

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting: CABINET

Date and Time: WEDNESDAY, 5 APRIL 2017, AT 10.00 AM*

Place: COUNCIL CHAMBER, APPLETREE COURT,
LYNDHURST

Telephone enquiries to: Lyndhurst (023) 8028 5000
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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

*Members of the public may speak in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme:

- (a) immediately before the meeting starts, on items within the Cabinet's terms of reference which are not on the public agenda; and/or
 - (b) on individual items on the public agenda, when the Chairman calls that item.
- Speeches may not exceed three minutes. Anyone wishing to speak should contact the name and number shown above.

Bob Jackson
Chief Executive

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This Agenda is also available on audio tape, in Braille, large print and digital format

AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 1 February and 20 February 2017 as correct records.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by members in connection with an agenda item. The nature of the interest must also be specified.

Members are asked to discuss any possible interests with Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To note any issues raised during the public participation period.

4. SAFER NEW FOREST PARTNERSHIP PLAN - 2017-18 (Pages 1 - 12)

To recommend to the Council that the Partnership's Action Plan for 2017-18 is approved.

5. CEMETERIES REGULATIONS REVIEW (Pages 13 - 64)

To consider revised Regulations and a Registration Scheme for Stonemasons and Funeral Directors working in the Council's Cemeteries.

6. ELING TIDE MILL AND LEARNING CENTRE (Pages 65 - 68)

To be advised of the outcome of the tender process for works and to consider making an additional budget allocation as this Council's contribution towards increased costs.

7. WRITE OFF POLICY (Pages 69 - 74)

To review and update the Council's policies for writing off debt.

8. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT - 2016/17 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN (Pages 75 - 80)

To be advised of the provision outturn figures on the 2016/17 budget.

To:

Councillors

Mrs S V Beeton
J E Binns
Mrs J L Cleary

Councillors

E J Heron (Vice-Chairman)
J D Heron
B Rickman (Chairman)

SAFER NEW FOREST PARTNERSHIP PLAN – 2017/18

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires that certain prescribed agencies in each district must form a statutory community safety partnership - 'the partnership'. This Council is one of these agencies. The remit of the partnership is to provide strategic direction on the statutory responsibilities of the relevant partner agencies in the area of Community Safety.

1.2 The prescribed agencies are:

- The District Council
- The County Council
- The Police
- The Probation Service (represented locally by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Rehabilitation Company)
- The Fire and Rescue Service
- The Clinical Commissioning Group

The New Forest Community Safety Partnership is known as 'Safer New Forest'. In addition to the above agencies, meetings are also attended by representatives of Children's Services, Community First, the Forestry Commission, the New Forest National Park Authority and the Youth Offending Team.

1.3 Primarily the partnership is required to prepare an annual Strategic Assessment of prescribed information (relating to crime and disorder) and to prepare an annual Partnership Plan based on the evidence obtained from the strategic assessment to support the reduction of reoffending, crime and disorder and combating substance misuse in the area.

2. ACTION PLAN

2.1 The Safer New Forest Partnership Plan 2017/18 (**Appendix 1**) contains the six priorities that the partnership has identified for the forthcoming year. These are as follows:

1. Tackle the cause and effects of anti-social behaviour
2. Tackle the casual effects of offending behaviour, with a focus on violent crime
3. Continue to support the partnership and community in preventing arson related incidents
4. Support victims of domestic abuse
5. Promote road safety with an emphasis on killed and seriously injured (KSI)
6. Reduce rural crime

2.2 The Partnership Plan sets out a detailed action plan to support the identified priorities, as well as demonstrating how the partnership will meet its obligations to engage with the community.

- 2.3 The Council is the lead partner, with support from the police and the domestic abuse forum, for the actions related to the priorities of reducing anti-social behaviour and reducing domestic abuse.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 For the financial year 2017/18 provision has been made for the Council to contribute the sum of £11,240 to support the actions of the partnership and delivery of the Partnership Plan.

4. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The delivery of the Partnership Plan will hopefully result in the reduction of reoffending, crime and disorder and substance misuse in the District.

5. PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS

- 5.1 I am supportive of this year's Partnership Plan and hope the delivery of the action plan will improve the lives of those affected by crime and disorder in the District.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 That it be a recommendation to the Council that the Safer New Forest Partnership Plan 2017/2018 be approved.

