

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMISSIONER FOR THE PUBLIC REALM

Cabinet - 5 March 2020

Report of	Monitoring Officer
Status	For decision
Key Decision	No

Executive Summary: This report seeks a decision on the establishment of a Sevenoaks District Public Space Commission.

Portfolio Holder	Cllr. Peter Fleming
Contact Officer	Martin Goodman, Ext. 7245

Recommendation to Cabinet: That

- (a) a Member of the Council be nominated as Sevenoaks District Council’s Commissioner for the Public Realm;
 - (b) terms of reference for the Commissioner be as set out within this report;
 - (c) the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and the Commissioner be authorised to appoint a voluntary Commission for the Public Realm to advise the Commissioner on matters within his terms of reference;
 - (d) the Commissioner be required to report at least once in every Municipal Year to Cabinet on the execution of his duties;
 - (e) the role of the Commissioner for the Public Realm shall cease to exist at the end of the 2022/23 municipal year.
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Reason for recommendation: This report will establish the Commissioner and Commission for the Public Realm.

Introduction and Background

1 It is understood that Members wish to create a Commissioner and Commission for the Public Realm, to advise Cabinet on the creation and retention of good quality public space within the District. It is hoped that the Commission will likely attract interest from parties with the desire to create a good quality living and working environment for now and the future. Members are understood to wish to promote the motto that ‘Great public spaces are those places where celebrations are held, social and

economic exchanges occur, friends run into each other, and communities mix.'

Governance

- 2 This Commission would not have decision-making powers and it is not intended to be a Member committee. Instead, it is to be an invitational and voluntary body with the ability to advise the Member appointed by Cabinet Commissioner for the Public Realm.
- 3 However, it is essential that such a body be created in a fair, open and lawful manner. For this reason it is proposed that a full application and interview process be undertaken so as to recruit the best volunteers for the job.
- 4 The Commissioner will be required to advise Cabinet on matters within his terms of reference at least once a year and to take such direction from Cabinet as Cabinet sees fit.
- 5 It is proposed that the terms of reference for the Commissioner should cover the phases and topics set out in the next paragraph.

Terms of Reference

6 Phase 1 - Information and Data gathering

1. Where are our current public spaces across the district and what purpose or uses do they serve
2. What new developments are planned and has the public realm been considered, designed or planned
3. What makes good Public Space
4. Commission recruitment

Phase 2 - The Commission

1. The principles of Public Space in Sevenoaks (Wellbeing, Health, Safety, Economy, Built Environment, Environment)
2. Public Art, commissioning and financing
3. Urban Green Space
4. Report and Outcomes

Phase 3 - Delivery

1. Calendar of events
2. 'Quick Wins'

