

AGENDA ITEM 9

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: GRANGEMOUTH SPITFIRE MEMORIAL TRUST
Meeting: EXECUTIVE
Date: 17 JUNE 2014
Author: DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council leases an area of ground extending to 635.55 sq m to Grangemouth Spitfire Memorial Trust (see attached plan).
- 1.2 The lease commenced on 30 January 2013 and is for a period of 20 years. The rent is £50 per annum.
- 1.3 The ground is used by the Memorial Trust for the purpose of housing a war memorial wall and replica Spitfire World War II fighter aircraft with associated path and landscaping.
- 1.4 In terms of the lease, the Memorial Trust is responsible for repair and maintenance of the leased subjects including the Spitfire and memorial wall. The tenant is also responsible for insurance of the leased subjects.

2.0 THE MEMORIAL TRUST'S PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The Trust has recently requested that the Council considering "adopting" the Spitfire site with a view to the Council assuming maintenance responsibilities.

3.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 Corporate & Neighbourhood Services currently carry out ground maintenance of the area within the lease (see attached ground maintenance plan). This does not include the memorial wall or the Spitfire itself.

4.0 FUTURE MAINTENANCE

- 4.1 Planning & Environmental Unit and Bridge & Structural Design Team have been consulted on the maintenance aspect of the Spitfire. It is considered difficult to quantify future maintenance costs including potential for repairs resulting from, for example, vandalism to the structure.

Given the specialist nature of the structure (the Spitfire is constructed in fibreglass), it would be likely to need future specialist maintenance to prevent or address, for example, weather related damage.

- 4.2 It has been suggested that a commuted sum could be sought from the Memorial Trust in return for taking on future maintenance liability.

5.0 POTENTIAL FUTURE MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 As noted at 3.1 above, Corporate & Neighbourhood Services maintain the surrounding ground and this arrangement would continue unchanged.
The budget for maintenance of the war memorials in the area is held by the Governance Division within the Chief Executive Office. This amounts to £20,000 per annum.
Whilst the actual amount is variable, there is usually a small underspend on this budget.
- 5.2 Were the Council to agree to the Memorial Trust's request to take on maintenance of the memorial wall and replica Spitfire, it is likely that costs will require to be met from this budget. As the replica is comparatively new, these are not anticipated to be significant in the short term, though may increase over time eg dependent on the extent of weather related damage as noted at 4.1 above.
- 5.3 Should the Council agree to take on responsibility for the replica Spitfire, it is intended that it be included on the block property insurance policy and insured against the standard insurable risks, including vandalism (though excluding normal wear and tear maintenance as normal). The cost and reinstatement value of the Spitfire itself is £30,000 and it is anticipated that the memorial will have a minimum lifespan of 30 years. It is not anticipated that this would result in a significant increase to the level of the block policy premium payable.
- 5.4 The Spitfire Memorial Trust have advised that they would be prepared to pay a commuted sum towards future maintenance. The amount would require to be formally agreed by the Trust, however, it is understood the sum to be offered is likely to be in the region of £4,000.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 To ask Members to consider the request and determine whether they wish Council to agree to take over maintenance responsibilities.

.....
Director of Development Services

Date 2 June 2014

Contact Officer: Alan Urquhart, Asset Manager, ext 4798

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil