

CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 27

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Streetscape Design Guidelines
Date of Meeting: 26 July 2010
Report of: Director of Environment
Contact Officer: Name: Jim Mayor Tel: 29-4164
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Key Decision: No
Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The Streetscape Design Guidelines set out standard design and installation specifications for the elements that make up the highway corridors, such as street furniture and surface materials, along with the issues that should be considered when choosing and implementing them.
- 1.2 The Streetscape Design Guidelines contribute to delivery of the city's Public Realm vision as set out in the Public Space Public Life Study. The Public Space Public Life Study informs the Local Development Framework and the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 1.3 The Core Strategy of Brighton & Hove's Local Development Framework sets out the overarching planning policy for the public realm network including the streetscape under Council Policy 3 (CP3) Public Streets and Spaces. CP3 "seeks to ensure new schemes within the public realm network achieve consistent standards in quality, legibility and accessibility and contribute towards the implementation of the Public Space Public Life Study (2007)". The aims of CP3 most relevant to the streetscape are:
 - Enhancing the local distinctiveness of the city's neighbourhoods;
 - Utilising high quality, robust and sustainable materials for all elements of the streetscape;
 - Reducing the clutter of street furniture; and
 - Incorporating an appropriate and integral public art element."

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member approves the Streetscape Design Guidelines should be the standard approach adopted by all people undertaking work in Brighton & Hove's public realm.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 A huge number of people undertake work which impacts on our streetscape, often with different primary objectives and within a variety of constraints, whether financial, legal, temporal or other. Establishing a consistent, coordinated and high quality approach to our streetscape is therefore a complex task. The Streetscape Design Guidelines is one of several documents that together aim to make this work and enable delivery of the city's Public Realm Strategy.
- 3.2 The overall aim of the Public Realm Strategy is to ensure the city's streets and public spaces are designed to bring maximum benefit to all residents. If all areas of the city work to maximum potential for residents they will also be much more attractive for visitors. The more attractive and usable the city is for everyone, the more time everyone will want to spend in it, bringing a host of social, economic and sustainability benefits. The other documents are:
- **The Public Space Public Life (PSPL) Study** (adopted in 2007) - sets out strategic recommendations to improve the public realm network, along with guiding design principles that should be followed to ensure the recommendations are delivered in the most successful way.
 - **The Public Space Public Life (PSPL) Delivery Plan** (in development) sets out how the PSPL Study's strategic recommendations can be delivered in a coordinated way. For example, where the PSPL Study identifies a recommendation for improving the pedestrian network and sets out good design principles for successful pedestrian networks, the PSPL Delivery Plan identifies where pedestrian network improvements are most urgently required, and any other streetscape improvements that may be required in the same area.
 - **The Urban Characterisation Study and Conservation Area Appraisals** (adopted in 2009) describe the different character areas in the city, providing historic context and a reference guide to help ensure any work within the public realm network protects and strengthens the character of an area where relevant.
 - **The Materials Database** (in development) is an online reference tool that provides easy access to details of existing and recommended street furniture and surface materials on an area and citywide basis.
- 3.3 The Streetscape Design Guidelines are based on good design principles used elsewhere, adapted to reflect the city's unique character and to reflect and complement Brighton & Hove City Council policy and strategy.
- 3.4 The Street Design Guidelines have been put together with support and input from a range of officers involved in delivery of aspects of public realm work, ranging from Highways Maintenance to Sustainability. A full list of contributors is included on page 2 of the document.
- 3.5 In addition, the council has been fortunate to benefit from "critical friend" support from a range of experts, including CABE (the Commission for Architecture and

the Built Environment) and John Dales, one of the authors of the Department for Transport's Manual for Streets. A full list of critical friend contributors is also included on page 2 of the document.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Streetscape Design Guidelines aim to ensure that good practise principles are applied on a consistent basis. Due to the nature of the document, the most appropriate consultation has been achieved through a process of agreeing the final document amongst internal officers responsible for delivery of public realm works. It should be noted that the fact that the document has been agreed in its current form by officers working in traditionally disparate areas reflects positively on Brighton & Hove City Council's cross departmental working ethos.
- 4.2 Targeted external consultation has been undertaken, through the involvement of the expert "critical friends" listed on page 2 of the document, and through presentation to the Local Strategic Partnership Transport Partnership Board, after which Living Streets added their formal support for the document.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 Delivery of works in line with the Streetscape Design Guidelines does not carry an explicit cost implication. However, by ensuring only necessary street elements are installed, and that they are chosen and installed in such a way that they are fit for purpose, savings can be expected due to reduced expenditure on buying, fitting and maintaining unnecessary street elements, and minimising ongoing maintenance liabilities associated with street elements that are installed. A higher quality public realm is also more conducive to an enhanced economy, as more people – residents and visitors – will be inclined to use the city's streets if they are more pleasant places to be in.

Finance Officer Consulted: Patrick Rice

Date: 08/06/10

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 There are no human rights implications to draw to Members' attention.

Lawyer Consulted: Stephen Dryden

Date: 08/06/10

Equalities Implications:

- 5.4 The general ethos of the document encourages greater consideration of all a street's potential uses and users whenever any work is undertaken in the public realm.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.7 The document links directly to and supports Brighton & Hove's Sustainability Agenda, both in terms of choosing street elements, and enabling all uses and users of a street (which includes enhanced enabling of "sustainable" pursuits).

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.8 Where appropriate, the document links to crime and disorder issues, ranging from ensuring street furniture is sticker and graffiti proofed through to encouraging greater levels of human activity in the street, which in turn reduces fear of crime.

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.9 n/a

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.10 This project will contribute towards the following Council Priorities:
- Protect the environment while growing the economy – by encouraging less investment and installation of intrusive street clutter, ensuring new street element decisions consider sustainable impact, and improving the quality of the city so that more people – residents and visitors – are encouraged to spend time (and potentially money) in the city
 - Better use of public money – by reducing unnecessary short term expenditure and long term maintenance liability
 - Reduce inequality by increasing opportunity – by ensuring streets are designed for all uses and users

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The alternative option is not having Streetscape Design Guidelines, which would see continuation of the issues that the document seeks to redress (such as unnecessary and or poor quality work)

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 By ensuring the Streetscape Design Guidelines are applied consistently across the city, the City Council ensures a consistent, co-ordinated and quality approach is applied to all aspects of public realm work, unlocking the benefits described in the document.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

None

Documents in Members' Rooms

Streetscape Design Guidelines

Background Documents

None