

**Subject:** Irwell Sculpture Trail

**Status:** For publication

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> June 2006

**Report of:** Head of Community and Partnerships

**Portfolio**

**Holder:** Cabinet Member for Customer Services

**Key Decision:**

NO

Forward Plan

General Exception

Special Urgency

"X" In Relevant Box

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1

To inform members of the current position with regard to the management of the Irwell Sculpture Trail and to seek approval for a forward management option for the trail.

**2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- Improving Leisure Facilities in the Borough through securing access to external funding and the expertise to deliver the project as a proper business.

**3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- If we do not participate within the partnership with Salford, Bury and Lancashire we may be unable to draw down any remaining money from the budget available to pay for maintenance, publicity and access. Furthermore the completion of already commissioned works such as the work at the culvert in Bacup would be less likely to go ahead.

If we do not work in partnership we would have to be prepared to allow officer time to manage the trail in Rossendale including working with the

other authorities on promotional work and access. This could be up to the equivalent of one day per week on average.

- If we do participate within the partnership we could lose some autonomy over the management of the trail but this would be no more than at present.

#### **4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS**

- 4.1 The Irwell Sculpture Trail is an environmental art trail from Rossendale through Bury to Salford following the route of the Irwell Valley. It was established in the main with National Lottery Funding which was in the region of £2.3 million.
- 4.2 The trail was established in 1996/7 with Bury MBC taking a strategic managing role on behalf of the councils.
- 4.3 In 2002/3 a charitable organization, CITE (Commissions in the Environment Ltd.) was established to manage the trail and the remaining monies. The partnership between the Councils' to manage the trail was dissolved and responsibility for the development of the trail was passed on to CITE.
- 4.4 CITE has now formally ceased to exist and for much of the past several years has carried out little or no works to support the development and management of the Irwell Sculpture Trail. All remaining monies have reverted back to the Arts Council North West.
- 4.5 The arts council is keen to ensure that the trail continues as a regional and national landmark and tourist attraction which is beneficial to the visitor economy, the local environment and also attracts local people to outdoors and physical activities. The arts council have therefore asked the local authorities involved to come forward with options for the continuation of the trail.
- 4.6 There remains within the overall Sculpture Trail budget approximately £420,000 which can only be spent on the furthering and betterment of the trail, including maintenance, access and marketing of the trail and sculptures. There may be scope for additional new commissions.
- 4.7 Fourteen of the sculptures are within the Rossendale Boundaries, fifteen in Bury and nine within Salford. All of the sculptures are in varying states of repair and condition, some of which is planned decay.

Rossendale Borough Council is the owner of and is responsible for the maintenance of all the sculptures within the Borough and there is a small capital sum set aside for the ongoing maintenance.

- 4.8 The management of the sculptures and the trail including its marketing and publicity is a complex job and requires various skills. It is proposed that the four local authorities, Rossendale BC, Bury MBC, Salford City Council and Lancashire County Council appoint Salford as the lead authority with financial accountability for the trail. The activity required would be managed by an officer co-coordinating group who would set the work plan for the forthcoming

years and this would be managed through a Service Level Agreement with Salford. There are no current financial implications of this option for Rossendale Borough Council

- 4.9 This is effectively is a return to the original agreement when the trail was established however, with Salford rather than Bury taking the lead. Bury have been clear that they do not wish to lead on the trail at the present time. This option would allow the trail to be taken forward across its whole and may allow for the development of further pieces of art work including opportunities for future works in Rossendale.
- 4.10 If we do not enter into the agreement it is likely that we would not be able to draw down against the remaining money and all maintenance costs for the future management of the sculptures would fall to the Council. Members are asked to delegate the responsibility for negotiating the SLA to the Head of Community and Partnerships in conjunction with the Head of Legal Services.

## **5. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES**

- 5.1 The report specifically states that there are no financial implications to the Council from the preferred option. Should the option not be approved responsibilities for maintenance will fall to the Council who will have to make provision to secure the required funding

## **6. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

- 6.1 There will be a requirement to enter into a service level agreement with Salford City Council. Cabinet are being asked to delegate the decision to enter into this service level agreement to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Head of Community and Partnerships in consultation with the Portfolio Holder

## **7. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

- 7.1 There are no human resources implications of this report.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The Irwell Sculpture Trail is a valuable visitor attraction to Rossendale and by working together with the other local authority partners there are likely to be enhanced benefits of shared publicity and maintenance costs.

## **9. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Council sign up to an agreement designating Salford to take the lead for the Irwell Sculpture trail with an SLA managed through an officer steering group.

That the Head of Community and Partnerships is delegated to agree the SLA in conjunction with the Head of Legal Services.

## 10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 10.1 Lead member, Leader, Rossendale Leisure Trust Arts Development team. Arts Council North West, Salford City Council, Bury Metropolitan Borough Council, Lancashire County Council.

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Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Novation Agreement CITE and RBC	Room 113 Futures Park
Memorandum of agreement CITE and RBC	Room 113 Futures Park