

Item



## PUBLIC ART COMMISSIONING

**To:**

Councillor Anna Smith, Executive Councillor for Communities  
Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee – 3/10/2019

**Report by:**

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**Wards affected:** All

### Key Decision

#### 1. Executive Summary

1.1 Over the last couple of years, public art reports to this Committee have taken a two-pronged approach, focussed on the following:

- Developing a Public Art Strategy, which includes proposing a framework and associated principles new public art commissions; and
- Bringing forward a few public art commissions prior to the development of the Public Art Strategy, in order to make effective and timely use of existing time-limited S106 contributions.

1.2 While progress continues to be made on developing the Public Art Strategy, research and advice received from external public art specialists has underlined the need to work closely with the shared Planning Service as it reviews related planning policies. Officers aim to report back on the Strategy in the first half of 2020/21.

- 1.3 In the meantime, this latest report provides updates, which had been scheduled for this committee meeting, including:
- a. The need to commission a public art project in/ around Trumpington ward's boundary with Petersfield and Coleridge to use time-limited, local S106 contributions (see Section 4); and
  - b. The need to take stock of the River Cam public art programme, including progress on the 'artist in residency' project commission (£120,000); and to review the remaining uncommitted £330,000 programme budget allocation (some of which are time-limited S106 contributions) and the need for the budget's de-allocation (see Section 5).
- 1.4 Section 6 then considers other proposals that could be developed ahead of the development of the Public Art Strategy.

## **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor for Communities is recommended to:

- 2.1 Allocate up to £90,000 of S106 public art contributions to develop the 'Art of Play' public art project in accordance with the outline brief in appendix A
- 2.2 De-allocate £330,000 of public art S106 contributions currently allocated to the River Cam public art programme;
- 2.2 Instruct officers to develop proposals for the following projects and report back to this Committee in 2020/21, so that the project proposals and associated s106 funding allocations can be considered:
  - a. A public art project in/ around Trumpington ward's boundary with Petersfield and Coleridge, using up to £75,000 of time limited, local s106 contributions (if these cannot be related to the 'Art of Play' public art project);
  - b. A public art project in Romsey ward using time-limited public art S106 contributions that have to be contractually committed during 2023; and

- c. A city-wide urban art project and associated urban art space at Newmarket Road roundabout subway, in accordance with the concept proposal in appendix C.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 Over recent decades, the Council has mitigated the impact of development by securing public art (previously, through on-site provision by developers or off-site, generic S106 contributions paid to the Council and, now, through planning conditions). An overview of this approach to S106 funding can be found on the Council's S106 web pages. S106 funding has to be used for its intended purpose<sup>1</sup>.
- 3.2 Decisions over the use of public art S106 contributions are made by the relevant Executive Councillor (now, within the Communities portfolio). Officers also engage with the Lead Councillor for Public Art.
- 3.3 The S106 (Streets and Open Spaces) report to this Committee in March 2019 listed eight public art commissions and around 30 grant-funded, small public art projects since 2012. In line with the principles set out in the Council's Public Art Strategy SPD 2010, the criteria for the use of public art S106 funding has focused on new and original, high quality public art in Cambridge, which is accessible to the public, involves an artist, engages the community and has a lasting legacy. An important consideration in developing public art proposals has been to identify appropriate locations.
- 3.4 In common with other S106 contribution types, S106 funding availability for public art is running down and is unevenly spread across the city. This uneven distribution reflects differing levels of development from ward-to-ward. Public art S106 contributions have mainly been secured from major developments and the funding from them has tended to be used in two ways. As a rule of thumb:
  - a. half this funding have been made available for **local** public art projects in the same ward (or nearby other projects); while

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1. For example, public art contributions have to be used for public art (even if they also fulfil other purposes).

b. the other half<sup>2</sup> has sometimes been made available for **strategic** projects in the same Area of the city (i.e., North, East, South or West/Central) or for city-wide projects<sup>3</sup>.

