

7. ARTWORKS IN PUBLIC PLACES POLICY - PLACEMENT OF ARTWORKS

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The purpose of this report is to provide advice as to what process the Council has in place to authorise the placement of artworks in public places. This report is being provided to the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee and the Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee.

BACKGROUND

At the February 2004 Council meeting a question arose out of a report to the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee regarding the placement of the “corgi” statues in Cashel Mall and which person had authorised the placement of those structures. I understand there has been some concern expressed regarding the location of the corgis.

I undertook to report back to the Council as to the processes in place for the placement of such structures.

ARTWORKS IN PUBLIC PLACES POLICY

At its meeting on 28 February 2002 the Council adopted an Artworks in Public Places Policy.

In that Policy the phrase “public places” is defined to mean “...any areas under the control of the Christchurch City Council including parks and reserves, streets, squares, riverbanks, bridges and buildings, sites and airspace, and other locations by agreement between the Council and property owners.”

The Policy clearly contemplates the establishment of permanent or temporary artworks in these public places.

Objective 1.1 of the Policy is “to identify locations within the City suitable for the display of works of art”. The Policy also provides that the maintenance of artworks situated within the precincts of a Council-owned building are to be the responsibility of the Art Gallery. All other public artworks and structures are to be maintained by the Greenspace Unit. Presumably this would include the maintenance of artworks located on streets, bridges, buildings, sites and air space as set out in the definition of “public places”.

The maintenance of public artworks is to be monitored annually through a report to the Artworks in Public Places Subcommittee, which is a Subcommittee of the Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee.

ROLE OF ARTWORKS IN PUBLIC PLACES SUBCOMMITTEE

At its meeting on 8 November 2001 the Council had also established an Artworks in Public Places Subcommittee to carry out the functions conferred on that Subcommittee in the Policy. The Subcommittee was disestablished in December 2002.

The Policy does not directly confer on the Artworks in Public Places Subcommittee the power of the Council to approve, as landowner, the placement of artworks in the public places referred to in the Policy. The Subcommittee’s only clear role in the Policy was an accountability one in terms of the registration and maintenance of public artworks.

As with the Policy, the Council resolutions establishing the Subcommittees did not specifically confer authority on the Subcommittee to make decisions regarding the particular placement of artworks in public places.

I believe that this had arisen because it was clearly contemplated in the development of the policy that operational procedures would need to be developed for each of the three categories of artworks identified in the Policy itself.

Those three categories of artworks were:

- Urban and environmental artworks.
- Integrated artworks.
- Community artworks.

I understand that those operational procedures have not yet been completed for each of those three categories and it would now seem appropriate in the development of those operational procedures for there to be clear processes set out for the placement of the artworks, and particularly who has authority to make decisions on the location of the artworks.

CONCLUSION

From the information provided above it is clear that the Council has not yet settled on a decision-maker for the approval of public artworks in “public places” as defined in the Policy. I recommend that staff be requested to complete development of those operational procedures and include provision for decisions to be made on the placement of artworks.

That recommendation should be given effect to by the Council so it is clear that the Council as landowner has clearly delegated authority to a committee, subcommittee or an officer, to approve the individual placement of public artworks. A delegation could be formulated on the basis of criteria to be set out as to which Council business units are to be consulted in the placement of artworks, and what is to occur, in the event of there being a recommendation from the business unit that an artwork not be placed in a particular location. These criteria could also incorporate health and safety issues.

This report was also referred to the Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee and is reported to Council as a part ‘B’ item in the report of that Committee.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Council complete the development of operational procedures for the placement of artworks in public places, and that such procedures include a decision by the Council as to who is to be the decision-maker for such placement.
 2. That in respect of artworks in public streets the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee receive requests for the location of such artworks from the relevant committees or private parties as the case may be, obtain advice from staff on safety, maintenance and other such issues, and make a recommendation to the Council for approval as land owner.