

Report to Council

Agenda item 7.2

Post travel report by Councillor Rohan Leppert, Auckland, New Zealand, August 2019

29 October 2019

Presenter: Councillor Rohan Leppert

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Council on meetings undertaken by Councillor Rohan Leppert with City of Auckland representatives on issues relating to public art whilst on private travel in New Zealand in August 2019.

Key issues

2. The City of Auckland adopted a new [Public Art Policy](#) in 2013, seeking to progress new public art that celebrates the region's creativity, highlight Māori identity, reflect the city's diversity, respond to the natural landscape, generate pride and belonging, and transform public places.
3. Cr Leppert met with City of Auckland representatives with expertise in the creative sector, and public art procurement and management, to gain insights into the commissioning and delivery of permanent public art by government.
4. Key observations of the work undertaken by Auckland included the following:
 - 4.1. There is a strong expectation of integration of public art in public realm projects in Auckland. The benefits derived from placing independent artists at the start of a place-making design process, rather than being commissioned to install a discrete piece of public art within an already-designed place, are visible and significant. The integration of the Council's arts and city design functions is therefore strong.
 - 4.2. It is policy of the City of Auckland to ensure that public art is delivered where it has the greatest benefit, and this specifically requires that all business case design briefs for all Council major public place development projects include consideration of the potential for integrating permanent public art. Public art therefore tends to be commissioned earlier in a design process than occurs in Australian Capital Cities (though the City of Melbourne's Creative City Strategy 2018 seeks to transform Melbourne's approach to the role of the artist in this regard).
 - 4.3. As one recent successful example of the above, Freyberg Place and the Ellen Melville Centre were reopened in 2017 as a terraced, open air space for relaxation in the heart of the city and a community centre for locals and visitors respectively. The \$4m redevelopment of Freyberg Place followed an interesting design process that involved multiple artists and an architecture firm, resulting in multiple artistic elements and the coordination of sometimes collaborative and sometimes competing artistic elements, that nevertheless come together to deliver an integrated whole; a public square with extraordinary diversity of purpose and artistic intention.
 - 4.4. A recent trend has been a greater political willingness to install fewer, larger pieces of public art. The Auckland waterfront has undergone a particular transformation with the installation of public art; the waterfront renewal integrates maritime heritage, cultural and recreational elements successfully.
5. The work undertaken by the City of Auckland is of particular interest to the City of Melbourne, as:
 - 5.1. One of the initiatives included in the 2019-2020 Annual Plan and Budget provides for the development of new public art at greater scale. This is something which the City of Auckland has significant experience of in recent years.
 - 5.2. The Melbourne City Council or Future Melbourne Committee is soon to consider a new Public Art Framework for the City of Melbourne, as foreshadowed by the Creative City Strategy 2018.
6. There was no cost to Council associated with travel by Cr Leppert as it was privately funded.

Recommendation

7. That Council notes the report by Councillor Rohan Leppert on meetings undertaken with City of Auckland representatives on creative and public art matters whilst on private travel in New Zealand in August 2019.

Attachment:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 2 of 2)

Supporting attachment

Legal

1. There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report.

Finance

2. There was no cost to Council associated with the travel, which was personally funded by Cr Leppert.

Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Health and Safety

4. Cr Leppert undertook standard safety precautions associated with international travel.

Relation to Council policy

5. The Manager Governance and Legal has confirmed that the travel undertaken accorded with the requirements of the travel guidelines outlined in the Councillor Expenses and Resources Guidelines.

Environmental sustainability

6. The carbon emissions resulting from air travel were offset by the purchase of credits.