



WAR MEMORIAL

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

12 DECEMBER 2011

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the recommendations from the group, consisting of the Town Clerk and Councillors Harry Rees and Jim Toogood, appointed at the October meeting to clarify and cost the available options for the repair and/or restoration of the War Memorial

No. DETAIL

1) BACKGROUND

- a) Following concern expressed to Councillor Harry Rees by representatives of the Royal British Legion about the condition of the War Memorial in Ventnor Park and initial inspection of it by Councillor Jim Toogood, the Town Council considered the matter at its meeting of 10 October.
- b) Minute 171/11 of that meeting delegated authority to the Town Clerk to work with Councillors Harry Rees and Jim Toogood to identify and cost the available options.
- c) Initial investigation established that work is needed to repair and secure the damaged top of the Memorial itself and to the surrounds which are badly cracked.
- d) The War Memorial itself is currently leaning slightly but not seriously into the Park with a slope 6 inches off the vertical over its height. It is understood that this almost certainly took place a very long time ago and there is no sign of more recent movement.
- e) The information gathering has provided professional and specific assessments of the Memorial's current condition and although detailed estimates can only be secured through a procurement process in line with the Town Council's Standing Orders the group is confident that the necessary work to secure the Town's War Memorial for a long term future will be in the region of £25,000 - £30,000.
- f) This stage has also involved discussions between the group and the officers of the Ventnor Branch of the Royal British Legion, referred to below.

2) RESTORATION WORKS

- a) Councillor Jim Toogood will outline the proposals for this work.
- b) For the record, it is proposed is to underpin the Memorial to prevent further movement of and thus secure its long term future.
- c) It is also proposed that the base be reduced in area in order both to allow the restructured steps to be built from salvageable stone in the current base and to facilitate ease of access to the Memorial for visitors and ceremonies with the remaining area asphalted in keeping with current surfacing.
- d) The repair work to the top of the Memorial should also be included.

3) BORE HOLE

- a) As the major work will be that of underpinning the Memorial, the group has been very clearly advised that a detailed specification for the procurement process is only possible after drilling a bore hole to determine the actual nature of the ground beneath it.
- b) An initial estimate for a 6 metre drilling was of the order of £1,200. Since no funding for this work is provided for in this year's Town Council budget this was included in the discussions with the British Legion and the organisation has formally agreed to provide that funding in order that the work can go ahead immediately as is necessary if the War Memorials Trust next funding application deadline of 31 March 2012 is to be met
- c) Subsequent discussions have recommended a 10 metre depth and a formal estimate has been received from specialists Mini Soil Surveys (MSS) for that work of £1,446.

4) PROCUREMENT

- a) Invitations to tender for the work could be commenced as soon as the results of the bore hole have been assessed.
 - b) In view of the sensitivity of the work, it is proposed that direct invitations be sent to Island companies experienced in work of this nature in addition to the advertisement in the press required by Standing Order 30(c).
 - c) This process needs to be completed by March as the application to the War Memorials Trust requires the submission of the results.
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5) LEAD ROLES

- a) During discussions with the British Legion Officers, they expressed the view that evidence nationally indicated that Town Councils were not necessarily the most appropriate guardians of War Memorials as their membership changed regularly and good support from any particular Council might not be continued by its successors.
 - b) They proposed that lead responsibility for the War Memorial should rest with the British Legion as the foremost representatives of those most involved with what it represented.
 - c) In view of the Town Council's indicated willingness to take the lead role in the funding of the restoration, they further proposed that the work be taken forward on a partnership basis with the Town Council's role and support formally acknowledged.
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6) FUNDING

- a) As previously reported, the War Memorials Trust is able to offer up to 50% of totals below £40,000 for restoration work of this nature.
 - b) Ventnor Enhancement Fund could be asked for a contribution as the *cleaning and repair of Ventnor War Memorial* is one of its stated activities.
 - c) The local British Legion branch are willing to lead, with support from Ventnor Town Council, a local fund raising appeal.
 - d) The Town Council is empowered to contribute from the 2012/13 Precept.
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7) RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) that the proposed arrangements for lead roles in respect of the War Memorial set out in section 5 above be endorsed and that the partnership approach be in place throughout the restoration process;
 - b) that outline approval is given for the restoration work identified in section 2 above;
 - c) that approval is given for the work involved in the bore hole to proceed as soon as possible and for the difference in cost of £246 between the Ventnor British Legion contribution and the £1,446 quotation to be paid by the Town Council;
 - d) that the Expression of Interest Form for a grant from the War Memorials Trust be completed and submitted with immediate effect;
 - e) that, subject to a positive response from the War Memorials Trust, the Town Clerk, working with Councillors Harry Rees and Jim Toogood be authorised to conduct a tender process to secure the three estimates required by the War Memorials Trust to be submitted with any full application.
 - f) that the Town Clerk, working with Councillors Harry Rees and Jim Toogood be authorised to take all necessary steps to develop a full specification and schedule of works and the completion of a grant application form to the War Memorials Trust in advance of its next deadline of 31 March 2012;
 - g) that the Town Clerk be authorised to ask the Isle of Wight Council to remove the tree that blocks the view of the Memorial from the road; and
 - h) that the Town Clerk provides a progress report to the February meeting of the Town Council.
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