

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

26th May 2010

SPRING INDUSTRY PUBLIC ART PROJECT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Anderson, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism
Relevant Head of Service	John Godwin, Head of Leisure and Cultural Services
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report sets out the background to a proposed public art project relating to the Redditch spring industry. It communicates how the project would be taken forward if approved, including the management, staffing and resource implications.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that

- 1) as part of the Borough Council's commitment to the provision of public art, a project to celebrate and commemorate the spring industry in Redditch be approved. The project will create a fitting and permanent artwork with in the town centre to reflect the positive contribution to the economy and community that the spring industry has provided; and**
- 2) a financial contribution of £2000 towards the programme be approved, to be funded from General Fund revenue balances.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In the early autumn of 2009 Councillor Hall approached the Arts Development Manager about a Mayoral initiative to promote more public art in Redditch as well as celebrate and commemorate the spring industry in Redditch.
- 3.2 Officers from the Economic Development and Planning teams joined preliminary discussions because of the respective business engagement opportunities and potential implications concerning planning policy. In addition the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development and Transport (Councillor Macmillan) and Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism (Councillor Anderson) took part in the initial discussions and agreed to support the development of Councillor Hall's proposal.

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- 3.3 Businesses from the spring industry in the Redditch Borough (manufacturers and suppliers) and representatives from NEW College's Art Department were invited to two meetings held in the Town Hall held in December 2009 and February 2010 to learn more about the project idea. The meetings facilitated a broad discussion on the history and future of the industry. Councillor Hall led the meetings on behalf of the Council and was supported by Councillors Macmillan and Anderson as representatives of the Executive.
- 3.4 Of the 17 companies represented across both meetings, all attendees agreed their support for the project idea. (Responses were received from approximately one third of businesses invited to the meetings.) Four companies registered their interest in being on a project steering group.
- 3.5 Councillors Hall and Officers now wish to formalise the proposal as an RBC project and develop the project brief to design, procure, construct and install a piece of public art in the town centre area to celebrate and commemorate the spring industry. We are currently exploring where the most suitable location for the project will be however the preferred location at this stage is Peakman Street in the town centre due to historical significance of this location in relation to the birth of the town's Spring industry. Further detail about the historical significance of the proposed location is available in 4.5 of this report.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The artwork would be a statement of pride, recognising the Borough's industrial heritage and the importance of the town's productive output. Spring manufacturers were keen to support the initiative, from the context of both commemorating the industry's history and celebrating its current situation. As Members will be aware there are a wide range of spring companies in the Borough, involved in every stage of spring making from development through to manufacture. The industry supplies local, national and international markets in the automotive, defence, aerospace, cosmetic and medical industries. Businesses hope the project will promote the industry locally and contribute to safeguarding the industry's future in Redditch.
- 4.2 The project aims include contributing to enhancing the positive "**sense of place**" in the Borough in Redditch and developing a creative project to improve the **quality of the environment** in Redditch's town centre in line with current RBC priorities around **environment** and **economic viability**.

The project will also contribute to the delivery of the Council's arts policy which prioritises the development of public art and the key deliverables contained within the Leisure and Culture Service plan which committed the department to 1) working cross departmentally to explore how best the arts can contribute to the Council's overarching priorities and how the arts can be utilised as a tool in order to contribute to priorities other than arts for arts sake; and 2) the development of public art across the Borough.

4.3 The proposed project process would be:

- 1) Finalise the project methodology documents and indicative project plans..
- 2) Establish a cross cutting officer/Member steering group. This will be made up of representatives from the Spring Industry (we have already received nominations); Officers from Leisure & Culture, EDU and Planning (including a senior RBC officer), to the portfolio holders for Leisure and/or Culture and Economy and Planning and Councillor Hall.
- 3) Produce an artist's brief for NEW College suitable to the agreed resources available, request submission of artist's proposals, select a design and artist, identify the exact location within the already confirmed approximate location in the Peakman Street area of the town centre.
- 4) Consult with the wider community and submit a planning application at which stage the design will be approved by elected members.
- 5) Fabricate and install artwork.
- 6) Official opening and promotion campaign.
- 7) A project evaluation and impact assessment would be undertaken.

At this stage it is envisaged that the project will be completed in the first quarter of 2012.

- 4.4 NEW College artist Kerry Sherlock has agreed to work with the Council to develop an artist's brief, taking into consideration the industry's heritage and the current range of products produced within the local industry. The brief will examine options for a suitable subject / theme, materials, in kind support and resources available from the industry itself (for example scrap springs and machinery), scale, functionality versus aesthetics, moving versus static, durability and permanence, health and safety and ongoing maintenance implications. NEW College and the Arts Development service are considering how work on this project could be incorporated into coursework for students taking the 2-year arts diploma course - to enhance community involvement and ownership by local young people.
- 4.5 The most well-known spring manufacturer (Herbert Terry and Sons) had significant links with the town centre area – from their first workshop in

Beoley Road in the late 1880s to manufacturing in Millsbro Road in the 20th century. Members of the Terry family lived in Peakman Street.