For Further Information Please Contact:

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and Member Support
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Background Papers:

Safer New Forest Strategic Assessment
2016

Safer New Forest Partnership Plan 2017/2018 – Action Plan

	Priority area	Lead Partner and Contact	Action		Measurement of Action	Resource Allocation Lead Partners to Allocate
1	Tackle the cause and effects of anti-social behaviour	New Forest District Council in partnership with Hampshire Constabulary Brian Byrne, Partnership Intervention Manager & Chief Inspector Rob Mitchell	1.1	Joint work with Policing partners, Youth Offending Team and Probation in identifying perpetrators of ASB. This will be achieved through clinics across the forest identifying perpetrators and utilising current processes to engage individuals. 1-2-1 work with perpetrators of ASB to identify the causal effects of negative behaviour and implement prevention plans to deter further behaviour.	Through positive engagement with support services and reduction in overall number of reported ASB incidents. Measurable reduction or cessation in negative behaviour resulting in victim satisfaction and increased confidence. This will be quantified through the measurement of reported cases and incidents of ASB.	NFDC Community Safety Team to oversee and support with Supporting Families Programme and its partners through positive divertive actions or punitive measurements where appropriate. Partnership Interventions Panel to formulate action plans and implement risk assessment when dealing with perpetrators of ASB with a focus on victim impact. Utilise the Restorative Justice Programme as a means of deterring perpetrators of ASB and providing reparation work to make good any harm.

	Priority area	Lead Partner and Contact	Action	Measurement of Action	Resource Allocation Lead Partners to Allocate
			<p>1.2 Plan seasonal events with partners to ensure appropriate resources and pre planning are in place for major events.</p> <p>Safety Advisory Group and Licensing Team to notify the NFDC Community Safety Team of known events that may have an impact on the community. This will provide a more holistic approach to the prevention and effects of ASB and impact on the communities.</p>	Seek to minimise the effects of negative behaviour towards communities and victims of ASB.	NFDC Community Safety Team and Hampshire Police with core partners to devise plan and direct resources where required to known seasonal events such as Halloween, Mid-Term educational breaks and major sporting events.
			1.3 ASB awareness programmes with educational establishments and youth facilities on the effects of ASB both on perpetrators and victims.	Seek an overall recorded number of reported ASB and 1 st time entrants into the criminal justice system by perpetrators.	Joint working with Schools, Youth Centres, Youth Offending Team and the Children and Young Persons Alliance. Utilising the Safe4me Schools educational package for delivery.
2	Tackle the causal effects of offending behaviour and reoffending with a focus on violent crime	Hampshire Constabulary in partnership with Interchange/ CRC Chief Inspector Rob Mitchell &	2.1 Develop a working strategy with local Mental Health care services around reducing violence towards staff and other patients within residential mental health units in the New Forest.	Seek to minimise the harm to others from assaults with and without injury in mental health units. One measure would be to see a reduction of reports compared to the previous 12 months.	Continue with ongoing partnership work with Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust. Continued partnership work with The Bluebird Unit involving information sharing and accurate recording of risks. Implement and review action plans and threat assessments

	Priority area	Lead Partner and Contact	Action	Measurement of Action	Resource Allocation Lead Partners to Allocate
		Dean Hatton, Interchange Manager			with partners.
			2.2 Continue to seek to reduce domestic abuse through partnership work. (This has been carried over from the 2016/17 Action Plan)	Reduction in number of DV assaults as proportion to overall assaults. DV perpetrators subject to court orders/licences given the appropriate level of intervention and/or treatment	Partnership work with stakeholders to identify those at risk. Identify perpetrators through partnership information and manage the risk posed. Prevention work through use of Domestic Violence Prevention Notices and formal police outcomes. Intervention with perpetrators whilst in police custody (Op Cara) when in custody. Neighbourhood Officers to work closely with partnership processes (MARAC/MASH) where local knowledge will allow engagement and problem solving.

