

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET: 18 NOVEMBER 2009

BEVIN BOYS MINERS PERMANENT MEMORIAL CAMPAIGN

Report by Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purposes of this report are to:

- (1) Inform the Cabinet of correspondence received from the Chairman of the Appeal Committee of The Bevin Boys Miners Permanent Memorial Campaign inviting the Council to contribute to the Memorial Fund; and
- (2) To recommend that the Cabinet agrees that East Ayrshire Council makes an appropriate donation.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In 1943 the country faced a crisis in coal production that jeopardised the country's ability to win World War II. More than 36,000 miners had left the industry to join the armed forces and as a result the increased demand for coal to sustain the war effort could not be met. Crisis point was reached in December 1943 with only a three week stock of coal available.

2.2 Winston Churchill charged Ernest Bevin, then Minister for Labour and National Service, to increase coal production. Bevin decided that of all 18 to 24 year old men conscripts, one in ten, on pain of imprisonment, irrespective of background or ability, were to work underground in British coal mines. These young men became to be known as the Bevin Boys.

The scheme ran between 1943 and 1948 and involved 48,000 men.

2.3 The Ayrshire Coalfield made an enormous contribution to the World War II effort and many Bevin Boys worked at deep mines such as at Barony near Auchinleck.

3. THE BEVIN BOYS MINERS PERMANENT MEMORIAL CAMPAIGN

3.1 On 27th August, 2009 The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive received correspondence from the Chairman of the Appeal Committee of The Bevin Boys Miners Permanent Memorial Campaign inviting the Council to contribute to the Memorial Fund.

- 3.2 The campaign has been organised to ensure that the Bevin Boys who were conscripted to work in the mines during World War II are not forgotten.

All of the armed services and workers who contributed to the war effort are remembered with a memorial within the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas in Staffordshire except for this group and the Campaign is to provide a focus of remembrance of the vital contribution of coal miners and Bevin Boys during World War II.

- 3.3 It is understood that a significant number of local authorities covering former deep coal mining areas have already agreed to support the campaign.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 A contribution of £500.00 can be met from Central Grants Funding Budget 2009/10 within which there are available resources.

5. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no Policy or Legal implications arising from this report

6. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

7 COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Proposals to recognise and promote the proud industrial heritage of East Ayrshire are consistent with the overall Aims of the East Ayrshire Community Plan

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 Cabinet is asked to:

(a) Agree that a contribution of £500.00 be made to the Bevin Boys Miners Permanent Memorial Campaign.

Elizabeth Morton

Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

DAH/ 11 November 2009

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- (1) Correspondence from The Hon Joan Taylor, MBE, Chairman of the Appeal Committee. Received 27th August, 2009

Members wishing further information should contact David Hewet, Senior Policy Adviser (01563 503234)

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