

**ASHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL**



Council Offices,  
Urban Road,  
Kirkby in Ashfield  
Nottingham  
NG17 8DA

## Agenda

### Scrutiny Panel B

Date: **Thursday, 27th June, 2019**

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Time: **7.00 pm**

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Venue: **Committee Room, Council Offices, Urban Road,  
Kirkby-in-Ashfield**

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For any further information please contact:

**Lynn Cain**

[l.cain@ashfield.gov.uk](mailto:l.cain@ashfield.gov.uk)

01623 457317

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# SCRUTINY PANEL B

## Membership

**Chairman:** Councillor Christian Chapman

**Vice-Chairman:** Councillor Caroline Wilkinson

**Councillors:**

Tony Brewer  
Rachel Madden  
David Walters

Dale Grounds  
Phil Rostance

## FILMING/AUDIO RECORDING NOTICE

This meeting may be subject to filming or audio recording. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Members' Services on 01623 457317.

## SUMMONS

You are hereby requested to attend a meeting of the Scrutiny Panel B to be held at the time/place and on the date mentioned above for the purpose of transacting the business set out below.



**R. Mitchell**  
**Chief Executive**

## **AGENDA**

**Page**

1. To receive apologies for absence, if any.
2. **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interests and Non Disclosable Pecuniary/Other Interests.**
3. To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 21st March, 2019. 5 - 8
4. **Scrutiny Review of War Memorials.** 9 - 14

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## SCRUTINY PANEL B

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

on Thursday, 21st March, 2019 at 7.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor Mick Murphy in the Chair;

Councillors Don Davis, Lauren Mitchell and  
Matthew Relf.

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors Helen Hollis, Cathy Mason and  
Glenys Maxwell.

**Officers Present:** Lynn Cain, Mike Joy and Shane Wright.

**In Attendance:** Councillor Paul Roberts.

### **SB.14 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interests and Non Disclosable Pecuniary/Other Interests**

No declaration of interests were made.

### **SB.15 Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 29th January, 2019, be  
received and approved as a correct record.

### **SB.16 Workplan Consultation and Delivery of the Scrutiny Function 2019/20**

The Chairman introduced the item and reminded Members that the meeting  
would be the last meeting of the Panel prior to the District Elections in May  
2019. Rather than commence a new review at this late stage, it had been  
agreed that it would be prudent for Panel Members to consider the potential  
impact of the upcoming national scrutiny guidance, evaluate the Council's  
scrutiny function over the last four years and to consider topics for the 2019/20  
Scrutiny Workplan.

#### New Government Scrutiny Guidance

The Service Manager, Democratic & Scrutiny Services advised the Panel that  
officers had been waiting for some considerable time for the new statutory  
scrutiny guidance to be released by Government. The guidance was originally  
due to be published in December 2018 but due to Brexit priorities, the release  
date has been pushed back indefinitely.

The scrutiny function was first introduced by the Local Government Act 2000 as part of the requirements for the new Cabinet/Leader regime. Should a local authority adopt a Stronger Leader model to facilitate their decision making processes then a scrutiny function will also need to be provided.

No new statutory guidance had been released since 2006 and it was evident that the landscape of scrutiny had changed over the last few years. Originally the scrutiny function enabled members to hold the Cabinet to account, be a critical friend in relation to policy development and to consider items on the Forward Plan.

However, from what was already known about the anticipated new guidance, the emphasis would now focus on:-

- scrutiny of outside/external organisations;
- recognising scrutiny's legal and democratic legitimacy;
- allocating sufficient resources to the scrutiny function;
- ensuring scrutiny members have powers to access pertinent information as required;
- focussing on scrutiny of financial resilience and sustainability of functions.

It was hoped that local authorities would give renewed consideration to the level of support given to their scrutiny function thus ensuring the provision of an effective service that adds value to the work of the authority.

Panel Members were advised that once the guidance was released, a report would be submitted to the next available Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting for consideration.

### Scrutiny Improvements

Due to the fact that the current term of office was coming to an end, the Scrutiny Research and Support Officer suggested that it would be a good idea to reflect on and evaluate how the Council's scrutiny function had performed over the last four years. Members comments were to be welcomed and also consideration could be given to some suggested improvements for the next term of office.

