

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Environment and Highways Cabinet Board

2 March 2018

Report of the Head of Streetcare, M. Roberts

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: ALL

Cemetery Rules and Regulations

Purpose of Report

1. To seek member approval for the amended Cemetery Rules and Regulations covering this council's cemeteries.

Executive Summary

2. Cemetery Rules and Regulations provide a clear and consistent approach to the management of Cemeteries managed by the authority. They set out the standards required of Memorial Masons and Funeral Directors whilst providing guidance on what is and is not permitted by service users and visitors.
3. An existing policy is in place, however this latest document has been amended to reflect current working practices and legislation changes over recent years.

Background

4. The authority is responsible for 9 Cemeteries, these being Margam, Goytre, Cymmer, Ynysymaerdy, Llantwit, Onllwyn, Giants Grave, Carmel and Godregraig.
5. An existing policy exists, however due to legislation changes and working practices this document needs to be updated to reflect these changes.
6. The Institute of Cemeteries and Cremation (ICCM) and the Local Authorities Cemetery Order 1997 (LACO) sets out standards that all Burial authorities in England and Wales must adhere to.

7. The authority acknowledges that the management of cemeteries is very emotive and families frequently contact the authority to discuss matters during very difficult times.
8. It is important that whilst being sensitive to the needs and wishes of families, and providing assistance during these difficult periods, the authority provides clear guidance to ensure consistent management throughout all of its Cemeteries.
9. The authority is committed to maintain its cemeteries to a high standard, this policy provides information to families on what items are permitted. In addition, the permitted dimensions for Memorials are set out, once again providing clear guidance.
10. Whilst providing guidance for families, the policy also sets out standards required of both Funeral Directors and Memorial Masons.
11. Only Memorial Masons that are registered to BRAMM are permitted to work in authority Cemeteries, and the benefits of this registration is set out for families within the Policy.

Financial Impact

12. There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

Equality Impact Assessment

13. A Screening Assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. After completing the assessment it has been determined that this proposal does not require an Equalities Impact Assessment. However, the service has sought to consult widely as set out in the report.

Workforce Impact

14. There are no staffing implications in the delivery of this proposal.

Legal Impact

15. Adhering to this policy will allow the authority to meet its legal obligation as set out within LACO.

Risk Management

16. To date there has not been any prosecutions against the authority in respect of its obligations and the aim is to maintain this position going forward. Failure to provide clear guidance could lead to reputational risks, as tackling unacceptable actions after the event can be difficult in the context of what is a sensitive matter.

Consultation

17. Public consultation from the 1st-31st December 2017 has been carried out with Nil returns.
18. Signs were placed on each authority managed cemetery gate advising public of the link to the online consultation.
19. A link to the online consultation was placed on the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council cemeteries webpage.
20. Service users (Funeral Directors, Memorial Masons, and Bereavement Groups) and Equality groups were emailed advising them of the link to the online consultation.
21. Service users with no email details were sent a letter which contained the link to the online consultation.
22. Consultation boxes placed at reception within the Quays, Neath Civic Centre, Port Talbot Civic Centre and Pontardawe Library.

Recommendation(s)

23. That the draft Cemetery Rules and Regulation Policy dated September 2017 are adopted by the Council.
24. That a copy of the adopted policy is provided to all local Funeral Directors and Memorial Masons.
25. A link to the policy is placed within the relevant section on the authority's website.

Reason for Proposed Decision(s)

26. To allow the authority to meet its legal obligation whilst providing a clear and consistent approach to the management of Cemeteries managed by the authority.

Implementation of Decision

27. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices

28. Cemetery Rules and Regulations – Appendix 1

List of Background Papers

29. None

Officer Contact

30. Andrew Lewis, Waste & Neighbourhood Services Manager Tel: 01639 686021 or email: a.lewis@npt.gov.uk
31. Wayne Curtis, Principal Officer Parks & Cemeteries Tel: 01639 686390 or email: w.curtis@npt.gov.uk