

Environment Select Committee

Review Title: Cemeteries and Memorials Phase II – The Management of Memorials

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<p>1. Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?</p> <p>Provide attractive and safe parks, open spaces and cemeteries.</p>	
<p>2. What are the main issues?</p> <p><i>Legal Issues</i> Statutory Requirements Ownership of memorials</p> <p><i>Existing Memorials</i> Inspection Programme – Responsibilities, Public Relations Removal/ replacement of memorials Grave digging and maintenance Ombudsman report and ICCM response</p> <p><i>New Memorials</i> Legal right to erect a memorial Types, range of choice, fixing methods Inspections/ spot checks</p> <p><i>Unauthorised memorials</i> Definitions, implications, possible solutions</p> <p><i>Registration of Memorial Masons</i></p> <p><i>Rules and Regulations</i> <i>Operational Impact of any policy changes</i> Effect on maintenance, grave excavation, administration</p>	
<p>3. The Thematic Select Committee’s overall aim/ objectives in doing this work is:</p> <p>To ensure that cemeteries and closed churchyards meet health and safety requirements and establish appropriate guidelines on the erection of new memorials</p>	
<p>4. The possible outputs/outcomes are:</p> <p>To ensure that Council cemeteries and closed churchyards are safe places to visit. An up to date policy on new memorials which can be enforced.</p>	

5. What specific value can scrutiny add to this topic?

Detailed consideration of the issues and views of Stockton Residents. Reconciling different stakeholder views.

6. Who will the panel be trying to influence as part of their work?

Funeral directors, memorial masons, public, Cabinet, Council

7. Duration of enquiry?

6 months

8. What category does the review fall into?

Policy Review

✓

Policy Development

✓

External Partnership

Performance Management

Holding Executive to Account

9. Extra Resources needed? Would the investigation benefit from the co-option of an “expert” witness?

None

10. What information do we need?

Secondary Information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc.)

Relevant Legislation and Ecclesiastical legislation
Harrogate Borough Council Ombudsman report and ICCM response
Inspection Programme
Viewpoint Feedback (from first phase of review)

Primary/new evidence/information

Consultation with Church congregations, faith groups
All Member Survey
Comparison with services offered by other Local Authorities (e.g. Middlesbrough)

Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet Member/portfolio holder, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc.)

Registration and Bereavement Services

Care for Your Area

Mem Safe

Conservation

What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?

Background report and overview of issues from service perspective
Legislative requirements

Maintenance and Safety issues

Update on inspection programme and demonstration of “topple test” at site visit

Conservation and management of cemeteries

Finance

Budgetary position and funding for inspection and remedial works

Funeral Directors
Memorial Masons

Views on new memorials – types, range of choice, fixing. Their perception of public views on what should be permitted within cemeteries

11. What processes can we use to feed into the review? (site visits/observations, face-to-face questioning, telephones survey, written questionnaire, etc.)

Site Visits to Stockton Cemeteries
Consultation with church/ faith groups congregations
All member survey

12. In what ways can we involve the public and at what stages? (consider whole range of consultative mechanisms, local committees and local ward mechanisms)

Briefing for Press at start of review
Consultation with church/ faith groups congregations
Viewpoint Focus Groups

Project Plan

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KEY TASK	DETAILS/ACTIVITIES	DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
Scoping of Review	Information gathering	June 2007	Scrutiny Officer Link Officer
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss aims and objectives of review	12 June 2007	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Corporate Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
Agree Project Plan	Scope and Project Plan agreed by Committee	18 June 2007	Select Committee
Publicity of Review	Press Briefing at start of review	June 2007	Chair, Link Officer, Press Officer Scrutiny Officer

Obtaining Evidence	Site Visit to Durham Road Cemetery	27 July 2007	Select Committee
	Evidence from Registration and Bereavement Services, Conservation and Finance	30 July 2007	Select Committee
	Mid Review Tri Partite	29 August 2007	Select Committee
	Evidence from CFYA Feedback from consultation	3 September 2007	Select Committee
	Meeting with Funeral Directors and Memorial Masons	24 September 2007	
Members decide recommendations and findings	Review summary of findings and formulate draft recommendations	8 October 2007	Select Committee
Tri-Partite Meeting	Meeting to discuss finding of review and draft recommendations	15 October 2007	Select Committee Chair and Vice Chair, Cabinet Member(s), Corporate Director(s), Scrutiny Officer, Link Officer
Circulate Draft Report to Stakeholders	Circulation of Report	October 2007	Scrutiny Officer
Final Agreement of Report	Approval of final report by Committee	28 October 2007	Select Committee
Consideration of Report by Executive Scrutiny Committee	Consideration of report	13 November 2007	Executive Scrutiny Committee
Report to	Presentation of final report with	22 November 2007	Cabinet/ Approving Body

Cabinet/Approving Body	recommendations for approval to Cabinet		
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