

Title of meeting: Cabinet Member for Housing & Tackling Homelessness

Date of meeting: 13th July 2023

Subject: Public Artwork - PCC Housing Blocks and Estates

Report by: James Hill - Director for Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services

Author: Andrew Malbon - Acting Head of Design Service

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek approval to the principle to incorporate public art (murals / sculptures etc.) on Portsmouth City Council housing buildings, housing owned assets and within our housing estates across Portsmouth and Havant, and to agree the core principles and the process that will be followed in identifying and approving locations for the installation of public art as and when requests arise.
- 1.2 To seek approval to explore the opportunity to work with Articulate Sage to incorporate into the planned Portsmouth Art Festival 2023 housing buildings and housing owned assets, and in doing so pilot the application of the core principles and process as set and in this report.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness approves the principle to incorporate public art (murals / sculptures etc.) on Portsmouth City Council housing buildings, housing owned assets and within our housing estates across Portsmouth and Havant, and agrees the process that will be followed in identifying and approving locations for the installation of public art as and when requests arise.
- 2.2 The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness approves the exploration of a Portsmouth Art Festival 2023 using housing buildings and housing owned assets to pilot the application of the core principles and process as set - out in this report.

2.3 The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness delegates to the Director of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Building Services and relevant officers, as appropriate the application of the core principles and process.

2.4 The Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness requests officer to bring an information report following the Portsmouth Art Festival 2023.

3. Background

3.1 The Design Service has a track record of providing innovative and imaginative projects for clients across the City Council, recently this has included involving local artists to contribute to the interior decoration of the developments. Many of our young people have been able to enjoy these pieces through the Council's recent expansion of secondary school places. Appendix 1 shows examples of the artwork that has been incorporated into school sufficiency projects.

3.2 The success & the positive impact of these projects has led to further involvement with the artistic community, most recently the very successful Hilsea Lido paint weekend. This 'Levelling Up Fund' scheme saw 15 local and guest artists paint the temporary hoarding around the Lido. The local community's sense of ownership and pride in the work was backed up by a long reach across PCC's social Media presence and the event being reported nationally. Appendix 2 shows a photo of the artwork installed at Hilsea Lido.

3.3 Following this event Housing Neighbourhood and Building Services have been approached by a number of artists and artist's collectives enquiring about opportunities for further painting or sculpture on building and assets owned by PCC.

3.4 Furthermore, the 'Pompey Pelican' (by Curtis Hylton, Angmering House 2022), installed in conjunction with Portsmouth Creates (We Shine Festival) stands as a model for consultation and engagement with the local residents and an example of what can be achieved using a residential housing block. This initiative provided the opportunity to create and test a process to ensure that the installation was successful, and consideration had been given to all that required input to determine if the location and building were suitable. Portsmouth Creates adopted the Arts Council England's (ACE) good practice in the selection of artists for the 'We Shine Festival' and worked with the Portsmouth Events Safety Advisory Group (PESAG). The initiative also enshrined the core principle that the residents living in the block were at the heart of the decision to use the block and engaged in the choice of the artwork. Appendix 3 shows picture of the Pompey Pelican installation.

3.5 With the success of these schemes and interest in using PCC owned housing blocks, housing assets and housing estate areas to incorporate public artwork a process to enable officers to manage enquiries with reference to an agreed set of core principles and process is necessary.

3.6 The creation of the core principles and process should be considered a temporary measure and would be superseded in the event that a policy and process is developed for Portsmouth City Council alongside a City-wide strategy for Public Art. This is likely to arise from opportunities to incorporate public art into strategically significant schemes like the coastal defence works.

4. Core Principles and Process

4.1 If agreed, the following core principles and process will be used by officers to manage contact for the installation of public art.

4.1.1 Core principles

- Residents (tenants and leaseholders) - The residents in a block and the surrounding area (as appropriate) must be engaged and consulted and will have the final say on any proposal. If a majority do not agree with the installation of the public artwork or the design of the public artwork permission will not be granted. This recognises that the buildings and estate areas in scope are residential homes and communal areas, and the landlord should have regard to the views of their tenants and leaseholders. (This principle will be applied as appropriate to other housing owned assets for example licensees of garages, community centre users etc)
- The wider community should also be engaged and consulted as appropriate and particularly when the public artwork is visible to the wider community. Though primacy will be afforded to the residents living in the block about the installation and design, it will be important in considering providing permission to be assured that the wider community support the public art.
- The financial position for the City Council and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) remain under significant pressure. Any installation both in the initial installation and in the longer term, needs to be budget neutral for the housing revenue account which will instead seek to support through 'in kind' support, utilising, for example, the social value opportunity for HRA contractors and officer time.
- The selection of a building and location is subject to landownership checks and approval by building services to ensure that the location and building (or asset) is suitable for the installation. If the installation proceeds building services will oversee the risk assessment for the work.
- It is important that the organisation or group have the capacity and capability to successfully deliver the public artwork, including the relevant public liability insurance and certainty of the funding required to do so. It is also important that the organisation or group are able to demonstrate that they will follow the ACE good practice in the open and transparent selection of artists.
- The ongoing maintenance (including the decommissioning) of any artwork, its suitability for application to a particular substrate and a clear idea of how the

work will weather over time will be considered when making a recommendation.

4.1.2 Process

4.1.2.1 The following is an indicative process and outlines the key elements of the process from the initial contact through to the checks and coordination of the delivery of the public artwork. This process will be refined as individual projects are completed, noting the potential as outlined in 3.6 for a City-Wide policy and process to emerge.

