



Subject:	Update on Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Development
Date:	8 th October 2019
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Siobhan Toland, Director of City Services

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
	The purpose of this report is update committee on the key issues discussed at the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Development Working Group meetings held on 21 st August and 2 nd October 2019
2.0	Recommendations
	That the People and Communities Committee:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Approve the minutes and the recommendations from the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Development Working Group meetings held on 21st August and 2nd October 2019.

3.0

Key Issues

Introduction to Bereavement Services

New members were given an overview of Bereavement Services. It was noted that the crematorium a regional service, makes provision for almost one third of all those bereaved in NI. It was further noted that £18m capital has been committed for a proposed new crematorium, and that there is an active expression of interest to acquire new burial land for North and West Belfast. The new memorial for 7,160 babies in City Cemetery has been well received. The Council maintains around 360,000 burial records for nine cemeteries and there is growing public interest in genealogical and historical investigation, including tours.

Memorial Tree Replacement

The Council has not had available land to support the continued provision of memorial trees and this ceased in October 2017. A 30 year scheme had provided 13,000 memorial trees in Roselawn.

Members of the Working Group agreed, subject to Committee approval, to move to a reactive replacement, whereby a tree is only replaced after a direct request from the owner. This will not impact on tree safety inspections nor on tree surgery for reasons of safety.

Update on New Crematorium Development

Members were given a verbal update on progress and they requested that this is made a standing agenda item for the Working Group.

Report on Knock Burial Ground

Members were informed of the historical significance of Knock Burial Ground. The site has a significant number of historic graves and headstones, however the grounds are locked and access control is by request given the site layout and complex challenges around ensuring health and safety for users. To date families and small groups of visitors have been facilitated by staff to access the site. Members were updated that due to recent requests to take bus tours onto the site, a safety review was conducted. A number of health and safety challenges noted would mean substantial investment would be required. As an interim safety measure, Members were advised that visits would be limited to five persons including a tour guide.

Recognition of Success

	The Chairperson on behalf of the Working Group wished to express his thanks to the members of the Focus Group who worked to create the memorial for The Baby Haven at the City Cemetery and that a letter of gratitude be sent to each of the Focus Group members in recognition of their huge contribution. The Chairperson also expressed his thanks to all the officers who worked on the Baby Haven memorial.
4.0	Financial & Resource Implications
4.0	None
5.0	Equality or Good Relations Implication / Rural Needs Assessment
	None
4.0	Appendices
	Minutes of the Working Group on 21 st August and 2 nd October 2019