

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 12 December 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

PORTFOLIO: Leader

SUBJECT: First World War Commemorations

WARD(s): Borough Wide

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To determine the Council's approach to the First World War Commemorations 2014 -2018.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS: That

- 1) the Council develop a local programme of events to commemorate the First World War and funding bids be drawn up as appropriate;**
- 2) the plans for a regional event be noted and once detailed plans are drawn up, the Council consider its involvement in the event; and**
- 3) the Leader be nominated as the appropriate portfolio lead.**

3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The 4th August 2014 will mark 100 years since the start of the First World War. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has announced plans to build a commemoration fitting of this significant milestone in world history, working alongside partners including Imperial War Museums (IWM's), Heritage Lottery Fund and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The focus for events is one of commemoration and remembrance rather than celebratory and is intended to cover the four year period of the war.

3.2 The government has contributed over £50 million of funding to support commemoration activities. The plans announced so far include a national series of commemorative events, starting on 4 August 2014 with:

- A service for Commonwealth leaders at Glasgow Cathedral; an event at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, St Symphorien Military Cemetery in Mons, Belgium; a candlelit vigil at Westminster Abbey.
- Commemorative paving stones to be laid in communities where Victoria Cross recipients of the First World War were born. The first paving stone will be laid on 23 August 2014 marking the exact date that the first Victoria Crosses were won.

- A £5.3 million educational programme providing the opportunity for 2 students and a teacher from every state school in the country to visit First World War battlefields and undertake research on people local to their school who fought in the war.
- A Christmas Day ‘Truce’ football match on the battlefields of Flanders to commemorate the anniversary of British and German soldiers ceasing fighting to play football in no man’s land.
- 2,500 local war memorials to be given the opportunity to win listed building status, reflecting their historical special interest, and Liverpool War Memorial to be upgraded to a Grade I listed building.
- £34 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund, including a new £6 million community project fund to enable young people working in their communities to conserve, explore and share local heritage of the First World War.

4 LOCAL EVENTS

4.1 A number of local authorities are taking the lead locally and engaging residents to establish a programme of commemoration events over a four year period.

4.2 Many local authorities are developing commemoration programmes and are involving residents in planning local commemorations that bring communities together to commemorate the local impact of the First World War. Examples include

- Involving the community in local exhibitions
- The restoration of war memorials and an online Roll of Honour
- Exhibitions across local Museums showing the impact of the war locally
- Events based around war poetry, art and music in libraries
- Online resources that enable people to learn about the lives of local men, women and children who were affected by the First World War in different ways and information about local regiments and battalions
- Working with communities to plan activities and events to commemorate those who were affected by the First World War in their own towns and villages
- Work with the media – reproduction of archive news reports relating to key local items from each week of the war over the period of The Great War and coverage of local commemorative events over the period.

- An interactive blog to share memories from families affected by The Great War – this could be through combat or the wider impact of living at this time
- Memorial parade involving members of the Armed Forces, local cadets and veterans
- Church services
- The laying of ceremonial paving slabs to commemorate residents awarded the VC (Halton will be provided with two commemorative paving slabs to commemorate its VC residents)
- Schools competition/research of the local impact of the First World War

5 FUNDING

5.1 There are a number of funding sources available to support local commemorations, in particular, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is offering grants from £3,000 to £100,000 upwards, and Councils are able to join the IWM's First World War Centenary Partnership to access a range of digital resources. The HLF are awarding grants for community projects that focus on the First World War with a focus on any heritage related to the First World War, and are encouraging new perspectives and stories not previously told.

5.2 The government has also announced a scheme to commemorate the 100th anniversary of World War I and give thousands of schoolchildren the opportunity to visit the Great War battlefields. Pupils and teachers from every maintained secondary school in England will have the chance to go on a tour of the great battlefields and take part in remembrance ceremonies on the western front.

6 REGIONAL EVENT

6.1 Liverpool City Council in consultation with local regiments have started to scope a potential First World War Commemoration Event to take place in Liverpool 12th/14th September 2014. The event is themed around an educational schools day, display day and a day of commemoration via church services and parades.

7 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None

8 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The local programme will be developed by utilising existing events and in-kind support. Any projects requiring funding will be the subject of bids to the various funding streams.

9 IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

9.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The local programme will help Children and Young People understand the impact of the First World War nationally and locally.

9.2 Employment Learning and Skills in Halton

None

9.3 A Healthy Halton

None

9.4 A Safer Halton

None

9.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

10 RISK ANALYSIS

None

11 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

12 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None under the meaning of the Act.