

ASHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL



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

Agenda

Scrutiny Panel B

Date: **Thursday, 19th September, 2019**

Time: **7.00 pm**

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

For any further information please contact:

Lynn Cain

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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

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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

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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 27th June, 2019. 5 - 8
4. **Scrutiny Review: 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, 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.

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Report To:	SCRUTINY PANEL B	Date:	19 SEPTEMBER 2019
Heading:	SCRUTINY REVIEW: WAR MEMORIALS		
Portfolio Holder:	NOT APPLICABLE		
Ward/s:	ALL		
Key Decision:	NO		
Subject to Call-In:	NO		

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Scrutiny Panel B Members with an update on the interim recommendations submitted to July's Cabinet meeting, details of the informal working group that took place in August, and to present some potential final recommendations for consideration and approval by the Panel.

Recommendation(s)

Scrutiny Panel B Members are recommended to:

- a. Receive an update on the interim recommendations submitted to Cabinet in July 2019.
- b. Consider all information gathered over the course of the review.
- c. Discuss and approve final review recommendations to be presented to Cabinet on 7 October 2019.

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

The Scrutiny Review: War Memorials could have concluded with the interim recommendations presented to Cabinet in July 2019. However, Scrutiny Panel B Members felt the review should continue to consider further options.

Detailed Information

The review of war memorials commenced at the 27 June 2019 meeting of Scrutiny Panel B. The first meeting of the Panel was attended by the Council's then Service Director – Place and

Communities, Assistant Director – Planning and Regulatory Services, Conservation Officer, Environment and Cemeteries Manager, and Cemetery and Allotment Team Leader.

At this meeting, Panel Members discussed the following:

- The origins and meaning of war memorials
- Memorials identified by the Council as high priority for cleaning and restoration
- Guidance on maintaining war memorials from the War Memorials Trust
- Ensuring plans extend beyond 2019

Discussion at the first formal meeting focused on the cleaning and restoration work required on four priority war memorials located in Kirkby, Sutton, Hucknall, and Huthwaite. These four memorials were identified as priority due to the scale of maintenance and restorative work required.

Scrutiny Panel B Members quickly came to a consensus that it was essential that the four identified war memorials were cleaned and restored in due time for remembrance events in November 2019. Due to the time sensitive nature of the Panel's considerations, it was decided that a set of interim recommendations would be presented to Cabinet at the earliest possible opportunity.

Interim Recommendations Approved

A set of interim recommendations relating to the Scrutiny Review: War Memorials were presented to Cabinet in July for consideration. These recommendations were as follows:

- a. To ensure the four priority war memorials identified in this report are professionally cleaned and restored in readiness for remembrance events in November 2019.
- b. 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.
- c. In conjunction with recommendation B, 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.
- d. 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.

Cabinet approved all four of the recommendations submitted for consideration and were thrilled with the proactive nature of the review and the contributions from Scrutiny Panel B.

Informal Working Group – 15 August 2019

An informal working group was held on the 15 August 2019 to discuss the scrutiny review of war memorials with Scrutiny Panel B Members and a representative from a local community group in attendance.

Communication Plan

Discussion at the informal working group started around the communications plan approved at Cabinet in July 2019 as part of the interim recommendations. Panel Members discussed the importance of having clear communication between the Council, the public, and other interested groups regarding war memorials.

Members of the Panel are keen to expand on the communications plan recommendation approved at July Cabinet through further discussion, looking at how the existing resources such as the Council's website and Council publications could be utilised.

Memorials across Ashfield

At the informal working group, further discussion focused on the need for other areas in Ashfield to have their war memorials appropriately monitored and maintained, particularly in the Rurals. At the working group, Members expressed a desire for maintenance plans to extend past the four priority war memorials due to be cleaned and restored in 2019.

Potential Recommendations

War Memorials Management Plan

Throughout the review, discussion on war memorials has focused on two distinct phases. Initial considerations by Scrutiny Panel B centred on the four priority war memorials and the necessity for them to be cleaned and restored by November 2019, to coincide with remembrance events. The second phase of discussion centred on planning beyond 2019, and ensuring all war memorials in Ashfield are considered as part of a wider war memorial management plan.

