

## SEVENOAKS DISTRICT PUBLIC REALM COMMISSIONER

People & Places Advisory Committee - 1 December 2020

**Report of:** Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Officer People & Places

**Status:** Information only

**Also considered by:** N/A

**Key Decision:** No

**Executive Summary:** This report gives an overview of the Public Realm Commissioner work

**This report supports the Key Aim of:** Council's Corporate Plan

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Lesley Dyball

**Contact Officer:** Kelly Webb, Ext. 7112

**Recommendation to People & Places Advisory Committee:**

To note the work of the Public Realm Commissioner.

**Reason for recommendation:** To keep Members updated on the work of the Commissioner for the Public Realm.

### Introduction and Background

- 1 In early 2020, the Council appointed a Public Realm Commissioner, who will oversee the delivery of a public realm programme for the district. The Public Realm Commission sits within the People and Places portfolio.
- 2 The commission is not decision-making body, but will provide support in an advisory capacity. The commission's role is to:
  - Understand current public spaces across the district and what purpose or uses they serve.
  - Identify what new developments are planned and has the public realm been considered, designed or planned.
  - Understand what makes good public space.
  - Facilitate funding and other philanthropic contributions to enable the delivery of an annual public realm programme.
  - Ensure public art celebrates the particular story of a place and engages with the community in its making.

- Submit an annual report describing the activities of the previous year.
- 3 A team of ten voluntary members, whose role is to ensure clarity of vision, ethos and direction for the Council's public realm ambitions, helping to deliver the aims identified, supports the Commissioner. Volunteers assist the Commissioner in the work towards the creation and retention of good quality public space in the district. The first meeting of the Commission was held in July this year.

### **Progress to Date**

- 4 The Commissioner is working with Commission's volunteers to guide a programme of public realm interventions in the district and will be presenting to the next People and Places Advisory Committee to provide an update on progress. Work undertaken to date includes:
- The Commissioner has been working with the Enterprise Co-ordinator for West Kent Partnership to undertake a contest at Knole Academy for students studying film, which would involve producing a video about the public realm, providing an opportunity to hear the perspective of young people on the public realm.
  - The Commissioner is supporting the development of an artist commission for the M&S site at Bligh's in Sevenoaks Town, which has been awarded a Section 106 development contribution of £20,000. The contribution to Sevenoaks District Council has been allocated to support a public art commission on the site.
  - A sculptor has been appointed to restore the artwork in the Shambles, located in Sevenoaks Town. This is a partnership project between the Commission and Sevenoaks Town Council and has been supported with a £1,000 grant from the Area Improvement Fund.
  - The Commissioner is working with Swanley Town Council to consider the refurbishment of Swanley Skate Park.

## Key Implications

### Financial

There is no financial implication to the Council, projects are either through S.106 money or funding is sought.

### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications and risk assessments are carried out on by the community and voluntary groups receiving grants on a project/works/event basis.

### Equality Assessment

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups. The decisions recommended through this report directly impact on end users. The impact has been analysed and does not vary between groups of people. The results of this analysis are set out immediately below.

Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty:

Question	Answer	Explanation / Evidence
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	No the Realm covers all groups
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	Yes	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?	N/A	No negative impacts identified

**Appendices**

None

**Background Papers**

None

**Sarah Robson**

**Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - People & Places**