



Belfast District Council (Shadow)

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| Report to: | Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Potential Cemetery Site at Dundrod |
| Date: | 29 August 2014 |
| Reporting Officer: | Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure |
| Contact Officer: | Claire Sullivan, Policy and Business Development Officer |

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| 1 | Relevant Background Information |
| 1.1 | <p>Belfast City Council as part of its approach to cemetery and crematorium development has been engaged in a process to identify a site for development as a new cemetery. Decisions around this process have been brought to the Council's Parks and Leisure Committee for consideration.</p> <p>The Council has been undertaking a process to identify a potential cemetery site for a number of years and several sites have been considered and rejected for a variety of reasons including ground conditions and location. Currently the only site that is under consideration is a site at Dundrod which came to the Council through an expression of interest exercise which the Council initiated.</p> <p>This site was put forward by an agent acting on behalf of a business man who holds an option on the site. A company, Carston Undertakings Ltd has now been established and has taken over the option. Officers from the Parks and Leisure Department, Legal Services and the Estates Management Unit have held a number of meetings with the party who holds an option on the site along with their agent. The Council is aware of who the landowners are but at this point have had no direct dealings with them.</p> |

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| 2 | Key Issues |
| 2.1 | <p>Carston Undertakings Ltd has commissioned a number of pieces of work around the development of the site and the Chairman of Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee received a request from Strategic Planning, on their behalf, requesting the opportunity to make a presentation to the Committee on their proposals for the development of a cemetery on the site. A copy of the letter is attached as Appendix 1.</p> <p>A delegation made up of representatives from the various consultancies that the option holder has commissioned to work on this project, including Strategic Planning, MRA Traffic Consultants, Park Hood Landscape Architects and PWC, made a presentation on the development of the site to the Parks and Leisure</p> |

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| | <p>Committee at its meeting in June 2014.</p> <p>Members should also be aware that there are strict regulations around the development of a cemetery, particularly in relation to ground conditions and hydro-geology, and that detailed investigations are required by NIEA to assess the suitability of the site for development as a cemetery. These investigations are expensive and take approximately 18 months to complete. Therefore with the option holders consent the Council has undertaken several initial studies to help determine the site's potential for development as a cemetery. These studies have identified a number of potential issues with the site and work has been commissioned to draw together all the findings from these studies on the viability of the site to allow recommendations on the options available to be made to the Parks and Leisure Committee in September 2014.</p> |
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| 3 | Resource Implications |
| 3.1 | <p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>The development of a new cemetery is currently a Stage I emerging project in the Council's capital programme.</p> |
| 3.2 | <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>There are no human resource implications at this stage.</p> |
| 3.3 | <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></p> <p>None at this stage although the final phases of the project will inevitably increase the Council's land ownership and associated liabilities.</p> |

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| 4 | Equality and Good Relations Considerations |
| 4.1 | There are currently no equality or good relation implications however this will continue to be reviewed as the project is developed. |

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| 5 | Call In |
| 5.1 | This decision is subject to Call In. |

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| 6 | Recommendations |
| | Members are asked to consider the request and determine whether they wish to invite a delegation to make a presentation on the Dundrod site to the Committee at a future meeting. |

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| 7 | Decision Tracking |
| | Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure will inform Strategic Planning of the Committee's decision. |

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| 8 | Key to Abbreviations |
| | PWC – Price Waterhouse Coopers |

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| 9 | Documents Attached |
| | Appendix 1 – Letter from Strategic Planning |