

Title of meeting: Culture, Regeneration and Economic Development Decision Meeting

Date of meeting: 11 October 2024

Subject: Seafront Arts 'Navigate' project

Report by: Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

Cabinet Member: Councillor Steve Pitt

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update on activity related to the seafront arts project.
- 1.2 To agree on the next phase of the project.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Culture, Regeneration and Economic Development approves the proposed 'Navigate' public art project which has been developed as part of the Southsea Coastal Scheme's enhancements programme.
- 2.2 That the Cabinet Member for Culture, Regeneration and Economic Development approves the use of a public consultation process to help inform the selection of the scheme's signature artwork for Serpentine Square.

3. Background

- 3.1 Portsmouth City Council has committed to delivering a programme of public art and creative projects to engage the local community and enhance the Southsea Coastal Scheme. To implement this, the new role of Seafront Arts Programme Officer was created in September 2023. The aims and initial plans for the programme were outlined at the Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Briefing Meeting on 1 March 2024.
- 3.2 The first two enhancement projects are due to be installed by the end of 2024. A specially commissioned poem *The Theatre of the Sea* by the poet laureate

Simon Armitage, an alum of University of Portsmouth, will be added to the seawall around Southsea Castle. A series of outdoor exhibition boards called 'The Windbreaks' will be installed on the promenade close to Speakers Corner and will display a changing programme of artwork predominantly by local artists.

4. Navigate

4.1 The proposed next phase of enhancements is a series of public art commissions and activity grouped together under the banner 'Navigate'. The Navigate project will create a trail of sculpture and visual art on the seafront. The project aims to provide tangible opportunities for the community to engage in creating, selecting and learning about public art. Using a central theme of 'navigation', the project will encourage exploration of the new landscape whilst referencing Portsmouth's rich seafaring history.

4.2 See Navigate project overview attached.

The project will comprise:

Navigate Public Art Commissions

A series of nine commissions for permanent and temporary artworks which highlight local themes and stories.

- Tier One - Five commissions of up to £6,000 each
We want to use these commissions to support local artists to develop their skills and learn about creating public art from an experienced professional. PCC will fund £5,000 for the creation of each work and Portsmouth Creates will provide an additional £1,000 to fund mentoring for each artist. We hope that these commissions will provide a foundation from which the selected artists can develop their practice, empowering them to take on larger-scale public art projects in the future.
- Tier Two - Three commissions of up to £25,000 each
The Tier Two commissions will be open call opportunities for artists with some previous experience of producing art for the public realm. We want to bring the seafront to life with a dynamic, engaging series of artworks. Applications will be open to artists from across the UK and we will actively encourage artists from the local area to apply.
- Tier Three - One 'signature artwork' commission of up to £100,000
For Tier Three, we will invite three artists with experience of high-profile public art commissions to submit proposals for a large piece of public art to be located at the heart of the scheme's new piazza, Serpentine Square. It is essential that the community have a say in this process. The proposals will be exhibited publicly and community feedback will be collected. The three proposals and the community feedback will be reviewed by a panel before one artwork will be

chosen. We want a signature artwork which will make real impact, become an iconic landmark on the seafront and help establish Portsmouth as a cultural destination.

Southsea Castle Lighthouse

A commission for a temporary light-based art installation to be applied to the disused lighthouse at Southsea Castle. The artwork will allow the lighthouse to 'shine again', having sat unused since 2017. This project is dependent on approval by Historic England.

The Portsmouth Markers

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Portsmouth Markers sculptures by John Maine RA, the commissioning of a new piece by the artist to replace the missing sixth marker. John Maine was at the start of his career when he created the original sculptures in 1974 but is now a revered sculptor and member of the Royal Academy of Arts.

Mapping the Seafront

A 'constellation' of miniature artworks which draws inspiration from The Portsmouth Markers. Mapping the Seafront will be created by a professional artist/facilitator working in collaboration with local people.

Young Explorers

Engagement activity to encourage school groups to explore the new collection of public art and learn about the processes and stories behind the work.

Trail Guide and Video Content

Printed and digital guides to this new collection of public art. A series of short films will also be produced to capture the process of creating the artworks.

- 4.3 The total cost of delivery is budgeted at £310,000. The plans have been developed with ongoing and continuing engagement with Sarah Madden of Arts Council England. An application has been submitted to Arts Council England for the sum of £62,000 to support the delivery of this project. £243,000 from the seafront enhancements budget has been allocated for the Navigate project. £5,000 will be provided by Portsmouth Creates to fund mentoring opportunities for five local artists.

5. Reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 There is a strong emphasis on working with artists at all stages of their creative careers and upskilling local artists. It is a valuable opportunity for Portsmouth's creatives to contribute to a scheme which will be part of the local landscape for years to come.



- 5.2 There is a considered approach to providing meaningful opportunities for local people to engage in the process. Members of the community will participate in the creation of the Mapping the Seafront artwork and members of the community will engage in the selection of the scheme's signature artwork. The Young Explorers workshop series will provide engaging arts-based learning experiences for young people from across the city.
- 5.4 The programme is guided by a steering group from local arts organisations which ensures transparency for the planning and delivery of the project. The group is made up of representatives from Portsmouth Creates, Aspex Visual Arts Trust, Hotwalls Studios, University of Portsmouth and Portsmouth Museum & Art Gallery.

6. Integrated impact assessment

- 6.1 Integrated Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 2

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 There are no specific legal issues identified within the report at this time. Further legal advice maybe required and can be obtained on the specifics of the project as required.]

8. Director of Finance's comments

- 8.1 The recommendations contained in this report will be implemented within the existing approved budget resource and external funding bids, as identified in paragraph 4.3].

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Signed by:

Stephen Baily
Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Navigate Project Overview
- Appendix 2 - Integrated Impact Assessment

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

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

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Signed by:
Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development