Scrutiny Panel B Members feel that the development of a war memorial management plan would be extremely beneficial and would ensure appropriate maintenance is carried out.

The management plan could include:

- Guidelines for war memorial maintenance and surrounding areas

War memorials need to be maintained and restored by professional contractors due to their structural age and the materials used. Within the management plan, guidance could be included on how to avoid causing unnecessary damage to war memorials and how it is best for any issues to be reported to the Council for an appropriate response. Further guidance could be provided on how areas surrounding war memorials are maintained and how/if interested community groups could get involved.

- Protocol for wreaths

Wreaths and War Memorials, another help sheet produced by the War Memorials Trust, provides guidance on the laying of wreaths, personal tributes, and how they should be managed.¹ The laying of wreaths is an important part of remembrance services. As a personal tribute, wreaths allow individuals and organisations to pay their respects to those commemorated.

Panel Members have indicated that within the management plan, a protocol for managing wreaths should be included. This would include information on:

- When or if the Council will remove tribute wreaths and how this will be communicated
- How the Council will respond to the deterioration of wreaths placed
- Information on how wreaths can cause staining to war memorials

¹ War Memorials Trust, *Wreaths and War Memorials*, 2017.

Management of wreaths laid can be a sensitive issue, and consideration should be given to ensure minimal distress is caused. A wreath protocol within the war memorial management plan could ensure this.

- Maintenance plans

Looking After Your War Memorial, a help sheet produced by the War Memorials Trust in 2017, provides guidance on the maintenance of war memorials.² Within the guidance, the War Memorials Trust recommends the implementation of a maintenance plan, with the objective of enabling early identification of issues. Scrutiny Panel B Members feel as though a maintenance plan could form part of a wider war memorial management plan.

- Timetable of maintenance

This could be a timetable of planned work/maintenance for public information and planning purposes. The timetable could set out when work is to be carried out and when different memorials are due to be surveyed

Before recommending the development of a war memorial management plan to Cabinet, Scrutiny Panel B Members should give appropriate consideration to the contents and framework of the plan. Further consideration should also be given to Officer time needed to develop, implement, and maintain a management plan.

War Memorials Website Space

To expand on the communications plan approved as part of the interim recommendations in July, Members have discussed how the Council could also develop a space on the website as a feature for war memorials in Ashfield throughout the remembrance period in November. The Council could invite the submission of stories relating to those commemorated on the District's war memorials and feature them on the website. This space could also include further information regarding the District's war memorials, such as location, events relating to them, and how they were originally constructed.

Final Steps

To conclude the Scrutiny Review: War Memorials, Panel Members should give consideration to the potential recommendations outlined in this report, and discuss any further recommendations.

Once the Panel has approved final recommendations, a final report will be presented to Cabinet in October.

² War Memorials Trust, *Looking After Your War Memorials*, 2017.

Implications

Corporate Plan:

The Scrutiny Review: War Memorials reflects the following Corporate Plan priorities:

- Place and Economic Growth
- Communities and Growth

The includes recognising, promoting, and enhancing the District's cultural and historical heritage, engaging communities, and achieving a cleaner environment.

Legal:

There are no legal implications resulting from this report.

Finance:

There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	None.
General Fund – Capital Programme	None.
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	None.
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	None.

Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
There is a risk that the District's war memorials will fall into disrepair without a maintenance plan.	Scrutiny Panel B Members are considering the benefits of a War Memorial Management Plan to ensure necessary is carried out in a timely manner.

Human Resources:

There are no Human Resources implications resulting from this report.

Equalities:

There are no equalities implications resulting from this report.

Other Implications:

There are no other implications identified in this report.

Reason(s) for Urgency

None.

Reason(s) for Exemption

None.

Background Papers

- War Memorials Trust, *Looking After Your War Memorials*, 2017.
- War Memorials Trust, *Wreaths and War Memorials*, 2017.

Report Author and Contact Officer

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