



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Commonwealth War Graves request
Date:	12 April 2012
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Jacqui Wilson, Business Support Manager, Parks and Leisure

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Correspondence has been received by the Cemeteries Office from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission regarding the marking of graves of those deemed to be casualties of war and have been buried in our facilities.</p>

2	Key Issues
	<p>The Commission has confirmed a number of graves (24) of servicemen within our facilities have been afforded war grave status. (10 at the City Cemetery, 14 at Glenalina) Some of the graves are currently unmarked or have family memorials on them. The commission is asking permission to erect (or lay recumbent where a family memorial exists) a standard war pattern type headstone at the head of each of these graves. They would provide these headstones and cover the cost of the future upkeep or any removal.</p> <p>The Cemeteries Administration Office has confirmed the details of the individuals identified as accurate. Legal advice was sought about the impact any subsequent disputes and Legal Services are content with the request by the War Commission.</p> <p>The War Commission has also made proposals to replace or refurbish the existing Memorial Screen Wall at the City Cemetery (see appendix 1). They are also requesting a memorial for three individuals at Shankill Memorial gardens subject to agreement with the council regarding location.</p>

	<p>They have also confirmed that the War Commission will cover all the costs of any works or future upkeep of these memorials. (see appendix 2)</p> <p>The War Commission has also requested that any normal memorial fees charged by the council would be waived in this instance.</p>
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3	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> An erection fee per grave of £1115 and a foundation fee of £337 where applicable approx would be waived. As 9 headstones require foundations and erection this would be a loss of income to the Council of £4068. The remaining stones will be laid flat on the graves.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> No additional human resources required.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> All future costs of upkeep would be at the expense of the commission and this will be confirmed in a written agreement.</p>

4	Recommendations
	<p>Committee is asked to agree to the proposals from the War Commission to placing of the headstones at graves identified in the City Cemetery including the Glenalina section and to waiving the normal memorial fees on the graves identified and agree subject to further information and legal agreements to the refurbishment or replacement of the existing screen memorial wall at the City Cemetery and Shankill Memorial gardens.</p>

5	Equality and Good Relations Implications
	None.

6	Decision Tracking
	Agreements to be drawn up and signed, legal services and Business Manager.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 Letter of request for screen within City Graveyard Appendix 2 Email confirmation regarding costs