



Title of meeting: Cabinet
Date of meeting: 1 October 2024
Subject: Portsmouth Cemeteries Delivery Plan - Post consultation
Report by: Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services
Cabinet Member: Councillor Steve Pitt
Wards affected: All
Key decision: No
Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

To seek Cabinet approval to formally adopt the Cemeteries Delivery Plan.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to formally adopt the Cemeteries Delivery Plan.

3. Background

- 3.1. The purpose of the delivery plan is to provide a forward vision for the Council's cemeteries, to sit above the individual operational plans for the individual sites. The delivery plan considers key issues and opportunities presenting to the service.
- 3.2. Preparation of the plan included consideration of other local authorities' codes and practices regarding cemeteries and burial space, together with an understanding of current regulations.
- 3.3. The delivery plan is broken down into the following objectives:
 - 3.3.1. Address capacity of existing burial space and identify new provision;
 - 3.3.2. Enhance cemetery green space;
 - 3.3.3. Review management of assets (buildings);
 - 3.3.4. Memorials policy and process;
 - 3.3.5. Community engagement;
 - 3.3.6. Development of user experience.
- 3.4. The cemeteries plan aligns with the City Vision 2040 'Green City' and Council Plan 'Delivering for Portsmouth' which commits the Council to 'Stand Up For



Portsmouth' by supporting its residents, including through the delivery of infrastructure, parks and open space.

The cemeteries plan also aligns with the City Vision 2040 values of community, collaboration, equality and respect.

- 3.5. The draft delivery plan was approved for public consultation by the Cabinet in February 2024. Thereafter the plan was added to 'Your City' Portsmouth City Council consultations webpage, promoted via public notices in the city's cemeteries and distributed to key user groups. A full list of groups consulted is found at Appendix 1.
- 3.6. The director of culture, leisure and regulatory services is grateful to the 351 responses to the consultation during Spring 2024. 96% of the responses were from individuals with the balance from stakeholder organisations. 20% of respondents visited the cemeteries either weekly or daily, with Kingston the most visited cemetery.
- 3.7. The consultation report is included at Appendix 2. The responses showed clear support for the priorities identified, with 82% agreeing or strongly agreeing. The responses also demonstrated that cemeteries are considered an important part of the community and green space offer of the city.
- 3.8. The response document to the consultation report shows the key points made by respondents to the identified priorities. The response document is included at Appendix 3.
- 3.9. Key changes made to the plan in response to the consultation include:
 - 3.9.1. Updating photographic images in the cemeteries plan.
 - 3.9.2. Updating the cemeteries plan to include reference to the responsibilities of the Grounds Maintenance and Parks Infrastructure teams regarding cemetery site maintenance and safety.
 - 3.9.3. Updating the cemeteries plan to include reference to the Libraries Service and History Centre, in connection with community engagement.
 - 3.9.4. Updating the cemeteries plan to change 'customer' to 'user' in relation to cemeteries.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1. An adopted cemeteries plan will complement the Portsmouth Local Plan 2038 and the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy by supporting the 'green city' objective of the City Vision. It will also support bids for external funding.

5. Integrated impact assessment

- 5.1. An integrated impact assessment is attached at Appendix 5.



6. Legal implications

- 6.1. The Council is under no statutory duty to provide a cemetery, but is required to maintain its existing cemeteries.
- 6.2. Members are advised that the key elements of an effective and fair consultation process in relation to a proposed decision are that:
 - 6.2.1. The consultation is conducted at a time when the proposals are at a sufficiently formative stage;
 - 6.2.2. Adequate information is provided to enable consultees to consider the proposal;
 - 6.2.3. Adequate time is afforded to consultees to allow them to make a proper and informed response; and
 - 6.2.4. The decision maker must consider the consultation responses in an open-minded way and have due regard to them in making a decision on the proposal.

7. Director of Finance's comments

The majority of the actions proposed within the cemeteries plan are expected to be funded from existing service portfolio budgets, as approved by Full Council. Where there are actions which have additional financial requirements, funding will need to be identified prior to their commencement.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Organisations consulted
- Appendix 2: Communications team consultation report
- Appendix 3: Response to consultation report
- Appendix 4: Portsmouth Cemeteries Delivery Plan
- Appendix 5: Integrated Impact Assessment

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location



The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: