

14 September 2016

Environment & Housing Management Committee

Cemetery Management Plans – Woodman Road Cemetery and London Road Cemetery

Report of: *Stuart Anderson – Deputy Operations Manager*

Wards Affected: *Brentwood West, Warley*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The cemeteries within Brentwood are without doubt some of the most highly regarded and emotionally motivated assets operated by the Council. To ensure they are not only safe to use but also well maintained, it is important that there is a focused forward thinking plan in place to direct resources and highlight areas for improvements within them.
- 1.2 The provision of management plans with structured programmes for improvements for the cemeteries will help Officers to focus and direct resources where they are needed. This will manage resident expectations with regard to future provisions and improvements as well as ensure that value for money is obtained with the works undertaken.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That Members approve the management plans for Woodman Road Cemetery and London Road Cemetery.**
- 2.2 **That Members approve the works programmes for Woodman Road Cemetery and London Road Cemetery (progression of works is reliant on successful capital funding bids or availability of funding from S106/CIL contributions).**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The Council is responsible for 2 active cemeteries in the Borough.
- 3.2 The responsibilities of the Council in this area cover a wide range of features. These include day to day maintenance and management in addition to the long term strategic management of the sites.
- 3.3 At present, there is little in the way of documented forward planning for the management of the cemeteries other than the Open Space Strategy and the needs assessment within the Leisure Strategy however, these documents failed to address site specific works that were required, and focused on high level management and needs.
- 3.4 The intention of the management plans is to identify required works and improvements to specific sites, and also opportunities for either reductions in expenditure, or to exploit the best use of the space and facilities within the cemeteries.
- 3.5 Any improvements identified within the work plans would be dependant on funding being available to progress them. At this stage annual revenue for cemetery infrastructure maintenance and improvement stands at £8,000 per annum. This is no longer sufficient to sustain the cemeteries; therefore improvements will be reliant on successful capital funding applications or S106/CIL contributions being available.
- 3.6 In addition to this, the management plans will offer the opportunity for Officers to look at where resources are directed against set service standards i.e. frequency of grass cutting, and to identify where partnership working may offer savings both long and short term.
- 3.7 The management plans have been written following the guidance and best practice of the Green Flag Award Scheme. This would allow sites to be entered into the programme if it was felt it offered a tangible enhancement to the profile of the site, service or reputation of the Council.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 The proposal is for the Council to adopt the attached management plan for both Woodman Road Cemetery and London Road Cemetery.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 So that a robust and forward planning strategy can be put in place for the management of the parks and open spaces, ensuring they are fit for purpose and safe for users.
- 5.2 To make sure that management plans are in place to allow robust and realistic budget setting to take place to ensure resources are allocated when and where they are needed.
- 5.3 To allow for opportunities to be identified and generate additional income, or to rationalise the use of the Councils cemeteries and the manner in which they are used to ensure maximum income whilst utilising the available resources.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 No consultation has been carried out regarding these management plans.

7. References to Corporate Plan

- 7.1 Environment and Housing Management- To enhance the cleanliness of our environment and maintain the attractiveness of our Borough.
- 7.2 Economic Development – Maximise Council assets to deliver corporate objectives and ensure community benefit.
- 7.3 Community and Health - Make Brentwood a Borough where people feel safe, healthy and supported.
- 7.4 Transformation – Provide more modern and effective customer services, Develop new ways of working for the Council, improving service delivery and reducing costs and unnecessary bureaucracy, Provide more modern and effective customer services.

8. Implications

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Ramesh Prashar, Financial Services Manager

Tel & Email: 01277 312 513 / ramesh.prashar@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.1 As outlined in the report there is a budget of £8k a year available for maintenance and improvements. Any expenditure beyond this budget will be reliant on successful capital funding applications or other sources of funding which will need to be agreed in advance.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Saleem Chughtai, Governance Lawyer

Tel & Email: 07966 891 705 / saleem.chughtai@brentwood.gov.uk

- 8.2 The Council as a 'burial authority' ensures proper management and regulation of its cemeteries under the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977, pursuant to which the Council is required to keep such cemeteries as it does have in good order and repair.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

- 8.3 The maintenance works/capital improvements identified in the management plans will ensure the ongoing improvement and maintenance and management of the site.
- 8.4 They also identify health and safety issue such as maintenance of footpaths and roadways along with asset management i.e. capital improvements to parking surfaces etc providing an improved valuation of the facility both monetary and also in public perception.

9. Background Papers (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

- 9.1 None

10. Appendices to this report

- **Appendix A** - Draft management plans for Woodman Road Cemetery and London Road Cemetery.

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Stuart Anderson

Telephone: 01277 312654

E-mail: stuart.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk