



Cabinet (Resources) Panel

24 March 2015

Report title	Improvements Programme – Bereavement Services	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor John Reynolds Environment	
Key decision	No	
In forward plan	No	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Nick Alderman, City Environment	
Originating service	Bereavement Services	
Accountable employee(s)	Stephen Wright	Head of Operational Services
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Report to be/has been considered by	Delivery Directorate Leadership Team	18 November 2014

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to:

1. Approve the following proposals to improve facilities at the crematorium and cemeteries funded from the cemeteries and crematorium reserve fund.
 - a) Increase seating capacity of the west chapel at the crematorium.
 - b) Resurface worn roads and footpaths at the crematorium.
 - c) Installation of concrete plinths for memorials.
 - d) Installation of Wesley music system at the crematorium.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To seek approval to undertake improvements to facilities at the crematorium and cemeteries funded from the cemeteries and crematorium reserve fund.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Bereavement services reserve fund was established in 1998 for the purposes of investment in service improvements and/or to contribute towards the capital cost of maintaining facilities at the City's cemeteries and crematorium.
- 2.2 Traditionally, all surplus income from the Bereavement services trading account was channelled into the reserve fund annually. This has now ceased in view of the Council's current financial position.
- 2.3 The service carries out general repair and maintenance works annually within cemeteries and at the crematorium, however, the revenue budget has been reduced over the past few years and is now only able to fund routine maintenance and general repair work.
- 2.4 It has become especially important to continue improving facilities at the crematorium and the City's cemeteries because of the ever-increasing threat of alternative facilities being provided in neighbouring authorities by the private sector in the near future
- 2.5 A balance of £160,000 currently remains in the cemeteries and crematorium reserve fund.

3.0 Project Proposals

- 3.1 The projects shown in the table below were proposed for implementation in 2014/15 but will be undertaken in 2015/16 once the outturn situation becomes clearer.

Projects Proposed	Indicative Costs	Details	Reason
a) Increase seating capacity of the west chapel at the crematorium	£40,000	Remove existing pews and replace with individual chairs, remove and replace carpets and curtains, decorate as required – this proposal increases the capacity of the west chapel by a further 25 - 30 seated mourners. (the east ehapel seating capacity will be reviewed at a later date)	The chapels at the crematorium are currently only able to accommodate up to 80 seated persons and it is estimated that at up to 100 funerals each year, some mourners are having to stand during services which has led to complaints from funeral directors and families.

Projects Proposed	Indicative Costs	Details	Reason
b)Resurface worn roads and footpaths at the crematorium	£40,000	Some tarmacadam roads and footpaths within the crematorium grounds require urgent reinstatement.	The roads in the crematorium are used on a daily basis by visitors and maintenance staff and are subject to wear similar to traditional highway roadways. Repair is required in order to reduce the Health & Safety risk to the public and its associated insurance implications.
c)Installation of concrete plinths for memorials	£20,000	All memorial installations on new grave sections at cemeteries are erected on concrete plinths which are essential for stability and to maintain uniformity.	It is considered unreasonable to pass this additional cost on to the public via memorial masons. The grave price already includes a charge for permission to erect a memorial.
d)Installation of Wesley music system at the crematorium	£22,000	This investment is required as an alternative to ttraditional organ music during funeral services. Mourners who wish to use the services of an organist now make arrangements via their funeral director at no cost to the Council.	The Council no longer automatically provide an organist for funeral services at the crematorium.

4.0 Financial implications

4.1 Following completion of these proposals, a balance of £38,000 will remain in the cemeteries and crematorium reserve fund.

[CH/05032015/O]

5.0 Legal implications

5.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

[RB/27012015/H]

6.0 Equalities implications

6.1 No equalities analysis required for these proposals.

7.0 Environmental implications

7.1 No direct implications.

8.0 Human resources implications

8.1 No direct implications.

9.0 Corporate landlord implications

9.1 The proposed investment is from a ring fenced reserve for cemeteries and crematorium and it is supported by the Corporate Landlord because the proposed enhancement of facilities enables the delivery of efficiencies and will help to protect the income streams to the service.

10.0 Schedule of background papers

10.1 None.