



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks & Leisure Services Committee
Subject:	Cemetery Operative posts
Date:	13 September 2012
Reporting Officer:	Fiona Holdsworth, Principle Parks & Cemeteries Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Stephen Stockman, Area Manager, Parks & Cemeteries

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>During the reviews within Parks and Cemeteries Services resources/staffing levels have changed and subsequently it has been established that the current resources/staffing levels at Roselawn are not providing sufficient operational cover. There is a requirement that staff are flexible in order to deal with the number of burials and to provide sufficient staff cover specifically at Roselawn Cemetery. Cover for absence, holidays and operational requirements is proving difficult.</p> <p>It was previously agreed by the Parks and Leisure Committee at its meeting on 15 May 2008 that new Cemetery Operative posts would be created. The post was developed to carry out all aspects of cemeteries work including acting as Crematorium Technician when required. This post allows for more flexibility in arranging cover at the crematorium.</p> <p>Recommendations from the review of the Crematorium agreed by Committee in April 2011 established four additional Crematorium posts to address the increased demand in the Crematorium. The recruitment of these posts has been completed, staff trained and when fully operational should reduce the demand for Cemetery Operatives to cover the Crematorium.</p> <p>Since May 2008 the workload at Roselawn has increased in relation to additional graves to maintain. Since 1 May 2008 to present 1081 new graves have been sold in Section W. The construction of Section Y started on 14 August 2011 and is close to completion which will also</p>

	<p>includes additional graves.</p> <p>The Service has also seen an increase in customer complaints during 2012 which relate directly to weeds and slipping standards. Insufficient resources to undertake day to day duties, i.e. weed control, grass cuttings, bark mulching, dead tree removal etc. is considered to be the main issue.</p>
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2.	<p>Key Issues</p> <p>It has been identified that the current staffing levels at the Crematorium and Cemeteries are not providing the necessary flexibility to ensure operational cover therefore it is proposed that two additional posts of Cemetery Operatives should be created within the current established staff levels.</p> <p>At present there is one vacancy of Gravedigger at Roselawn and it is proposed that this post plus a further post will be recruited through external recruitment. A reserve list will be compiled so that the remaining post can be recruited if/when a vacancy arises. Once these vacancies are recruited as Cemetery Operatives, the established number of Gardeners and/or Gravediggers will be reduced accordingly to ensure no overall increase in the total establishment figures.</p> <p>The result of this will mean that two posts will be replaced with Cemetery Operatives creating a maximum of 14 Cemetery Operatives posts which will be more flexible to meet the operational demands.</p> <p>Overtime costs from 1 April 2011 until 31 March 2012 were £12,426.86 at Roselawn. Agency costs from 1 April 2001 until 31 March 2012 were £2619.54. The introduction of these posts will assist to reduce overtime and agency costs currently being used to cover these duties.</p>
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3.	<p>Resource Implications</p> <p>The creation of two posts of Cemetery Operatives will have financial implications. This will include the differential between current remuneration of posts at Scale 3 to the proposed Cemetery Operative posts of Scale 4. This will cost £1965 per post, totalling £3930 for two additional posts.</p> <p>Note that the above calculations assume that post holders currently being remunerated at Scale 4 will not apply, however if they are successful the financial impact will be lessened.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> Recruitment for the posts of Cemetery Operatives will be carried out</p>
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	<p>through external recruitment and one post will be filled immediately to replace the Gravedigger vacancy and the other will be filled as and when a further vacancy occurs within Gardener or Gravediggers designations at Roselawn.</p> <p>There are currently 4 Apprentices who were temporarily allocated posts as Gardener 3s until suitable Scale 4 posts became vacant. If the above is agreed, these posts will have to be offered to these members of staff as suitable redeployment options.</p>
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4.	Equality and good relations implications
	None.

5.	Recommendations
	<p>Members are asked to approve the contents of this report namely:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To agree the creation of two additional Cemetery Operative posts to replace one existing Gravedigger vacancy and one other vacancy as and when it arises within Gravedigger and Gardener designations at Roselawn.

6.	Decision Tracking
	None.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	None.

8.	Documents Attached
	None.