

SCRUTINY PANEL B

Meeting held in the Committee Room, Council Offices, Urban Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield,

on Thursday, 27th June, 2019 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor Christian Chapman in the Chair;

Councillors Tony Brewer, Dale Grounds,
Rachel Madden, Phil Rostance, David Walters
and Caroline Wilkinson.

Officers Present: Phillip Bennett, Lynn Cain, Carol Cooper-Smith,
Aimee Dobb, Charles Edwards, Mike Joy,
Christine Sarris and Shane Wright.

In Attendance: Councillors Lee Waters and Jason Zadrozny.

SB.1 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interests and Non Disclosable Pecuniary/Other Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

SB.2 Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 21st March, 2019, be received and approved as a correct record.

SB.3 Scrutiny Review of War Memorials

The Service Manager for Scrutiny and Democratic Services presented the report and advised that the topic had been added to the 2019/20 Scrutiny Workplan in June 2019.

Some of the war memorials within the Ashfield area were currently in need of cleaning and restoration. The Council had prioritised four memorials to undergo a full cleaning and restoration programme within the 2019/20 financial year as follows:-

- Titchfield Park War Memorial, Hucknall
- Kingsway Old Cemetery War Memorial, Kirkby in Ashfield
- Sutton Cemetery War Memorial, Sutton in Ashfield
- Huthwaite Cemetery War Memorial, Huthwaite, Sutton in Ashfield.

It had been agreed to include it on the Scrutiny Workplan and undertake a review to enable the Panel to consider the following aspects in relation to the Council's war memorials:-

- possible resident involvement
- ongoing cleaning and preservation requirements
- to develop a protocol for War Memorials within Ashfield District Council
- consider events surrounding War Memorials
- future planning and preservation of the monuments and surrounding spaces.

Members acknowledged that the maintenance and preservation of the Council's war memorials was a task undertaken by many officers across the Council including the Director of Place and Communities from a strategic standpoint, the Environment Team regarding ground maintenance and repair and the Conservation Officer who ensured continued protection and preservation of the heritage and legacy of the monuments.

The Council were intending to submit a bid to the War Memorials Trust to access funding for cleaning and restoration of the four earmarked memorials. Schedules of Works were currently being drawn up for each of the four individual war memorials and were due to be submitted by 31st July, 2019.

The Council's Conservation Officer took the opportunity to explain to the Panel about the origins and remit of the War Memorials Trust and gave some examples of how the Council could endeavour to protect their monuments going forward (i.e. wreath holders) as suggested in the guidance document produced by the Trust organisation.

A debate took place and Members considered the following:-

- the timescales for completion of the cleaning and restoration works to the four memorials;
- the potential costs of carrying out the works with a ballpark estimate being given of around £5,000 per war memorial;
- the levels of potential damage caused to the monuments by the passage of time and the continually changing elements including possible options for future restoration and protection;
- the benefits of an informative awareness campaign to ensure all Ashfield residents were aware of the restoration works taking place and the events being organised for 2019 remembrance events;
- slight concerns raised at the lengthy grant application process for the War Memorials Trust and the importance of ensuring the works were completed in readiness for the 2019 remembrance events;
- the potential for enabling local war veterans to contribute to the ongoing maintenance of the memorials and their surrounding vicinities going forward;

- an acknowledgement that completion of the restoration and cleaning works to all the Council's war memorials would be undertaken through a rolling programme of repair, scheduled over a longer period of time, rather than being completed within the current financial year.

RESOLVED

- a) that the following interim recommendations be submitted to the next meeting of the Cabinet (15th July, 2019) for consideration:-
- to ensure the four priority war memorials, as identified in the report, are professionally cleaned and restored in readiness for remembrance events in November 2019;
 - to continue with the submission of a grant application to the War Memorials Trust, to secure funding for the professional cleaning and restoration work required;
 - in conjunction with recommendation b) above, to immediately identify sufficient Council funding for the professional cleaning and restoration work required, should the grant application to the War Memorials Trust prove unsuccessful;
 - to develop a communications plan ensuring the public is fully informed of the proposed cleaning and restoration works and any other events or plans relating to the District's war memorials.
- b) the Scrutiny Research and Support Officer be requested to arrange an Informal Working Group during August 2019 to enable Panel Members to progress the review in a timely manner and meet the deadlines for submission to Cabinet in October 2019.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm

Chairman.