

**REPORT TO POLICY & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE**

<b>Date:</b>	25 November 2024
<b>Report Title:</b>	Consultation Results on the Proposal to Site the “Kiddey Stones” at Castle House

<b>Comments to be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration:</b>	<b>Officer Comments</b>
<p><b>Location</b>                      Numerous comments made regarding the location chosen for the siting of the stones.</p> <p>Other locations were mentioned e.g. Stodman Street.</p> <p>Comments were also made that if an alternative location was found, then Members could support the project.</p>	<p>The focus of the consultation was on the specific location of Castle House in Newark. The Town Council, as custodian of the Kiddey Sculptures, was content for NSDC to progress this proposal. As set out in the June Cabinet report, NSDC own the land, no planning permission was required and the location is central to the town which Kiddey was synonymous with. Over the past 40 years many locations have been considered by the Town Council but none have progressed. NSDC undertook a full feasibility to understand how the stones could be displayed at Castle House as well as the costs of doing so. If Cabinet was minded not to support Castle House, then it would be a matter for the Town Council, as custodian of the stones, to consider alternatives and incur future costs associated with feasibility work and consultation on those proposals.</p>
<p><b>Finance</b>                      Clarity was sought on how the project was to be financed. Which budget would the funds be paid from and when was this budget set?</p> <p>Query raised as to the additional costs to follow the Police recommendations for the siting of the Kiddey Stones at Castle House.</p> <p>Query raised as to what the final cost of the project is and what that covers.</p>	<p>The Council will add a new budget into the Capital Programme funded by the Change Management Reserve. As this is a new budget and hence not included within the original budget estimates for 2024/25, Council Tax was not increased to fund the project.</p> <p>The Change Management Reserve has received funds over a number of years, primarily from the New Homes Bonus grant. The primary purpose for the</p>

<p>Has alternative funding been considered?</p>	<p>reserve was to fund change initiatives that were not previously budgeted for.</p> <p>The costs for including the additional covering over the stones has been factored into the revised cost plan</p> <p>The final cost of the project would not be known until it is complete. This stands for all construction projects. However, the cost plan has been produced by an external cost consultant and is inclusive of all construction works, fees, inflation and contingency. This is referenced in the covering report.</p> <p>Alternative funding sources have not been explored by NSDC as part of this exercise. The project has progressed to date on the basis of NSDC incurring the project costs. The Council has been very successful in attracting funding for other projects, most notably £1.4-million from the National Lottery Fund for the Castle Gatehouse Project. St. Mary Magdelene Church is also benefitting from the same funder. Were Cabinet minded not to approve the scheme, the Town Council, as custodian of the Kidney Sculptures, could explore third party funding opportunities. Indeed, this option has been open to the Town Council over successive years.</p>
<p><b>General Comments</b> Would Cabinet consider not proceeding with the project?</p>	<p>Cabinet will decide, in light of the comments from PPIC and the public consultation, whether or not to progress with its earlier in principle decision to site the Kidney Stones at Castle House</p>
<p>Has a Deed of Gift from Newark Town Council to Newark &amp; Sherwood District Council been considered and what are the contractual arrangements?</p>	<p>Subject to Cabinet decision, the Town Council and NSDC would need to agree a loan agreement for the Kidney Sculptures. The principles of an agreement are set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Town Council would devolve authority to the town clerk to seek legal advice if necessary, to draft an agreement with NSDC to loan the Kidney Stones to NSDC for a period of</li> </ul>

	<p>40 years, subject to regular review at the end of every five year period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- all costs being met by NSDC, including return of the stones to Newark Town Council at the end of the agreement or at the end of one of the review periods.</li> <li>- the interpretation panel to acknowledge the loan of the Kidney Stones by Newark Town Council, and this signage/acknowledgement to be in place throughout the length of the loan.</li> <li>- intellectual property rights to be retained by Newark Town Council, but with full permission granted to NSDC to publish photographs and illustrations of the Kidney Stones in their literature and website.</li> </ul>
<p>Assurance was sought as to the accuracy of the responses following their analysis.</p>	<p>The nature of collecting qualitative survey data means that sometimes the views of respondents are not explicitly stated and it is necessary to interpret the views of respondents. The consultation team consisted of three officers who each assessed the results on three separate occasions, the purpose of this was to ensure that the interpretations of responses were captured as accurately as possible and to allow for robust categorisation. Where views were explicitly stated this has been counted as such, where views were not explicitly stated or have been considered to be unclear this has been assessed and categorised. All of the information provided within the comment has been used to determine whether the comment is supportive, unsupportive or remains to be unclear. The primary and secondary themes of the comments were then assessed and assigned accordingly.</p> <p>An example of a comment which has been categorised as supportive of the proposals overall but against the location is included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Supportive of the proposals overall, with the primary theme being considered being against the</b></li> </ul>

**location and the secondary theme being concerns around vandalism:**

*“I feel it is a good idea to display his works and create an art trail in Newark but feel Castle House is too far out of town. I have concerns about the stones being outside because of vandalism.”*

By contrast below is an example of a comment which has been categorised as unsupportive of the proposals overall, with a primary reason being recorded as the location:

- **Unsupportive of the proposals, with the primary theme being considered as being against the location and a secondary theme that the money could be better spent elsewhere:**

*“I disagree with the Kiddey stones being located outside castle house at a cost of £81,240. Castle House is the wrong location for this work. It is the wrong side of the railway to benefit local businesses etc from footfall and the council offices are not a public attraction. This is an extraordinary amount of money that could be better spent. The kiddy stones should be located in walls that are already being built in a more suitable location, such as nearer to the town centre to benefit local businesses and improve an arts trail.”*