

23 October 2013		ITEM: 12
Council		
First World War Commemorative Events		
Report of: Councillor Lynn Worrall, Portfolio Holder for Communities		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non key	
Accountable Head of Service: Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy		
Accountable Director: Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive Officer		
This report is Public		
Purpose of Report: To inform Council of the initial plans to commemorate the First World War and its impact on Thurrock.		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2013 Council approved a motion to establish a working group to ensure the events of the First World War are appropriately commemorated in Thurrock. This paper informs Council of the initial plans to commemorate the First World War and its impact on Thurrock.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1.1 To note progress to date.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

2.1 A national programme of events to mark the 100th anniversary of the First World War will commence August 2014 and continue through to 2019 to mark the official end of the war, marked with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. Thurrock Council has established a cross party working group to consider and plan how this key event will be commemorated in Thurrock.

3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:

3.1 The Working Group is committed to an innovate and inclusive programme of events which help to achieve a wider understanding of The First World War and the events leading up to it. The programme will ensure the events of the First World War are appropriately commemorated, including how the Great War affected Thurrock. In addition, the events over the period will seek to build stronger communities, tolerance and cohesion through remembering and learning from The Great War.

- 3.2 To date the working group has met twice with advice and support provided by Heritage and Community Development. Wider community engagement will ensure that residents and businesses have ample opportunity to influence and participate in the programme as it develops. A specific meeting with veterans groups is being arranged to discuss participation in the programme.
- 3.3 The Group has agreed an initial outline programme called 'It'll All be Over By Christmas' – a reference to the comments made by Generals at the start of the war. Actual details are still being confirmed. However the following summary provides Council with a flavour of the shared ambitions of the Group:
- Saturday 2 August – 4 August 2014 – A significant event based at one of the Borough's key military heritage sites. To incorporate learning about the period, community engagement and participation. This event will also include the key Civic event for remembering the beginning of World War One, officially recognised as 4 August 1914.
 - 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 in Thurrock affected by The Great War – this could be through combat or the wider impact of living in Thurrock at this time.
 - A touring exhibition – This will be organised to share key information about the war and to consider the affect of the war from a range of different perspectives so to involve a wide range of interested participants. The exhibition will visit existing annual events such as The Orsett Show, it will visit military history sites and will make every effort to go to places where heritage may be a new feature of involvement.
 - Art and culture – the programme will look to incorporate activities planned by partners in Thurrock, as well as consider commissioning sculpture, performances or re-enactments.
 - Work with schools – The Government has announced a £5.3million opportunity for schools to access in support of commemorating the First World War. Links will be made with schools to recognise and support activity and to add value where possible – for example, supporting visits to local sites where archives will be appropriately displayed for schools to utilise.
- 3.4 A budget of £50,000 has been made available from reserves to support the programme over the five year period. It is anticipated that further external funding can be accessed to support delivery. The Group is committed to adding value to community led events and activities commemorating The

Great War. By co-ordinating a Borough approach, the Group aims to help ensure the programme makes the most of all available resources.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

4.1 This report is for information to all Councillors who are encouraged to share their ideas for this important event.

5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 This is a key opportunity to involve all communities in achieving a wider understanding of the First World War and the events leading up to it. In addition, many will have stories to share of their families' involvement in the First World War, or life in Thurrock at that time. A press release has encouraged communities to share their ideas of how residents and businesses would like to see the First World War commemorated and to encourage community involvement. Schools are to be approached to capture their ideas and plans, and to involve schools where possible. Community engagement will be a key feature throughout the programme.

6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

6.1 The programme will support the priority to create a great place for learning and opportunity and will contribute to building pride, responsibility and respect to create safer communities.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Michael Jones**
 Telephone and email: **01375 652772**
mxjones@thurrock.gov.uk

The First World War is a significant event and £50,000 has been made available from reserves to support this programme. It is anticipated that this will enable further external funds to be accessed.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
 Telephone and email: **07875 397 764**
dlawson@thurrock.gov.uk

There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**
Telephone and email: **01375 652472**
SDeAlyn@thurrock.gov.uk

The work to commemorate the First World War will need to take into account the diversity of those affected in the Borough at that time and include all communities living in Thurrock today.

7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- None

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