

NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY SERVICES POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

MEETING, 16TH JULY, 2012

Present – Councillors R. Silvester (Chairman), Ayub, D. Burrows, A. Connell, S. Harkin (as deputy for Councillor Zaman), Haslam, Hayes, Pickup and A. Walsh (as deputy for Councillor Mrs Fairclough)

Also in Attendance

Mr. M. Cox	-	Director of Environmental Services
Mr. K. Roberts	-	Head of Service, Community Services
Ms. J. Casey	-	Business and Management Support Officer
Mr. P. Lamb	-	Senior Project Officer
Mrs S Bailey	-	Principal Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Fairclough and Zaman (Vice-Chairman).

1. BOLTON MARKET REFURBISHMENT PROPOSALS

Further to Minute 29 of the meeting of the Environmental Services PDG held on 26th March, 2012, Ms. J Casey gave a presentation which updated members on the latest developments regarding the refurbishment proposals for Bolton Market.

The presentation outlined the proposed timescale for the refurbishment works, provided details of the ongoing arrangements to create a temporary market hall in which existing traders and stalls would be transferred to whilst the works were carried out, and described the associated procurement process and planned stakeholder consultation which would take place following formal approval by the Cabinet in July.

Once the consultation process was complete, it was anticipated that the formal planning application would be submitted to the Council for approval in September, 2013. If agreed, it was expected that the enabling works would commence in February, 2013 with the actual on site works beginning in March, 2013. It was hoped that the refurbished hall would be complete by October, 2013 with all works being completed by the end of 2014.

Following the presentation, members discussed the issues and made the following comments/suggestions, as follows:

- refurbishment works would need to cease over the festive period to allow stallholders to trade during a profitable time;

- it was expected that all existing traders who met the criteria would be offered new stalls within the refurbished market; and
- it would be important to keep the public fully informed of the proposals and progress of the refurbishment works.

It was also noted that the proposed design of the outside market that was being developed would not lend itself to lock up units or use as an events space in the future, as previously reported.

It was agreed that further updates on the refurbishment of Bolton Market be submitted to this Group in due course.

2. BEREAVEMENT SERVICES – CEMETERY RULES AND REGULATIONS

Further to Minute 30 of the meeting of the Environmental Services PDG held on 1st December, 2009, the Director of Environmental Services submitted a report which sought approval to incorporate various operational changes into the existing cemetery rules and regulations as part of the overarching Bereavement Services Strategy.

The report reminded members that in 2009, the Environmental Services PDG had discussed and agreed a number of operational changes in relation to the memorialisation of graves, cemetery opening/closing times and dogs/dog fouling. A summary of their previous comments and agreements was provided in the report.

In this regard, the report went on to update members on the latest developments in relation to each of these operational areas and sought their approval for the following changes to the cemetery rules and regulations:

Memorialisation of Graves – that in existing cemeteries with active usage, the current practice of allowing buildouts should be retained. However, in new cemetery extensions, the traditional written rules should be enforced and that consultation should continue with faith groups to agree grave plot layouts on the new site which conform to the traditional written rules in order to make future maintenance of the site simpler.

In addition, it was proposed that the rules and regulations be amended to reflect the outcome of the consultation and to ensure uniformity of approach across the new site.

Opening Times – proposal to introduce earlier summer and winter closing times:

Opening times – all year round - 9.00am.

Closing times – April to September – 8.00pm.

October to March – 4.00pm.

The changes to opening times would allow for some savings on opening and closing cemetery and crematorium gates.

Dogs and Dog Fouling – signs had been erected across all cemetery sites warning dog owners that dogs should be kept on a lead at all times and that dog fouling would be a prosecutable offence. They would also be placed in the new Heaton Cemetery extension. It was proposed that the cemetery rules and regulations be amended to reflect this, on the basis now detailed.

Following consideration of the report, members discussed the proposals and were in agreement with them. Although concerns were initially expressed in relation to the earlier closing times, it was noted that pedestrian access would still be available into the cemeteries and crematorium.

It was noted that the new rules and regulations would be applied to the new Heaton Cemetery Extension when it came into use in August/September, 2012.

It was agreed that the proposals relating to memorialisation of graves, cemetery opening and closing times and dogs and dog fouling be supported, on the basis detailed in the report now submitted.

3. BEREAVEMENT SERVICES: REVIEW OF LOCKING AND UNLOCKING ARRANGEMENTS IN THE CEMETERIES AND CREMATORIUM

The Director of Environmental Services submitted a report which put forward proposals to reduce Bereavement Services expenditure in 2013/14 by reviewing the locking and unlocking arrangements in the Borough's cemeteries and crematorium.

The report outlined the current arrangements in place for locking and unlocking the cemeteries and crematorium together with details of the associated costs. It was proposed to reduce this expenditure in 2013/14 by the introduction of earlier winter and summer closing times across the cemeteries and by using cemetery staff to open/close cemeteries on weekdays.

Full details of the proposed changes and how these could be operated were provided in the report together with a summary of potential savings.

It was agreed that the Executive Cabinet Member be recommended to approve the report as the basis for consultation with staff and trades unions.

(The meeting started at 5.00pm and finished at 5.40pm)

