

Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee

5th July 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

No

Update on Public Realm Design Guide and Public Art Policy

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Commercial and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Fran Wallis, Local Economy Project Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. To note the contents of this report, and the progress made so far in the Design Guide.
2. To make note of the attached presentation and the key principles within it.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all – by creating a more coherent way of dealing with art and public realm
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough – by creating a more attractive place

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	5 July 2016

Update on Public Realm Design Guide and Public Art Policy

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To provide an update on the work being undertaken by FrancisKnight who have been commissioned to produce a Public Realm Design Guide for Maidstone Town Centre and a Public Art Policy for the Borough.
 - 1.2 To provide Members with the opportunity to comment on the progress of the work and provide input into the Design Guide and the Public Art Policy
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 During early discussions on Phase 3 of the Maidstone Town Centre Public Realm project, it became clear that a piece of work was required, prior to Phase 3 itself, to establish a set of principles regarding the public realm in Maidstone town centre. Phases 1 and 2 were completed several years ago, and other developments have taken place in the town centre (eg Fremlin Walk) but each development has had its own style. Consequently as each new phase of Public Realm comes about, there will potentially be a mismatch of styles and character.
 - 2.2 FrancisKnight have therefore been appointed to develop a Design Guide for public realm in the town centre. Their work will bring together other reviews of public realm and town centre visioning which have gone before, to create a document which developers of the public realm can refer to. For each further phase of public realm which the council carry out, the set of principles will be adhered to by designers to ensure some consistency.
 - 2.3 FrancisKnight have also been appointed to develop a Public Art Policy, which is intended to be borough-wide. This is intended to create more clarity on defining what public art is, and how the Council can use it to enhance an area e.g. through developer contributions.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 To note the contents of this report and presentation, and to agree to receive a further report recommending the adoption of the Design Guide and Public Art Policy once the work has been completed in the autumn 2016. This will ensure that all future public realm works are more coherent with the rest of the town and that all public realm work and public art reflects the culture, heritage and character of the Borough.
 - 3.2 To reject the work that FrancisKnight are doing, and continue to see a patchwork of design styles in the town centre, and a lack of clarity on public art in the Borough.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The option in 3.1 is recommended as this will ensure that the town centre will have a public realm which is coherent and reflects and utilises the town's heritage and character. As and when funding becomes available for any future phases of public realm, there will already be an existing design principle which consultants will follow. It will also ensure that public art is used in the borough to enhance areas and add character.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 FrancisKnight have been consulting with officers from Street Scene and Environmental Services and Economic Development, as well as the Project Team for phase 3 which incorporates colleagues from Property, Parking Services, Finance and KCC Highways. They will also be consulting with One Maidstone, and the Town Centre Strategic Advisory Board. This is the first opportunity for Members to review the work and comment on its progress and provide input. There will be further opportunities as the project develops.

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	This work will support two corporate priorities: Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all and Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough	Head of Commercial and Economic Development
Risk Management	No implications	[Head of Service or Manager]
Financial	No implications	[Section 151 Officer & Finance Team]
Staffing	No implications	[Head of Service]
Legal	No implications	[Legal Team]
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	No implications	[Policy & Information Manager]
Environmental/Sustainable Development	No implications	[Head of Service or Manager]

Community Safety	No implications	[Head of Service or Manager]
Human Rights Act	No implications	[Head of Service or Manager]
Procurement	No implications	[Head of Service & Section 151 Officer]
Asset Management	No implications	[Head of Service & Manager]

7. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Presentation on Public Realm Guide
-