3.5 In this context, and not counting S106 funding already allocated to existing public art projects<sup>4</sup> (including £330,000 of strategic and local funds allocated to the wider River Cam public art programme), the current availability<sup>5</sup> of public art S106 funds for local projects is:

**Table 1:** Current public art availability for local projects<sup>6</sup>

North Area		East Area	
Arbury	£0	Abbey	£8.5k
East Chesterton	£0	Coleridge	£47k
King's Hedges	£3.5k	Petersfield	£6k
West Chesterton	£5k	Romsey	£47k
South Area		West/Central Area	
Cherry Hinton	£24k	Castle	£0
Queen Edith's	£7k	Market	£13k
Trumpington	£47k	Newnham	£0

2. This is sometimes referred to as the 'strategic pot' for public art S106 funding.
3. For public art projects with a city-wide relevance, officers aim to draw on S106 funding from across all four Areas (e.g., 'Cambridge Rules' public art on Parker's Piece, the River Cam artist residency, the Showcase of Queer Arts and the Suffragettes commemorative public art).
4. Table 1 does not include £75,000 of the time-limited public art contributions from Trumpington which, in March 2019, were earmarked for the public art proposals that are considered in Section 4 of this report. Nor does it take account of £10,000 from East Chesterton currently earmarked for a Chesterton Village sign or £15,000 from Abbey ward currently earmarked for a 'Travellers and Outsiders' project.
5. Officers review S106 funding allocations regularly to ensure best fit with relevant projects. Consequently, these funding availability figures are subject to change.
6. Where '£1k' denotes £1,000.

3.6 The Public Art report to this Committee in June, 2018, highlighted the need to review the £330,000 allocated to the wider River Cam public art programme, following completion of the artist in residency commission. The review would use the residency output to inform the development of potential future public art projects, for which the £330,000 allocation could be used.

#### **4. Trumpington ward public art project**

4.1 In March, 2019, the Executive Councillor for Streets & Open Spaces agreed to instruct officers to develop proposals for a public art commission (with a budget of between £50,000 and £75,000) in Trumpington ward, or close to its boundary with Petersfield and Coleridge wards, and report back to this Committee later in 2019.

4.2 This reflected a particular need to make use of unallocated public art contributions<sup>7</sup> from a major development near Cambridge Station, which have to be contractually committed by January, 2022. Officers were asked to produce a project brief (possibly around the theme of issues facing young people) for a public art project in the vicinity.

4.3 Officer scoping of possible concepts for the use of this funding soon evolved into the 'Art of Play' proposals for public art encouraging informal play – see outline in appendix A. This concept has real potential, albeit that it remains to be seen whether suitable sites for this public art could be found in the vicinity of the Cambridge Station end of Trumpington, which would represent an effective use of the time-limited (January, 2022), local public art S106 contributions

4.4 Should it transpire, that the January, 2022, local, time-limited contributions are not suitable for use on the 'Art of Play' project, depending on its location(s), officers would scope another project which would make relevant and timely use of these particular contributions. If this is the case, officers will report back to this Committee with a worked

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7. These unallocated public art S106 contributions, to the value of £75,000, represent funding for a local project, since the contributions, in the 'strategic pot', from this development, have already been assigned to strategic projects which have either been completed or are close to completion.

up proposal in that part of Trumpington ward, or close to its boundary with Petersfield and Coleridge wards in first half of 2020/21.

## **5. River Cam public art programme**

- 5.1 The River Cam public art programme was allocated £450,000 of public art S106 funds in March, 2016. The Executive Councillor for Streets and Open Spaces, in January, 2018, allocated £120,000 of this to the River Cam artist residency, with the other £330,000 still allocated to the wider programme. At that time, officers committed to a report back to this Committee to take stock of progress and the next steps<sup>8</sup>.
- 5.2 Appendix B outlines the progress made by the artist in residence, Caroline Wright, including temporary elements, events and public engagement. The artist is currently developing ideas for a concept proposal for the permanent artwork, arising from the residency, the research undertaken and the time spent around the river. Once the concept proposal has been assessed from public art and business case perspectives, the aim is to exhibit the proposals publically, later this autumn, before moving forward with project. Members will be kept informed and updates will also be posted on the Council's Public Art web pages: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public-art>. The aim is for concept proposal to stand alone as the only permanent artwork(s) for the River Cam. The emerging concept proposal for the permanent artwork, as part of £120,000 artist residency, is being developed within the original budget.
- 5.3 There are a number of reasons for recommending that the remaining £330,000 currently allocated to the River Cam public art programme should be de-allocated:
- a. The project focus and officer capacity, to date, has been on completing the Artist in Residency and associated permanent artwork. Detailed proposals for the use of the £330,000 for other River Cam public art have not yet emerged.
  - b. The £330,000 allocation includes time-limited contributions. There is

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8. This needs to be seen in the context of paragraph 3.6 above.

a risk of not being able to develop eligible public art projects to spend the time limited funds on before the 'cut off' date in the corresponding S106 Agreements.

