

**TITLE OF REPORT: ITEM REFERRED FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
20 SEPTEMBER 2016 – PROPOSED CREMATORIUM AT WILBURY HILLS CEMETERY,
LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY – INTERIM REPORT ON BUSINESS CASE**

The following is an extract from the Draft Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 20 September 2016.

58. PROPOSED CREMATORIUM AT WILBURY HILLS CEMETERY – INTERIM REPORT ON BUSINESS CASE

This item was considered after the Part 2 item (Minutes 60 refers).

The Service Manager – Grounds Maintenance presented the report of the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services entitled Proposed Crematorium at Wilbury Hills Cemetery – Interim Report on Business Case.

In response to a question, he advised that the Council currently operated 7 cemeteries across the District, however 3 of those were reaching capacity. There were also a number of churchyards which continue to hold burials. Cabinet resolved that Wilbury Hills would, as capacity was reached in each cemetery, become the District wide facility for burials.

The Strategic Director of Finance, Policy and Governance advised that this was the first time the Council had worked with partners in the burial service, but they had worked with partners in other service areas.

The Council had a policy of considering all options when looking at the provision of a service and when doing that would consider risks and benefits. In this case the proposal was based on the needs of residents and that people currently had to travel some distance if they wished to have a cremation rather than a burial. It was then considered that the Council could generate an income and create a win - win situation.

Members asked whether other Authorities had worked with the private sector to provide this type of service.

The Service Manager – Grounds Maintenance advised that there was a wide range of business models including the wholly privately operated facility, those working in partnership to fully Council operated facilities.

Members debated whether the recommendations needed to be amended to make clear that one option available would be not to go ahead with the project.

The Service Manager – Grounds Maintenance informed Members that this was implicit in the recommendations as the Council had a duty to get best value. He advised that negotiations and discussions would be held before a further report with a recommendation to go ahead, or not was presented.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That the recommendations in the report entitled Proposed Crematorium at Wilbury Hills Cemetery – Interim Report on Business Case be supported.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comment on the report entitled Proposed Crematorium at Wilbury Hills Cemetery – Interim Report on Business Case prior to consideration by Cabinet.

[NOTE: The report to which this referral relates is Item 15 on this agenda.]

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