It was important that the credibility of the scrutiny function including its Members was maintained with a constant eye to raising its profile wherever possible. A strengthening of engagement with stakeholders during the review process would benefit both the Panel's deliberations and fulfil the Council's ongoing commitment towards transparent and informative engagement.

A reconsideration of scrutiny committee memberships and format (i.e. thematic panels) could be undertaken whilst ensuring that all new scrutiny members are fully supported and trained to ensure that their scrutiny work is focussed and well directed. Thought should also be given to the value, or otherwise, of utilising the expertise of co-opted scrutiny members and technical advisers as and when required.

Scrutiny meetings have traditionally been held at the main Council offices but in a bid to increase community engagement, Members could consider utilising different venues around the District to make the meetings more accessible to

local residents and if appropriate, to locate any such meetings based on the particular Workplan topic under review.

### Scrutiny Workplan

It had been previously acknowledged that the compilation and management of the Council's Scrutiny Workplan could be expanded and suggestions had been made to ensure any future Workplans made reference to timelines for completion of reviews and contained an outcome tracking mechanism to ensure all interested parties were kept informed as required.

### Discussion

Members took the opportunity to reflect on how the Council's scrutiny function had performed over the last four years and debated some of the issues and potential improvements as follows:-

- following the cessation of the four Area Committees in 2017, a gap had been left in relation to liaison with communities and local residents which the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Panels could bridge with more public interest led topics for review;
- the scrutiny function should have two sides; a strategic direction for reviewing and holding to account the decision making processes and arrangements of the Council and a more community led engagement focus for reviewing topics of interest to the public;
- advice on how Independent Members are recruited and the potential benefits of producing a job description to alert potential candidates as to what is expected of them whilst undertaking the role;
- the importance of a good quality Workplan which contains a variety of topics for consideration;
- a suggestion that more meetings are streamed live through the Council's Facebook and Twitter pages to increase public engagement and accessibility;
- a suggestion that the Scrutiny Panels could tap into the work and expertise being demonstrated through the 'Discover Ashfield' initiative including the possible recruitment of business representatives as Independent Members if appropriate;
- a concern that many of the Scrutiny Committee and Panel meetings are poorly attended by the public and consideration of how this may be remedied including holding meetings at community venues within the District;
- how social media has changed how the public acquire information and interact with the Council regarding matters of interest over recent years.

In relation to the Scrutiny Workplan, the Scrutiny Research and Support Officer reiterated the importance of having an effective and inclusive Workplan and Members made the following suggestions for the 2019/20 municipal year:-

1. the impact of the introduction of Universal Credit on the Council and its customers;
2. to consider the Stronger Leader model against the possible introduction of the alternative Committee System;
3. the risk and impact of Ashfield District Council becoming part of a Unitary Authority;
4. the Council's ongoing commitment towards apprenticeship opportunities;
5. the value of the third sector delivering a range of Council objectives;
6. to review the Nottinghamshire Business Rates Pool and how it facilitates the allocation of its pooled resources to encourage economic growth within the area;
7. the disparity of business rates requirements for private children's nurseries as opposed to public run nurseries and to consider options for levelling the playing field;
8. ways to improve communication between Members and officers to ensure Elected Members are kept informed of events/issues within their particular wards on a regular basis.

RESOLVED that

- a) the Service Manager, Democratic & Scrutiny Services be requested to circulate a copy of the new Government statutory scrutiny guidance to Panel Members should it be released before May, 2019;
- b) Members comments/responses in relation to the effectiveness of the Council's scrutiny function over the last four years and any suggestions for future provision, be received and noted;
- c) the potential topics for the 2019/20 Scrutiny Workplan be submitted to the first meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (following the District Election in May 2019) for further consideration and inclusion on the Workplan if agreed.

The meeting closed at 7.37 pm

Chairman.



<b>Report To:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY PANEL B</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>27 JUNE 2019</b>
<b>Heading:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY REVIEW OF WAR MEMORIALS</b>		
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	<b>NOT APPLICABLE</b>		
<b>Ward/s:</b>	<b>ALL</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>NO</b>		
<b>Subject to Call-In:</b>	<b>NO</b>		

## **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is as an introduction to war memorials in Ashfield, following the approval of the topic to the Scrutiny Workplan 2019/20. This report aims to provide Scrutiny Panel B Members with a background on war memorials, including war memorials identified for work in Ashfield and guidance from the War Memorials Trust on maintenance and preservation.

