

**Review into Cemetery Regulations and the Introduction of a Medical Examiners Service 2014/15 – Update on Implementation of Recommendations – Appendix 1**

| Ref | Recommendation   | Action   | Owner         | Timescale  | Progress  |
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| A   | That a review be undertaken of the council's Cemetery Regulations. Revised regulations to be further considered and agreed by Members. | Establish contact in the Legal Section and agree terms of the regulation review. Continue to work with colleague in the Legal Section to form new regulations. | Karen Lounton | April 2017 | <p>The draft Regulations have now been produced and agreed with Legal Services and are about to go out to consultations with stakeholders (Funeral Directors and Memorial Masons) in November 2016. The Bereavement &amp; Registration Services Manager has a meeting scheduled with stakeholders for 30 November 16.</p> <p>It is hoped that the new Regulations will be introduced no later than April 2017.</p> <p>As was reported to Scrutiny Committee in December 2015, staffing and resource issues resulted in a slippage in the original timescale for implementation of March 2016.</p> |

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| <b>B</b> | That the cemetery regulation review outlines provisions relating to authorised and unauthorised kerb-sets in cemeteries. A clear overall policy is formed in relation to unauthorised kerb-sets, which sets out the council position regarding retrospective unauthorised kerb-set as well as any future installations. | As part of the Cemetery Regulation review and in conjunction with colleagues from the Legal Section, produce a clear policy statement relating to authorised and unauthorised kerb-sets in the city's cemeteries.  | Karen Lounton | April 2017   | A draft policy is still under consideration but a working draft will be finalised November 2016, to keep in step with the timetable for the Cemetery and Crematorium Regulation review. |
| <b>C</b> | That given the sensitivity of the issues involved in the review, a consultation plan be established involving the council website and engagement with key stakeholders.   | <p>Consultation process to commence in July 2015 where Funeral Directors, Clergy and Memorial Masons will be consulted as part of the twice yearly Bereavement Services Stakeholder meeting.</p> <p>E-consultation strategy to be formulated following on from this meeting.</p> | Karen Lounton | April 2017   | Consultation will take place at the next scheduled Funeral Director and Memorial Mason meeting to be held 30 November 16.   |
| <b>D</b> | That officers investigate the possibility of establishing 'friends of' groups to become actively involved with ground maintenance and local history issues at some of the older sections across the ten cemeteries in the city.   | Bereavement Services to meet with Sunderland Antiquarian Society to discuss the 'friends of' group concept and establish interest.   | Karen Lounton | January 2016 | Meeting has taken place with the Antiquarian Society who have expressed an interest in forming a 'friends of' group, in particular for Sunderland Cemetery. On-going.                   |

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| E | <p>That on receiving confirmation that the Medical Examiner Service is to be implemented, the council continue to work with partners to prepare for the introduction of the Medical Examiners Service.</p> | <p>That the Bereavement &amp; Registration Services Manager remain aware of central government developments regarding the Medical Examiner project and take appropriate action when necessary.</p> | <p>Karen Lounton</p> | <p>March 2016</p> | <p>A consultation document titled "Introduction of Medical Examiners and reforms to death certificate in England and Wales" was issued by the Department of Health in March 2016 relating to the Medical Examiner service. The Bereavement &amp; Registration Services Manager responded to this on behalf of Sunderland City Council on 15 June 2016 (response available if required). The outcome of the consultation is expected November 2016.</p> <p>A North East regional group of Local Authority managers with responsibility for Coroner Services has been established with terms to meet quarterly in order to discuss the pending Medical Examiner service. The first meeting took place 23.9.16 with the next meeting scheduled for 12.1.17. This is chaired by the Bereavement &amp; Registration Services Manager from</p> |
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|          |  |            |               |            | Sunderland City Council.<br>The objective of the group is to explore the optimum way to configure the Medical Examiner service, and where possible, share best practice. The earliest date for implementation of the new service is April 2018. |
| <b>F</b> | That when implementation is confirmed, the financial implications of introducing the Medical Examiner be examined in more detail including the options for the funding of the service. | See above. | Karen Lounton | March 2016 | <p>Pending outcome of consultation.</p> <p>The situation will continue to be monitored and plans are in place for implementation should they be required.</p> <p>New burden funding may be provided by the Department of Health.</p>            |
| <b>G</b> | That consideration of future funding options takes into account the sensitive nature of the service and potential issues of affordability.   | See above. | Karen Lounton | March 2016 | <p>Pending outcome of consultation.</p> <p>The situation will continue to be monitored and plans are in place for implementation should they be required.</p>   |