

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land and Environmental Services)

Council: 30 May 2007

Subject: Creation of a Memorial Wall in Clydebank

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to update Members on proposals for the creation of a Memorial Wall in Clydebank to commemorate service personnel who lost their lives during active service with the armed forces and civilian victims of the Clydebank Blitz.

2. Background

- 2.1** In 1914 Clydebank Town Council agreed to display a Roll of Honour in relation to the First World War however unfortunately this has never been done.
- 2.2** There is therefore presently no formal war memorial in Clydebank which includes the names of those local service men and women who lost their lives whilst serving their country during World War 1, World War 2, Korean War, Gulf War, Northern Ireland or any of the other conflicts during the 20th and 21st Centuries.
- 2.3** At a meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 20 December 2006 a motion was considered and passed that the Council recognised the desire of descendants and relatives to have a permanent record of the names and other details of their loved ones who died serving as part of the armed services. It was agreed that the Chief Executive should ensure that a report was presented to the next Council Meeting on how such a place of public remembrance could be achieved. That meeting was held on 28 February 2007.
- 2.4** A report was submitted to the Council meeting of 28 February 2007 by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land and Environmental Services) outlining proposals for the creation of a Memorial Wall in Clydebank to commemorate service personnel who lost their lives during active service with the armed forces.

The Council unanimously agreed:

- a) to the proposals for the creation of a Memorial Wall in Solidarity Plaza, Clydebank to commemorate those service personnel who lost their lives in defence of their country since 1914;
- b) that the Memorial Wall should include the hundreds of civilian victims of the Clydebank Blitz of 13 and 14 March 1941;

- c) that a working group, chaired by Provost Macdonald be established to co-ordinate an official opening ceremony to take place on Veterans Day, 27 June 2007;
- d) that membership of the working group should be widened in order to maximise community involvement and could include MP and MSPs, Church representatives and representatives of the Royal British Legion;
- e) that the Provost will ensure that appropriate dignitaries are invited to the official opening of the Clydebank Memorial Wall on Veterans Day;
- f) that Council notes that Veterans Day will be celebrated across the whole of West Dunbartonshire and the Provost will use the additional £6,000 allocation of funds to support Veterans Day events in Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven area.

3. Main Issues

3.1 The working group was initially convened with a restricted membership of council officers. Provost Alistair Macdonald chaired the first meeting on Monday 23 April 2007 and it was noted that the group remit was to co-ordinate proposals and arrangements:-

- a) for the creation of a Memorial Wall in Solidarity Plaza to commemorate those service personnel who lost their lives in defence of their country since 1914 including victims of the blitz.
- b) for an official opening ceremony to take place on Veterans Day, 27 June 2007.

3.2 The working group discussed a number of issues which they believed would impact upon the proposals. In particular it was noted that:-

- a) a service enhancement of £25,000 was agreed as part of the 2007/08 budget however the total cost and funding for the project required to be confirmed.
- b) work to collate information on details of service personnel eligible for inclusion on the Memorial Wall was ongoing with information being gathered from a number of sources including a public consultation exercise to collate and validate data and that this exercise would require to be monitored and formally concluded to ensure maximum public input.
- c) the timescale for the official opening on Veterans Day, 27 June 2007 was not achievable given the amount of work and research involved to ensure accuracy of inscription details and the continued public input into this exercise.

- 3.3.** It was agreed by the group that a report be submitted to the new Council explaining that it was not considered possible to complete this project within the proposed timescale.

Furthermore, it was recommended that the new Council should have an input into the proposals and should advise officers on how they wish to proceed.

- 3.4** The working group members have recommended that:-

- a) due to the short timescale, a ceremony of dedication of the site be held on Veterans Day 2007 with commemoration events being held annually thereafter.
- b) consideration be given to displaying a notice on the site indicating that a memorial would be erected there in the future.
- c) the new Administration should agree the design of the inscription and wording on the wall.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** As part of the 2007/2008 Budget settlement agreed on 08 February 2007 the sum of £25,000 was allocated to this project.

- 5.2** Inscriptions of this nature are generally charged 'per letter' therefore the full cost of the work will not be known until the list of names has been finalised and the nature of the inscriptions has been determined.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** There is no requirement for a risk assessment to be carried out on the proposals contained in this report.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1** Creation of a Memorial Wall is seen as a fitting tribute to those men and women who lost their lives and will provide a permanent place of public remembrance.

- 7.2** It is important that detailed research and consultation is carried out to ensure that the memorial is accurate in detail and meets the aspirations of the families represented.

8. Recommendations

8.1 It is recommended that:-

- a) the Council notes that the timescale for an official opening on Veterans Day 27 June 2007 will not be achieved.
- b) the Council agrees to a ceremony of dedication of the site being held on Veterans Day 2007 with commemoration events being held annually thereafter.
- c) the working group be reconvened, with Provost Agnew as the chair;
- d) the membership of the working group be widened, for particular meetings, as it considers appropriate; and
- e) the working group discuss and agree arrangements for the creation of the Memorial Wall and dedication/commemoration events and that their proposals be submitted to a future meeting of Council.

Ronald M. Dinnie

**Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services
(Land & Environmental Services)**

Date: 15 May 2007

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Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	Report to Council on 28 February 2007 Minute of Memorial Working Group 23 April 2007
Wards Affected:	Ward 4 - Kilpatrick Ward 5 - Clydebank Central Ward 6 - Clydebank Waterfront