

Cabinet

16th July 2014



**World War 1 Centenary Activity:
Victoria Cross Winner's Commemorative
Paving Stone Project**

Report of Corporate Management Team

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Cllr Neil Foster, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To outline the Council's involvement in delivering the Department of Communities and Local Government's Victoria Cross Winner Commemorative Paving Stone Project.
- 2 The report proposes a process for determining where the paving stones will be permanently located.

Background: National Importance

- 3 The centenary of World War 1 (WW1) (2014 – 2018) will be a period of major importance to the people of the Country and particularly those countries with regiments that took part in the conflict. The effects of the war have been far reaching and society changing.
- 4 In the United Kingdom (UK) the centenary of World War 1 is already the subject of immense interest among government, media, funding bodies, universities, schools, community groups and individuals, and this interest is universally expected to grow as we approach August 2014 (the centenary of the outbreak of war).
- 5 The government is working alongside partners, including the Heritage Lottery Fund, Commonwealth War Graves Commission and Imperial War Museums, on a series of national remembrance events, an extensive cultural programme and educational schemes.
- 6 In August of 2013 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) announced an open competition for a design to be put on to commemorative paving stones to honour Victoria Cross recipients throughout the UK. There will also be a QR reader on each stone which people can scan with a smartphone to learn more details about the recipient. It is intended that individual stones will be given to the relevant participating local authority so as they may determine their location. Durham County Council was among the first authorities to confirm it would take part in supporting the scheme and would place the commemorative stones within the County.

- 7 On Monday 4 November 2013 the Communities Secretary unveiled the design of the paving stone. The winning design uses the material, form and lettering of the family of memorials used by the War Graves Commission.
- 8 The stones will be unveiled across the country in a rolling programme exactly 100 years after each individual won the Victoria Cross.

Background: Local Importance

- 9 The DCLG has produced a national list of Victoria Cross winners with locations of the recipient's birth. This list will identify the stones that will be produced and the Councils that will be allocated them.
- 10 The Culture and Sports Team has worked closely with the DCLG to ensure that the County Durham Victoria Cross winners and the locations attributed to them are correct.
- 11 All stones will be supplied to the Council in late 2014 and it will be the responsibility of the Council to place the stones in their final location on the centenary of the act for which the Victoria Cross was awarded.
- 12 County Durham has seven Victoria Cross winners appearing on the DCLG list and each of these will be allocated a paving stone. The recipient and related details are as follows:

Name	Born	Date VC awarded	Notes
Roland Bradford	Witton Park	01 Oct 1916	9th Battalion Durham Light Infantry Died 30 Nov 1917, aged 25, youngest Brigadier General in the British Army
George Bradford	Witton Park	23 April 1918	Royal Navy Officer who was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions on 22/23 April 1918.
Michael Heaviside	Durham City	06 May 1917	15th Battalion Durham Light Infantry
Thomas Kenny	South Wingate	04 Nov 1915	13th Battalion Durham Light Infantry First DLI soldier awarded VC in WW1
George McKean	Willington	27/28 April 1918	14th Infantry Battalion (The Royal Montreal Regiment)
William McNally	Murton	27-29 Oct 1918	8th (Service) Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment (Green Howards)
John Youll	Thornley	15 June 1918	Attached to 11th (Service) Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers

- 13 The first stone will be placed on 4th November 2015.
- 14 It should be noted that, of the County Durham Victoria Cross winners, two have potential for major national media coverage:
- Roland Boys Bradford (youngest Brigadier General in the British Army)
 - George Nicholson Bradford

Roland and George Bradford are known as 'The Fighting Bradfords'. The story of two brothers both winning Victoria Crosses is potentially a major press story. The DCLG have expressed that they may promote this story.

- 15 The stones will provide an enduring legacy for County Durham of their local heroes - a fitting tribute to mark the centenary of their extraordinary bravery and service fighting for their country. This will also enable residents to gain a greater understanding of how their area fitted into the story of the First World War.

Co-ordination of Activity

Temporary Display

- 16 The Council will take charge of the stones in late 2014 and will need to store them until they are required for placing in their final location; the first stone not being installed in its permanent location until November 2015. It is proposed that rather than place them in store that they are placed on temporary public display in the Durham Light Infantry Museum.
- 17 It is anticipated that such a display would be of considerable interest to the local community and likely to attract a high number of visitors.
- 18 In order to facilitate the display of the stones within the Museum, it would be appropriate that they are displayed properly and complimented with interpretive information. The cost of producing a temporary exhibition of the stones is estimated to be circa £10K.

