

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

1 March 2011

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 TONBRIDGE MEMORIAL GARDEN

Summary

This report updates Members on progress with the development of improvement proposals for the Memorial Garden in Tonbridge.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Within the Council's Capital Plan there is a scheme to improve the Memorial Garden in Tonbridge, with a contribution from this Council of £25,000. The scheme will enable the safe access for users of the Garden, ensure the area meets an appropriate standard for the annual Remembrance Sunday Service and make this important public open space a more pleasant and higher quality environment.

1.2 Tonbridge Memorial Garden Trust

- 1.2.1 A Trust has been formally established to oversee the improvements and to raise funds for the works. The Trust is chaired by Group Captain Patrick Tootal OBE, DL, RAF (ret'd) and includes representatives from the Royal British Legion, Tonbridge Civic Society, local Churches, Town Wardens and local Members of this Council.
- 1.2.2 A number of meetings of the Trust have taken place, with the main focus to date on the development of a scheme design. A design has now been approved by the Trust, a copy of which is attached at **[Annex 1]**. The scheme takes into account the views of individuals and groups attending an open consultation meeting, and has been developed with the assistance of an external landscape consultant. The scheme is of high quality and creates at grade level through the Garden, additional paved areas for people to stand, improved seating, power supply, enhanced security, repairs to the memorial and the installation of interpretation panels.
- 1.2.3 Having developed the scheme for the Garden, the focus of the Trust will now turn to fundraising. A fundraising launch will take place at the Royal British Legion

Club on the evening of Wednesday 16 March 2011, and all Members are welcome to attend.

- 1.2.4 A dedicated page on the Council's website has been developed to provide information on the proposed improvements and give details on how funding support can be made.

1.3 Timescale

- 1.3.1 Due to the need to raise the funds for the project over the next year, the Trust has identified that works would take place in spring/summer 2012, and be completed in advance of the 2012 Remembrance Sunday Service in November of that year.
- 1.3.2 The funding received to date will enable urgent works to trees in the Garden and a refurbishment of the memorial wall to be progressed in advance of the 2011 Remembrance Sunday Service.

1.4 Legal Implications

- 1.4.1 None.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.5.1 The total capital cost of the scheme is estimated to be in the region of £250,000. Whilst this clearly represents a significant fundraising challenge to the Trust, it is felt essential that if improvements to the Garden are to be made, they should be of high quality. A number of fundraising sources have been identified including grants, developer contributions and a public appeal.
- 1.5.2 In addition to this Council's funding commitment of £25,000 a grant of £4,070 has also been received from County Councillor Chris Smith from his Community Grant allowance.

1.6 Risk Assessment

- 1.6.1 It has been identified that the existing layout and condition of the Memorial Gardens has health and safety implications, which will need to be addressed within any improvements.

1.7 Policy Considerations

- 1.7.1 Asset Management, Community, Health and Safety.

Background papers:

contact: Robert Styles

Nil

Robert Styles
Chief Leisure Officer