



Report to: Cabinet Meeting: 4 June 2024
 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Rowan Cozens, Heritage, Culture & the Arts
 Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Director - Communities & Environment
 Lead Officer: Dennis Roxburgh, Project Manager Construction, Ext. 5645

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open report, non-key decision
Report Title	Proposal to Site the 'Kiddey Stones' at Castle House
Purpose of Report	To put forward a proposal for Member consideration that could see work by the famous sculptor, Robert Kiddey, put on public view for the first time in 40 years, as part of plans to create a new art trail in the town and beyond.
Recommendations	<p>It is recommended that Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) approve, in principle, the design and location of the Kiddey Stones to be installed at Castle House, Newark; b) support a period of public consultation on the proposals to enable residents and stakeholders to have their views on the plans, including the Town Council in whose ownership the stones are in; and c) agree that a report is brought back to Cabinet in September 2024 to formally endorse the scheme or otherwise with a budget to be included in the Council's capital programme.
Alternative Options Considered	The Kiddey Stones are part of Newark's heritage. For around 40 years they have been under tarpaulin in the town's cemetery. Without funding and a suitable location to site the stones, it is highly likely they will continue to remain away from public view. However, it is an option not to invest in the project.
Reason for Recommendations	The recommendations align with the Community Plan objectives in relation to heritage and culture, particularly the specific actions around increasing the quantity and quality of public art in the district.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Robert Kiddey was born in Nottingham in 1900 and died in Newark in 1984. In the 1920s, he is credited with the frieze of figures around the top of Nottingham's Council House on the Market Square and a carved panel called 'The Devine Tragedy' which was accepted for the Royal Academy's annual exhibition in London. His work became known internationally at this point. In 1931 he moved to Newark and took up a teaching post at the newly opened Technical College where he remained for some 50 years. There is a plaque to him in Mill Gate where his studio was located.
- 1.2 The Kiddey stone tablets have been stored at Newark Cemetery on London Road for many years. They comprise 12 pieces of stone forming 4 panels of 3 pieces each. The individual tablets measure just over 2m in height and 1m in width. The tablets are created from carved sandstone in bas-relief and each depict a different aspect of electricity production and were originally commissioned and installed at Wilford Power Station. When the power station closed in the early 1980s, the tablets were given to the Town Council. The tablets were briefly reassembled in the early 1990s when a Town Council working party was asked to explore options for their future. It is not known what happened after this, other than that the stones were stored at the Cemetery under tarpaulins.
- 1.3 The Town Council have discussed relocating the stones to the Middlebeck development, potentially as part of a roundabout or parkland setting. The Civic Trust are keen to see the stones displayed in the public realm, but otherwise retained within Newark. The Town Council had indicated that they would consider alternate options for disposal on written request. Last year, the Council's Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Heritage, Culture & the Arts, Councillor Rowan Cozens, made a formal approach to the Town Council for the stones to be put on public display once more – this time at Castle House, the Council's main office base. Castle House was identified as it is in the Council's ownership, so no additional permissions are required, whilst it also has the required space and is publicly accessible.
- 1.4 It was not fully known what condition the stones were in or what would be needed to install them in a public setting. A feasibility budget was created to facilitate this work which included specialist input from a heritage stone mason, architect, structural engineer and cost consultant.

2.0 Proposal/Details of Options Considered

Vision

- 2.1 The Community Plan references a desire to increase the quality and quantity of public art in Newark and Sherwood. Robert Kiddey was an internationally renowned sculptor with a strong association to the town of Newark. As such, putting stones on public display once more would be a powerful and practical expression of commitments made in the community plan. It would also mark the start of a new art trail around the town centre, with more objects from the Council's extensive resource centre collection being put on public display across the town centre. As well as bringing more residents of the district into contact with their heritage, the trail would also create a new experience for visitors and residents within the town and help generate additional footfall.

Feasibility Work

- 2.2 The stones were carefully removed from the cemetery earlier this year by a local, heritage stone mason. This was approved by the town council. Since that time, the stonemason has been able to confirm that the stones were in a good condition. This also enabled architects and structural engineers to measure and assess the stones, to identify how they could be displayed safely. It is estimated that the stones collectively weigh over eight tonnes.

Preferred Option

- 2.3 The preferred option is for the stones to be displayed outside Castle House as can be seen in the attached appendices. A concrete plinth would be created for each of the four depictions, with the stones then pinned and encased in a brick surround which would tie in with the brickwork at Castle House. Colleagues in planning have been consulted and confirmed that planning permission is not required. In addition to the four structures, an interpretation panel would also be installed together with a seating structure. The area earmarked for the art works is covered by CCTV and close to Castle House. Other locations may be put forward during the consultation phase referred to below, but the suitability or otherwise of these is not yet known. It should also be noted that feasibility work and costs would not have been incurred at these sites.

Cost Plan

- 2.4 The cost to deliver the scheme is forecast at £81,240, inclusive of the build costs for the four panels, seating and interpretation panel, lighting, fees and contingency. A detailed cost plan is included in the **appendices**. Clearly, the actual cost will not be known until the works have been tendered.

Next Steps

- 2.5 The feasibility work to date has shown that siting the panels in public once more after 40 years is possible. It has identified a location which ties into a wider art trail for the town of Newark and a cost plan to complete the scheme as set out.
- 2.6 It is now proposed the Council enters into a period of consultation in which residents and visitors can give their views whilst feedback is sought from specific organisations as well, including the Town Council, as the custodian of the Kiddey Stones, the Civic Trust and the Police. It is proposed that this takes place over the summer with a report due back to Cabinet in September for a final decision.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Financial Implications (FIN24-25/6777)

- 3.1 A budget of £20,000 was made available to carry out the feasibility works. £17,525 has been committed to date.
- 3.2 Based on the costs shown at paragraph 2.4 of £81,240 the additional revenue costs of the construction will be £5,687 per year. That is £1,625 in Minimum Revenue Provision and £4,062 in interest over a 50 year period.
- 3.3 Following the consultation exercise, a report will be brought back to Cabinet in September 2024, when subject to member approval, the costs to complete the build will be added to the Capital Programme, along with identifying additional revenue costs for maintenance and cleaning.

Legal Implications

- 3.4 Any transfer of ownership of this artwork to the District Council should be formalised by a deed of gift or letter of intent, including confirmation of the position in relation to any ongoing liabilities and maintenance obligations, together with any intellectual property rights considerations. A monetary value should be established for insurance purposes.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None