

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services

Licensing Committee: 4 November 2008

Subject: Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders - Proposed Homecoming Parade – 11 December 2008

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the proposed parade to be held on 11 December 2008 and to consider varying clauses in the Code of Conduct in order for it to proceed.

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 21st September 1963. The 5th Battalion, the Royal Regiment of Scotland, has been serving in Helmand Province in Afghanistan, returning in October. Dumbarton is one of only three locations in the UK chosen to host the Battalion's homecoming parade
- 2.2** 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.
- 2.4** The Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee, on 29th October 2008, considered the event in terms of the hospitality to be provided, which was approved subject to permission for the parade being granted.
- 2.5** Parades are governed by the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 and the Police, Public Order and Criminal Justice Act 2006. Any parade requires permission from the local authority.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Parades can be permitted by delegated authority, if they conform with the code of conduct and unless objections are received from local residents or from the police.
- 3.2** A military parade will require variation of certain conditions in the code of conduct, namely:
11. The organiser shall ensure that all participants do not march more than four abreast....: and
23. No halberds or weapons of any description shall be carried.

In these circumstances, this committee's approval of a variation in these conditions is required to allow the parade to go ahead.

- 3.2 At the time of writing this report, the Battalion has not yet submitted its formal application to hold the parade. The deadline for this is 13th November.
- 3.3 Approving the variation to the permission to allow the Battalion to parade with bayonets fixed does not in any way usurp the normal process for parade applications. Once the application is submitted, consultation will take place in the usual way and, if any objections are received, a formal meeting will have to take place to consider them.
- 3.4 If, however, this committee grants the variation to conditions and no objections are received, it will be possible for the permission to be approved under delegated powers.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1 There are no personnel issues arising from this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. Cost issues of providing civic hospitality have already been addressed by the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1 The Battalion will be required to submit a fully worked up risk analysis for submission with their application.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The parade is designed to recognise the service and sacrifice of individual soldiers serving in war zones. The Battalion has already suffered many casualties and one fatality during its tour of duty in Helmand Province.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve a variation of the conditions 11 and 23 of the code of conduct. This is on condition that an adequate risk analysis is submitted as part of the application for permission. It is also understood that, should any public objections be lodged following notice of the parade, a formal hearing will be required to decide finally whether permission be granted. Otherwise the parade would be approved under delegated powers.

Joyce White, Executive Director of Corporate Services

Background Papers

Report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services to the meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee held on 29th October and minute thereof

Letter dated 17th September 2008 from Colonel Andrew Campbell, Deputy Commander of the Battalion.

Wards Affected: Ward 3 Dumbarton

Officer to Contact:

Anne Laird, Manager of Administrative Services, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton Tel 01389 737514 or e-mail: anne.laird@west-dunbarton.gov.uk