	Priority area	Lead Partner and Contact	Action	Measurement of Action	Resource Allocation Lead Partners to Allocate	
			2.3	Improved engagement within schools to address Youth on Youth violence issues.	Reduction in levels of youth on youth related violence compared to previous 12 months	Support the delivery of Safe4Me schools programme by partners, joint work with schools across District including supporting education around knife and weapon use.
			2.4	Ensure that offenders subject to Court Orders and Licences are given access to the appropriate rehabilitative activities and that, where necessary, correct enforcement action is taken	Reduction in offending and harm	<p>Wider work with Supporting Families group and domestic abuse priority to address wider DV issues in the District which can form violence issues for young people.</p> <p>CRC offenders to complete Orders successfully in 75% of cases.</p> <p>Reach action to be taken within 8 days of the unacceptable absence.</p> <p>CRC Manager to liaise with local police to share information and agree to joint actions to reduce risks of further offending.</p> <p>Use of assessments of offenders' needs to make appropriate local</p>

	Priority area	Lead Partner and Contact	Action	Measurement of Action	Resource Allocation Lead Partners to Allocate
					<p>referrals.</p> <p>Evidence of delivery to accredited programmes such as Building Better Relationships and Thinking Skills Programme.</p> <p>Close working relationships with the local drug treatment agency.</p>
3	Continue to support the partnership and community in preventing arson related incidents	<p>Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service</p> <p>Dan Tasker Group Manager Response</p>	<p>3.1 Continue to lead the New Forest Arson Reduction Forum towards proactively identifying and positively addressing all potential/ongoing problems associated with deliberate fire-setting activity</p> <p>3.2 Reintroduce and drive a multi-agency approach to arson prevention through increased use of the Environmental Visual Audit (EVA) process, mobile CCTV and Exchange of Information (EOI)</p>	<p>Reduction in number of arson-related incidents across the New Forest</p> <p>Increased numbers of completed EVA and EOI. Increased use of mobile CCTV units to identify repeat offenders</p>	<p>All of this essential work will be centrally driven through the continued vision of the Strategic Partnership; albeit actively co-ordinated and locally delivered through the excellent work of the multi-agency “Arson Reduction Forum”, chaired by HFRS. Information exchange and “Task Force” delivery will be greatly supported and better facilitated by the co-location of the two Police/Fire Stations in the East and West of the New Forest.</p>

	Priority area	Lead Partner and Contact	Action	Measurement of Action	Resource Allocation Lead Partners to Allocate	
			3.3	Introduce a more multi-agency “Task Force” based approach in tackling high-risk problematic issues both quickly and effectively (e.g. fly-tipping)	Reduction in arson-related incidents. Increased level of detection/conviction for repeat offenders	Wider, more effective use of SafetyNet will also support this information sharing.
4	Support victims of domestic abuse	New Forest District Council (in consultation with the Domestic Abuse Forum as necessary)	4.1	Continue to develop a positive awareness campaign for You First, the commissioned service for victims of Domestic Abuse. Alternating advertising campaign, both digital and print for improved awareness.	Increase in access to support services.	NFDC Community Safety Team, with NFDC funds.
		Brian Byrne, Partnership Intervention Manager	4.2	Upskill Council Housing staff on the use of screening tools for identifying victims of Domestic Abuse and sign posting them to support services.	Earlier identification and reduction in missed opportunities for supporting victims of Domestic Abuse. Increased confidence in alerting services to adults and children at risk of Domestic Abuse.	NFDC Community Safety Team with You First.
			4.3	Identify areas of need, emerging issues and training through the Domestic Abuse Forum and assist in implementing positive action where available.	Greater service access to both professionals and victims of Domestic Abuse.	NFDC Community Safety Team though permanent participation at the Domestic Abuse forum.

	Priority area	Lead Partner and Contact	Action	Measurement of Action	Resource Allocation Lead Partners to Allocate
			4.4 Enabling victims of Domestic Abuse and families to access the Supporting Families Programme for positive interventions and safe planning for the future. This will provide greater opportunities for support of children witnessing the effects of Domestic Abuse.	Increase in cohort size for families with recorded Domestic Abuse.	Supporting Families Programme, both local and intensive services. Access to the Supporting Families budget and the strategic community safety grant
5	Promote road safety with an emphasis on Killed & Serious Injury (KSI)	Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service in partnership with Hampshire Constabulary Dan Tasker, Group Manager Response, HFRS & Ch Insp Rob Mitchell, Hampshire Constabulary	5.1 Excess speed is a contributory factor to serious injury incidents on our roads. Enforcement and education to tackle poor driver behaviour	The number of Police-led Partnership initiatives to tackle traffic speeding issues with a mixture of enforcement and awareness raising for drivers.	Hampshire Constabulary Roads Policing Team to support volunteers with Community Speedwatch training. Speed enforcement initiatives with use of visible camera van at identified hotspots. Liaison between Roads Policing Team and Neighbourhood Team to identify appropriate locations. Road safety education can be provided through Roads Policing Force-wide initiatives by liaison with Neighbourhood Policing Teams and Hampshire Fire & Rescue.