## **Recommendation(s)**

Panel Members are recommended to:

- Note the information contained in this report
- Agree terms of reference for the review
- Arrange an informal working group to progress the review in between formal Scrutiny Panel B meetings

## **Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

War memorials was added as a topic for review to the Scrutiny Workplan 2019/20 in June 2019.

## **Alternative Options Considered**

No alternative options have been considered at this stage of the review.

## **Detailed Information**

### **Suggested Review Terms of Reference**

In consideration of this topic, Scrutiny Panel B Members have indicated that the following areas could benefit from scrutiny involvement and could form the review terms of reference:

- Resident involvement
- War memorial cleaning and preservation
- A comprehensive protocol for war memorials in Ashfield
- Events surrounding war memorials
- Future planning

Any additional lines of enquiry concerning war memorials will be identified and discussed as part of the review process.

## **What is a War Memorial?**

War memorials exist in many different forms, but all exist as an object to preserve the memory of a conflict or war and those involved in it. Typically, a war memorial takes the form of a plaque, monument, or sculpture, but can also include any tangible object that has been erected or dedicated to commemorate. Generally, war memorials are erected by local communities and groups associated with those remembered. War memorials act as historical touchstones, linking the past and the present as focal points for acknowledging and remembering the sacrifice of those that served, fought, and died in conflict, especially on occasions such as Remembrance Sunday.

## **Origins of War Memorials**

Today, it is estimated that there are around 100,000 war memorials throughout Britain, built as symbols of commemoration for war dead. The notion of commemorating those lost in war developed significantly towards the end of the nineteenth century. Before then, war memorials were few in number, typically dedicated to individuals or specific regiments, and seen as celebratory objects. The aftermath of the First World War became the “great age” of memorial building, as thousands were erected across Britain. The effects of the First World War were immensely far-reaching, and in response came a nation-wide drive for commemoration. This drive for commemoration was compounded by a ban on repatriation of the dead, as over 700,000 Britons lost their lives, and it became a logistical impossibility to transport numbers so high.

Although the Second World War saw fewer military losses, local communities continued the drive for commemoration, as new memorials were constructed and many names were added to those erected after the First World War. In the time since the end of the Second World War, names have been continually added to memorials in remembrance of those lost in more recent conflicts.

## **Priority War Memorials**

Four of Ashfield’s war memorials have been identified as high priority for restoration works due to the extent of work needed. The works for each memorial identified below are repairs/maintenance, meaning Listed Building Consent is not required.

### Titchfield Park War Memorial, Hucknall, NG15 7LU

- Bronze staining
- Surface damage to stone
- Repointing

### Kingsway Old Cemetery War Memorial, Kirkby – in – Ashfield, NG17 7FJ

- Damage to wall and railings

- Loss of mortar
- Cracks to memorial
- Step readjustment
- Lettering reinstatement

#### Sutton Cemetery War Memorial, Sutton – in – Ashfield, NG17 2EL

- Staining
- Loss of lead
- Crack to marble
- Base repairs
- Remove vegetation
- Lettering repairs

#### Huthwaite Cemetery War Memorial, Huthwaite, NG17 2NQ

- Stone discolouration
- Repointing
- Works to the plaques, cross, and wreath

### **Maintaining War Memorials**

As set out in a help sheet produced by the War Memorials Trust, there are certain guidelines and requirements that must be adhered to when looking after war memorials.<sup>1</sup> The War Memorials trust also produced the leaflet *Advice on Maintenance of War Memorials* to provide guidance on how to preserve war memorials and identify repair needs.<sup>2</sup>

#### Look

Visiting a memorial, taking photographs, and maintaining an accurate record is important. This information can form the basis of any maintenance/restoration plan, and can help monitor any damage to the memorial.

#### Investigation

All war memorials have a history. Taking history into account is vital when managing a memorial. Details of how a memorial was erected, and by whom, can answer any ownership issues. Information on how names have been identified can help anticipate any future requests for names to be added. Details of the materials used in a memorial's construction is also vital for any maintenance work.

