commercial investment property portfolio.	Councillor David Boothroyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform Gerald Almeroth, Executive Director for Finance and Resources
Work programme	To review the work programme considering recent events and discussions.	n/a – Francis Dwan, Policy and Scrutiny Advisor

Unallocated Items

(N.B these will be considered as substitutes, should the situation merit it. They can also be used for consideration by the Committee, though other options not listed may also be presented or considered):

Westminster Works 2024	To review the Westminster Works Programme.
IT disaggregation	To review the ongoing process of disaggregation of IT services from shared-service and review the costs/savings realised.
Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD	To review planning obligations and the affordable housing SPD before the decision is taken in July 2023.
Council Tax Collection	To review the Westminster's rate of council tax collection, what efforts are in place to improve it and to support vulnerable residents.
Understanding major planning applications fall is being addressed – efficiency savings	To review the Council's efforts in attracting appropriate infrastructure investment in the form of major planning applications following a lull in the volume of applications.
Preserving world heritage status	To review the Council's efforts to sustain Westminster's world heritage status.
Review of Westminster Investment Service	To review the Westminster Investment Service.
Evening and Night-Time Economy	To review the Council's work on facilitating Westminster's night-time economy whilst ensuring safety and respect to both visitors and residents.
Working with BIDs	To receive an overview of BIDs in Westminster. To better understand how they work, their processes and how the Council interacts with them. The Committee could receive a case-study of a joint working scheme with a BID, to review how the Council might work better with the BIDs.
London Living Wage and Third-Party Contracts	To review the progress made in implementing the Council becoming a Living Wage accredited organisation in respect of its employees and suppliers and the impacts arising from this.

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 3 - ACTION TRACKER

Finance, Planning and Economic Development Policy and Scrutiny Committee

ROUND 5 9 th March 2023		
Agenda Item	Action	Status/Follow Up
Update from the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development	Given the level of vacated properties, particularly on high streets, what are the projections for what can be achieved by pop-ups, are they likely to lead to long-term improvements to high streets and (small) businesses?	Referenced in the Meanwhile Activation Substantive Look

ROUND 6 4 th May 2023		
Agenda Item	Action	Status/Follow Up
Update from the Cabinet Member for- Planning and Economic Development	The Cabinet Member, through his next Cabinet Member Update to provide additional information on the digital connection vouchers scheme for residents.	In Progress – to come in July's Update
	The Cabinet Member was asked to provide the methodology behind the baseline comparisons suggesting an increase in Berwick Street market trade on Community Saturdays vs a 'normal trading day'.	Provided in CM Update
	The Cabinet Member agreed to look into options facilitate resident feedback/complaint that might arise as a result of the micro logistics schemes being developed.	Noted by the Cabinet Member.
	The Cabinet Member invited Member feedback on the updates provided and agreed to consider changes based on Member preferences.	Feedback from Committee received, open for anything further.
	Cost of Living board, a specific breakdown of the people who sit on the board.	Response Provided.

<p>Update from the Cabinet Member for</p> <p>Finance and Council Reform</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member, through future Cabinet Member Update(s) to provide additional information on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Population survey statistics. 2) P.D.H.U. 3) Insourcing. 4) Corporate Property portfolio. 5) IT disaggregation. 6) Council Reform. 7) Report It review. 	<p>1 in progress will come in July's update.</p> <p>2 the strategic options paper that went to the relevant P&S Committee was circulated.</p> <p>3-7 Have been touched on/will be mentioned going forward as updates occur.</p>
<p>Report It Review</p>	<p>The Committee heard that ~2000 reports are made each month, Members asked how much traffic the website attracts in total – to gain an understanding as to the potential scale of people who wish to report something but may not due to the present system design.</p>	<p>Response Provided by the relevant Officers.</p>
	<p>To consider changing the automatic wording of some reports such as "Job closed" to improve communication and transparency with residents.</p>	<p>Response Provided by the relevant Officers.</p>
<p>Work Programme</p>	<p>To receive Member suggestions and consider amendments to the variety, form and purpose of some of the substantive items currently listed in the draft work programme.</p>	<p>Received and amended.</p>