

MAYOR OF LONDON

Andrew Boff AM

Chair of the London Assembly
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Our ref: MGLA180324-9082

Date: 3 July 2024

Dear Andrew,

London Assembly (Plenary) Meeting 7 March 2024 – Motions

Thank you for your letter about the motions agreed at the London Assembly (Plenary) meeting on 7 March 2024. My reply to motion 3.8 is set out below.

Motion 3.8 – Opening up City Hall to Arts and Culture

I would like to thank the Assembly for recognising the challenges that theatres and the wider culture sector are facing. Cultural organisations like theatres are still experiencing the long-tail effect of Brexit, the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis / increased energy costs, and the huge cuts to London imposed by the present Government, which has moved £50m of culture funding out of the capital.

Over the course of the past eight years, my Culture, Creative Industries and 24-Hour London Unit has set out a programme of interventions to tackle the problems faced by the sector: from running a dedicated Culture at Risk office that has now given over 1,500 struggling theatres and cultural venues advice and guidance to funding major tourism and promotional campaigns spotlighting the sector. My 'Let's Do London' tourism campaign has generated a combined 1.16 million additional visitors and £508m in additional visitor spend.

I am proud that we have already run cultural events at the present City Hall – for example, a series of engagement events that paved the way for Black on the Square and most recently the Fourth Plinth Schools Awards, which is part of my work to give young Londoners access to culture (we typically get entries from between 300-400 schools). So we remain open to one-off opportunities in the future.

Black on the Square will return in September, when we will turn Trafalgar Square into a performance venue celebrating Black creative talent and culture as part of my annual cultural and events programme.

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One of my key aims is to bring culture to people's doorsteps – so I have launched new London Boroughs of Culture in Wandsworth and Haringey and made Cultural Impact Awards in Barnet, Merton and Greenwich.

In the meantime, we will continue to liaise closely with theatre representative bodies such as the Society for London Theatres and Theatres Trust as we roll out our cultural programme for this term.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small '2' written below the 'h'.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London