

BURIAL AND CREMATION PROTOCOLS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council is responsible for 1 crematorium and 131 cemeteries of which some 68 are available for new lairs to be opened. There have been a number of historic procedures and 'rules' in place to enable the smooth operation and running of the crematorium and cemeteries. This report and its appendices collate and updates the procedures and rules to provide clarity on service provision in one suite of documents.
- 1.2 Although earth burial has been practiced for many hundreds of years, the development of cemetery layout as known today in the UK took place after the Burial Act (Scotland) 1855. The maintenance and operation became the responsible of the local authority where many churchyards and other burial grounds were transferred to them by virtue of The Church of Scotland (Property and Endowment) Act 1925. It is recommended that Members:
- approve the Management rules for Burial Grounds Appendix 1.
 - approve protocol for provision of cemetery and cremation services Appendix 2 .

BURIAL AND CREMATION PROTOCOL

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Purpose of this report is to present the management rules for burial grounds and the protocol for provision of cemetery and cremation services.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members:
- approve changes to the Management rules for Burial Grounds Appendix 1
 - approve protocol for provision of cemetery and cremation services Appendix 2

4.0 DETAILS

- 4.1 Delivery of all elements of crematorium and cemetery services requires a clear protocol along with management rules. In the current climate of reduced resources it is essential to provide clarity of service level provision for customers, elected members and officers of the council.
- 4.2 A protocol has been produced which defines rationale for each element of the bereavement service portfolio. The document sets out service provision taking account of customer expectations and how these will be delivered within budget constraints.
- 4.3 Management rules provide a framework for the operation of cemeteries the crematorium and cremation services under the Local government Scotland Act 1973.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Operation procedure documents and management rules provide clarity on levels of service delivery and clearly inform processes for customers, elected members and officers of the council.
- 5.2 Clarity of service delivery allows for consistency, ease of performance monitoring against defined targets, budget preparation and future planning. Biennial review of documents will be undertaken where appropriate.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

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| 6.1 | Policy | Provides an opportunity for the burial and cremation authority i.e. Argyll and Bute Council to define clear guidance on issues particularly where no legislation is currently in place |
| 6.2 | Financial | Budget planning for service delivery is managed more effectively with clear rules and protocols |
| 6.3 | Legal | None known |
| 6.4 | HR | Officers and elected members have clear guidance on service delivery. |
| 6.5 | Equalities | Protocol allows for definition of religious and secular disposal of the dead. |
| 6.6 | Risk | Modern thinking allows for a less traditional approach to disposal of the dead, creating a range of policies encouraging alternatives to a traditional approach to burial or cremation. |
| 6.7 | Customer Services | There has not been public consultation on the contents of this paper. |

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Management Rules for Burial Grounds

Appendix 2 – Protocol for provision for Cemetery and Cremation services