

BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

26 NOVEMBER 2020

MONUMENTS AND PLACE NAMES WORKING GROUP

Report from: Councillor Barry Kemp, Chairman of the Working Group

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Summary

Council agreed a motion on 16 July 2020 to set up a Monuments & Place Names Working Group to consider monuments and place names in Medway. This report presents the outcome of the Working Group's work, with recommendations about two structures.

1. Budget and policy framework

- 1.1. The naming of monuments and place names in Medway is a matter for Cabinet.
- 1.2. This item has been circulated separately to the main agenda. The Chairman is of the opinion that it should be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency as permitted under section 100B of the Local Government Act 1972 to enable the Committee to consider the matter before it is considered by Cabinet on 15 December 2020. The report was not available in time for despatch with the main agenda due the final meeting of the working group being held on 17 November 2020.

2. Background

- 2.1. In the wake of the Black Lives Matter demonstrations across the country, the Council considered three motions at its meeting on 16 July 2020. The motion that was agreed sought to set up a Working Group to consider monuments and place names in Medway.
- 2.2. A cross-party Working Group was arranged. It met on three occasions and produced a final report on 17 November 2020, which is attached as Appendix A to this report.

3. Advice and analysis

- 3.1. The Working Group took advice from Officers as part of their deliberations and sought to obtain historical information from Medway Archives.
- 3.2. It was recognised that the information provided by Medway Archives was not necessarily exhaustive but the Working Group was entitled to consider it together with any information they could glean from other sources, and their local knowledge to carry out their role.
- 3.3. A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has been completed and is attached at Appendix B.

4. Risk management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Cabinet chooses to retain the name of the Sir John Hawkins Car Park	There may be community concern about a Council asset continuing to be named after an individual linked to the slave trade	Consider changing the name as advised by the Working Group	C3
Cabinet chooses to retain the name of the Sir John Hawkins Car Park	There may be reputational damage to the Council about continuing to name an asset after an individual linked to the slave trade	Consider changing the name as advised by the Working Group	C3

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Working Group considered one petition that was presented at the Council meeting on 16 July 2020 and four comments received by the Council in June 2020 from members of the public as part of their work. The Outcome Report of the Working Group is the subject of pre-decision scrutiny by this Committee.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1. The cost of changing signage for the car park can be paid from the existing budget.

7. Legal implications

7.1. The legal implications are set out in the body of the report.

8. Recommendations

8.1. Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to scrutinise the work of the Monuments and Place Names Working Group and make recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate.

Lead officer contact

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Appendices

Appendix A - Monuments & Place Names Working Group Outcomes Report

Appendix B - Diversity Impact Assessment

Background papers

None