- 4.6 Alternative locations outside the town centre were considered but rejected. Spring manufacturers are located across the Borough - there is no single site representing the heart of current production. Installing artwork on a roundabout or prominent verge would necessitate a large-scale – and therefore costly, structure that officer considered would be inappropriate..
- 4.7 It is proposed Councillor Hall chair the steering group given that the project idea began as his Mayoral initiative and for consistency as he has led correspondence and meetings with spring firms and NEW College to date.
- 4.8 Roles and Responsibilities of the steering group are follows.

Councillor Hall: Chair of steering group and project advocate.

Project Sponsor: Head of Leisure and Culture

Project Lead: Arts Development Manager with responsibility for overseeing the management of the project, and taking a lead in terms of artistic advice in partnership with NEW College.

Industry Liaison: Economic Development Officers:

Community Engagement - NEW College, development of artists brief in partnership with RBC. Lead participation management with NEW College diploma students.

Implementation Works: Capital and landscaping officers, Town centre manager and planning officers.

- 4.9 All spring manufacturers interested in the project will receive an e-newsletter update each quarter to advise them of progress and the upcoming elements of the project plan.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The proposed budget for the project is a fixed cost of £3,500 of which RBC will be contributing £2,000. There are some optional ideas for the scheme which could be utilised if additional external funding is secured as the project develops. However, the proposed sources of that fixed budget are:

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Expenditure

Planning application: £170
Community consultation: £100
Professional artist support: £1500
Installation costs: £400
Materials (in addition to local business donated materials/equipment hire):
£650
Interpretation panel: £250
Contingency: £430

Total: £3500

5.2 Income :

£2000 : RBC
£700 : Business sponsorship
£800: Redditch School of Art Trust

Total : £3500

The £2000 contribution will act as leverage to secure the Redditch School of Art Trust contribution and local business support.

5.3 In kind support will be provided from partner organisations to progress the project as required and will include materials, capacity and expertise in key specialist areas, community engagement and communications/promotion. Partners include: New College, local business/ employer input and CYP organisations.

5.4 Ongoing costs of maintaining the work from existing arts development budgets and from in kind partner support (NEW College) as and when necessary.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 This project supports the Arts Development policy for the Council. Two of the "Values" for the policy state that we prioritise "Participation" and "Education Training, Employment and Life long Learning". Two of the aims

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say “To prioritise young people’s engagement in the arts” and “To support active participation in the arts by local people”.

- 7.2 The project supports the delivery of the Town centre strategy which includes reference to the development of public art to increase the quality of the local environment , develop a stronger sense of place in Redditch, and help with public orientation and signposting within the town centre.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 This project would contribute to the Council’s objective to develop a enterprising/economically viable Borough by creating a piece of public art which recognises the social and economic impact of the springs industry in Redditch. The project provides indirect benefits to the EDU who can take the opportunity to build relationships or consult with local businesses and in so doing ascertain local business needs. Local Spring Industry representatives have indicated that it would encourage them to bring their customers/external partners to the town centre in order to make clear that the Borough Council are proud of the local Spring Industry. These visits would encourage businesses to spend money in the local economy.
- 8.2 This piece of quality art work also supports the Council’s objective to develop a “quality environment” in the Borough.
- 8.3 The project supports the work of the artsinredditch (air) partnership (cultural theme group to the Redditch LSP) who fully endorse the programme. The development of Public Art is incorporated into the partnership’s work programme and incorporates into their mission to “increase participation in the arts” National Indicator 11.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The relevant officers from the Planning/Landscape and Capital will be consulted in order to ensure that the piece of work is safe and suitable for permanent installation in a public place. A process of ongoing H & S checks will take place throughout the project’s delivery and following the completion of the project. .

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

10.1 If approved the project will enhance the physical environment in the town centre and celebrate one of the Borough's important industries – impacting on a number of residents and local businesses.

10.2 Relevant Officers will be informed and consulted as required throughout the project. Spring manufacturers who have previously noted their interest in the project will be updated on progress regularly. A full public consultation will take place when a design and location have been identified.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

12.1 A considerable amount of artistic input, design and the production of the public art is provided voluntarily by local young emerging artists, support by a professional artist. This therefore represents good value for money and an effective use of council resources to mitigate the overall cost of the project to RBC.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

13.1 The project may be able to utilise – and hence recycle – some redundant materials from spring manufacturing although no formal decision has yet to be made on the materials for the artwork.

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

14.1 None

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

15.1 None

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**16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF
CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

16.1 We will consult with our colleagues in community safety to ensure CCTV coverage is not disrupted by the works undertaken and that any designs produced consider community safety implications.

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

17.1 None

18. LESSONS LEARNT

18.1 None

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

19.1 In total 75 spring-related companies were invited to a meeting regarding the initial project idea. 17 companies agreed their support for the project idea, with 4 interested in being members of the steering group. The steering group will meet regularly throughout the rest of the process and they will arrange a public consultation event once designs are near completion serving to cover our ongoing commitment to community consultation as part of this programme.

19.2 The project will also facilitate links between education providers and employers and provide opportunities for young people to participate in arts related activities and stimulate work experience opportunities between the local springs industry and local young people.

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	Yes
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	No

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Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

21. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards

22. APPENDICES

None

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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