

Subject: Irwell Sculpture Trail

Status: For Publication

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 10th September 2008

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive

Portfolio

Holder: Communities and Neighbourhoods

Key Decision: No

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present to Cabinet a report about the Irwell Sculpture Trail Partnership.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 The Irwell sculpture trail is an environmental art trail following the route of the Irwell Valley. It is intended to contribute to the enjoyment, use and community identity of the Irwell Valley.

2.2 The Irwell Sculpture Trail is a 33 mile arts trail which starts in Salford, following the River Irwell through Bury up to Bacup.

2.3 Arts Council North West has confirmed that their Capital Services will be supporting the development of the Irwell Sculpture Trail with an investment of £420,515, of which Rossendale will benefit proportionately along with the other partners.

2.4 A strategic partnership led by Salford City Council working with Lancashire County Council, Rossendale Council, and Bury Metropolitan Council, will manage the redevelopment of the Trail as part of a 5 year plan.

2.5 The Irwell Sculpture Trail Partnership's Business Plan 2007 – 2013 will impact directly on the following corporate priorities and associated corporate objective.

- Delivering Regeneration across the Borough
- Keeping Our Borough Clean and Green
- Promoting Rossendale as a cracking place to live and visit
- Improving health and well being across the Borough

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

- The Council is the responsible authority for ensuring the sculptures within the Rossendale boundary are maintained in a safe condition
- LCC is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the rights of way on which the sculptures are sited
- Removing ourselves from the IST Partnership could result in the Arts Council North West considering removal of their investment of £420,515
- A significant advantage of being within the partnership allows us to utilise the intellectual capital of officers employed within Salford, Bury and County. This would cease if we removed ourselves from the partnership
- Rossendale's reputation with funding bodies like the lottery fund and Arts Council North West would be significantly tarnished

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

4.1 In September 1997 Rossendale Borough Council entered into a partnership agreement with Bury MBC, Lancashire CC and Salford CC known as the 'Irwell Sculpture Trail Partnership'. The partnership agreement sets out detailed arrangements between the authorities for developing ways in which they would work individually and collectively to support the creation and development of the Irwell Sculpture Trail.

4.2 The IST Partnership has from 1999 to the present date overseen £2,316,730 of funding from the National Lottery Fund for various public art works and activities.

4.3 The IST Partnership has agreed that Salford CC will take responsibility as the lead authority for the trail and management of agreed priority tasks, including decommissioning, signage and interpretation, access and marketing. Salford CC will also take the lead in employing and managing a project coordinator and re-establishment of a partnership working group.

4.4 The IST Partnership's key responsibilities going forward are to:

- Oversee the delivery of the Irwell Sculpture Trail Business Plan 2007 – 2013.
- Promote the concept of a public art trail, and the Irwell Sculpture Trail in particular, with statutory and voluntary bodies, the private sector and local communities.
- Promote the cooperation and partnership of local communities and users of the Irwell Sculpture Trail.
- Secure resources for implementation of projects on the Irwell Sculpture Trail by raising private and public sector funding (e.g. contributions, donations, subscriptions, legacies, grants or other lawful means; and by

targeting other grant aid including the National Lottery, Government and European Community Funds).

- Implement agreed projects on the Irwell Sculpture Trail, subject to funding being available, through the employment of professional artists.
- Involve local people, local businesses, volunteers, schools and colleges in development of the Irwell Sculpture Trail, particularly in the design and implementation of projects.
- Prepare appropriate public relations and marketing strategies and co-ordinate with other agencies as required, e.g. Arts Council England, North West Regional Development Agency, the Countryside Commission and Red Rose Forest.
- Engage in any further arts/cultural projects on the Irwell Sculpture Trail that may be agreed between the parties, and secure additional funds to implement them.
- Engage in promotions to raise the profile and contribute to the success of the Irwell Sculpture Trail.

The £420,515 released by the Arts Council North West to the IST Partnership will be spent on interpretation, signage and marketing for the IST. The key point to note is that the funding cannot be used for making good the footpaths or maintenance of the pieces.