- c. Deallocating the £330,000 would allow these funds to be returned to the appropriate public art S106 funding pots for use on other public art projects that the Council may wish to bring forward in those parts of the city to which they relate.

- 5.4 If, however, robust and realistic project proposals were to come forward for specific River Cam public art projects (for example, for further permanent art works arising from the artist residency), which could be afforded from the relevant part of the city, and could be delivered with any time limits that apply, these would be reported back to this Committee for consideration of allocating public art S106 funding.

## **6. Next steps for public art projects**

- 6.1 Table 2, overleaf, details the available S106 funding by ward/ area, assuming the deallocation of the £330,000 from the wider River Cam public art programme. The key points to note are as follows:
  - a. There is still limited or no scope for S106-funded projects in North Area (which has £11,000 available in total), nor in Castle and Newnham wards. At the same time, there is a need for local projects in each of Romsey, Coleridge and Trumpington wards.
  - b. Scope exists for some more area-based or city-wide projects. Alternatively, funds in the 'strategic pot' could supplement those in the 'local pot' for local projects.
  - c. Possibilities exist for smaller local projects which straddle neighbouring wards (e.g., Abbey/Petersfield).
- 6.3 A further analysis of the time limits within which S106 contributions need to be spent<sup>9</sup> reveals that around £80,000 of public art S106 funds from Romsey ward have expiry dates in 2023.

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9. These time limits are either stipulated in particular S106 agreements or reflecting the aim to make use of contributions within 10 years).

- 6.4 While the development of a new Public Art Strategy continues, alongside a review of relevant planning policies, work will continue to:
- a. Complete on-going S106-funded public projects (e.g., Southern Connections, River Cam artist residency and enabling grant recipients to complete grant-funded projects (e.g. History Trails 2);
  - b. Develop proposals, using the S106 contributions from Trumpington ward, which have to be contractually committed by January, 2022<sup>10</sup>; and
  - c. Develop the ‘Art of Play’ public art proposal in accordance with the outline proposal in appendix A, with a recommended allocation of up to £90,000 for this project. This budget could be allocated from strategic funds available in South and East Areas, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Public art S106 availability following deallocation of £330,000

Ward	LOCAL projects only	STRATEGIC (or local) projects	TOTAL AVAILABLE
<b>North Area</b>			
Arbury	£0	£1k	<b>£1k</b>
East Chesterton	£0	£0	<b>£0</b>
King’s Hedges	£3.5k	£1k	<b>£4.5k</b>
West Chesterton	£5k	£0.5k	<b>£5.5k</b>
<b>East Area</b>			
Abbey	£8.5k	£30.5k	<b>£39k</b>
Coleridge	£76k	£74k	<b>£150k</b>
Petersfield	£6k	£2.5k	<b>£8.5k</b>
Romsey	£72k	£38.5k	<b>£110.5k</b>
<b>South Area</b>			
Cherry Hinton	£24k	£27k	<b>£51k</b>
Queen Edith’s	£7k	£5k	<b>£12k</b>

<sup>10</sup>. As paragraph 4.3 explains, this may either be as part of the ‘Art of Play’ public art project or as part of the development of a separate proposal which would be worked up and report to this Committee in June 2020.



Trumpington	£67.5k <sup>11</sup>	£66k	<b>£133.5k</b>
<b>West/Central Area</b>			
Castle	£0	£0	<b>£0</b>
Market	£13k	£7k	<b>£20k</b>
Newnham	£0	£0	<b>£0</b>

6.5 In addition, there would be scope to bring forward:

- a. The development of proposal for a city wide urban art project and associated urban art space at Newmarket Road roundabout subway. The proposed project concept has already been discussed at the East Area Committee in July, 2018. See the outline in Appendix C.
- b. The development of proposal for a public art project in Romsey, making use of public art contributions that need to be contractually committed during 2023 (paragraph 6.3 refers).