	Priority area	Lead Partner and Contact	Action	Measurement of Action	Resource Allocation Lead Partners to Allocate
			5.2 Continue to support Hampshire Constabulary and the Community Safety Partnership in order to deliver a range of educational programmes and prevention activities	Reduction in the numbers of KSI figures across the New Forest	Strong reliance on the data provided by Hampshire Constabulary in order to effectively baseline, monitor and report on annual progress
			5.3 Work to reduce animal injury and death on New Forest roads by enforcement and education to tackle poor driver behaviour, particularly in relating to excess speeds.	The number of Police-led partnership initiatives to tackle traffic speeding issues with a mixture of enforcement and awareness raiding for drivers	Local Neighbourhood & Prevention Teams to support volunteers with Community Speed Watch initiatives with use of visible camera van at identified hotspots to reduce animal injury and death
6.	Reducing rural crime	Hampshire Constabulary Rob Mitchell, District Commander	6.1 Continue reduction in rural theft from motor vehicles in beauty spot car parks 6.2 Deliver a monthly themed operation to tackle seasonal rural crime – Operation FALCON	Reduction in beauty spot TFMV compared to previous 12 months. Data and feedback from individual operations	Allocation of resource from Police, also requiring assistance from NFDC and Forestry Commission in relation to wider awareness and crime prevention messages. Visible policing operations such as Operation KOEMAN to provide reassurance and prevention advice. Operation BOTHERSOME which utilises collaborative policing with stakeholders within the community.

	Priority area	Lead Partner and Contact	Action	Measurement of Action	Resource Allocation Lead Partners to Allocate
					Wider media strategy to deliver reassurance to rural communities through all areas of partnership including most agencies working within the New Forest.

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CEMETERIES REGULATIONS REVIEW

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report proposes the revision of the existing Cemeteries Regulations and Registration Scheme.
- 1.2 The Regulations were last comprehensively reviewed 2010. These Regulations govern the seven open New Forest District Council Cemeteries and cover all aspects of cemetery management.
- 1.3 The opportunity has been taken to review the Funeral Directors and Memorial Masons Registration Scheme. This is the first revision since its establishment in 2006. This review reinforces and aligns the requirements of the registration scheme to be consonant with the proposed new Regulations.
- 1.3 The Regulations and Registration Scheme has been drafted in partnership with the Cemeteries Task and Finish Group. The proposed documents were considered by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel at their meeting on 9 March 2017.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Cemeteries Regulations all cemeteries and have some bespoke rules for individual sites.
- 2.2 This review aims to harmonise individual requirements into one document, to aid the bereaved family, Funeral Directors and Stonemasons, especially when selecting an appropriate grave or memorial. This assists with this Council's administration and management, closes loop-holes, and manages expectations, while working within the resources available.
- 2.4 The Registration Scheme sets out the required common working practices by contractors (Funeral Directors and Stonemasons) working in New Forest District Council Cemeteries. These contractors are engaged by the holders of Exclusive Rights of Burial, or family, however there is a need to ensure they work in a safe and respectful manner in these public open spaces. In common with many authorities, New Forest District Council stipulates that any Funeral Directors or Memorial Masons wishing to work in our cemeteries is registered. Registration includes the submission of a copy of their insurance; proof of industry qualifications; sets our minimum standards; and the discipline procedure in cases of poor or unsafe practice.
- 2.4 Recommendations from industry bodies (such as the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM)) have been incorporated. This revision brings New Forest District Council on a similar approach to other authorities.

3. PROPOSALS WITHIN NEW REGULATIONS & REGISTRATION SCHEME

3.1 The following changes have been incorporated:

Cemetery Regulations:

- Revision of format and language to make them more readable and engaging
- Adjustment to the definition of child to include “Under 18s”. Previously teenagers were charged at adult rate and a child was classed as under 12.
- Clarification on the definition of a “resident” (para 4.1);
- Creation of flowcharts (Appendix 1) to assist the reader.
- Revision of the administration for interment and the installation of memorials, including placing emphasis on the Funeral Director or Stonemason to provide a copy of New Forest District Council’s Regulations to their client.
- Clarification of when two plots are required (para 5.2.6)
- A small increase in cremated memorial permitted height (para 0.3.4) from 450mm to 550mm following industry practices and allowing standard designs to be used.
- Clarification on memorabilia, including glass items, to reduce safety hazards to visitors and this Council’s maintenance staff.
- The inclusion of Calshot (following receipt of planning approval for new cemetery)

Funeral Directors and Memorial Masons Registration Scheme:

- Emphasis on the member’s responsibility to advise and manage customer expectations within the Regulations – avoiding speculative applications or unrealistic expectations being formed and resulting in distress when these are declined.
- Emphasis that the member is responsible for ensuring that applications are accompanied by the necessary legal paperwork and their new insurance certificates, to assist administration.
- Inclusion of examples of behaviour which could lead to exclusion from the scheme, such as bringing New Forest District Council into disrepute.
- The revision of job titles, following previous organisation restructures.

3.2 This proposal brings no additional resource requirement to the establishment; and it is believed that any additional costs can be absorbed within current budgets.

3.3 The existing Cemeteries Administration team is fit for purpose, with additional responsibilities being incorporated into Job Descriptions, to be reviewed through the normal process. The team will report directly to the Open Spaces Officer.

3.4 These drafted documents have been sent out for consultation as follows:

- The Task and Finish Group have reviewed them
- Five industry consultees (the most common users) have been sent copies and their comments invited
- New Forest District Council’s Legal Service have been consulted

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The clarification of who should pay resident/non-resident fees has financial implications as residents receive a 50% discount on the listed New Forest District Council fees and charges.

5.1.1 Non-residents account for approximately 15% of interments carried out during 2015-6. Thirty nine non-resident interments within New Forest District Council's cemeteries, compared to 250 resident interments undertaken. Of the 15% non-residents the proposed changes will only affect approximately 10% this equates to £2,000 loss of fee income compared to if they had been non-residents

5.1.2 The 2017-8 review of fees and charges covers the shortfall outlined in paragraphs 5.1.1 and 5.1.2, and the Cemeteries budget is expected to break-even.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None

7. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The adoption of the new regulations will avoid age discrimination of teenagers (see paragraph 5.1.2).

9.0 ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL COMMENTS

9.1 The Panel welcomed the proposed revised Regulations, which were comprehensive and gave greater clarity about what was, and was not, permitted.

10.0 PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS

10.1 I would like to thank the task and finish group for all their hard work in revising the Cemetery Regulations. Members and Officers have done exceptionally well. It is very difficult to communicate Regulations to family members while they are grieving and I am confident the revisions that have been recommended to you in this report will assist in clarifying what the requirements are for using New Forest Cemeteries. I am especially pleased that we have acknowledged the national issue around charging for burials for 12 to 18 year olds and addressed those within these changes

11.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 11.1 That the Registration Scheme for Stonemasons and Funeral Directors and the revised Cemeteries Regulations, as attached as Appendices to this report, be approved.

For further information contact:

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Background Papers:

Attached

CEMETERY REGULATIONS

Draft – Version 007

April 2017

Revision date due 2022

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2 Definition of Terms

Application - A request made on the Council's prescribed form.

The Council - New Forest District Council.

Cemeteries - All cemeteries coming under the control of New Forest District Council and as identified at Section 5.1 below.

Cemeteries Service or Office - The Council department responsible administering and maintaining the Cemeteries for both burial and the interment of ashes.

Cemeteries Representative: Is any member of staff appointed by the Council Service Manager to carry out Cemeteries administration or supervision work on behalf of the Council.

Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB) - An agreement between the Council and the elected Holder(s) / Owner(s) of an interment plot giving them the Right to open the plot and install a memorial stone. The terms *Holder(s)* and *Owner(s)* relating to the Exclusive Right of Burial will be used interchangeably within these Regulations.

Owner(s) / Holder(s) of an Exclusive Right of Burial – All Owners / Holders are elected upon Purchase of the interment plot or during Transfer of Exclusive Rights. During the interment plot Ownership of Rights tenure, changes in Ownership are permissible through Assignment of Rights.

