



**3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 Cabinet**

## **The Future of Bristol's Cemetery and Crematorium provision**

### **Appendix A - Further essential background / detail on the proposal**

#### **Contents**

1. Background	1
1.1 Service Review	2
2. South Bristol	2
2.1 Potential expansion land	2
2.2 South Bristol Cemetery Landscape Design	3
2.3 Office improvements and commercial opportunities	3
3. Project Cost	3
4. Programme	4

#### **Additional documents:**

Appendix A – Part 2 - Supporting Plan

### **1. Background**

The Council's Cemetery and Crematoria provision offers an important service for Bristol, producing a net income of £2m per year (part of the parks income plan). The service provided and income generated is at risk due to little recent investment in the service, with it reaching a critical point:

- Of the eight burial sites owned by the Council, only four are operational and capacity for new burials is very limited, South Bristol Cemetery being the main site for new burials.
- The cremators at Canford Crematorium are over 30 years old and have now exceeded their economic life. Their age and condition creates an increased risk of critical failure, in part due to a more limited supply of replacement parts. The existing cremators do not abate any mercury emissions, so the Council presently offsets the regulatory minimum 50% mercury abatement requirement through 'burden sharing' with South Bristol Crematorium where 100% abatement is achieved. Installation of new Cremators would allow the Council to achieve 100% mercury abatement across both sites, in line with OSPAR Convention targets, which the UK is a signatory of. In addition new Cremators would allow the option to be

explored of moving towards a carbon neutral provision through use of electric (rather than gas) cremators, with the energy supplied via green electricity sources.

- If the Council does not improve the quality of services, including the range of bereavement products and hospitality options offered, it is likely that Bristol citizens will increasingly opt to use alternative provision outside Bristol.

## **1.1 Service Review**

The Cemetery and Crematoria Service commissioned sector specialist consultants to undertake a Service Review, which considered the requirements for future burial space and cremation provision in Bristol. The report identified the potential for South Bristol Cemetery to be expanded to provide additional provision for the South of the City, with an estimated cost of £1.4m. For the North of the city, expansion is more complex, due to the constraints of the existing sites, in particular being land-locked by surrounding uses, more detailed feasibility work to explore options is required in order to identify a preferred solution.

## **2. South Bristol**

### **2.1 Potential expansion land**

The council owns the adjacent land to South Bristol Cemetery. The area is currently leased for agricultural purposes and negotiations will take place with the objective of agreeing a release of the area needed for the expansion, rather than a full termination of the lease. After initial studies plots 1, 3 and 4 (shown in Appendix A – Part 2) were selected as the most suitable for the proposed expansion.

#### **Options of adjacent sites required for expanding burial plots**

- Plot 1 – 1.48 ha (3.66 acre) (estimate provision for 22 years)\*
- Plot 3 – 1.81 ha. (4.47 acre) (estimate provision for 27 years)\*
- Plot 4 – 1.45 ha. (3.58 acre) (estimate provision for 21 years)\*

\* estimate assuming an average of 800 graves per acre and the rate of burials as 227 per year (based on 2016/17 figures) where 30% would be single depth plots.

Hydrological studies are taking place to monitor the suitability of the plots for burial and a report will be produced and submitted to the Environmental Agency in order to acquire the necessary permissions for progress with the development.

Plots 3 and 4 are within Colliter's Brook, designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and the Council's internal ecological team identified the potential for lesser horseshoe bats in the area. Ecology Consultants are currently undertaking studies on the

sites and will work close with the landscape designers to identify measures which can minimise impacts and provide net gains for biodiversity.

The sites under consideration are in the Green Belt. The provision of facilities for cemeteries are an acceptable use in principle in Green Belt areas provided the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it (National Planning Policy Framework para 145).

The draft Local Plan (March 2019) is proposing to remove the land in this location from the Green Belt and re-designate most of it as 'Local Green Space'. If this approach is maintained in future versions of this emerging plan a similar approach to cemeteries would be applied in Local Green Space. Area 1 adjacent to Bridgwater Road is proposed to be removed from the Green Belt and given no specific policy designation. Cemetery use would be acceptable in principle there also.

## **2.2 South Bristol Cemetery Landscape Design**

Cemetery Development Services have been appointed as landscape architects for the cemetery expansion. The brief is to look at both, the total site available for the expansion and the current site, and find a holistic solution to improve the current and future provision as a whole.

## **2.3 Office improvements and commercial opportunities**

Architects have been appointed and are currently looking into three different refurbishment options (low, medium and high costs) for office/reception aiming to improve the customer and staff experience.

Commercialisation option such as Memorialisation products and a café provision are also being explored and will be added to the business case.

## **3. Project Cost**

Overviews of estimated project costs are detailed below:

### **A. South Bristol Cemetery**

#### **Project Development Costs - £300k**

- The Council's Direct Management and other costs
- Legal/Land Agreements
- Statutory Fees
- Professional Fees
- Surveys and Studies

#### **Construction Costs and Project Contingency - £1,100,000**

### **B. North Bristol Cemetery - £300k**

#### **Feasibility work, to include:**

- The Council's Direct Management and other costs
- Designers – Architects, Landscape Architects and Engineers for Concept / Feasibility proposals for options;
- Consultant input for surveys, technical studies, planning and production of cost plan.

#### 4. Programme

The below table outlines estimated milestones for the project, the dates are subject to design development and the outcomes of surveys, lease negotiations and applications for consents.

<b>South Bristol Cemetery</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Groundwater monitoring, ecological and other surveys, agricultural lease negotiations	January 2020 – Summer 2020
Outline Design development	January 2020 – Spring 2020
Consultation, Full Business Case, Design Development of preferred options	Spring – Summer 2020
Applications for Statutory Approvals	Summer 2020 – Autumn 2020
Detailed design and tender document production	Summer 2020 – Autumn 2020
Construction	Winter 2020 – Summer 2021
Commencement of operations of new provision	Summer 2021

<b>North Bristol Feasibility Work</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Appointment of consultant team	Spring 2020
Options Assessment	Spring 2020 - Summer 2020
Feasibility and concept design development	Summer 2020 – Autumn 2020
Report back to Cabinet	Autumn/Winter 2020