

**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