

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

To: Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

15 December 2015

Recognition Programme: Centenary of the Battle of the Somme 2016

For decision

Linkage to Corporate Plan	
Strategic Priority	Leader and Champion
Objective	Civic Leadership
Lead Officer	Liz Johnston
Cost: (If applicable)	To be confirmed

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Further to the reports to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in October and November and adoption of Notice of Motion (15) by Council on 27th October Council decided to take steps to commemorate the Centenary of the Battle of the Somme in 2016 and assist in the facilitation, co-ordination and support of associated community-led events.
- 1.2 The Working Group will report to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.
- 1.3 This report is based on the deliberations of the inaugural meeting on Working Group on 8th December, comprised of Alderman Finlay, Councillors Clarke (Chair), McCandless, Wilson, and Quigley.

2.0 Terms of Reference

- 2.1 The working group's terms of reference, as agreed by Council, were confirmed:
- “to commemorate, through appropriately dignified and inclusive means, the centenary of the Battle of the Somme across the Borough; and that a budget be decided by Council after the working group's initial investigations and discussions on possible events and initiatives.”

3.0 Recognition Programme

3.1 The Working Group received presentations from the following Groups who had requested resource support and sponsorship from Council for the delivery of proposed programmes of events recognising the Anniversary of the Somme.

The catchment area for the events was the entire Causeway Coast and Glens Borough and includes engaging with local schools, voluntary, cultural and heritage groups in researching and commemorating their shared history.

- Ballymoney Cultural & Heritage Society (27th June – 2nd July)

The project will bring history to life over a five day exhibition, including displays, workshops, re-enactments. Communities will have the unique opportunity to learn about their shared history, to challenge and to accept diversity that will be fundamental to achieving a shared future for all. The event, based in Ballymoney Showgrounds, will include First World War Trenches, field hospitals, cooking demonstrations and music and dance from the area. The 36th Ulster Division, the 10th and 16th Irish Divisions will play a major part and Living History Ireland will put on a War Horse re-enactment. A re-enactment around the Easter Rising and how this time in our history divided families will also be included.

The event, understood to be the largest event taking place in Northern Ireland, as part of the decade of centenaries commemoration, is expected to attract some 30,000 visitors from across Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland.

The group who have submitted the project to the Big Lottery and other funders require confirmation of partnership funding by 17th December. Total event cost £48,000.

Under a separate project the Society will deliver a schools project involving 60 primary schools throughout the Causeway Coast and Glens area researching the history of people named on local war memorials, culminating in the publication of book of their stories.

- The Royal British Legion Coleraine, in partnership with the Ulster Scots Regeneration Group (29th June – 2nd July)

Events and activities included, inter alia, Somme Dinner, tree planting, campment, wreath laying, Candle Lit Vigil. The request is for use of facilities.

3.2 The Working Group will identify and meet other groups and interested parties in the Borough area planning and bring forward a recommendation on budgetary provision.

It will meet with relevant officers to understand the programme of events developed through the Council's Museum and Good Relations services in order to remember and reflect on the significant historical events of 1916.

It agreed that engagement of young people and creating a lasting legacy was a key aim as was delivery of a co-ordinated marketing and promotional campaign.

Next meeting: Tuesday 15th December at 5.15 p.m. in Cloonavin.

4.0 Recommendation

It is recommended, on the proposal of Councillor Finlay seconded by Councillor Wilson, that in view of funding timelines on the Ballymoney Cultural & Heritage project that Council agree in principle to provide match funding and other support for their Battle of the Somme Commemoration Project 30th June – 1st July.