



Title of Report:	Installation of Artwork Portstewart
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	19 October 2021
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, Healthy & Engaged Communities
Outcome	Council will work to develop and promote stable and cohesive communities across the Borough
Lead Officer	Head of Community & Culture Arts Service Development Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£0 - £15,000
Included in Current Year Estimates	NO
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	
Staffing Costs	n/a

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date: Aug 2016 (CAH Strategy)
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date: 2019
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date: n/a
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

To provide options for Members to consider a potential art installation in Portstewart following correspondence tabled at the Leisure & Development meeting in June 2021 from Mr Sam Burnside.

2.0 Background

Correspondence received from Mr Sam Burnside, and previously circulated to Members, included a request that council consider the installation of artwork which includes the inscription of a poem written by Mr Burnside, who has offered to donate copyright of the poem to the Council.

Mr Burnside expressed an interest in Portstewart and having written the poem, which acknowledges Henry McCullough, guitarist in Wings and Jimmy Kennedy who wrote Red Sails in the Sunset. The poem is attached as part of the correspondence received in **Annex A** of the report.

The poet has shared the piece with a relative of Mr McCullough as well as engaging with a number of residents in relation to same.

The proposal requests that council considers funding and installing either an appropriately placed free standing stone, glass or granite plaque attached to a wall with the text of his poem along waterfront in Portstewart with the view of enhancing the civic space of the town, as an example of 'poetry in public'.

The correspondence cites examples of his previous poetry commissions for public and private spaces for both public institutions, a charity and a private individual. Mr Burnside has identified a number of these being as the result of a public competition/procurement to develop particular pieces.

3.0 Options

A number of options are provided for council to consider, as requested by members.

Option description	Issues	Benefits	Indicative/estimated cost to council
A. Do nothing	Correspondence not progressed by council following request. Potential negative PR from some members of the community.	No cost to council. No potential challenge from other artists/creative practitioners in terms of proceeding with requests without criteria or consistent rationale (such as an existing programme or project council has built into business plans) or public/open competition process to enhance public spaces.	Nil
B. Granite slab fixed to wall/or ceramic plaque with text painted. seafront location or Flowerfield building (either	Identification of potential suitable sites in council ownership. Advertisement consent from Planning. Stakeholder/community consultation required if on public land.	Enhancement of public realm. Or enhancement of Council's Flowerfield site. Promotion of the arts, subject matter relates to	Rough estimate provided by stonemason and installation £4,000 (granite slab). Or Circa £2500 for ceramic plaque

<p>internally or externally).</p>	<p>No current artistic scheme in place that the proposal can fit within (sets precedence) – potential challenge from other local artists.</p> <p>Additional cost implication for council – not in budgets.</p>	<p>CC&GB area and local talent.</p> <p>Act as a catalyst for public expression of the arts (potential to develop a trail promoting local artists over time, depending on resources).</p>	<p>Capital project and arts staff time.</p>
<p>C. Free standing 'stone'/ Sculpture.</p>	<p>Identification of potential suitable sites in council ownership or obtaining consent from 3rd party site owner.</p> <p>Planning permission and costs.</p> <p>Stakeholder/community consultation.</p> <p>No current artistic scheme in place that the proposal can fit within (sets precedence) – potential challenge from other local artists.</p> <p>Additional cost implication for council – cost prohibitive.</p> <p>Additional project for capital works.</p>	<p>Enhancement of public realm.</p> <p>Promotion of the arts, subject matter relates to CC&GB area and local talent.</p> <p>Act as a catalyst for public expression of the arts (potential to develop a trail promoting local artists over time, depending on resources).</p>	<p>Estimate for design, build and installation based on small scale sculpture projects previously completed (depending on size/design) £15,000+ (difficult to estimate without final design and ground works investigation etc).</p> <p>Not including planning costs, capital project and arts staff time.</p>
<p>D. Arts staff to investigate the feasibility of developing a broader programme reflecting the sentiments/ objectives of the proposal, liaising with Mr Burnside and other arts practitioners.</p> <p>As a result, develop a programme, for example creative trail projects and seeking relevant</p>	<p>Proposal as it stands would not receive immediate deliverables.</p> <p>Without immediate action, momentum may be lost.</p>	<p>A range of stakeholders are engaged in developing potential programmes to maximise participation.</p> <p>Inclusive and broader programme developed which considers the potential to include other areas, artists and subject matters.</p> <p>Equitable approach embedded.</p> <p>Local talent promoted.</p> <p>Additional offering for local residents and</p>	<p>Staff time.</p> <p>Minimal direct costs, until included in direct programming costs or external funding secured to progress.</p>

funding opportunities for same.		<p>tourists alike, raising awareness and appreciation of the arts in public.</p> <p>No immediate additional, unplanned cost pressures to council.</p> <p>Enhancement of public realm.</p>	
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4.0 Recommendations

That members consider the options provided in the report, and considering the risks and benefits associated with each, proceed with option D, namely investigate the potential to develop a broader programme which reflects the sentiment of the correspondence. Offer the opportunity to engage a broader range of creative practitioners, including Mr Burnside in developing same and seek funding to progress.

