

Management Committee

11 December 2018

Public art project in Weymouth – consultation results and design brief

For Decision

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Richard Kosior – Tourism, Culture & Harbour

Senior Leadership Team Contact:

M Hamilton, Strategic Director

Report Author:

T. Hurley, Leisure Commissioning Manager

Statutory Authority

Localism Act 2011 – ‘general power of competence’.

Purpose of Report

1. To present to the committee a report on the public consultation undertaken to inform the public art project in Weymouth and seek agreement as to the brief for implementation of the project.

Officer Recommendations

2. That Management Committee notes the consultation results as summarised in Appendix A;
3. That Management Committee approved the project implementation brief as set out in Appendix B subject to the following optional variations to the project:
 - a) that the project is undertaken by a single, lead artist who is urged to make use of local craft-workers and engage with local students and artists;
 - or**
 - b) that the project is undertaken by commissioning different artists to each produce one artistic installation and that will collectively form the trail.
 - c) that the project attempts to integrate water refill stations in to some of the artistic installations and to do so in partnership with Wessex Water.

Reason for Decision

3. To enable Management Committee to take forward the Action Plan objective of creating a sculpture trail in the borough.

Background and Reason Decision Needed

4. At its meeting in December 2017, the Committee allocated £123,000 to a sculpture trail for the borough. Given the scale and complexity of this public art project it is recommended that it is, in accordance with best practice, undertaken in two stages.

Stage One: Consultation, design selection and identifying what permissions are required (e.g. planning permission). The retention of specialist project management expertise to oversee the process would ease capacity issues within the existing workforce.

Stage Two: The costed designs and implementation requirements will be presented to Management Committee for consideration and approval – along with estimates of future maintenance costs.

5. The local arts organisation B-side was commissioned to undertake stage one of the project (consultation) and also to prepare a brief for the subsequent implementation stage. The consultation programme comprised online survey and also an innovative 'walk-talk-art' technique, whereby residents and visitors were invited to give their views by taking part in a guided walk around the town, particularly in the areas where the sculpture trail might be installed. The results of this consultation are set out in the executive summary report, **Appendix A**. More detailed reports on the consultation findings are available and will be used to inform the implementation stage.
6. In response to the consultation, B-side produced a brief for the council to use to procure a lead artists to design, fabricate and install the sculpture trail. This brief is set out in **Appendix B**.
7. During the research for this project, B-side explored the potential for the public art installations to perhaps include water refill units – thereby providing the public with the opportunity refill drinking water bottles and help reduce single-use plastics. This concept fitted well with aspects of Weymouth history and picked up on general public concern about the use of plastics. Discussions with Wessex Water highlighted their interest in this concept and potential to fund the on-going costs of water supply to the refill units.
8. Consultation with the Member Arts Advisory Panel did, however, highlight the following member concerns:
 - a) The trail should preferably be produced by a variety of artists, perhaps a different artist for each installation;
 - b) Where possible, Dorset-based artists should be employed;

- c) The inclusion of water refill units should be a secondary concern and not detract from the primary artistic purpose of each installation.
9. The advice of B-side, based on the organisations extensive local experience and expertise, is that it would be preferable to appoint a lead artist to design and oversee the creation of the whole trail, in order to ensure continuity and a coherent style throughout. Whereas, employing different artists for each installation would be more expensive and result in a fragmented concept.
10. The brief for the next stage of the project (going from design to installation), as set out in Appendix B, is therefore based on the advice of B-side. However, in order to reflect the views of the Member Arts Advisory Panel, this report requires Management Committee to decide to amend the brief to introduce the concept of different artists per installation and whether or not include water refill stations. These options, are set out in recommendation 3 above, can be summarised as follows:
- The brief is amended to provide for different artists to work on the trail and each to produce a single installation. The trail would, therefore, comprise a series of artistic installations / sculptures each produced by a different artist. This is in contrast to the approach current recommended by B-side, whereby one artist leads on the creation of the whole trail but perhaps collaborates with different craftspeople on each installation.
 - The brief currently includes the potential for included water refill points in some of the installations (depending on available water supply) and to do so in partnership with Wessex Water. However, members are presented with the option of removing this concept from the brief.
11. A budget of £110,700 is available for this project and it is proposed that up to £25,000 is allocated to the contract for the detailed design of the trail as per the brief (Appendix A). This will leave the remainder of the budget for fabrication and installation. In addition, the creation of a temporary busking/performance space will be commissioned within the existing budget.
12. As the project develops, a discussion will need to take place between Weymouth Town Council and Dorset Council as to short-term responsibility for the implementation of the project and long-term responsibility for maintenance.

Implications

13. **Corporate Plan.** *Empowering Thriving and Inclusive Communities.* The need to develop sculpture trail is also identified in the Management Committee's Action Plan.
14. **Financial.** A budget of £123,000 was allocated by Management Committee to this project and following public consultation and research and preparation of the brief, £110,700 remains available for implementation.

15. **Equalities.** Consideration will need to be given to ensuring that any supported arts projects are accessible to all sections of the community.
16. **Economic Development.** Arts events and installations can make a significant contribution to economic growth.
17. **Risk Management (including Health & Safety).** With regard to the programme of public arts / sculpture trail, there are a range of risks that need to be considered. These risks include: the possibility that not all the proposed installations will be able to secure planning consent (if required); reputational risk if there is not significant public support for the designs; and possible long-term maintenance costs that may not be affordable and for which there is currently no budget.

Consultation and Engagement

18. Consultation has been undertaken with the briefholder for culture (Cllr Kosior) and the Member Arts Advisory Panel.

Appendices

19. **Appendix A** – Consultation executive summary report prepared by B-side. September 2018.
Appendix B – Draft brief for implementation of the project.

Background Papers

20. *WalkTalkArt full consultation report.* B-side and Mark Simons. September 2018.

Footnote

21. Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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