Exclusive Right of Burial Deed of Grant – The legal document which records the purchase of the Exclusive Right of Burial, lists the Deed of Grant unique number, the Holder(s) / Owner(s) and interment plot details.

Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial – The act of transferring the Exclusive Right of Burial for the remaining years on the Deed of Grant when the Holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial is deceased.

Assignment of Exclusive Right of Burial - The act of assigning the Exclusive Right of Burial for the remaining years on the Deed of Grant upon instruction from the Holder(s) / Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial. Assignment of Exclusive Right of Burial also applies to Transfers when clarifying proposed elected new Holder(s) / Owner(s).

Statutory Declaration – A Statutory Declaration is a written statement of fact that is signed in the presence of a Solicitor or a Commissioner for Oaths. The Council's Cemeteries Service uses Statutory Declarations with EROB Transfer cases and other instances requiring a prescribed declaration.

Interment – The act of burying within a burial or a cremated remains plot.

Family Organised Interment – A burial or cremated remains interment organised directly through the Cemeteries Office.

Interment plot – An interment plot is a space assigned for burial and / or cremated remains.

Burial Plot – A burial plot is assigned for burial and cremated remains. A burial plot is also known as a grave. Both terms will be used interchangeably within these Regulations.

Cremated Remains Plot – An interment plot assigned for cremated remains only.

Woodland Grave - An interment plot assigned for burial and / or cremated remains located within the Woodland Section of a cemetery.

Common Grave – A common grave is a burial plot which has not been purchased upon or after interment.

Statutory Inspection - Statutory Inspections involve the testing of memorials to assess their safety and risk level. . The inspection process is also known as topple testing. Mandatory inspections are periodically carried out by the Cemeteries Service, in line with the recommendations stated in *Article 16.1 of The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977*.

Memorial Masons and Funeral Directors Registration Scheme – Memorial Masons and Funeral Directors who are Registered with the Council permitting them to undertake works within the Cemeteries. A list of the Registered Memorial Masons and Funeral Directors are available on the Cemeteries Service website or can be requested from the Cemeteries Office.

Memorial Bench Donation – Individuals are able to donate a memorial bench to memorialise a loved one who has been interred within the chosen cemetery.

Memorial – A memorial is a permanent, fixed, typically inscribed, structure used to memorialise the person(s) interred. Memorials permitted may include memorial headstones, kerb-sets and integrated floral tributes. All memorial installations are subject to Application and approval.

Memorial Application - A request to install a memorial at one of the Cemeteries; made on one the Council's prescribed application form.

Memorabilia – Memorabilia are portable commemorative objects which are not fixed to the main interment plot's memorial. Memorabilia are not subject to Application; however, only authorised memorabilia are permitted (see 10.3).

Selection Fee – Selection Fee applies to all newly purchased graves and woodland cremated remains plots if the next in line plot is not the preferred choice and an alternative is purchased. A Selection Fee does not apply to specifically chosen cremated remains plots (see 8.2.2).

Dependent living needs – An individual who needs care and assistance is classified as having dependant living needs.

Independent living needs – An individual who is able to care for themselves is classified as having independent living needs.

BRAMM - British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons Scheme is a network of nationally accredited businesses and registered fixers.

NAMM – National Association of Memorial Masons Scheme is a network of nationally accredited businesses and registered fixers.

3 Introduction

The following Cemetery Regulations are intended for all parties with an affiliation with the Cemeteries Service and the Cemeteries.

The Cemeteries Service administers and maintains cemeteries for both burial and the interment of ashes.

The New Forest District Council Cemetery Office is committed to providing an excellent customer service to the bereaved. The Service includes:

Interment bookings;

Memorial applications;

Purchase and Legal Transfer of the Exclusive Right of Burial; and

Enquiries relating to all Cemeteries which are administered by the Council.

The Service of Interment includes the administration for the booking of the interment, the preparation and completion of the interment at the time of committal, and the maintenance of statutory registers and records post interment.

There are no restrictions on who can be interred within the Cemeteries provided by this Council, however, the Council implement a 50% discount for New Forest Residents for all Cemeteries Service fees. See 4.1 for further clarification.

The Council Regulations have been formulated to ensure the Cemeteries remain well maintained and pose no safety risk to either visitors or operatives. The Regulations should therefore, be observed at all times.

