

WW1 Commemorations 2018 Scrutiny Review Draft Final Report

Summary

1. This draft final report presents the findings of the Scrutiny Review into the city's plans for commemorating the centenary of the end of World War One (WW1). The Committee are asked to consider and endorse the Task Group's draft recommendations ahead of this report being presented to the Executive on 25 January 2018.

Background

2. In March 2017 Council considered a Motion proposed by Cllr Steward which stated:

'Council notes that 2018 will mark 100 years since the ceasing of the hostilities in the Great War;

Council recognises that residents of York will wish to commemorate this event and to express their appreciation to all who sacrificed so much during that conflict;

Council therefore invites the Leader and Deputy Leader to set up a working group to coordinate a series of commemorative events for next year, such working group to include, at their discretion, councillors, officers, civic leaders, organisations representing the armed forces and similar groups; artists and residents. The working group will plan an overall strategy for the council's commemoration activities, determine and address its funding needs as the steering group deem appropriate. Council further instructs that the working group should ensure that the programme of activities fully reflects the following:

- *The horrors of war, including the suffering caused by the 37 million military and civilian casualties during the First World War;*
- *A diversity of perspectives on the causes and consequences of the war;*

- *A commitment to learn the lessons of the past to help build peace in the future.'*
3. Council agreed a Member Working Group should be formed to carry out the coordination work as described in the Motion above. However, by late July 2017 a Working Group had yet to be formed and so mindful of the limited time available, this Committee agreed to form a Scrutiny Review Task Group to progress the required work.

Information Gathered

4. The Task Group made up of Cllrs Steward, Mason, Taylor and Wells met for the first time in August 2017. The Assistant Director (Communities & Equalities) provided information on previous events and commemorations that the Council had facilitated e.g. the 50th anniversary commemorations for Victory in Europe and Victory in Japan, and the annual Holocaust Memorial Day, including the budget requirements for those events.
5. In addition, the Task Group discussed some of the many events and exhibitions that had been held across the country or that had been ongoing since 2014 to commemorate WW1 and/or mark the centenary of its start. For example, York Museums Trust had an ongoing 1914-1918 exhibition.

Consultation

6. The Task Group agreed any plans should involve as many residents and citywide organisations as possible. They also agreed it would be useful to understand what if any plans were already in place across the city, and agreed to write to a range of organisations to gather their views and record their plans. The following organisations were contacted:

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| • Archbishop of York | • All CYC Cllrs |
| • Dean of York Minster | • All Alderman |
| • All Churches | • MP Rachael Maskell |
| • York Interfaith Forum | • MP Julian Sturdy |
| • North Yorkshire Police | • Civic Party |
| • North Yorks Fire & Rescue Service | • Mansion House |
| • North Yorks Ambulance Service | • All York Guilds |
| • Armed Force Community Covenant Network | • CYC Community Involvement Officers |
| • All Schools | • Parish Councils |
| • University of York | • Residents Associations |
| • York St John University | • Make it York |

- Cultural Leaders Group
- National Trust
- York Archaeological Trust
- English Heritage
- York Museums Trust
- York Army Museum
- Yorkshire Air Museum
- Yorvik
- York Explore
- York@Large
- Civic Trust
- Aesthetica
- National Centre for Early Music
- Pilot Theatre
- York Theatre Royal
- Grand Opera House
- York Barbican
- City Screen

7. A number of the organisations provided an initial response. In addition, the Task Group issued a press release and used the Council's social media channels to advertise its work. This generated further feedback from the public.
8. See Annex A for a summary of feedback received.

Analysis

9. The Task Group were pleased to note the level of interest that their initial communication had generated and the amount of positive feedback they had received which included some details on plans already in place for 2018 and ideas for additional events.
10. The Task Group agreed that the Council's primary role should be to facilitate the coordination of a programme of events organised by others, and help in the promotion of those events to residents and visitors. It was agreed that this should include the production of both a printed programme as well as web-based information.
11. The Task group agreed that the programme should focus on the period between 1 October 2018 and Armistice Day on Sunday 11 November 2018, culminating in a civic ceremonial procession, a laying of wreaths and a service in the Minster.
12. The Task Group agreed that the Council should seek to facilitate a programme that, in addition to a civic component, includes contributions from:
 - The military
 - The business community
 - The city's faith communities

13. The Task Group noted that there are a number of potential civic contributions to the programme including use of the Mansion House. This might include exhibiting items from the WW1 period from within its historic collection and displaying information on:
 - the civic party of the time
 - how the Mansion House was used during the war
 - the Council and the city's contribution to the war effort
14. The Task Group agreed that the work would require a budget of £10k, the majority of which could be used to procure the services of an event organiser to carry out the work associated with the production of a programme and any costs associated with the activities proposed in paragraph 12 above. The Task Group therefore drafted a brief for the post for the Committee's consideration – see Annex C.
15. The Task Group agreed that the remainder of the budget could be used to support the involvement of the Mansion House and/or any other emerging ideas.
16. Finally, the Task Group suggested that a Reference Group be formed to support the Event Organiser in their work. They agreed the Group should include the AD for Communities, Culture & Public Realm with a number of CYC Councillors and representatives from those external bodies who have expressed an interest in being involved – see consultation feedback.
17. To further explore and develop the ideas generated as a result of the Task Group's publicity and to recruit to and establish the Reference Group, the Task Group agreed that an open meeting should be held at the end of January.

Options

18. The Scrutiny Committee may choose to either endorse the draft recommendation contained in this report or identify alternative recommendation(s) for presentation to the Executive.

Council Plan

19. As part of the review the Task Group sought the views of a range of partner organisations, community groups and children and young people thereby demonstrating the Council's commitment to listen to residents,

which is one of the Council's corporate priorities, as set out in the Council's Plan 2015-19.

Implications

20. Financial – The financial implications associated with the recommendation arising from this review and detailed in paragraph 13 above.
21. There are no other known HR, Equalities, Legal, Crime & Disorder or other implications associated with the review recommendations listed at paragraph 20 of this report.

Risk Management

22. There are no known risks, associated with the recommendations arising from this review.

Recommendations

23. As a consequence of their review, the Task Group agreed to recommend that:
 - i. The Executive provide a budget of £10k to enable the procurement of an event organiser to develop and promote a programme of events to commemorate the end of WW1, in line with the brief shown at Annex C.
 - ii. A Reference Group be set up to support and steer the work of the Event Organiser, with its membership as suggested in paragraph 15 above.

Reason: To ensure the City reflects the appreciation of its residents to all those who sacrificed so much during the conflict, and to conclude this review in line with scrutiny procedure and protocols.

Contact Details

Author:

Melanie Carr
Scrutiny Officer
Scrutiny Services
Tel.01904 552054

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Andrew Docherty
Assistant Director, Legal & Governance

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Specialist Implications Officer:

Charlie Croft, AD Communities and Equalities

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: Not Applicable

Annexes:

A – Feedback from formal consultation

B – Draft brief for event organiser

Report Abbreviations:

Cllr – Councillor

WW1 – World War One