

## **Item: 4**

**St Magnus Cathedral Sub-committee: 25 October 2022.**

**Orkney International Science Festival.**

**Proposed Temporary Installation of Artwork known as SUN.**

**Report by Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

To consider the temporary installation of the “SUN” artwork in St Magnus Cathedral as part of the Orkney International Science Festival 2023.

### **2. Recommendations**

The Sub-committee is invited to note:

#### **2.1.**

That the Council has received a request from Orkney International Science Festival to install an art and science installation known as the “SUN” in St Magnus Cathedral as part of the 2023 Festival.

#### **2.2.**

That relevant Council officers have been consulted regarding conservation, health and safety, fire and insurance issues associated with the temporary installation of the “SUN” and its use and no insurmountable concerns have been raised.

**It is recommended:**

#### **2.3.**

That the request from Orkney International Science Festival to temporarily install the “SUN” in St Magnus Cathedral, to coincide with the 2023 Festival, be approved, subject to the following conditions:

- The host organisation being Orkney International Science Festival.
- No financial responsibility for the Council in the transportation, installing, insuring or maintenance of the “SUN” whilst it is in St Magnus Cathedral.
- Additional workload on Council custodial staff comprising up to 12 hours outwith Cathedral opening times, to facilitate access.

## **3. The “SUN” Art and Science Installation**

### **3.1.**

The Council has been approached with a request from Orkney International Science Festival that the “SUN” art and science installation be temporarily displayed in St Magnus Cathedral during the Orkney International Science Festival for the period 7 to 13 September 2023.

### **3.2.**

The “SUN” is a partnership between artist Alex Rinsler and Professor Robert Walsh (solar physicist), along with Dr Jonathan Westaway of the University of Central Lancashire. “SUN” comprises a 6m diameter inflatable balloon, with lights/moving images, based on NASA’s data of sun activity, projected onto the balloon surface. “SUN” would hang in the middle of the Cathedral crossing, under the tower, suspended internally.

#### **3.2.1.**

The original “SUN” balloon is 7m diameter, which would not be suitable for the Cathedral, therefore a smaller 6m diameter balloon has been made, which would be suitable. There is also a soundscape which can be played continuously if required, but can be switched off as appropriate. The sound can be localised to the area immediately around the “SUN”, or can be connected to the Cathedral’s sound system to be heard throughout the building. There is also the option of dry ice/smoke to create an atmospheric effect.

### **3.3.**

Advice has been sought from Council officers in relation to conservation, insurance, health and safety and fire safety, particularly in relation to how the installation is fixed to the Cathedral fabric, and how it is maintained and monitored during the period in question.

### **3.4.**

Installation would be carried out by the “SUN” technical team, which may include Orkney partners, for example the St Magnus International Festival stage crew, or the technical team from the Orkney Theatre. Council officers would be present to monitor and advise.

### **3.5.**

Installation would take a maximum of three days, during which time the Cathedral can remain open, with the central area cordoned off as necessary. The de-rigging would take about one day, under the same conditions. The “SUN” would be inflated at the initial installation, then require topping up throughout the installation period which would be done by the “SUN” team of technicians. During opening hours, there would be a fan in operation, the noise disruption is about the same as a small air conditioning unit. The electrical equipment would be switched off at night, leading to some deflation. The “SUN” would be reinflated the following day, prior to opening.

### **3.6.**

A member of the “SUN” team would be on-site throughout the day when the Cathedral is open to the public. There would be no personnel on-site at night.

### **3.7.**

Feedback has been sought from Fraser Macnaughton, Cathedral Minister, and the Church of Scotland congregation. They are very supportive of the installation and can see potential for using the “SUN” as a prompt for prayer, meditation and contemplation. There are no weddings planned for the dates proposed for the installation. Funerals may be considered and, should one take place, the Funeral Directors can request that the light/film projections be switched off for the duration of the funeral. The balloon would remain in situ.

### **3.8.**

A risk assessment has been completed by the Visitor Services Officer and is being evaluated by the Safety and Resilience Officer specifically regarding the risks and mitigation of risks relating to the temporary installation of the “SUN”. The installers will also prepare their own Risk Assessment following a site visit.

### **3.9.**

Insurance for the installation would be provided by the University of Central Lancashire, to the value of £50m. The Insurance Officer has contacted the Council’s insurers and is awaiting a response.

### **3.10.**

The “SUN” team would provide interpretation material in the form of static exhibition banners, leaflet literature and volunteer ‘explainers’ as appropriate. Members of the “SUN” team would be present periodically to speak to visitors.

### **3.11.**

Advice and guidance has been sought from Exeter Cathedral, which hosted Luke Jerram’s Museum of the Moon, a comparable art installation comprising an inflated balloon and accompanying light projections. The Visitor Services team at Exeter reported a very positive reaction from local people, visitors, clergy and church-goers, and said they would highly recommend the experience to any cathedral proposing to host a similar event.

### **3.12.**

No proposal has been put forward to charge entry to the Cathedral during normal opening hours. However, Orkney International Science Festival will hire the Cathedral for two evening events during the Festival. The Council will receive the hire fee and provide visitor services staff, whilst the Orkney International Science Festival will charge for ticketed entry to those two events. Outwith those two events, there is potential for the Council to organise its own special evening event, which could incur a ticketed charge.

### **3.13.**

It has been proposed that there be a tie-in exhibition at the Orkney Museum related to sun-related science and discovery, which is being discussed with the Museums Exhibitions Officer and the curatorial team.

## **4. Human Resource Implications**

It is expected that members of either the visitor services team or the conservation team will facilitate access to the Cathedral outwith normal working hours for the initial installation, the de-rigging, and the regular re-inflation of the balloon. Exact times are to be confirmed but total number of hours is estimated at 12 hours.

## **5. Corporate Governance**

This report relates to the Council complying with governance and procedural issues and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

## **6. Financial Implications**

The recommendations to this report state that there will be little financial implication for the Council in relation to the temporary installation of "SUN". The full costs of transportation, installation, insurance and security for "SUN" (estimated at £25,000) would be borne by Orkney International Science Festival and The University of Central Lancashire. There may be staffing requirements if the installation proves to be extremely popular, and also for facilitating access to the Cathedral outwith normal working hours.

## **7. Legal Aspects**

In terms of the Local Government and Planning (Scotland) Act 1982 section 15(2), the Council is empowered to undertake activities, both within and out with their area in furtherance of provision of cultural facilities.

## **8. Contact Officers**

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