4.1.2.2 An artist, collective of artists or a local resident's groups approach the City Council seeking permission to install or commission a work of public art on part of a building that is owned or managed by the City Council's housing service. All contacts regarding public artwork will be routed through to the Head of Design Services.

4.1.2.3 The Assistant Director of Buildings/Head of Design Service would then be approached to assist with an assessment of the suitability of the proposal using the following terms of reference:

- HRA land team is engaged to check land ownership and oversee any formal arrangements to grant access to the land etc
- Estate Services and the local area office housing management team will be consulted to ensure that any proposal is in keeping with the local area and any environmental improvement plans.
- Resident engagement team are engaged and potentially used to support liaison with residents/community
- Leasehold services are engaged to consider any leasehold interests in residential blocks
- Building Services will be engaged to assess the buildings/assets and locations. The buildings and sites will be surveyed by the buildings service team for suitability with consideration given to future maintenance of any installation, including the duration for the installation and the decommissioning plan
- Culture and Leisure will be engaged to check the fit of a project with other city-wide initiatives.
- Financial services engaged as appropriate to ensure that the scheme is self-funding and will be budget neutral.
- Housing communication and marketing team are engaged to support and compliment communications and publicity including coordinating cabinet member and ward member input.

4.1.2.4 The artist, collective or group will be directed to engage with the Portsmouth Events Safety Advisory Group (PESAG) and any event or installation must meet the requirements of PESAG.

4.1.2.5 Any project or scheme will require final approval by the director through the Directorate Building Management Board (DBMB).

- 4.1.2.6 The Cabinet member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness will be kept informed through internal briefings and via decision meetings as appropriate.
- 4.1.2.7 In order to facilitate contacts and coordinate the process - the Design Services team will hold and coordinate contact and the process.
- 4.1.2.8 The core principles and process largely in response to requests from artists and artist collectives. They can be adapted and used as appropriate for situations where the service commissions directly public artwork and seeks funding to do so. In those instances, the directorate will work with Culture & Leisure and Portsmouth Creates to agree the tendering of the opportunity.

5. Art Festival Opportunity

- 5.1 Articulate Sage have contacted Design Services to request if it is possible to use housing owned buildings to create a Portsmouth Art Festival.
- 5.2 Articulate Sage have access to Arts Council funding and will secure additional funding. The Articulate Sage team have a wide range of experience and are associated with the Cheltenham Art Festival.
- 5.3 The approach requires pace to develop the opportunity and is seen as a means to test the core principles and process as outlined in the report. In doing so this can be seen as a means to build upon the success of the Pompey Pelican installation and install public art to a selection of other housing blocks throughout the City. The festival is anticipated to take place during the summer 2023 with installations complete at the end of the summer (September 2023).
- 5.4 If the festival is successful it is possible for a festival in 2024 to go further to incorporate a wider range of blocks and expand the festival into the Havant area.
- 5.5 In order to move at the pace required for the 2023 art festival exploratory work has been undertaken to identify a range of housing buildings and housing assets to be considered for the 2023 festival. The exploratory work has been caveated that any work undertaken prior to the decisions contained in this report are subject to this decision report and though housing buildings and housing assets have been identified as prima facie suitable for the festival they remain subject to the application of the core principles and process contained in this report. The range identified it is hoped will enable a successful festival incorporating housing buildings and housing assets bringing public art into PCC housing areas throughout the City and will enable the core principles and process to be tested. Appendix 4 shows the list of blocks (and assets) in scope for the 2023 festival.
- 5.6 Assuming the Portsmouth Art Festival 2023 is successful it is hoped that a future festival will expand the reach to housing buildings and housing assets in Havant and other locations in Portsmouth.

6. Reasons for recommendations

- 6.1 Given the success of the initiatives as highlighted in section 3 and interest in further installation of public art it is necessary to seek approval to continue to explore opportunities and agree core principles and a process to enable officers to manage contacts

To enable more communities, especially those that are seldom heard, to access and experience the positive benefits of public art including positive impacts on mental health, pride in the local area and increasing the sense of ownership to spaces that are under valued.

- 6.2 To build stronger relationships within these communities through working with artists.
- 6.3 To understand the constraints and opportunities available to local artists when seeking to deliver large scale public art on Council owned property. To ensure that all connected parties have the opportunity to input into any projects that might be brought forward.
- 6.4 The Portsmouth Art Festival provides then opportunity to further test the core principles and process. The exploratory work with Articulate Sage confirms that the festival will meet the core principles and the recommendation to move forward recognises the need for pace to hold onto the funding and opportunity.

7. Integrated impact assessment

- 7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed and submitted, the results will follow once it has been assessed.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 The City Solicitor is satisfied that it is within the City Council's powers to approve the recommendations as set out in this report.

9. Director of Finance's comments

- 9.1 The core principles and process, as described in the report, seek to ensure that the installation, as well as any ongoing maintenance, of any public artwork remains cost neutral for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the City Council. Financial Services will be engaged to confirm that the scheme is self-funding. Officers will seek to support the initiative through 'in kind' support, to avoid any draw upon HRA revenue or capital budgets.

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 Signed by: **James Hill**
Director for Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Example of Public Artwork incorporated into school sufficiency projects
- Appendix 2 – Picture of the Public Artwork installation at Hilsea Lido
- Appendix 3 – Picture of the Pompey Pelican installation
- Appendix 4 – Portsmouth Art Festival 2023 – housing blocks in scope

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Articulate Sage	Articulate Sage (articulate-sage.com)

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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 Signed by: