

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

23 JUNE 2011

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| SUBJECT: | WIRRAL WAR MEMORIALS |
| WARD/S AFFECTED: | ALL WARDS |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT |
| RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER: | COUNCILLOR ADRIAN JONES CORPORATE RESOURCES |
| KEY DECISION? | NO |

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet Members of the proposals to install war memorial plaques at the Cenotaph at Hamilton Square and to seek approval for a single tender action.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Members note the contents of this report.

2.2 That Members endorse the proposals contained in this report.

2.3 That Cabinet approve the award of contracts for memorial masonry works to Birkenhead Monumental, pursuant to Contract Procedure Rule 5.1.1.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Whilst not a statutory duty of the Council, it is generally considered to be very important that all the people of Wirral who have given their lives in the service of their country are properly remembered. The completion of all the proposed phases of improvements at the Cenotaph will be a fitting tribute in advance of the 100 year anniversary of World War One in 2014.

3.2 The proposed monumental masonry works including the cutting, inscribing, supply and installation of stone plaques will be carried out by Birkenhead Monumental, whose services will be procured by a number of purchase orders at appropriate stages of the scheme implementation. Birkenhead Monumental is the only known local supplier of the necessary specialist masonry services with sufficient capacity to deliver the works to the required quality and timescales. The total value of monumental masonry for the Phase 2 works described below is approximately £33,000. Birkenhead Monumental has performed satisfactorily and at reasonable cost when previously engaged in similar activities for the Council. Nevertheless, prior to award of any Phase 3

works contracts the market will be re-tested and discussions will be held with the Corporate Procurement team to ensure there are no other suitable alternative suppliers.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 There are 12 district war memorials in the borough, including the Cenotaph at Hamilton Square. The memorials at Eastham; Magazine Promenade, New Brighton and the Cenotaph are currently Grade 2 listed. The memorial at Grange Hill, West Kirby, is Grade 2* listed. Representations are being made to English Heritage by the Council's Conservation Officer for them to consider listed status for additional memorials and enhanced status listing for the Cenotaph.
- 4.2 The memorials and Cenotaph generally contain names of the fallen in the two world wars from the districts in which they are located. The memorial at Grange Hill, West Kirby does include some names of Wirral's fallen from post-1945 conflicts. However, this memorial has difficult access issues as described in section 11 below. There are known to be a large number of fallen who are not currently commemorated at any the borough's memorial sites.
- 4.3 The Cenotaph at Hamilton Square is the location where the borough's official civic act of Remembrance takes place each year in November. The Cenotaph itself was originally dedicated to the fallen from World War One (WW1). There are only a few World War Two (WW2) names and, with little room for further inscriptions, it is therefore appropriate that separate memorials are provided.
- 4.4 Phase 1 of the improvements at the Cenotaph took place in 2009 when the various regimental plaques in the grassed area each side of the Cenotaph were re-set to make them more prominent.
- 4.5 As Phase 2 of the improvements, the current proposals involve the installation of low level memorial plaques which will be laid to a slightly sloping angle across the existing edging kerbs around the paved area along the entrance and left hand side of the Cenotaph. The plaques will be manufactured from large slabs of Portland stone and carved in relief with multiple names. It is proposed that these plaques will include the names of all the following: any WW2 Wirral fallen not currently recognised on district memorials elsewhere in the borough (1100 number), including those only recognised on plaques inside the Birkenhead Town Hall, and all the Wirral fallen from post-1945 conflicts, including Iraq and Afghanistan (currently 17 number). It is also intended to install plaques in this phase in honour of all the borough's recipients of both the Victoria and George Cross (currently 24 in total), which will be carved with a copy of their medal inscriptions. It is proposed that all Phase 2 works be implemented prior to Remembrance Day in November 2011.
- 4.6 Phase 3 of the proposals involve the installation of further Portland Stone plaques laid around the edging to the right hand side of the Cenotaph, which will include the names of all Wirral fallen from the Boer War (approximately 12 number); any WW1 names not currently commemorated elsewhere (550 number), and all Merchant Navy personnel who have fallen in conflicts during WW1 and WW2. Merchant Navy personnel are not currently commemorated at