Annex A

From: Sam Burnside (samuelburnside@aol.com)
Eglinton, Co Londonderry.
T. 07988884149

To: Mr Jackson, Town Clerk / CEO,
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

Subject: A proposal for a public art installation that acknowledges the cultural contribution made by two sons of Portstewart.

Background

After many years developing poetry in the community and writing and publishing poetry I have developed a growing interest in the concept of Poetry in Public. I attach some examples of my work, below.

I have a particular interest in Portstewart, (hence this poem) and have given a copy of it to Rae Morrison, Portstewart (Sister of the late Henry McCullough, legendary guitarist, and she has shared it with others, some as far afield as Canada.

The songwriter Jimmy Kennedy OBE is of course very much associated with Portstewart, an association kept alive by the Red Sails Festival.

I have also shared this idea of this “public poem” with residents, including Mrs Alison Millar LL and Karen Girvan: Mrs Millar suggested I contact you regarding the initiative, hence this email.

I am happy to donate copyright of the poem to the Council. The cost of inscribing the text on (say) for example a large stone placed in an appropriate site along waterfront and designed to enhance the civic space of the town, would be minimal.

Poems made visible

Inscribed on glass or carved into large free-standing stone (or a slate or granite slab fixed to a wall) and placed in a public or civic context, cultural meaning and significance is conveyed powerfully by a poem’s visibility. The sense of a shared humanity created and expressed, for example, in Brackfield Memorial Woods Public poetry (see below), makes affective life immediately tangible by foregrounding the soldiers’ experiences. This can lead to the formation of a two-way link through memory of past and present generations in a new and powerful way, allowing history to infiltrate directly into and live in contemporary consciousness.

Another example of this can be found in Belfast City Hall’s “Spanish Window”: This window marks the contribution of those Belfast citizens to the anti-fascist forces during the Spanish Civil War from 1936 – 1939. About 320 Irish volunteers fought against Franco’s forces as members of the XV International Brigade. Of these, forty-eight were born in Belfast. Twelve died in Spain. The Spanish Civil War became for many an opportunity to stand against the growth of fascism. Men and women from all over the world answered the call to defend democracy and their working class counterparts.)

Sam Burnside

Examples of of Sam Burnside’s work in “poetry in public”

1. Belfast City Council, Stained Glass Window in Belfast City Hall. A new stained glass window commissioned by Belfast Council to mark the contribution made by the people of Belfast to the Spanish Civil War. (Work chosen was selected via public competition.) Poet/Artist, Sam Burnside / Alpha Stained Glass
2. Three glass panels on the west elevation of historic Culmore Victoria Hall, now a dedicated “community Hub”. Victoria Hall (formerly in the ownership of the Honourable the Irish Society, has been handed over as a community resource. This window has been conceived of by the organising committee as a celebration of the heritage of the Culmore area. Poet/artist Sam Burnside/Joe Campbell.
3. Derry and Strabane City Council, Garden of Reflection, a suite of themed Haiku poems incorporated into eight free-standing, stained glass panels. The garden, with seats strategically placed, is conceived of as a place of refuge, sanctuary and reflection located in the (urban) city centre. (Work selected via public competition.) Poet/Artist, Sam Burnside / Art Glass
4. Millennium Forum and Conference Centre: Derry-Londonderry: a long poem (consisting of 14 framed folios incorporating image and text, each with original art work). The poem first appeared in *The Recorder, The Journal of the American Irish Historical Society, NY, Fall, 1999*, Poet/Artist Sam Burnside/Leslie Nicholl
5. Woodland Trust (UK) at Brackfield Woods, Co. Londonderry: a series of eight stone plinths, each with its own sound pod, with a poem inscribed on each, forming a poetry trail through Brackfield Memorial Woods. These poems were first published by the Woodland Trust (*By Brackfield Bawn, Lapwing Poetry, Belfast, 2018, 2nd edition, sponsored by Armed Forces Covenant Fund, 2018*) as the result of a poet in residence initiative. The woods contain 40,000 trees planted in remembrance of the individuals from Ireland who gave their lives during the First World War. The programme was overseen by Brackfield Memorial Woodland Advisory Committee, chaired by Sir Dennis Desmond. Poet. Sam Burnside / implementation, Woodland Trust UK.
6. Poetry Wall: a poem on the theme of ‘home’ inscribed in glass bricks built in the form of a small glass wall, situated in a private garden in Londonderry. Poet, Sam Burnside

- Text -

The BreakingWave

Rain hammers on the anvil of the world,
 Makes a mosaic of this grey and green shoreline,
 Crenelated sea, tumbling rocks, crumbling earth.
 What there is of natural light is not now flat,

It curves, ebbing and flowing, as grief does.
Suddenly, the heavy gates close; thud, thud.
The shuttered town is black; yet it is not
Wholly black, veined with life's oncoming force:
Light creeps, invades, challenges the heavy dark,
Through slitted eyes, luminosity seeps, seeps;
Light creeps around, over and under fences;
On softly singing wings¹ ghosts of seabirds.
Mist sliced by sails² as by a blood red knife.
Before death and after death there is life.

Sam Burnside

¹ An acknowledgement of [Henry McCullough](#), guitarist, who played in Paul McCartney's group **Wings** & at **Woodstock**.

² An acknowledgement of Jimmy Kennedy's song, **Red Sails in the Sunset**