



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Improvement works to the War Graves in City Cemetery by the War Graves Commission</b>
<b>Date:</b>	13 March 2014
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Ricky Rice, City Parks Manager.

<b>1.</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
	<p>Belfast City Council City Cemetery currently maintains 2 World War grave areas as part of their routine maintenance of the 100 acre City Cemetery. The maintenance involves regular grass cutting, strimming and/or weed spraying.</p> <p>The war graves were removed from the cemetery in the 1970s due to vandalism. During the 1990s, after full consultation with local representatives, the war graves were returned to the City Cemetery by the War Graves Commission and it is pleasing to note that no damage has since been caused to the graves.</p> <p>Parks and Leisure Officers have been approached by representatives of the War Graves Commission who have requested permission to introduce small colourful horticultural plants to be planted along the edge of the war graves of the one of the plots. See appendix 1 for a photograph of existing war graves area.</p> <p>Typical plants that will be used will include Roses, Lavender shrubs and small growing herbaceous plants. The plants will be aesthetically pleasing, colourful and similar to other war graves which the War Graves Commission maintains.</p>

<b>2.</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
	<p>It is anticipated this introduction of attractive plants will increase overall interest and improve tourism of the Cemetery and indeed improve the aesthetic look of the Cemetery. The concept links in with the overall City Cemetery and Falls Park Master plan which aims to improve both sites with a view to increase tourism to the area.</p> <p>It has been proposed the War Graves Commission directly finance and maintain</p>

	the War Graves area subject to an appropriate legal agreement between Belfast City Council and the War Graves Commission NI. The War Graves Commission has requested that if the first pilot of colourful planting is favourably received they would granted permission to extend the pilot to include the other war graves plot in approximately 1 year.
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<b>3.</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	<p><b><u>Financial</u></b> The War Graves Commission will finance and be responsible for the landscape and maintenance works under the direction of the Parks Operational Manager. There are no financial implications for Belfast City Council.</p> <p><b><u>Human Resources Issues</u></b> There are no Human Resources issues other than Officer time.</p>

<b>4.</b>	<b>Equality Implications</b>
	There are no equality issues.

<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	It is recommended Committee approve the proposal of the War Graves Commission to landscape and maintain the war graves plot within the City Cemetery, subject to an appropriate legal agreement, and if the pilot is successfully received then permission be granted to landscape and maintain the second war graves plot in a similar manner with the legal agreement amended as appropriate..

<b>6.</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	Ricky Rice, City Parks Manager.

<b>7.</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	None

<b>8.</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 Photograph of War Graves in City Cemetery.