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**Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**

7th November 2016

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

In addition to those matters previously notified to you, the following item(s) will also be considered at the meeting to be held at 4.30 pm on Tuesday, 8th November, 2016.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

- (d) Request for Deputations
- (b) Minutes of Meeting of the Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Development Working Group (Pages 1 - 8)

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Subject:	<i>Update on Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Development</i>
Date:	<i>8 November 2016</i>
Reporting Officer:	<i>Nigel Grimshaw, Director of City and Neighbourhood Services</i>
Contact Officer:	<i>Rose Crozier, Assistant Director Claire Sullivan, Policy and Business Development Officer</i>

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	<p>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues The purpose of this report is to report to committee on the key issues discussed at the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group meeting held on 2 November 2016.</p>
2.0	<p>Recommendations That the People and Communities Committee approve the minutes and the recommendations from the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group meeting held on 2 November 2016.</p>
3.0	<p>Main report The Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group is a Working Group of the People and Communities Committee which consists of an elected member from each of the political parties.</p> <p>The minutes from the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group are brought before the Committee for approval.</p> <p>The key issues discussed at the 2 November meeting were: <u>Terms of Reference for Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Development Working Group</u></p>

Members reviewed and reaffirmed the Terms of Reference which had been agreed at the meeting of the Working Group on 5th November 2015.

City Cemetery Heritage Project

Members noted the update that was provided on the development of the City Cemetery Heritage project. This included that in July 2015 the Council received a development grant of £165,800 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop detailed plans for the project in advance of submitting a Stage 2 application for £1.69m (to be match funded by the Council of £390k). Should the Stage 2 application be successful it is anticipated that work would commence on the site in early 2018.

Memorial Safety Inspection Programme

Members noted the update that was provided in relation to the roll out of the Memorial Safety Inspection Programme which had commenced in Balmoral Cemetery and which would be extended to other council cemetery facilities, including Shankill Graveyard, Knock, Friars Bush and Clifton Street cemeteries. It is anticipated that the memorial inspection programme in these cemeteries would be completed in early 2017.

Following completion of the programme in these historic cemeteries, it will then commence in Roselawn Cemetery. In early January 2017 public notices will appear in the regional and local press informing the public that the safety inspections will be taking place in Roselawn and they will also be promoted through the Council's usual communications channels.

More details regarding the above issues and recommendations are included in the minutes for this meeting which are attached as appendix 1.

Financial & Resource Implications

The costs associated with the implementation of the various items outlined will be met through existing budgets.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

The Memorial Management Policy was equality screened in line with the Council's process. Any changes to policy will be equality screened in line with the Council's equality process.

4.0

Appendices – Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Copy of the Minutes of the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium

	Working Group's meeting on 2 November 2016.

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**STRATEGIC CEMETERY AND CREMATORIUM
DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP**

Minutes of Meeting of 2nd November, 2016

Members Present: The High Sheriff, Alderman Rodgers (Chairperson);
Alderman Sandford and
Councillor Lyons.

In Attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and Neighbourhood
Services;
Mrs. C. Sullivan, Policy and Business Development
Officer and;
Mr. G. Graham, Democratic Services Assistant.

Apologies

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor McCabe.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 5th October were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported

Terms of Reference

The Working Group reviewed and reaffirmed its terms of reference, as presented at its meeting on 5th November, 2015.

City Cemetery Heritage Project

The Policy and Development Officer provided the Working Group with an update on the Council's City Cemetery Heritage Project. She referred to the fact that, despite the Belfast City Cemetery being an important site in terms of its history and heritage, its significance and links to the City of Belfast had not been developed or publicised extensively.

She reminded the Members that, in July 2015, the Heritage Lottery Fund had provided the Council with funding of £165,800 to develop a project, aimed at the protection and enhancement of the existing heritage within Belfast City Cemetery and that this would be achieved through a combination of the following elements:

1. Capital
2. Restorative
3. Interpretive
4. Bio –diversity and;
5. Promotional.

She reported that, as part of the process, a Conservation Architect and Interpretive Planner had been procured to assist with the development phase and that Council officers would be working with them, with the objective of submitting a stage 2 funding application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. This application for funding, if successful, would draw down a further £1.69 million and the Council would contribute £390,000 of match funding. She reported also that extensive consultation and engagement would be taking place over the next twelve months with a wide range of stakeholders. In response to a question from a Member, she stated that the funding for the project would be made available from within the Council's capital programme and that it was anticipated that, should the application be successful, work at the City Cemetery would commence in early 2018.

Noted.

Memorial Safety Inspection Programme

The Policy and Development Officer provided the Working Group with an update on the progress which had been made in respect of the implementation of the Council's Memorial Safety Inspection Programme. She reminded the Members that a previous report in the matter had been presented to the Working Group in October, 2016. She referred to the roll out of the programme which had commenced in Balmoral Cemetery and which would be extended to other council cemetery facilities, including Shankill Graveyard, Knock, Friars Bush and Clifton Street cemeteries. It was anticipated that the memorial inspection programme in these cemeteries would be completed in early 2017.

She advised the Working Group that, upon completion of the historical cemeteries, the inspection programme would commence in Roselawn Cemetery. It was anticipated that the inspection programme for Roselawn Cemetery would commence in February, 2017 and would not be completed until the end of that year. In response to a question from a Member in terms of measures which could be adopted to inform grave owners and the visiting public in regard to the safety inspection programme, she stated that public notices would appear in the regional and local press in early January and that a comprehensive publicity campaign would be launched, using the Council's existing communication channels, including City Matters. A public information leaflet, which would explain the process, would be available on site also. The Policy and Development Officer, in response to a question from a Member regarding the staking and banding process for securing unstable headstones, reported that industry standards of best practice would be adhered to. She advised also, in respect of a further question relating to issues of inappropriate imagery, that legal advice was being sought in relation to this matter and that the Working Group would be provided with an update in due course.

Report on Future Cremation Services

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Working Group, expressed his disappointment that a report in respect of the above-mentioned matter had not been made available for its consideration. The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services acknowledged the concerns of the Working Group and explained that the reason for the report not being submitted had been due to a delay in receiving it from the consultants. He reported that officers were working closely with the consultants to ensure the report would be completed in time for the next meeting of the Working Group.

The Working Group noted the information which had been provided and that the Director would arrange for Political Parties to be briefed on the report, prior to it being submitted to the People and Communities Committee.

Date of Next Meeting

The Working Group agreed that its next meeting would be held on Monday, 5th December at 12.30 p.m.

Chairperson

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