any memorial locations in the borough and relevant names will be confirmed in consultation with the Merchant Navy. This phase will proceed in 2012/13, subject to available funding as described in section 9.6 below.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 There is a minor financial risk that additional works may be required to the paved areas around the Cenotaph.
- 5.2 Where possible, families and military records will be consulted to ensure names and details are accurately recorded.
- 5.3 Risks will be managed appropriately and all critical project risks will be identified and monitored on a regular basis by the project team.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 The addition of supplementary plaques to the existing memorial at Grange Hill, West Kirby was discounted for the reasons outlined in section 11 below.
- 6.2 A 'do-nothing' option has been discounted since there would appear to be widespread support to include missing names at the Cenotaph and improve the memorials to all of Wirral's fallen.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 English Heritage have been consulted and support the proposals, which was a pre-requisite for the planning consent granted on 28 March 2011.
- 7.2 A number of relatives of the fallen from recent conflicts have been consulted and have expressed their approval for the location of memorials at the Hamilton Square Cenotaph. Some of the families of those remembered on plaques situated within Birkenhead Town Hall have complained about the difficult access in the building and support the proposal to re-create these memorials at the Cenotaph.
- 7.3 The proposals have received support from The Rt Hon Frank Field MP in a letter dated 24 November 2009. A number of former service personnel have also been consulted and have expressed their support for the proposals.
- 7.4 Details of the Council's war memorials are communicated to the public via a page on the Council's website under the Community and Living section. This page will be updated with further details on each of the borough's memorials once the current proposals are approved.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 There are no implications in this report for voluntary, community or faith groups.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 9.1 The Department of Law, HR and Asset Management will provide all professional services for the design and procurement of the construction

activities necessary to deliver the proposals, with assistance from the Council's Corporate Procurement team.

9.2 The Director of Technical Services in accordance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 will carry out the role of CDM Coordinator.

9.3 There are no additional staffing implications with these proposals.

9.4 The total estimated cost of the proposals (Phases 2 and 3) is:

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| • Ground works: | £2,000 |
| • Monumental masonry: | £68,000 |
| • Departmental charges, including Professional fees CDM Coordinator Other charges (Planning fees etc.): | £10,000 |
| Total | <u>£80,000</u> |

9.5 There is an annual budget for the repair and maintenance of war memorials, cenotaphs and historic clocks in the Property Maintenance Programme, managed by the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management. In 2010/11 £25,000, of the available £50,000, has been used for materials for Phase 2. The remaining funding for Phase 2, and Phase 3 totalling £55,000, will be from the Heritage budget managed by the Director of Technical Services.

9.6 In 2010/11 a contract amounting to a value of £9,500 was awarded to 1 Call Business Solutions for general maintenance of war memorials from 2011 to 2013. It is proposed that an order be raised under this contract for the ground works elements associated with these proposals. Future general maintenance and tidying of the Cenotaph area will be procured through this contract.

9.7 There are no IT implications arising from this report.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Currently the names of all Wirral's fallen from post-1945 conflicts are included on a memorial plaque on Grange Hill, West Kirby. This location is reached by means of a steep, narrow, rough sandstone path with very difficult access for those with disabilities and the elderly. There are also some existing memorial plaques in Birkenhead Town Hall, which has access issues, as described in 7.2 above. The addition of these names, together with all previously missing names from earlier conflicts, at Hamilton Square will significantly improve access for people with disabilities and the elderly. However, the current name plaques at West Kirby and Birkenhead Town Hall will not be removed.

11.2 The siting of the proposed memorial plaques has been designed to afford close easy viewing and access for all, and has followed the principles of the Council's generic Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for Highway Design.

11.3 There are no other specific equal opportunities implications in this report.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The availability of good access to Hamilton Square by public transport, when compared to monuments elsewhere, could lead to a potential reduction in carbon emissions from vehicles as a result of the proposals described in this report. However, specific estimates have not been quantified.

12.2 The contractor will be encouraged to employ local labour and source materials from local suppliers as far as possible in accordance with Council procurement procedures.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Full planning permission for the formation of new edging war memorial plaques to replace the existing stone edging around the Cenotaph in Hamilton Square was granted on 28 March 2011.

13.1 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

None

REFERENCE MATERIAL

The information used in the preparation of this report was obtained in consultation with The Department of Law, HR and Asset Management and with reference to their asset database and register information. No other background papers have been used in the preparation of this report.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Cabinet report – PPM Programme | 23 July 2009 |