

CEMETERIES MEMORIAL SAFETY PROGRAMME 2011-15

Submitted by: Head of Operations – Roger Tait

Portfolio: Culture and Leisure

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To inform Cabinet of the revised British Standard in relation to Memorial Testing and to seek authority to amend the Council's policy to bring it in line with the British Standard.

Recommendation

That the Council's policy in relation to Memorial Testing is amended to align with the revised British Standard.

Reasons

The Council has a legal and statutory duty to ensure the safety of visitors, contractors and staff within its cemeteries.

1. Background

1.1 Cabinet considered a report on the Cemeteries Memorial Safety Programme 2011-15 at the meeting of 20 July 2011.

It was resolved:

(a) That Cabinet review the completed Cemeteries Memorial Inspection and Safety Programme and consider a follow-on rolling programme to re-inspect all memorials over a five year period.

(b) That the underspend from the 2005-10 programme be rolled forward to meet the costs of the new 5 year programme and that provision of £10,000 be made in the General Fund Capital Programme for Year 5 (2015/16).

(c) That long-term provision be made in the General Fund Revenue Programme to meet the cost of the inspection and safety programme from 2016/17 onwards.

1.2 Since this date, the new 5 year programme has commenced and inspection and testing has been completed at Attwood Street Cemetery in Kidsgrove. Inspection and testing is also in progress at Newcastle Cemetery.

2. Issues

2.1 In April 2012, the British Standards Institute issued a revised edition of BS8415:2005 - Monuments within Burial Grounds and Memorial Sites – Specification.

2.2 The Standard covers a range of issues relating to design, materials, construction, performance, safety and inspection of monuments within cemeteries.

- 2.3 The main point which concerns the management of the Council's cemeteries and the Council's policy on memorial testing, relates to the test pressure to be applied to existing memorials.

Previously, the recommended test pressure when using a force measuring device was up to a pressure of 35kg.

The amended standard is recommending a reduction to a pressure of 25kg and advising those using a force measuring device to recalibrate it to 25kg.

- 2.4 The institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) is updating its policy, guidance and training to reflect the above reduction in test pressure.

- 2.5 In order to align the Council's current policy with the revised industry recommendations, it is necessary to reduce the current approved test pressure of 35kg to 25kg.

There are no other areas of the Council's Policy which require review or amendment as a result of the revised British Standard at present.

- 2.6 The 2011-15 Cemeteries Memorial Safety Programme is currently in progress and memorials are being tested to a pressure of 35kg at present.

This will continue until formal approval for the reduced test pressure is granted, at which point the force measuring device will be recalibrated to 25kg and the remainder of the programme will be implemented using the revised test pressure.

3. **Options Considered**

- 3.1 The preferred option is to amend the Council's current policy to align with the revised British Standard recommendations.

4. **Proposal**

- 4.1 That the Council's policy in relation to Memorial Testing is amended to align with the revised British Standard.

5. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 5.1 The Council has a legal and statutory duty to ensure the safety of visitors, contractors and staff within its cemeteries.

6. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

- 6.1 Creating a cleaner, safer and sustainable Borough.

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 7.1 There are legal and statutory duties incumbent on the Council to ensure the safety of visitors, contractors and staff within its cemeteries.

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

8.1 No differential equality impact has been identified within this report.

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

9.1 There are no new financial resource implications arising from this report.

10. **Major Risks**

10.1 The major risks have been identified and considered in the previous report.

10.2 If the Council does not align its policy with the revised British Standard, there is the risk that it could be challenged by stakeholders for adopting a test process which is in excess of industry guidelines and which may disadvantage memorial owners and masons.

11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 This decision has an impact on the Council's policy and impacts on all wards. It has been included in the Forward Plan.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1	Resolution No.	Cabinet	20 July 2011
12.2	Resolution No.	Cabinet	May 2006
12.3	Resolution No. 1013/06	Cabinet	22 March 2006
12.4	Resolution No.	Cabinet	30 November 2005
12.5	Resolution No.	Cabinet	3 August 2005
12.6	Resolution No. 196/05	Cabinet	21 July 2004
12.7	Resolution No. 718/04	Cabinet	17 December 2003
12.8	Resolution No. 114/04	Cabinet	25 May 2003
12.9	Resolution No. 358/03	Cabinet	7 August 2003
12.10	Resolution No. 848/02	Cabinet	16 January 2003

14. **Management Sign-Off**

Each of the designated boxes need to be signed off and dated before going to Executive Director/Corporate Service Manager for sign off.

	Signed	Dated
Financial Implications Discussed and Agreed		
Risk Implications		

Discussed and Agreed		
Legal Implications Discussed and Agreed		
H.R. Implications Discussed and Agreed		
ICT Implications Discussed and Agreed		
Report Agreed by: Executive Director/ Head of Service		