

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leisure and Arts Services Committee – 16 February 2004

REPORT ON: Dundee City Square Floral Displays

REPORT BY: Director of Leisure and Arts

REPORT NO: 130-2004

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to outline proposed improvements to the City Centre landscaping, specifically the floral elements and outline options for cost effective solution to the management and funding which focuses on quality and impact of the floral displays. In addition the report seeks approval for a number of associated initiatives to be progressed.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that improvement to the floral displays in the City Square is implemented to coincide with the planting out of the summer bedding in 2004.

2.2 As part of an early action plan the purchase of new tree containers has already been approved. It is therefore recommended that the quotation for replacement trees of £1,059 from Belwood Trees Ltd, Meigle and the quotation from Dundee Contract Services of £2,475.03 for the setting out of the containers and planting of the trees is approved.

2.3 It is further recommended that the Director of Leisure and Arts be remitted to explore further enhancement to the other areas of the City Centre including High St, Reform St and Murraygate with the Director of Planning and Transportation, Economic Development and external agencies in developing further sustainable proposals.

2.4 In addition it is recommended that the Director of Leisure and Arts be remitted with the Director of Economic Development to develop a sponsorship scheme with the business community in and around the City Centre which financially supports the purchase of hanging baskets and the bedding materials etc. and that a scheme is developed, promoted and co-ordinated with 2.2. above.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The total capital cost of the improvements to the City Square is estimated at £54,000. Scottish Enterprise Tayside has committed £12,000 to these costs. The balance of £42,000 can be contained within the Leisure and Arts Department's capital allocation in 2003/04 and 2004/05.

3.2 There will be no additional revenue implication for the initial phase of the works outlined in 2.2.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None

6.0 MAIN TEXT

6.1 Introduction

With the trees located in the planters in the City Square reaching the end of their useful life in the containers, Leisure and Arts Department, together with the Economic Development Department and Planning and Transportation Department, have taken the opportunity to review the floral elements in and around the City Square with the objective of proposing options for improvement, based on enhanced quality and impact of the existing arrangements for floral displays in the City Centre. This report, therefore, in addition to presenting options for improvements also outlines proposals to sustain the enhancement and suggests ways of embracing the business and the community in making a real impact in 2004 and beyond.

6.2 Current Situation

6.2.1 General

The Leisure and Arts Department manage the City Square floral displays, including the tree containers, window boxes, the beds in and around the City Churches, the hanging baskets in the City Centre and the bedding areas at the McManus Galleries. The quantity of material and quality of maintenance is entirely dependent on the available financial resources in the Department.

In the City Square the trees in the containers are now reaching the end of their useful lifespan due to their root formation. They are now in a stressed situation demonstrated by the premature loss of leaves, even though they were regularly watered and also the effect on the bedding plants planted within.

In addition the hanging baskets failed to meet the expectations with the very dry and hot weather contributing to the poor quality.

With the hanging baskets in particular there is an existing arrangement which is administered by Economic Development where the Leisure and Arts Department provide and maintain hanging baskets for those organisations who have funded the erection of a basket bowl. This is becoming unsustainable and the impact is diluted due to the limited revenue. Due to the expense of the supply and maintenance of these the number of hanging baskets has been reduced over the years from 3 per year to one during the summer only.

6.3 Way Forward

It is proposed that, in addition to the need to improve the quality of the existing floral materials, that there is a need to create an impact with bedding displays of which the City can be proud. In order to fulfill this, specific proposals are outlined, together with capital and revenue implications and a way forward outlined in seeking the interest and inclusion of the community.

In addition there is a need to review the revenue resources for the supply and maintenance of the floral display particularly in the context of the phased approach to improvements.

6.3.1 Phase 1 City Square

As the first phase of the action plan it is proposed to concentrate the resources in the City Square particularly as this is an important civic space and to focus resources and demonstrate what can be achieved.

A number of physical improvements are therefore proposed for the City Square which include the replacement of the existing trees which are now root bound, the introduction of

floral columns, additional hanging baskets and a general increase in the summer bedding material.

The estimated cost of the works is £54,000.

Replacement tree containers have already been approved and replacement trees have been sourced from Belwood Trees, Meigle for the supply and installation of the trees for £1,059. A quotation for the final positioning of the containers and planting up of the same has been received from Dundee Contract Services for £2,475.03.

The existing trees will be planted in various parks in Dundee and if the containers can be re-used they will be distributed in and around the City and planted up with summer bedding material.

The balance of the works to be completed in 2004 is estimated at £38,000. There is provision within the Leisure and Arts Department's Capital budget of £20,000 and Scottish Enterprise Tayside have allocated £12,000. External resources are being pursued to meet the balance, failing which the balance of £,6000 can be contained within the Leisure and Arts Capital budget for 2004/05.

The Director of Leisure and Arts will bring forward a tender report for these works to a subsequent Committee.

6.3.2 Future Phases

It is proposed that the Director of Leisure and Arts, together with the Director of Planning and Transportation, investigate the potential of rolling out further civic floral enhancement to other areas of the City Centre including High Street, Reform Street and Murraygate.

The proposals will be developed and reported to a subsequent meeting. Subject to agreements of the proposals and availability of finance it is not envisaged that these improvements would be implemented until 2005/06.

6.3.3 Development of Sponsorship Scheme

In relation to future phases it is proposed that the Director of Leisure and Arts be remitted with the Director of Economic Development to develop a sponsorship scheme with the business community and other agencies for hanging baskets/window boxes which would be self financing. In particular in respect of raising interest and embracing a pride in the floral displays within the City Centre, it is proposed that through the City Centre Manager, various businesses are approached in respect of the supply of a hanging basket. The Leisure and Arts Department would undertake to fund the maintenance for 2004 only.

This is similar to the schemes employed in both Aberdeen and Perth where there has been a high degree of success.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning), Director of Planning and Transportation, and Director of Economic Development have been consulted on this report and are in agreement with its contents.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Copies of the visualisation of the proposals have been supplied to Group Secretaries and in the Members' Lounge.

**STEVE GRIMMOND
DIRECTOR OF LEISURE and ARTS
30 JANUARY 2004**