6.6 These two concepts require further developmental work and it is proposed to report back to this Committee in 2020/21, so that the worked up proposals and associated S106 funding allocations can be considered.

## 7. Implications

7.1 **Financial implications:** There are no financial implications, as the proposed projects will be funded from time-limited S106 contributions. The recommendations in this report aim to make sure that these funds can be used appropriately and on time.

7.2 **Staffing implications:** There are no staffing implications.

7.3 **Equality and Poverty implications:** There are no equality and poverty implications, however, it is the intention that public art is freely and widely accessible and that some of the proposed projects are targeted at specific groups, including children and the elderly.

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<sup>11</sup>. This figure does not include the already-earmarked time-limited £75,000 from Trumpington ward that must be contractually committed by January 2022.

- 7.4 **Environmental Implications:** The provision of public art in the city adds to the interest, variety and quality of the public realm.
- 7.5 **Procurement Implications:** Any procurement associated with the proposed projects will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's procurement policy.
- 7.6 **Community Safety Implications:** The inclusion of works of art in public places can make the areas more attractive and encourage people to use them. Maintenance of public art is also an important consideration in assessing proposals. For instance, the ability to withstand vandalism and weathering should be demonstrated. Ongoing maintenance details are required to accompany all public art scheme submissions.
- 7.7 **Consultation and communication considerations:** All public art commissions require public engagement and consultation. This is built into the process

## 8. Background papers

- 8.1 The following committee reports can be found at <https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx>:
- 'River Cam Public Art Commission' report to Community Services Scrutiny Committee, 17 March 2016;
  - 'S106 Public Art and Public Realm Funding' report to Community Services Committee, 18 January 2018;
  - 'Public Art Policy and Strategy 2018-19 and Public Art small-scale grants 2018' report to Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee, 28 June 2018;
  - 'Urban Art Project: Newmarket Road Subway' report to East Area Committee, 12 July 2018;
  - 'S106 Funding: Next Steps (Streets and Open Spaces)' report to Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee, 21 March 2019.

8.2 The following information can also be found on the Council's website:

- Public Art Strategy SPD (Supplementary Planning Document)  
[www.cambridge.gov.uk/public-art-spd](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public-art-spd)
- Public Art web pages: [www.cambridge.gov.uk/public-art](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public-art)
- Overview of S106 funding (March 2019):  
[www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/5915/overview-of-s106-funding.pdf](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/5915/overview-of-s106-funding.pdf).

## **9. Appendices**

Appendix A: 'The Art of Play' project outline proposal

Appendix B: 'To the River' Artist in Residence update

Appendix C: Urban Art project concept proposal

## **10. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers, or if you have a query on the report, please contact:

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## Appendix A

### The 'Art of Play' outline proposal

- A1. The Council seeks an artist to develop a proposal for an original, high quality, accessible public artwork/s, which would provide opportunities for physical interaction/ activity. The likely maximum budget for this commission is £90,000.
- A2. This public art would be distinct from standard, structured play provision. The aim would be to spark children's imagination and playfulness to interact with the public art in a variety of different ways. For example, it might be a sculpture on which they could jump, balance, sit on, or any other manner of play activity. The artist would look for innovative ways of making interventions to encourage people of all ages to actively engage with the public art.
- A3. The artist would undertake research and development to identify locations for the work as well as developing concept proposal(s). The artist would be encouraged, firstly, to consider single or multiple location(s) for public art in that part of Trumpington ward near Cambridge Station (or close to its boundary with Petersfield and Coleridge Wards). Such locations would need to be safe and publically accessible and have the permission of the land-owner for the installation of the public art. Alternatively, if when applying to undertake the commission, the artist could, instead, propose other suitable locations in the South or East areas of Cambridge.
- A4. The artist would be encouraged to engage directly with local young people to explore ideas for the public artwork(s). Consideration must be given to providing elements of the project, which are inclusive to those with disabilities.
- A5. The Council recognises that contemporary public art can be realised in many different and varied forms. The brief is open to interpretation by the artist, however, all interpretations must demonstrate playfulness, be safe and require minimal maintenance.
- A6. The nature of this commission requires that an artist is appointed who has a direct interest and understanding of the subject along with some experience.

## Appendix B

### **‘To the River’ Artist in Residence: update**

Many conversations and meetings have been held with communities and groups associated and interested in the River Cam. These have revealed the extent to which the river is embedded in the Cambridge community.

