



COMMITTEE TITLE: Finance, Assets, Investments & Recovery Committee

DATE: 12 July 2023

REPORT TITLE:	War Memorial
REPORT OF:	Phoebe Barnes, Director Assets and Investments

REPORT SUMMARY

The Council is responsible for the management and maintenance of the War Memorial located at the junction of the A1023 Shenfield Road and Middleton Hall Lane. a public consultation was undertaken seeking the views of the people of Brentwood regarding a proposal for the removal of the existing planting beds around the memorial and to extend the paving area thus increasing the available space for those attending the services and events at the memorial. This report updates members on the responses following the consultation and recommends the option based on the public responses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. Note the public consultation responses.

R2. Approve that no further investment is required to the War Memorial and the Council will maintain the War Memorial, planting the existing area and ensuring the memorial is cleaned.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Following a report to Community, Environment and Enforcement on 4th October 2022 it was resolved that a full public consultation be carried out seeking the views of the people of Brentwood in support of the proposal. Delegated authority be given to the S151 Officer in consultation with the Chair of Community, Environment and Enforcement Committee to determine the consultation process and decision to be made at Performance, Resource and Economic Development Committee.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

N/A

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Main Report

Introduction and Background

1. Members will be aware of the Shenfield War Memorial set in place to remember those fallen during WW1 and WW2. Additionally, a further Memorial and two Commemorative Benches for those fallen in recent conflicts since 1946, have recently been added as has a memorial for Sgt William Merrifield VC.
2. Members will be aware of the well supported Remembrance Services with over 1,000 generally forming the parade along with the standard bearers' dignitaries and wreath layers negotiating the limited space available within the memorial site itself.
3. The existing design of the War memorial and its surrounds are what the people of the Urban District of Brentwood at the time considered to be the appropriate form of a memorial for those lost initially in WW1 and later in WW2. This is a memorial for the people of Brentwood for their relatives lost in those conflicts and any changes to the memorial that they put in place should clearly be approved by those relatives remaining today and the people of Brentwood. It is in this respect that a public consultation was carried out, commencing on 16th January 2023 for a 6 week period. The purpose of the consultation was to approach the public sensitively with any objections that may be received and seek their support for the improvements.

Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4. The public consultation ran from Monday 16th January 2023 until 28th February 2023.
5. The consultation proposed to remove the old 'crazy' paving around the memorial itself and replace this with a large circular paving area. The two more recent memorials, the post WW2 Memorial, the VC Memorial and the 1914 – 1918 Commemoration Benches would then be relocated to the corners of the plot. The WW1 silhouette would be repositioned within a bed of

poppies or other suitable planting which would be maintained by the council. A drawing supporting this proposal is attached within Appendix A.

6. The consultation asked the following questions with the drawing within Appendix A presented alongside the questions:

Q1. Do you support the proposal to make changes to the War Memorial as shown on the attached drawing? [Yes or No] If No please explain why you do not wish to see any changes made.

Q2. In order to better use the space around the memorial itself, do you support the proposal to remove the existing planting beds along with the existing 'crazy' paving and replace with a new formal paving? [Yes or No] Please provide some words that help understand your response.

Q3. If your answer to Q2 is NO what alternative would you like to see?

7. There were 49 responses to the consultation and the responses to the questions are summarised below:

Question	Yes	No
Do you support the proposal to make changes?	30	19
Do you support the proposal to remove the existing planting and paving?	13	27

8. From the consultation response 61% of respondents supported the proposal to make changes to the War Memorial. However, 55% did not support removing the existing planting beds and 'crazy paving' and replace with a new formal paving. For the 61% of respondents that supported the proposal 26% of them did not support removing the planting beds and crazy paving.
9. For the respondents that voted yes to Question 1, 22 then voted yes to question 2 with 8 responding no. For the 19 respondents that voted No to question 1, all voted no to question 2.
10. The comments to all questions are listed in Appendix B.
11. For question one, a common theme from the comments were that the proposal was a 'waste of public funds', 'cost of living should be a priority' and 'like the flower beds as they are'.

12. Question two had themes associated with not supporting the proposal that the cost to make the change was too high and there were concerns over the loss of the green areas.
13. The final question, which asked for alternative recommendations saw common themes which included, more planting or existing planting to remain and for the existing memorial to be tidied up.
14. The public consultation does not support the proposal. Instead the consultation emphasised the majority of respondents wanted the planting areas to remain and that the priority for the Council should not be the War Memorial which is well maintained in its current state. Therefore it is recommended that the Council will continue to plant in the existing planters and will arrange a cleaning schedule for the War Memorial.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer
Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. .

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Claire Mayhew, Joint Acting Director – People & Governance & Monitoring Officer
Tel & Email 01277 312500 / claire.mayhew@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Relevant risks have been included within the main body of the report and appendices.

7.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.0 ECONOMIC AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director – Place
Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

There are no direct economic implications. In terms of the natural and built environment, it is important that the war memorial is maintained to a good standard, beyond the historic civic importance of doing so.

REPORT AUTHOR:**Name:** Phoebe Barnes**Title:** War Memorial**Phone:** 01277 312500**Email:** phoebe.barnes@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**APPENDICES**

- Appendix A: Proposed War Memorial Drawing
- Appendix B: Public Consultation Summary of Responses

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CEE: War Memorial	04/10/2022