

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

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

Community Safety & Environmental Services Committee: 4 April 2007

Subject: Christie Park War Memorial - Alexandria

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To advise the Committee of necessary restoration work to Christie Park War Memorial and the position relating to availability of external funding.

2. Background

- 2.1** The Grounds Maintenance Section undertakes an annual condition survey of West Dunbartonshire Council's War Memorials in conjunction with independent monumental sculptors.
- 2.2** Minor structural repairs i.e. replacement of lettering, pointing joints, stone cleaning etc identified within the report are rectified prior to 11 November Remembrance Day Services.
- 2.3** As noted within a report submitted to this committee on 04 October 2006, Christie Park Cenotaph, the largest War Memorial within West Dunbartonshire, requires major refurbishment.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Christie Park War Memorial is constructed mainly of sandstone with slate panels inlaid. The sandstone has stood up relatively well to the effects of weathering however the slate panels have not fared so well and they display signs of deterioration commensurate with the age of the monument. The slate panels also suffer from chips and scrapes caused by vandalism.
- 3.2** The slate panels require to be buffed off before any work to re-gild the lettering can commence. Unfortunately the lettering has become so shallow in many places that the buffing process would render vast amounts of letters illegible. The re-cutting of lettering in situ is not a viable proposition due to the technical difficulties and the degree of danger involved. The removal of plaques for rework is also not practical, as the danger of breakage would be impossible to avoid.
- 3.3** For these reasons it was proposed that the slate panels are removed and replaced with light grey granite panels, however Historic Scotland is not supportive of this action and recommends that the slate panels must be replaced with new slate.
- 3.4** The memorial also requires extensive pointing and specialist cleaning. Great care is required with regard to stone cleaning. There is growing concern about the scale and extent of irreversible damage to stonework, which is often evident either immediately or sometime after cleaning has taken place.

- 3.5** In the best interest of the individual structure the cleaning procedure to be adopted will be a water wash using a low-pressure jet washer which is not detrimental to the manner in which the stone responds to natural weathering.
- 3.6** The war memorial is constructed on a three-tier base and surrounding concrete plinth that requires pointing and reconstruction.
- 3.7** Soft and hard landscape works are also proposed around the war memorial incorporating shrub/flower beds, access paths, ornate fencing/gates and floodlighting.
- 3.8** Retailed estimated costs for the work described in sections 3.1 to 3.7 above total approximately £132,000.
- 3.9** Consultation has taken place with various relevant organisations both in connection with proposed works and in relation to financial assistance.
- a) Historic Scotland responded positively in support of the proposed works, however unfortunately they are unable to commit financial resources to the project.
 - b) War Memorials Trust confirmed they only support applications in England and that they have no partnership agency in Scotland
 - c) Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) would consider an application providing the work forms part of a restoration project for the whole of Christie Park. It is however likely that funding from HLF would amount to no more than approximately 35% or 40% of total project costs.
- 3.10** A full restoration project for Christie Park (as suggested by the Heritage Lottery Fund) would be achieved by:-
- a) restoration of the War Memorial
 - b) restoration of boundary fencing/gates and sandstone walls
 - c) repairs to road/pathway surfaces
 - d) restoration of designed landscape
 - e) development /upgrade play areas
- It is estimated that these works would cost approximately £585,000 excluding professional fees.
- 3.11** As outlined in Section 3.9 above, only one of the three agencies approached responded positively in terms of possible funding assistance. In the event that the Heritage Lottery Fund contributed 35% or 40% of the project costs the Council would require to fund the remaining 60% or 65%.

4 Personnel

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues related to this report.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 Estimated cost for restoration of War Memorial:-

a) Monument	£103,200
b) Base	£15,360
c) Paths	£ 6,867
d) Fencing	<u>£7,000</u>
Total	£132,427

5.2 Estimated cost for restoration of Christie Park including costs contained in 5.1:-

a) War Memorial	£132,427
b) Fencing/gates and sandstone walls	£94,520
c) Road/path surface repairs	£183,948
d) Landscape	£90,000
e) Development /upgrade play areas	<u>£84,000</u>
Total	£584,895

5.3 Estimated cost to the Council for:-

- a) Full restoration of Christie Park £350,937
(based upon a maximum award of 40% from Heritage Lottery Fund)
- b) Restoration of Christie Park War Memorial £132, 427

5.4 Due to funding pressures, a phased 3 year programme of restoration work to Christie Park War Memorial funded from both Capital and Revenue budgets may be an option for consideration. This would be effective from 2008/2009.

6 Risk Analysis

6.1 At this stage there are no risks associated with the content of this report

7 Conclusions

7.1 There is no doubt that restoration work is required to the Christie Park War Memorial both to return it to its original condition and to prevent further deterioration of its condition.

7.2 Given that the Council has been unable to attract funding from two external agencies and the likelihood is that the level of HLF funding for complete restoration of Christie Park would be 40% or less, the alternative of a phased capital/revenue programme of work solely for the restoration of the War Memorial may be the most viable option.

8.0 Recommendations

8.1 The Committee is asked to:

- a) consider the content of this report; and**
- b) support the development of a phased capital and revenue programme of work over the next 3 years from 2008/2009 onwards.**

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(Land and Environmental Services)**

Date: 2 March 2007

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Appendices: None

Background Papers: Report to CS&ES - October 2006

Wards Affected: Ward 18