

SALISBURY CITY COUNCIL

Report

Subject : Gilbert the Dragon 2024 & Beyond
Committee : Environment & Climate Committee
Date : 9 Oct 2023
Author : Marc Read, Environmental Services Manager

1. Report Summary:

1.1. This report provides options for Gilbert for 2024 and beyond for consideration.

2. Background

- 2.1. Gilbert the Dragon is an 8ft metal framed floral display that has been a feature of Salisbury since 1999.
- 2.2. Unfortunately, his frame has reached the end of its life span, with the internal watering pipework now failing.
- 2.3. The Gilbert Floral display costs approximately £3,000 to construct each year.
- 2.4. To then keep the floral display alive, approximately 30,000 litres of water is used on Gilbert an estimated cost of £700.
- 2.5. As Salisbury City Council, moves forward with more sustainable planting as part of it's Environmental Policy Action Plan, it was decided at the July Environment & Climate Committee would not continue in his current form.
- 2.6. However, given the affection that Gilbert has with residents in the city, Council requested at the Environment & Climate Committee on 3 Jul 2023 to look at alternatives.

3. Options & Costs

- 3.1. Whilst there are many alternative options, officers have provided costs for two options as outlined below:
- 3.2. Option 1 – Artificial Box Wood. The company who has provided the quote could create a near copy of the existing Gilbert frame in various sizes:

Sculpture Size	Price
6ft High Approx. Sculpture Size (HxWxD): 183cm x 181cm x 146cm	£5,141
7ft High Approx. Sculpture Size (HxWxD): 213cm x 210cm x 170cm	£6,679
8ft High Approx. Sculpture Size (HxWxD): 243cm x 239cm x 194cm	£8,289

- 3.2. Examples of their work is illustrated below:



- 3.3. Option 2 – Chainsaw Sculpture. The artist’s proposal is to make a sculpture from Douglas Fir that would be approximately 5-6ft tall and this would stand on a plinth approximately 1-2ft high.
- 3.4. Gilbert’s outline would look as similar as possible with his proportions remaining the same, i.e. he would still have a chubby body, a happy face and his wings and ears would still ‘stick out’ as they currently do. His tail would be carved from a separate piece to curl up towards his back then away to leave sufficient room for his wings.
- 3.5. The sculpture would come in five or six parts - the plinth, the main body, two legs, one set of wings, tail and head, they will be connected together using a 75mm dowel system to locate in place. Then counter sunk with rust proof timber lock screws which although the screw heads would be visible, would be aesthetically pleasing. This will make him easier to move, although he wouldn’t need to be dismantled fully.
- 3.6. If at anytime Gilbert suffered any damage or one section experiences premature rot then it will be easier to make a replacement part. Douglas Fir cladding lasts for between 30 - 60 years if treated and left outside all year round.

3.7. The estimated cost for this sculpture would be £3,900.

3.8. Examples of the artist's work detailed below.



4. Consultation

4.1. Given the affection that Gilbert has with residents in the city, consideration should be given to a consultation on Gilbert 2.0.

5. Budget

5.1. No budget has been set aside for either Gilbert 2.0 or any consultation around what form Gilbert 2.0 should take, so provision would need to be made with the 2024/25 budget.

6. Recommendations

6.1. It is recommended that Council:

6.1.1. Determine if there should be a Gilbert 2.0.

6.1.2. Determine how to decide what form Gilbert 2.0 should take. i.e. By Committee, by community vote etc.

6.1.3. Determine during budget setting the level of funding that should be attributed to the project.

6. **Wards Affected:** Gilbert 2.0 could be located in any ward within the city.

7. **Background Papers:** DOC91103 – Sustainable Planting

8. Implications:

8.1. **Financial:** As detailed in this paper.

8.2. Personnel: Nil

8.3. Environmental Impact: Nil

8.4. Equalities Impact Statement: Nil