

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**Date**Report Title: **Cemeteries and Crematorium Scrutiny Update**Report of: **Assistant Director – Recreation Services**

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update Members on the progress made in implementing the agreed recommendations.
- 1.2 To advise Members of the outstanding work, and the proposed remaining programme and timetable for completion.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members note the progress to date and the plan for 2007/8.

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- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny 'Cemeteries and Crematorium Review' recommendations (32) were considered and largely endorsed by the Executive in March 2005.
- 3.2 An action plan was established around 6 themes with a combination of operational and strategic improvement actions/ tasks.
- 3.3 Whilst the majority of operational improvements have largely been implemented, progress on the strategic agenda has been very limited.
- 3.4 The latter will be the focus of a key project to be established and completed in 2007/8.

4. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

4.1 The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Cemeteries and Crematorium Review – Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee 8.2.05
- Executive Response to the Scrutiny Review of Haringey's Cemeteries and Crematorium – Executive 22.3.05

5. Background

5.1 The key findings, recommendations and approved action from the review were divided into 6 themes, which are reflected in both the Action Plan (see appendix 1) and the Update (see appendix 2).

- Understanding the Burial Process
- Health and Safety
- Operational Issues
- Strategic
- Infrastructure and Capital
- Relationships

5.2 The Review Panel and the Executive recognised the scale and complexity of the issues raised, and recommended that they be considered in setting the priorities for the Recreation Service Business Plan 2005/6 – 2007/8.

5.3 The operational improvement actions (4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 17, 18, 19 at Appendix 1) have largely been completed, with the following highlights:

- Performance Appraisal and Staff Training Programme fully established.
- £60k additional revenue funding approved to implement Memorial Safety programme/ plan from 2007/8.
- Wood Green national '*Cemetery of the Year (Innovation)*' Award in 2006.
- Introduction and management of Monumental Masons preferred supplier list.
- Commissioning and completion of external ICCM inspection of Enfield Crematorium operations.
- Development and introduction of new promotional materials.
- 'Charter for the Bereaved' action plan and target.

5.4 Limited progress has been made on the strategic improvement actions (1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20 at Appendix 1). Some action completed or initiated with regard to:

- Piloting of pre-cast vaulted burial chambers in Wood Green Cemetery.
- Internal Audit led review of pricing and subsidy policy to commence in March 2007.
- Unsuccessful bid for Growth Area Funding (Round 2) for Tottenham Cemetery.
- GAF(2) Funding secured to support relocation of mortuary to edge of Tottenham Cemetery on March 2008. Design and Planning permission at an advanced stage.

5.5 The Service intends to prioritise a project in 2007/8 – Cemeteries and Crematorium Renewal and Reinvestment Strategic Review, which will draw together the remaining related strategic improvement tasks. The scope of this project will include:

- The statistical, financial and mapping assessment.
- Mercury emissions abatement cost/benefit analysis.
- Tottenham Cemetery and the Moselle River Heritage and Ecological Audits and Plans.
- Burial space, reclamation and re-use review.
- Maintenance and Infrastructure improvement plan.
- Funding and investment strategy, including land, buildings and possible use of prudential borrowing.

Appendices

1. Action Plan
2. Scrutiny Update