The Service Manager's decision shall be final in all matters relating to the management of the Cemeteries.

3.1 Contact Details

For Cemeteries enquiries, please contact the Cemeteries Office by email at cemeteries@nfdc.gov.uk. You may also contact the Office on 023 8028 5952 or fax 023 8028 5755.

The Cemeteries Office will be open for business as per the times published on the Cemeteries website.

The Cemeteries Office is not open on Saturdays, Sundays, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Good Friday, Public Bank Holidays or any other day when the Council Offices are closed.

Information notice boards are placed at the entrance to each Cemetery with the contact email address, telephone number and address of the Cemeteries Office.

4 General Regulations

These Regulations are in addition to the provisions presented in *the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977* and any other appropriate Regulations currently in force.

4.1. Fees

A copy of the current Fees and Charges is available from the New Forest District Council Cemeteries Service website www.nfdc.gov.uk. Details may also be obtained by contacting the Cemeteries Office during the Office opening hours. Please see 3.1 for contact details.

Fees and Charges for the Cemeteries Service will be determined by the Council annually and will take effect from 1 April each year.

Fees and Charges are payable in advance. The Council does not currently provide a payment plan service.

4.1.1 Purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial

See 12.1 for Fees and Charges Flow Chart

Resident fees apply to:

A current resident of the New Forest District;

A non-resident Purchase of an Exclusive Right of Burial for a resident of the New Forest;

A previous resident who has relocated due to dependent living needs; and

A previous resident who has relocated due to independent living needs, but lived in the District for at least 10 years prior to relocation.

Non-resident fees apply to:

A non-resident of the New Forest District; and

A previous resident who has relocated due to independent living needs and lived in the District for less than 10 years.

4.1.2 Interment Fees

See 12.2 and Appendix 1b for Fees and Charges Flow Chart

Resident fees apply to:

A current resident of the New Forest District;

A previous resident who has relocated due to dependent living needs;

A previous resident who has relocated due to independent living needs, but lived in the District for at least 10 years prior to relocation; and

A purchased a burial or cremated remains plot as a resident.

Non-resident fees apply to:

A non-resident of the New Forest District; and

A previous resident who has relocated due to independent living needs, and lived in the District for less than 10 years.

Under exceptional circumstances, the Council reserves the Right to implement Resident fees to *non-residents*. All decisions will be final and are at the discretion of the Service Manager.

Proof of residency is required to support Resident Fees claims and need to be submitted with all Application requests. In cases where proof of residency is unattainable, a Statutory Declaration for Proof of Residency must be completed; otherwise Non-Resident Fees will be incurred.

5 Cemeteries

The Council's Cemetery Regulations form the basis for the management and administration of the Cemeteries and are designed to ensure a safe and pleasant environment and provide information to visitors and Exclusive Right of Burial Holders.

Information notice boards are placed at the entrance of the Cemeteries which contain cemetery management and maintenance notices, cemetery section maps and latest news updates.

In its management of the Cemeteries the Council will give consideration to wildlife and vegetation.

5.1 The Cemeteries

The following Regulations shall apply to all the Cemeteries under the administration of the Council, and are sited at the following locations:

Beaulieu Cemetery, Grindingstone, Lodge Lane, Beaulieu, SO42 7XP

Blackfield Cemetery, Exbury Road, Blackfield, SO45 1XE

Calshot Cemetery, Calshot Road, Calshot, SO45 1BP

Eling Cemetery, Eling Hill, Eling, SO40 9HE

Lymington Cemetery, Highfield Road, Lymington, SO41 9JL

Milford Road Cemetery, Milford Road, New Milton, BH25 6PN

New Milton Cemetery, Gore Road, New Milton, BH25 6RR

Sway Cemetery, Brighton Road, Sway, SO41 6EB

These Regulations also apply to the closed cemeteries currently maintained by the Council. The Council is responsible for the maintenance of the grounds, trees and boundaries, and is required to undertake statutory inspections and testing of memorials.

Beaulieu, Calshot and Lymington Cemeteries each have a small chapel in which a service can be held prior to an interment taking place.

Beaulieu, Calshot, Eling and Milford Road Cemeteries each have a Woodland Section which has provision for both burial and cremated remains plots.