Permanent Locations

- 19 The permanent location of the stones is for the Council to determine and has the potential to be both emotive and controversial. It is important that the Council has a clear process for determining the final location of each stone. In order to achieve this the following steps are proposed:
- Step 1 – relevant Area Action Partnership (AAP) approached to act as main local co-ordinator
 - Step 2 – Culture & Sport work with AAP to identify location options
 - Step 3 – AAP recommend preferred location to Council
 - Step 4 – Locations approved through Cabinet
- 20 In order to achieve these steps a member of the Culture & Sport Team will consult with the local AAPs to identify potential locations for the stones and to gauge the support from within the community. They will also advise on external funding opportunities available via the Heritage Lottery Funds, the Arts Council and trusts and foundations.
- 21 As it is anticipated that there may be a number of individual groups wishing to lead in each community, which may raise issues around location of the stone and associated activity, it is suggested that the local AAP is selected as the main contact point for the Council to operate through. This approach will provide a strong connection into communities and in identifying a lead organisation for the stones and associated activity. Local Members will also be given the opportunity to engage in this discussion prior to recommendations being made to the Council on location.

- 22 It is proposed that the placing of the Victoria Cross paving stone on site will be carried out by Technical Services; however, identifying the exact site will be the responsibility of the community who will need to consult with interested parties and engage with the land owner and appropriate experts (including Council departments such as planning where applicable). All works will be subject to a site assessment by Technical Services to ensure future utilities or other works are not likely to affect the stones. Guidance will be provided to AAPs in choosing suitable sites.
- 23 Any relatives of Victoria Cross winners contacting the Council will be directed towards the appropriate local group/AAP. The Council will not actively seek out relatives of Victoria Cross winners but will ensure that the media and press are informed of any paving stone activity in advance so that this can be fully publicised.
- 24 It is anticipated that there will be a desire from the community to add additional activity such as landscaping or commemorative events to enhance the site and unveiling. This will be discussed with the local community who would be required to find the appropriate funding and ensure plans are achievable.
- 25 The Corporate Events Team will offer practical advice on holding any event. Where there is to be an arts element, advice and guidance will be available from the Council's Arts Team. Similarly the Chairman's office will be kept informed of activities for which a Civic involvement may be requested.

Funding

- 26 The basic cost of placing the stones will be met by the Council. This is estimated by Technical Services as being £300 per paving stone. Additional costs will be dependent upon the needs of the community. It is therefore proposed that the Council meets the £300 installation costs of each stone and the communities source the funding for any commemorative events and/or additional landscaping that may be desired. Each community will be advised to contact the Council to arrange a quote on delivery of any associated work.
- 27 The HLF has announced the provision of a WW1 Small Projects Fund which can provide the opportunity for match funding and developing projects around the laying of the paving stones. Awards from the WW1 Small Projects Fund will be set at between £3,000 and £10,000. The HLF has other funds that can be applied for should a larger amount be required.
- 28 Further potential for funding is available via a number of trusts and foundation streams specifically designed to support WW1 Centenary activity. Applications to access these funds would need to come from the local community.
- 29 All of the above funding streams require a financial commitment from the applicants and the £300 in-kind allocation from the Council can be used for this purpose.

Financial Implications

- 30 The Council's financial commitment to the installation of the paving stones is £2,100. It is anticipated that the majority, if not all, of this will be in staff time and use of existing resources from within Direct Services and Culture and Sport. In addition, £10,000 is requested for exhibiting all stones at the Durham Light Infantry Museum prior to installation. This takes the total cost from the Council to £12,100.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- (i) Arrangements are made to display all County Durham paving stones at the Durham Light Infantry Museum prior to permanent installation.
- (ii) The process of determining the permanent location of stones as set out in paragraphs 19 to 25 is agreed.
- (iii) Subject to recommendations (i) and (ii), funding of £12,100 is identified from Neighbourhood's cash limits to fund the project.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – As set out in the main body of the report.

Staffing –

Use of existing staff resource

Risk -

Local political and media interest will be high.

Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty -

Full consideration will be given in the development of projects

Accommodation –

Nil

Crime and Disorder -

Nil

Human Rights -

Nil

Consultation -

Consultation on the location of stones will be undertaken with AAPs as set out in the body of the report.

The Strategic Manager Heritage and Culture is attending and updating the County Durham Local Councils Working Group, the County Durham Armed Forces Forum and the DCC Internal WW1 Corporate Working Group on all County Durham based WW1 activity and at which the VC Paving Stones project has been discussed.

Procurement -

Council's procurement procedures will be adhered to.

Disability Issues -

All activity will fully consider disabled access.

Legal Implications -

There are no legal implications.