#### Legal Requirements

Some war memorials are listed and are subsequently affected by listed building consent. Depending on the location of the war memorial, and its history, other issues may have to be taken into consideration such as planning, church facilities, etc. Any historical research will assist in understanding requirements surrounding war memorials.

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<sup>1</sup> Looking after your war memorial, *War Memorials Trust*, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Advice on Maintenance of War Memorials, *War Memorials Trust*, 2006.

## Assess

When assessing war memorials, two main questions need to be considered:

- Is the memorial in good condition?

Action may need to be taken to rectify any problems identified.

- Is the memorial safe?

Making sure a war memorial is secure is vitally important. Theft of metals can be common, as well as vandalism or graffiti.

## Maintain

A maintenance programme is important to ensure war memorials are preserved. Identifying issues early prevents large restorations projects through less intrusive and less damaging preventative work.

A maintenance plan could just mean an annual visit to the war memorial in question, taking photographs and carrying out a brief condition survey. Again, the objective of a maintenance plan is to identify problems early to make them easier to deal with.

## Conserve

It is inevitable that work will be required to conserve war memorials. Any work should be carried out should be done so by qualified professionals, and in line with current best conservation practice.

## Community Involvement

It is important for community involvement to be sought regarding war memorials. Not only are the memorials of huge sentimental value to many, the community can also help monitor and report any issues relating to war memorials, ensuring those responsible for the memorial can take preventative measures.

Consideration should be given to:

- Advice on how local communities can be involved
- Involving local communities in information gathering
- Ensuring local communities are involved and informed of any changes or issues relating to war memorials
- Planning community events

## **Wreaths and War Memorials**

In addition to other help sheets regarding war memorials published by the War Memorials Trust, *Wreaths and War Memorials* provides guidance on the laying of wreaths and personal tributes.<sup>3</sup> The laying of wreaths is an important part of most Remembrance services. As a personal tribute, wreaths allow individuals and organisations to pay their respects to those commemorated. Management of wreaths laid can be a sensitive issue, and consideration should be given to ensure minimal distress is caused.

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<sup>3</sup> Wreaths and War Memorials, *War Memorials Trust*, 2017.

Those responsible for managing and maintaining war memorials must consider the following:

- When to remove tribute wreaths
- How to inform those concerned of wreath removal
- Deterioration of wreaths
- Staining of a war memorial from a wreath or any metal on them
- Maintaining consultation with local communities and other interested parties
- The necessity and/or desirability for wreath holders

### **Next Steps**

- Review the information collected
- Request any further information required to progress the review
- Consider the value of a site visit(s)
- Consider strategic direction for war memorials going forward

### **Implications**

#### **Corporate Plan:**

This proposed scrutiny review of war memorials is reflected in the Corporate Plan priority areas of;

- Place and Economic Growth
- Communities and Growth

This includes recognising, promoting and enhancing our cultural and historical heritage, engaging communities and a cleaner environment.

#### **Legal:**

Any legal implications relating to war memorials will be considered and addressed as part of the review process.

#### **Finance:**

<b>Budget Area</b>	<b>Implication</b>
General Fund – Revenue Budget	None at this stage.
General Fund – Capital Programme	None at this stage.
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	None.
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	None.

**Risk:**

Risk	Mitigation
Failure to maintain and preserve Ashfield's war memorials is a significant reputational risk for ADC.	Ensuring that all processes for the maintenance and preservation of war memorials are communicated to all interested and involved parties.

**Human Resources:**

There are no HR implications identified in this report.

**Equalities:**

There are no equality implications identified in this report.

**Other Implications:**

None.

**Reason(s) for Urgency**

None.

**Reason(s) for Exemption**

None.

**Background Papers**

- Looking after your war memorial, *War Memorials Trust*, 2017.
- Advice on Maintenance of War Memorials, *War Memorials Trust*, 2006.
- Wreaths and War Memorials, *War Memorials Trust*, 2017.

**Report Author and Contact Officer**

Shane Wright  
 Scrutiny Research and Support Officer  
 01623 457318  
 s.wright@ashfield.gov.uk