The delivery of the IST Business Plan 2007 – 2013 is structured into 3 phases of delivery:

Phase 1 – Audit and Review

- Project Planning (site visits, meeting with partners etc.)
- Audits of pathways, routes and access
- Audits of Artworks
- Review of existing processes (commissioning, maintenance, decommissioning etc.)
- Review of existing marketing (website, print etc.) and research marketing options (marketing strategy)
- Review of Partnerships, potential funding, links in with cultural attractions
- Public Consultation – link in with routes, marketing and material to be included on routes

Phase 2 – Remedial Action and Delivery

- Remedial actions from recommendations in Audit of pathways, routes and access
- Remedial actions from recommendations in Audit of Artworks
- Development of new IST management processes and guidelines
- Development and delivery of marketing strategy
- Brief, contract and monitor deliverers
- Temporary commission launch and celebration
- Development and set up of Friends of Trail

Phase 3 – Sustain and Legacy

- New commissions utilising new management procedures and guidelines (maintenance, contracts etc.)
- Annual Audits – Artworks and Pathways
- Friends of the Trail – active supporting monitoring of Trail and update of website and interpretation
- Ongoing marketing
- IST becomes part of broader public realm programmes in each of the geographic areas.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 5.1 It is assumed that the initial stages of the development will not have any new material financial implications for the Council, other than existing financial risks (eg any required decommissioning expenses which will continue to exist irrespective of a partnership)
- 5.2 With regard to future financial implications, at this stage it has yet to be quantified what ongoing responsibility the Council may have and what new sources of funding maybe available.

6. MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 Its important that we are fully aware of any requirements to maintain the existing sculptures. We can then look to request s106 planning contributions from developers (if reasonable to do so) towards future maintenance and upkeep of the trail. The Lancashire County Council planning obligations policy provides a basis for the Council to request such contributions.

7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

- 7.1 There are no immediate Human Resource implications, however a full equality impact assessment will need to be carried out as part of the ongoing development of the Trail.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 Previous reports to Cabinet rightfully expressed uncertainty as to the ongoing financial implications to the Authority. The audit of the Rossendale stretch of the trail to be completed by November 08 should go some way to eliminating this uncertainty. Most importantly it should provide the Authority with a clear picture in order to develop an approach for going forward.
- 8.2 It is clear that any promotion of the trail relies heavily on joint working between Rossendale Council and Lancashire County Council particularly the County's approach to maintaining the rights of way on the trail.

8.3 Officers from the County and Rossendale Council have set up a joint planning committee to discuss proposals on our future approach to the IST. The priority for Rossendale Council is to secure some form of service level agreement that commits LCC to a scheme of ongoing maintenance and repair of the trail.

8.4 Rossendale Council has created a position of 'Service Development Officer – Culture within the newly formed Communities section. One of the officer's main responsibilities will be to work closely with the IST partnership, explore funding opportunities and most importantly develop and promote the IST and other 'Cultural Offer' within Rossendale.

8.5 Salford CC will provide the Irwell Sculpture Trail Partnership with the following information on a quarterly basis:

- A copy of the quarterly financial spend.
- Full update on project progress relating to the priority task areas.

8.6 Salford CC will provide the Irwell Sculpture Trail Partnership with the following information on an annual basis:

- A copy of full annual accounts relating to the Irwell Sculpture Trail.
- Full reports and evaluations on priority task areas and project progress.
- Annual forward planning report.

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- The recommendation to Cabinet is to support the ongoing work of the IST Partnership and ongoing commitment to the IST Business Plan
- That authority is delegated to the portfolio holder for Communities & Neighbourhoods and the Deputy Chief Executive to oversee any actions emanating from the audit of the trail and the development of a service level agreement with County.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

10.1 During the history of the IST, a huge amount of enthusiasm has been shown towards the Trail from a variety of voluntary groups, agencies and individuals within each of the local authorities. It is the Partnership's view that this enthusiasm should be valued and capitalised upon.

10.2 One of the key tasks of the IST partnership is to encourage the community to get involved with the future strategic direction of the trail. It is therefore proposed to set up a 'Rossendale Friends of the Trail' group and ensure that their work is linked into the Neighbourhood Forums.

11. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required

Yes / No

Is an Equality Impact Assessment attached Yes / No

12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required Yes / No

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached Yes / No

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Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
IST Business Plan 2007 - 2013	Stubbylee Hall, Bacup