

Report To:	CABINET	Date:	07 OCTOBER 2019
Heading:	SCRUTINY REVIEW: WAR MEMORIALS		
Portfolio Holder:			
Ward/s:	ALL		
Key Decision:	NO		
Subject to Call-In:	NO		

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present Cabinet with final recommendations resulting from the Scrutiny Review: War Memorials that took place from June to September 2019. The final recommendations presented in this report follow on from the interim recommendations submitted to Cabinet in July 2019.

Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is recommended to approve:

- a. The development of a brief protocol focusing on the four priority war memorials previously identified. This should set out the Council's key principles with regards to maintenance, engagement, and partnership working.
- b. The enhancement of existing webpages on the Council's website to provide further information on maintenance work, events, and community guidance regarding war memorials.

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 long term planning for maintenance and information sharing, and are therefore presenting a further set of recommendations for the consideration of Cabinet.

Detailed Information

Scrutiny Panel B – 27 June 2019

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 former 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 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.

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.

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.

Scrutiny Panel B – 19 September 2019

During this meeting, Scrutiny Panel B Members were assisted in their discussion by the Council's Director – Place and Communities and Cemeteries and Allotments Team Leader. Members set out to approve final recommendations to be presented to Cabinet in October and conclude the scrutiny review of war memorials.

Members received an update from Officers in attendance on the progress of the interim recommendations approved at Cabinet in July. Members were informed that the grant application to the War Memorials Trust had been submitted as planned on the 31 July, and that the Council was awaiting a response to the application. Members were further informed that contractors had been procured to carry out works on the four identified priority war memorials in early October.

In consideration of final recommendations, Members deliberated the following:

- The merits and the feasibility of an overarching management plan for war memorials
- The obligations of the Council regarding war memorials
- The need for these obligations to be established clearly
- Acknowledgement that future funding opportunities from the War Memorials Trust may be diminishing
- Focusing the Council's resources
- Working with community groups
- War memorial content on the Council's website

After discussion, Members approved the below recommendations for Cabinet's consideration.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to approve:

Protocol Development

The development of a brief protocol focusing on the four priority war memorials previously identified for maintenance work. This protocol should set out the Council's key principles with regards to:

- *Maintenance*
- *Engagement*
- *Partnership working*

Following discussion, Members of Scrutiny Panel B decided the protocol should initially focus on the four priority war memorials identified earlier in this review. These memorials were identified as high priority for restoration works due to the extent of work needed.

The four identified priority war memorials:

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

This recommendation is for a brief protocol to be developed to outline Ashfield District Council's key principles with regards to the maintenance of the four named war memorials, engagement, and how the Council will work with partners such as the War Memorials Trust and the Royal British Legion.

Scrutiny Panel B Members have indicated that the protocol could include:

- Signposting information (who to contact in the Council to report a war memorial issue, who to contact regarding events, etc.)
- Planned maintenance of the four identified war memorials
- Guidance on how to avoid causing damage to war memorials
- Event information

The protocol could then be expanded in the future in line with any work to other war memorials in the District.

Scrutiny Panel B Members feel that the development of a protocol is essential to provide adequate guidance and advice to Members, Officers, and communities. The protocol can be a reference point for the four identified priority war memorials going forward.

War Memorial Webpages

The enhancement of existing webpages on the Council's website to provide further information on maintenance work, events, and community guidance regarding war memorials.

Scrutiny Panel B Members discussed how the Council could use existing resources to improve information sharing relating to war memorials. This recommendation is for the development of a prominent website space on the Council's website. This could provide a one-stop-shop for war memorials, featuring:

- Memorial profiling
- Planned maintenance
- Event information
- Signposting
- Links to War Memorials Trust guidance

Scrutiny Panel B Members feel this will ensure that the Council maintains a continued presence and approach to information sharing with regards to war memorials.

Implications

Corporate Plan:

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

- 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:

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
Failure to adequately plan and prepare for war memorial maintenance could lead to disrepair and subsequent damage to the Council's reputation.	Scrutiny Panel B Members have recommended the development of a protocol ensuring adequate planning and preparation.

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 resulting from this report.

Reason(s) for Urgency

None.

Reason(s) for Exemption

None.

Background Papers

None.

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