

Report to: Charity Committee

Date of Meeting: 19th March 2018

Report Title: Proposal for Public Art on Foreshore Trust land

Report By: Victoria Conheady
Assistant Director for Regeneration and Culture

Purpose of Report

To provide a course of action to develop a programme of temporary public art along Hastings seafront.

Recommendation(s)

1. To initiate and support a proposal for public art investment
2. To give delegated authority to the assistant director, regeneration and culture, or her nominee, in consultation with the chair of the trust, to develop the proposal and implement a public art campaign accordingly.

Reasons for Recommendations

The chair of the trust has asked officers to present to the committee a scheme to develop a trust funded public art campaign.

This document outlines the proposed scheme which would set in course the development of a long-term strategy and delivery programme of public art.

Background

1. Over the past 17 years the borough of Hastings has built up a reputation for good quality, placemaking public art pieces from Esther Rolinson's "Stream" in St Leonards, to Leigh Dyer's chess fantasy at Butler's Gap and the winkle at Rock 'a' Nore, taking in the "Sticks of Rock", Steve Geliot's floral bollards and Annabel Tilley's "Heritage I on the King's Road, zeroh's moths, the Briscoe's Walk sculptures and Rick Kirby's "Continuum" in Alexandra Park.
2. After the success of Leigh Dyer's "The Landing" as part of the Root 1066 festival, there is an opportunity to build on this
 - a) to give distinct identity to separate areas of the Hastings and St Leonards seafront
 - b) to increase use and enjoyment of the seafront by local people
 - c) and to increase year-round visitor numbers to the borough.
3. It is important that any investment in public art installations on Foreshore Trust land is made in the context of medium and long term plans and aspirations for the area.
4. The options for public art are many, but can either be permanent or temporary.
5. In the current instance a scheme for a long-term programme of temporary art to be developed is proposed.

Temporary Installations

6. These should be introduced on an annual or bi-annual basis in the context of a regular local festival or occurrence such as Coastal Currents or the St Leonards Festival or as a feature in their own right eg: the Hastings Biennial.
7. The point of temporary installations is that they contribute to a recurring context, enriching and developing it as each event occurs. In this scenario therefore a long term commitment of funding for at least three years would be desirable in order at least to establish a sustainable model that can be built on.
8. Given that the Foreshore Trust land most suitable for the siting of sculptures is pebbled beach, from below the Pelham Car Park to the beach in line with Debenhams, public art installations would either be sculptural and sited on the beach itself or on the promenade surfaces. This site would attract the most attention because of its central position, and has the advantage of drawing people to the seafront, and engage with its facilities with healthier lifestyle benefits ensuing.
9. Other potential sites such as the Rock-a-Nore car parks and the beaches below beyond them have their own issues, sculptures on the former potentially taking

up valuable summertime parking space – and on the latter vying for space with the fishing boats on the beach.

10. There may be some opportunities for temporary sculptures on the pebbles above the high tide mark on the beach beyond Debenhams and west of the pier, but the risks arising from a combination of the highest tides and severe weather conditions would have to be managed.
11. A further option to be included in any proposal is to extend the area to include the temporary installations beyond Foreshore Trust boundaries to include other features on the seafront such as Bottle Alley, the site of the old St Leonards Bathing Pool and at suitable locations on the promenade.
12. The ideal scenario for temporary installations would be for the Foreshore Trust to make a commitment of specific funding to a partner organisation that could develop a project and even use this as leverage to raise further funding.
13. Specific funding would be conditional upon the delivery of the Foreshore Trust's objectives which might include the sites for sculpture, the broad context for installations and timeframes.
14. Budgets should not only include the fabrication and installation of artworks, but also artists design fees, project administration and any marketing / publicity costs or extra insurance required .
15. Very short term installations (i.e. for a number of weeks) do not generally need planning permission but if they are in place for a month or more, or are deemed to affect highway traffic, temporary planning permission is required. Quite often the seeking of temporary planning permission for longer periods (eg: 2 years) is a step towards obtaining permanent planning permission which is applied for when the temporary permission expires.

Delivery Model to be developed

16. In the past few years Hastings BC has been approached by many quite ambitious and quite experienced arts groups / organisations interested in starting borough wide high profile festivals of public art. The most obvious site for this would be the seafront, and their main issue is always the problem of establishing a sustainable model for achieving this. At least two such organisations are currently discussing “pilot schemes” to “test the water” and establish good practice with Sweet ‘n’ Dandy who own the annual Coastal Currents Festivals.
17. It is proposed that an initial sum of £20k is allocated to be made available to an arts organisation or partnership, to develop a scheme resulting in the creation and installation of temporary art installations on the Hastings seafront on a regular basis.
18. An initial trial installation(s) should take place in the next 18 months, either in 2018 or, more likely, in the summer of 2019, launching the concept and setting out a longer term context, model and strategy for its development.

19. The brief for this will stipulate that installations should be family orientated, and playful and will encourage them to be interactive where safely possible as is the case with internationally successful prototypes such as the festival at Dadaepo Beach in South Korea where local sculptors and artists from all around the world are invited to make playful, interactive sculptures targeting family audiences (see www.youtube.com/watch?v=dml9Z-7bFMo&feature=youtu.be) and Cottesloe Beach in Western Australia (see www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2575506/Permanent-sunset-surfers-graveyard-amazing-artwork-taken-Australian-beach.html).
20. Ideally there would be a commitment to make a similar award annually for or bi-annually for a named number of years as the project develops. Any very successful and popular sculptures may be submitted for permanent planning permission creating a longer term precedent where one remains per festival as takes place in Folkestone.
21. A minuted “in principal” annual award for public art development on Hastings seafront by the Foreshore Trust of £20k would be ideal leverage for ambitious arts organisations would could use the amount to establish a concept and initial artwork(s) and act as leverage for further funding.
22. Once again, it is vital that it is understood that the amount also includes the cost of administrating any such scheme.
23. It is also important that any such scheme is developed in partnership with a local arts organisation in a local context.

Wards Affected

Insert the list of wards affected

Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	X
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	
Risk Management	X
Environmental Issues	X
Economic/Financial Implications	X
Human Rights Act	
Organisational Consequences	
Local People’s Views	
Anti-Poverty	

Additional Information

Insert a list of appendices and/or additional documents. Report writers are encouraged to use links to existing information, rather than appending large documents.

Officer to Contact

Michael Hambridge
mhambridge@hastings.gov.uk
01424 451790