Vehicular access is permitted in Calshot, Eling, Lymington and Sway Cemeteries during Office opening hours, providing that vehicles travel on the main drives and not across the areas of grass.

5.2 Cemetery Sections

5.2.1 Lawn Section

With the exception of some older sections, the Cemeteries are predominantly organised as *Lawn Cemeteries*. The Lawn Sections are designed on the War Grave principle; with a memorial stone of a standard size at the head of the grave leaving the remainder of the grave laid to lawn. Floral tributes may be placed in the area immediately in front of the permitted memorial stone, but not exceeding 400mm beyond the base of the memorial. For a more detailed memorial description see 10.3.1.

It is the responsibility of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial to remove the memorial headstone to facilitate any subsequent interment within the purchased burial plot and to meet the costs for its removal and replacement. Applications must be made in writing to the Council when re-erecting amended memorial headstones. See 10.2.1 for more information.

In designated Lawn Sections, no memorabilia, edging stones or ornamental fencing of any type, is permitted on any grave. For a more detailed memorabilia description see 11.1.

Lawn Section burial plots, may provide space for two burials, at double and single depth, six subsequent interments of cremated remains in caskets and a further six scatterings of ashes below ground (without caskets).

All graves will be dug at double depth if achievable. Single depth new graves will be dug if a double depth is not achievable or if specifically requested at time of booking.

5.2.2 Cremated Remains Section

Authorised memorial stones are only permitted to be installed in this section. For a more detailed memorial description see 10.3.4.

A cremated remains plot may provide space for four interments of cremated remains in caskets and a further two scatterings of ashes below ground (without caskets).

To ensure the optimum number of cremated remains interments, casket dimensions should not exceed 9 inches (220mm) in height, 13 inches (330mm) in length and 9 inches (220mm) in width.

It is the responsibility of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial to remove the memorial stone to facilitate any subsequent interment within the purchased cremated remains plot and incur charges for its removal and replacement. Applications must be made in writing to the Council when re-erecting amended memorial stones See 10.2.1 for more information.

5.2.3 Woodland Section

Woodland burial and cremated remains plots are available in all Woodland Sections.

In keeping with the ethos of woodland burial grounds, memorials and items of memorabilia are restricted to a memorial plaque mounted on a plinth with a cut flower container. Subsequent memorial plaques will be mounted on the plinth of the first interment.

The Woodland Section comprises designated burial plots with a predefined memorial tree, a memorial shrub or bulbs.

Memorial plants are to be purchased through New Forest District Council at time of Interment. Designated bulb burial plots and cremated remains plots are also available within the Woodland Section.

The Council's planting schemes for the Woodland Sections schemes have been predesigned to achieve memorial plant longevity and to engender a natural woodland setting. No further planting is permitted within Woodland Sections. For a more detailed memorial description see 10.3.5.

Woodland Section burial plots may provide space for a single depth burial, six subsequent interments of cremated remains in caskets and a further six scatterings of ashes below ground (without caskets).

Woodland Section cremated remains plots may provide space for twelve interments of cremated remains in caskets, six at double depth and six at single depth, and a further six scatterings of ashes below ground (without caskets).

Coffins and caskets within the Woodland Section must only be made from a biodegradable material such as wood, cardboard, shroud, wicker, bamboo and similar. No plastic, which includes the handles, or veneer is permitted. For further information, please see *Natural Burial Grounds, Guidance for Operators* issued by the Ministry of Justice (2009). Embalming or the utilisation of other non-environmentally safe substances is not permitted for Woodland burials.

5.2.4 Baby and Children's Sections.

These sections are for babies and children only. For a more detailed memorial description see 10.3.2.

The length of Baby and Children's burial plots will not exceed 4 feet (1220mm).

5.2.5 Traditional / Romany Gypsy / Travellers Section

Conventionally located within the older areas of the Cemeteries, these sections permit the authorised installation of traditional memorial stones and kerb-sets.

It is the responsibility of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial to remove the kerb-set to facilitate any subsequent interment within the purchased burial plot and to meet the costs for its removal and replacement. Applications must be made in writing to the Council when re-erecting amended memorial headstones See 10.2.1 for more information.

Romany Gypsy and Travellers Burial Sections are available within specific cemeteries; these sections permit the authorised installation of traditional memorial stones and kerb-sets. For a more detailed memorial description see 10.3.3.

Traditional / