

PETITION REGARDING WEST DRAYTON CEMETERY

Cabinet Member	Councillor Jonathan Bianco
Cabinet Portfolio	Finance, Property and Business Services
Officer Contact	John Purcell Planning, Environment, Education and Community Services
Papers with report	Appendix A – Copy of Action Plan

HEADLINE INFORMATION

Purpose of report	To inform the Cabinet Member that a petition has been received from Mrs.A.Giles & Mr. R. Murphy, signed by 178 Ward residents seeking improvements to the child/adult sections of West Drayton cemetery.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	None
Financial Cost	Many of the issues raised in the petition regarding the condition of West Drayton cemetery are already being addressed within existing budgets. Where any improvements cannot be contained within existing budgets then a suitable funding source will need to be identified if they are to be taken forward.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents' & Environmental Services
Ward affected	West Drayton

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member:

- 1. Meets the petitioners and considers their petition for improvements to West Drayton Cemetery.**
- 2. Decides on the appropriate course of action having met with the petitioners.**

INFORMATION

Reasons for recommendation

To allow the Cabinet Member to consider the petition with the petitioners.

Alternative options considered

These can be identified from the discussions with the petitioners.

Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)

None at this stage.

Supporting Information

A paper petition with 178 valid residents' signatures was received by the Council on 14 June 2012 with a cover letter from Mrs Giles & Mr Murphy.

1.0 Background

1.1 Responsibility for the Council's cemeteries falls within the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property & Business Services' portfolio. A petition has been received relating to the condition of West Drayton cemetery and the purpose of this report is to respond to the concerns raised by the petitioners.

2.0 Report

2.1 From an inspection carried out in response to the receipt of the petition, officers implemented an action plan to address the petitioners' concerns. A copy of that action plan is attached and the actions broadly fall into three categories;

- Grounds condition, maintenance and upkeep
- Minor works
- Litter

2.2 The action plan assigned responsibilities and dates and progress has been overseen by the PEECS Deputy Director responsible for ICT, Highways and Business Services.

3.0 Broader Issues

3.1 A Residents' & Environmental Services Policy and Overview Committee review of the Council's cemeteries is underway. This review started at the end of July. The Council's Cemetery Regulations (originally drafted in 1994) require revision. The Committee will report its findings to Cabinet in due course.

4.0 Engagement with the Petitioners

4.1 The Council's Bereavement Services Manager has been in contact with the petitioners and he has made them aware of the progress of works.

Financial Implications

Many of the issues raised in the petition regarding the condition of West Drayton cemetery are already being addressed, as set out in the action plan referred to at paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 above and in Appendix A, within existing budgets. Where any improvements can not be contained within existing budgets then a suitable funding source will need to be identified if they are to be taken forward.

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

The recommendation will enable the Cabinet Member to discuss with the petitioners their concerns, and allow him to consider whether or not to agree to their requests.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

Petition Hearings are a key way in which residents can meet with, and influence, Council decision makers.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

As noted within the body of this report, an action plan is in place to deal with a number of issues raised in this petition. In cases where the cost of remedial actions can not be contained in existing budgets, it would be necessary to secure and release suitable funding prior to any expenditure being committed.

Legal

The Cabinet Member has before him recommendations that:
the Cabinet Member meets the petitioners and considers their requirements for improvements to child/adult sections of West Drayton cemetery and
the Cabinet Member decides the appropriate course of action having met with the petitioners.

Under Article 7.08(d) (28) of the Council's Constitution there is a general Cabinet Member delegation for the Cabinet Member to deal with petitions in their portfolio area in accordance with Council procedure.

The recommendation therefore falls within the Cabinet Member delegations. Article 13 of the Council Constitution requires that all key decisions follow the seven principles set out therein. The Cabinet Member should have full regard to the Cabinet decision dated 28 July 2011 referred to in the body of this report vis-à-vis the changes to the VSLP.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.
