

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure DATE 31st May 2010

DIRECTOR Gordon McIntosh, Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure

TITLE OF REPORT Golden Square Car Park

REPORT NUMBER EPI/10/160

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides the Committee with an update on negotiations with the Aberdeen Branch of the Royal British Legion (ARBL) in relation to their vacation of the car park in the centre of the square.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee;

- a) approve the proposed levels of donations to ARBL in lieu of their income from charitable donations for parking within Golden Square for a period of five years
- b) that in year four officers commence discussions with ARBL as to the future of funding arrangements as the position regarding public finances will be clearer at that time
- c) instruct officers to conclude legal agreements to this effect and to establish the car park operations as soon as resources permit

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Provision has been made within both the Non-Housing Revenue and Capital budgets in 2010/11 for income from the car parking operation and costs to set up the car park in the centre of the square respectively.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

This proposal accords with National Outcomes 12 and 14 and especially the local outcome to minimise the global impact of transport within the Single Outcome Agreement 2009/10.

The pertinent policies within the Local Transport Strategy are MAN CP1, MAN CP2, MAN CP5 and MAN CP6

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Officers will require to conclude a legal agreement between the City Council and ARBL setting out the details of this report. A detailed review of the proposals by

solicitors within Legal and Democratic Services has confirmed that State Aid would not apply in this instance.

6. REPORT

At its meeting on 29th November 2009 the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee approved the proposals and agreed that officers continue discussions with the Royal British Legion on a range of issues arising from their traditional (but informal) involvement with parking arrangements at this location and to report back on these, but otherwise to prepare a bid for capital funding from the 2010/2011 capital plan on the basis of a spend to save to cover the cost of carrying out works to allow the enforcement of a traffic order.

Officers have continued discussions with ARBL to ascertain various details around income levels, costs, allocation of donations and phasing of payments.

Officers have explored options for the phasing of payments to ARBL as set out in the original report, based on a five year phased reduction and staying within the overall limits of 200000Euros. Appreciating that the exchange rate fluctuates at any time a preferred option based around an overall income level of £160000/year has been set out to ARBL to meet these requirements. The preferred option for payments is as follows:

Year	Share	Payment
1	25.0%	£40,000
2	23.1%	£37,000
3	21.3%	£34,000
4	19.4%	£31,000
5	17.5%	£28,000

Total £170,000

During the course of the discussions representatives of ARBL have asked if it is possible to establish a level of payment beyond the five year period. It is believed they have conveyed similar requests to senior elected members. Given that it is unclear what the Council's financial position will be in 2015/16 officers agreed that they would propose to Committee that such a request would be considered as part of the budget process at that time. By entering into discussions with ARBL in year four of the agreement the direction public finance is moving in at a national level and how this impacts on the available funding within the City should be clearer.

Subject to the Committee making a decision it is envisage that the Council would take over the running of the Car Park during July 2010 which would allow time for the operation to be established on a clear legal footing i.e. car park machines to be installed, signs to be erected and spaces to be marked clearly. Some of the preparatory work could be undertaken with the car park partially operating e.g. areas barriered off, which would still allow ARBL to derive charitable contributions for a few weeks longer.

While it would be desirable to have a legal agreement formed between both parties prior to the Council introducing its operations, it is not absolutely necessary. The contents of the agreement would include much of the detail within this report but could also include any specific information that Councils would wish to see to ensure they are 'following the public pound' e.g. details of where the monies provided have been used to ensure they are supporting local charities and ex-servicemen.

Appendix 1 provides a briefing note provided by ARBL for members information as to what the organization does and how it supports ex-servicemen and their families and other local charities.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None