



Cabinet

Tuesday, 8 June 2021

COVID-19 Memorials

Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Communities and Climate Change,
Councillor A Brennan**

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet a range of proposals for public COVID-19 memorial schemes in the Borough.
- 1.2. The report follows significant work undertaken by officers to assess several different options including feedback and liaison with the portfolio holder.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) approves the creation a public memorial garden in Bridgford Park, West Bridgford as a shared place to commemorate people who have lost their lives in Rushcliffe due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- b) approves the creation of a temporary art installation / display at Rushcliffe Arena to recognise the contribution that keyworkers, community groups and volunteers from across the Borough have made to the local pandemic response; and
- c) approves support for town and parish memorials and remembrance activities, led directly by town and parish councils, incorporating:
 - i) the creation of a COVID-19 commemorations grant scheme; and
 - ii) the distribution of spring bulbs for memorial planting schemes in parishes.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

The coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on Rushcliffe's local population and economy, through both the direct impact of the virus upon public health and wellbeing and the secondary effects of measures introduced to control transmission. These measures resulted in an extended period of time where schools and businesses were closed, large proportions of those in employment were furloughed or changed to working from home, and there were

significant changes to the design and delivery of public services. There was also unprecedented disruption to community, recreational and cultural activities. By delivering a series of memorial activities, Rushcliffe Borough Council will support recognition of the impact of the virus on local communities, commemorating the loss but also celebrating the many individuals and groups who supported the pandemic response.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. Commemorative activities have been put forward for approval that will provide opportunities for reflection upon peoples' experience of COVID-19 and contribute positively towards recovery and growth.
- 4.2. A COVID-19 memorial garden will be created as a dedicated place for quiet reflection for bereaved families from across the Borough. The garden will be located in Bridgford Park, West Bridgford, and the scheme will include a monument, a small seating area and landscaping. **The required budget commitment is £15,000.**
- 4.3. An art installation will be created at Rushcliffe Arena to commemorate the stories of individuals and groups who have supported communities during the pandemic, particularly recognising the contribution of people who have supported social isolation and loneliness. **The required budget commitment is £2,500.**
- 4.4. The Council will provide financial support for commemorations in towns and parishes via the creation of a COVID-19 Commemorations Grant Scheme. Awards of up to £500 will be made available for parish councils to deliver local memorial schemes, which must be match funded by the applicant. **The required budget commitment will be up to £16,500.**
- 4.5. The Council will offer towns and parishes a batch of free bulbs to help create spring planting schemes, marking the annual anniversary of the first UK COVID-19 lockdown. **The required budget commitment is £5,000.**

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

- 5.1. The Council considered the creation of a memorial woodland at a cost of £25,000 - £50,000. This option was rejected on the basis of timescale, accessibility and that woodlands and planting projects were already in development through other schemes.
- 5.2. The Council considered the option of creating a large piece of public art to act as a roadside gateway at a cost of £100,000 - £250,000. This option was rejected on the basis of cost and development time.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

The Council has chosen schemes that can be delivered in a COVID-19 secure manner, in line with HM Government's proposed roadmap for the release of national social contact restrictions from the end of June 2021 onwards.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

The total commitment required to implement all memorial schemes detailed in section 4 is £39k. £15k funding has been identified from unspent capital allocations. The remaining £24k would require funding from 2020/21 in-year efficiency savings, associated adjustments will be made to revenue and capital budgets, these will be reported in the 2020/21 year end outturn report to Cabinet in July 2021.

7.2. Legal Implications

Budget allocation is to be made as above. The COVID-19 commemorations grant scheme will be subject to criteria agreed by the Director of Neighbourhoods in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Climate Change and will be allocated against that criteria so that audit requirements are met.

7.3. Equalities Implications

Accessibility will be a key consideration in the implementation of these options and as a result there are no specific implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

7.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	The recommendations of this report link to all four of the Council's Corporate Priorities
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	
The Environment	

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For more information contact:	Derek Hayden, Communities Manager 0115 914 8270 DHayden@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Not applicable
List of appendices:	None