

# **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

## **Report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services**

**Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee: 29<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

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**Subject: Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders – Homecoming Parade**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to advise of a proposed march through Dumbarton by the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and to seek authorisation for the provision of a civic reception to mark the occasion.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1** The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders have had a long, historic link with Dumbarton, having been granted the Freedom of the Royal Burgh on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1963. The 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Royal Regiment of Scotland, has been serving in Helmand Province in Afghanistan, returning in October.
- 2.2** During their tour of duty, there have been casualties, with many soldiers injured and one fatality. In these circumstances, morale is a key factor of success and this is heightened by the knowledge that those at home recognise the contribution and sacrifices made by the soldiers fighting abroad.
- 2.3** The Deputy Commander, Colonel Andrew Campbell, has requested that the battalion be granted Freedom of Entry to march through Dumbarton on 11 December 2008 with bayonets fixed, drums beating and colours flying. A copy of his letter to the Provost is attached as the Appendix to this report.
- 2.4** Dumbarton is one of only three locations in the UK chosen to host the Battalion's homecoming parade.

### **3. Main Issues**

- 3.1** The march will require permission from the Council in terms of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, Part 5, Public Processions. Approval of the parade will be subject to the normal statutory provisions which involve consultation with the police and the opportunity for any public objections to be submitted and considered.
- 3.2** The parade will require a number of road closures to be put in place and this matter will be dealt with by the Department of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development.
- 3.3** The main issue relates to the provision of civic hospitality for the event. The parade could involve up to 500 soldiers and a number of VIP guests.

- 3.4** Council officers are seeking to identify the best locations to cope with anticipated numbers. Modest hospitality would be provided by way of a buffet lunch.

**4. Personnel Issues**

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues associated with the request.

**5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1** The event will cost approximately £5000, depending on the final numbers of participants and the level of hospitality to be provided. This cost cannot be accommodated within the Council's hospitality budget given the other civic hospitality commitments for the financial year.
- 5.2** There is, however, a Cultural Services budget of £25,000, created to fund cultural events within West Dunbartonshire. It would be appropriate to meet the costs of the event from this budget.

**6. Risk Analysis**

- 6.1** As part of the application for permission to hold the Parade, the Battalion have to provide a risk assessment which demonstrates that all attendant risks have been considered and controls put in place to minimise those risks.

**7. Conclusions**

- 7.1** The parade will demonstrate that the people of West Dunbartonshire recognise the contribution made by the servicemen and women serving in war zones abroad. Appropriate hospitality should be provided to acknowledge their service and their sacrifice.

**8. Recommendations**

- 8.1** It is recommended as follows:-
- a) that the Council approve the provision of hospitality for the event, subject to permission being obtained for the parade through the normal procedures:
  - b) that funding be made available from the Cultural Budget; and
  - c) that it be remitted to the Executive Director of Corporate Services to make the appropriate arrangements in consultation with the Provost and the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development.

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Joyce White, Executive Director of Corporate Services

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**Background Papers**

Letter dated 17 September from Deputy Commander Andrew Campbell

**Wards Affected:** Ward 3, Dumbarton

**Officer to Contact:**

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