

# ***Information/Discussion Paper***

## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 8th September 2014**

### **Scrutiny of the Public Art panel**

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee and to help them decide what further action is required.

#### **1. Why has this come to scrutiny?**

- 1.1 The Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles, Councillor Rowena Hay, first suggested this as a topic for scrutiny in November 2013. O&S were advised that the Public Art Panel co-ordinates funds that have been raised for public art from Section 106 agreements and she suggested the governance and the accountability of the panel needed to be reviewed. As no members came forward to join the task group it was put on hold until after the elections when the Cabinet Member proposed it for a second time.
- 1.2 Since the July meeting, officers from Democratic Services have had further meetings with Wilf Tomaney, Urban Design Manager and the lead officer supporting the panel, and the Cabinet Member to understand the issues and how O&S might add value.
- 1.3 This issue has now come to O&S for members to decide if they want to proceed with this as a topic for scrutiny and if so what form that scrutiny should take.
- 1.4 Wilf Tomaney will be attending the meeting to update members on the work of the Panel and to answer any questions.

#### **2. Summary of the Issue**

- 2.1 The panel was previously scrutinised by a task group established by the former Social and Community O&S committee and Councillor Rowena Hay was a member of this group which was chaired by Councillor Diggory Seacome.
- 2.2 The O&S Review Group was established in September 2010 and their role was to consider the then workings of the Public Art Panel and to recommend improvements to its operation and hence the implementation of Public Art in the town.
- 2.3 The group reported to the parent committee in O&S in July 2011. In December 2011 Cabinet endorsed the findings of the task group and agreed that their recommendations should be implemented. Following the Cabinet decision, the Panel recommenced meeting in January 2012 and now meets every other month. The report from scrutiny is attached at Appendix 1 together with the Cabinet response.

**2.4** In 2013, Councillor Hay as the Cabinet Member Sport and Culture, requested a report on progress to date in respect of the recommendations and the work of the reformatted Panel. A summary was produced by Wilf Tomaney and endorsed by the Panel but was not taken back to Cabinet. This is contained in Appendix 2 and lists the recommendations of the review group and itemises progress against each and has been updated to reflect the current position.

### **3. Summary of evidence/information**

**3.1** From discussions with the Cabinet Member and the officer it is clear that progress has been made with the organisation of the Public Art Panel and the delivery of public art; however, there remain some outstanding issues which seem to be as follows:

- The governance of the public art panel needs to be reviewed and clarified. This should cover terms of membership for the chair of the panel.

- The role of the Cabinet Member in the process and their relationship with the panel needs to be clarified.

- It is not clear where the accountability lies for the decisions of the panel and the success of the implementation of the public arts projects it manages.

- It is not clear how the panel will link in with the new commissioned Leisure and Culture Trust

- The council is lacking an up-to-date public art strategy

- There is no overall funding of the administration of Public Art as currently any funding has to be allocated to a specific project

- A way forward for Public Art funding with the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy needs to be agreed

**3.2** From discussions with officers there is clearly an issue about the capacity to fully support the public art panel and there is no dedicated officer resource for Public Art as there is in some other councils. This may be the main reason why work has not been progressed on developing a public art strategy. Scrutiny in itself could not resolve this problem.

**3.3** Although the project management pool will assist in the delivery of individual work of public arts there is no overall administrative function to co-ordinate the whole programme of public arts. Again this is largely due to lack of funding or inability to allocate funding at this higher level rather than to individual projects.

**3.4** In summary, whilst the Panel, following the 2011 O&S Review is more effective and has put in place measures to enable it to deliver projects; staff and funding, particularly for strategic and support work, are stretched.

### **4. Next Steps - possible next steps for the committee to consider**

- 4.1 O&S must decide whether they think this is an appropriate topic for a scrutiny task group and if so what input would be required from officers and the panel. Some terms of reference for such as review are suggested in Appendix 3.
- 4.2 If however they consider that lack of resources both officer and financial is the main reason why the original recommendations have not been fully implemented they may feel this is an issue for the Cabinet to resolve in the first instance.
- 4.3 They could also suggest that a workshop is held with interested parties to try and achieve clarity on some of the issues set out in paragraph 3.1. This could be something O&S could facilitate
- 4.4 If the trust is to be commissioned in future to deliver Public Art, O&S may recommend that this is picked up as one of the outcomes from the L&C trust and looked at as part of that project.
- 4.5 The committee may want to ask for a further update at a later date.

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<b>Background Papers</b>	None
<b>Appendices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 1.1 – Covering report to Cabinet 6/12/2011</li> <li>1.2 - Scrutiny report</li> <li>1.3 - Mins of O&amp;S</li> <li>1.4 – Mins of Cabinet 6/12/2011</li> <li>2. Update on implementation of O&amp;S recommendations</li> <li>3. One page strategy for a new scrutiny task group</li> </ul>
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