

**Report to:** Children's Services, Young People and Sport Scrutiny

**Date:**

**Report of:** Director of Children's Services

**Report No:** 17

**Contact Officer:** Paul Round

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**Report Title:** **Spirit of Sport Update**

**Non Confidential:** **(Non-Confidential)** This report does **not** contain information that warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

**Purpose:** The purpose of the report is to inform the Scrutiny Committee of the proposal to update the Spirit of Sport sculpture through the addition of new portrait images of local sporting people.

**Recommendations:** The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note contents of the report.

**Decision:**

**Background Doc(s):**

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leader / Executive Member

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Monitoring Officer

**Date:**

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**Summary:**

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## **Background**

The Spirit of Sport is a piece of public art that was erected as a tribute to the past and present sporting community of Bolton. The sculpture was erected in November 2005 and is the largest piece of public art in the UK to be developed through public consultation. The structure is made of stainless steel, is almost 30 metres high and is covered with etched photograph panel images of men, women, children and young people who have made an immediate and/or long lasting contribution to sport in the town. The official launch of the Spirit of Sport took place at Bolton Arena in April 2007, inviting everyone whose image was on the sculpture to celebrate their peers, colleagues and their own sporting achievements. The event attracted local, regional and national media coverage,

## **Original Nominations**

When the Spirit of Sport was officially commissioned by the Council, the task of selecting who's images or portraits should feature on the sculpture began. A criteria was produced and nominations were sought through the local press, TV and radio, schools, clubs and basically any organisation or individual who believed that they knew someone who met the Spirit of Sport criteria. A panel of experts with a vast amount of local knowledge and experience in sport was also tasked with contacting their numerous associations and networks in an attempt to maximise the number of nominations coming forward.

Well over a thousand nominations were received within the time allowed to begin the photograph collection and submission process. Nominees were asked to provide suitable quality photographs of their nominations. Full day photo shoots were arranged at the Excel leisure centre and Bolton Arena to ensure a minimum standard of photographic image wherever possible. Of the nominations received, 653 individual portraits were approved and etched on to the special steel photographic panels. A number of duplicate panels were also installed to balance out the overall presentation of the 948 available panels.

## **New Nominations Proposal**

As expected, once people saw the completed sculpture in all its glory, people who had for whatever reason hesitated about sending in their nomination began to do so. A significant number of suggestions were received about people who they believed were missing from the sculpture. There were also a number of questions asked about some of the individuals/images that were actually already in place.

The task now therefore, is to review the new nominations that have been submitted since the installation of the first photographic panels, with the aim of addressing what the local sporting community believe to be the "glaring omissions" from the sculpture in the first instance. The proposal is that a maximum of 100 new portraits are added to the Spirit of Sport and that some of the duplicate panels are removed to accommodate the new images.

Over time, the aim will also be to review the original nominations and portraits whose inclusion may have been questioned, in order to fully reflect the original ethos of the Spirit of Sport sculpture.

### **Financial Implications**

The cost of adding/replacing 100 stainless steel photographic panels will be approximately £15,000 and monies from the Public Arts Fund will be sought to finance the proposal.

### **Conclusion**

The Spirit of Sport was launched in 2007 as a tribute to those local people who have made a lasting contribution to sport in Bolton. The sculpture also provides us with a snapshot of present day sport and sporting activity.

The Spirit of Sport was always going to be a showcase for the achievements of Bolton's sporting superstars such as Nat Lofthouse and Amir Khan. Equally, if not more important, it was also built to celebrate the achievements of the unsung sporting heroes of Bolton - i.e. those people in the background and at the very heart of the grass roots sport in the town.

We now have the opportunity to make sure that the Spirit of Sport becomes what it was always meant to be, a living monument to sport and the sporting community of Bolton.

### **Recommendation**

The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the content of the report.