

# Report

## **Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture**

**Part 1**

21 March, 2012

**Item No. 1**

**Subject**     **Chartist Mural**

**Purpose**     For the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture to agree the preferred option for a future interpretation of the Chartist Mural following demolition of the existing mural as part of the redevelopment of John Frost Square.

**Author**     Rob Frowen – Regeneration Manager - Economic Regeneration and Policy.

**Ward**        Stow Hill

**Summary**   The Chartist Mural, at the entrance to John Frost Square, has become a recognised part of the cultural fabric of Newport. As part of the City Centre redevelopment proposals the mural will be demolished. It is impossible to preserve the original mural so this report suggests an alternative public art solution to commemorate the Chartist movement

**Proposal**   **That the Chartist Mural is reproduced as tiles in the stair well at the Central Library as supported by local people following consultation.**

**Action by**   Head of Regeneration and Regulatory Services

**Timetable**   Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Development Control
- Planning Contributions Manager
- Head of Finance
- Head of Law and Standards
- Head of Regeneration and Regulatory Services

**Signed:**

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The 'Chartist Mural' is located at one of the entrances to John Frost Square. The mosaic mural depicts the Chartist uprising of 1839 and has become a recognised part of the cultural fabric of Newport. The mural was created by Kenneth Budd in the mid seventies. The Mural is 35 metres long by 4 metres in height and is made of over 200,000 pieces of broken tile and Venetian smalti. As part of the new Friars Walk retail development proposals, this area is due to be completely redeveloped. It is impossible to preserve the original mural so an alternative needs to be sought. It is proposed that the alternative will be constructed immediately following the demolition of the existing Mural. It should be noted that the cost of any proposal should not exceed a maximum of £50,000 being the cost envelope identified for the project.

## **2. Current Position**

- 2.1 The Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture agreed consult on the four options below for a future interpretation of the Chartist Mural following demolition of the existing mural.

### **2.2 *Option One***

#### **2.2.1 Replicate the Mural**

Oliver Budd holds the copyright to his father's Mosaic mural. Any reinterpretation or re-creation of the mural would, therefore, require his consent. Mr Budd has given his consent for the current Mural to be photographed and replicated onto ceramic tiles and installed within the stairwell of the Central Library. This resulting copy will be approximately the same size as the original mural. It will be arranged on the walls of the main landings. This is a prominent public location and will fit in well with the reference library and museum. It would include all the mural images, including the part already destroyed. This option has been priced at circa £22,000.

### **2.3 *Option Two***

#### **2.3.1 Recreate the Mural**

Mr Budd could be commissioned to recreate one section of the original mural. A suitable scene, such as the image of the conflict outside the Westgate Hotel could be chosen. It would be suitable for the Central Library stairwell, but other locations could be suggested. This would need to be kept within the maximum cost budget of £50,000.

### **2.4 *Option Three***

- 2.4.1 To create a re-interpretation of the mural at another location in the City Centre, for example, adjacent to the Wave at the riverfront. Other sites might be suggested during consultation.

### **2.5 *Option Four***

- 2.5.1 To create an alternative Chartist themed public art elsewhere in Newport, for example this could take the form of a new etched stone feature.

### **2.6 Public Consultation**

- 2.6.1 Consultation took the form of an exhibition at the Central library on Friday 24 and Saturday 25 February 2012. This included the display of a model highlighting Option One.

2.7 A press release was also issued which was published on the Newport City Council website and subsequently in the South Wales Argus on Saturday 25 February 2012.

### 3. Proposal

3.1 It is proposed that following the public consultation, Option One is adopted as the preferred option for the future interpretation. This was by far the most acceptable option in the eyes of the general public.

### 4. Financial Summary:

4.1 There is currently no approved budget for the project. However, Option One has been priced at circa £22,000.

### 5. Risks:

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
There is no approved budget for the work and so the public art cannot be commissioned.	H	H	The Friars Walk Development is a large scale redevelopment and there is time within the period of the works for the council to make provision for the sum involved.	Economic Development Manager

### 6. Links to Council Policies and Priorities

6.1 Maintaining and strengthening the vitality, functioning and attractiveness of Newport city centre as a major regional shopping destination is identified as an objective in the Retailing section of the Newport Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011.

### 7. Options available

7.1. For the Cabinet Member to approve Option One following public consultation on four proposed options for a new interpretation of the Chartist Mural.

7.2. For the Cabinet Member not to approve Option One following the public consultation.

### 8. Preferred Option and Why

8.1. The preferred option is option 7.1 where the general public expressed a clear preference to replace the mural with a copy as tiles within the Central Library staircase.

### 9. Comments of Head of Finance - Chief Financial Officer

9.1. There is currently no approved budget for any project which has emerged from the consultation. The Council will need to consider how it can fund any preferred solution. This funding could include match funding from other organisations.

## **10. Comments of Head of Law and Standards - Monitoring Officer**

- 10.1 The reproduction of the Chartist Mural was part of the public art pre-conditions attached to the detailed planning consent for the Modus Development. However, the Cabinet Sub Group has agreed that this should not be included as a contractual requirement for the Queensberry development and the Council should take responsibility for the mural to obviate the need for any further consideration of this issue by Planning Committee. The Report sets out a number of options that are within the budget agreed by the Cabinet sub-Group and which have been the subject of public consultation. The preferred option will involve the replication of the original mural and will, therefore, require consent because the intellectual property rights are vested in the artist's son. However, agreement has already been reached with the artist's son regarding the use of the original drawings for this purpose.

## **11. Local Issues**

Stow Hill

## **12. Consultation**

This report concerns the outcome of a public consultation exercise.

- 12.1 Approximately fifty people attending the exhibition over two days with fifteen people expressing a preference towards the options above. Twelve were in favour of Option One and three (in one group) were in favour of Option Three. Comments received for option one ranged from *"It's a shame we cannot save the original mosaic, however option one would be my preferred option to show the whole mosaic"* to *"Would prefer to see the Mural in the museum/library rather than the new shopping development"*.
- 12.2 A group of three people expressed a preference to option three, however stating *"We don't think the mural should be broken up, it should be in one run adjacent to the wave on the riverfront"*.
- 12.3 Three comments were received via email, one stating *"My preference would be for option three or four. I do not see the point in spending money on moving or replicating a piece of public art which as far as I can see, has lived its lifespan."* One wanted the mural persevered and one wanted it reconstructed in a new location.
- 12.4 A representative of the Newport Civic Society confirmed that they are happy with option one.

## **13. Comments of Ward Members -**

- 13.1 **Comments of Councillor Peter H Davies** – No comment to make.
- 13.2 **Comments of Councillor William Routley** – No comments received to date

## **14. Comments of Non Executive Members**

None received.

**Dated: 21 March 2012**