- Temporary Event in September 2018: FLOW, took place. A small container of river water, drawn from the area at Baits Bite Lock was encased inside a bright pink floatation vessel and taken by volunteers from Cambridge via Eco boat, running, rowing boat, kayak, narrowboat, bicycle, walking and paddleboard, swimming and by punt upstream to Byron’s Pool, near Trumpington, where it was replaced into the river.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-WJ3JoYTl8>
- Website: To the River is represented by a project website. The website will be a repository for river related information and documents the progress of the project and will to a great extent <https://totheriver.info/>
- Knit for the river: The River Cam is regularly inspected by various authorities to monitor the conditions of the riverbanks. Where erosion has occurred, a programme of maintenance is carried out using coir rolls impregnated with native plants to stabilise the riverbank. Inspired by the historical connections of the River Cam to textiles, for example, clothes washing at Laundress Green, members of the Cambridge community are invited to Knit for the River – knitting squares of organic, undyed wool which will be fixed onto the coir rolls. Installation of the knitted squares is planned for sections of the river near Trumpington (Byron’s Pool). Discussion with the Cam Conservators has highlighted that a project of regeneration work near Bottisham Lock scheduled for Autumn 2019 may be a suitable second location for the work, and installation would be carried out in partnership with the Conservators. Knit for the River open events continue through to September 2019. For information on these events or to collect a Knit for the River pack, please see <https://totheriver.info/events/> or contact Caroline Wright on [carolinejwright@btinternet.com](mailto:carolinejwright@btinternet.com)
- #what colour is the river?: In an age when snapping photos is an everyday, commonplace action, how often do we give time to stop, look and think about our surroundings by using all our senses. Capturing an image of the water of the river Cam fixes it at a moment in time, arresting all the infinite conditions. Asking what colour is the river, although a simple

question, is a seemingly impossible task. Photographs of the river water using a smartphone, and sharing on social media platforms attempts to determine enough information from which to consider the question.

- After Raverat: Artist Gwen Raverat lived in Cambridge for much of her life and generated a body of work that includes a number of wood engravings of the river Cam. Taking these works as a starting point, a research document has been compiled that pinpoints the locations that Raverat worked from. This has revealed a visual marker of physical changes to certain parts of the city of Cambridge. The document will be a starting point for work with students from Anglia Ruskin University who are developing their own responses to Raverat, her work, life and the geographical features of the River Cam. To date, students have expressed interest in Raverat's position as a working woman artist, as a Cambridge resident, and as a chronicler of social and geographical history. There is much scope for the artworks developed and Raverat research that will be investigated further.

## Appendix C

### Urban Art project concept proposal

- C1. A public petition in 2017 called for legal graffiti walls at Newmarket Road roundabout underpass. A report on the opportunities for urban art there was supported in principle by East Area Committee on 18 July, 2018.
- C2. Officers and an experienced street artist have met on site to explore the potential of the subway for urban art. This could be developed in two phases: firstly, identifying a space for the creation of urban art and, secondly, bringing the young people together to create urban artwork within the subway itself.
- C3. The entrances to the subway and tunnels would need minimal works to be used for urban art. However, the central drum of the underpass would need an EIP (Environmental Improvement Programme) funding to facilitate the project, in addition to S106 funding.
- C4. The benefits of the project to young people could include:
- developing relationships with the artists and each other;
  - exploring local environments and understand the city as a whole;
  - learning creative skills;
  - creating a stronger sense of identity to the place where they live, the surrounding areas - both natural and urban;
  - gaining a greater recognition of their emotional responses and needs and learning how to express them;
  - feeling like they belong to the community and their views count
- C5. The project could engage with cultural venues (e.g., Kettle's Yard and the University Museums) to explore what 'culture' means. This could:
- increase access to, and involvement in, the town and cultural venues;
  - support cultural venues through developing links and critical dialogue to improve and develop social and cultural policies; and
  - increase diversity within cultural venues being more reflective and understanding of the places they are in
- C6. The budget for the art project is yet to be developed and is subject to the availability of local public art s106 contributions (e.g., from Abbey and Petersfield wards). The timetable for the project has also yet to be set, as the further development of ideas needs to take place; including consultation with Community Development.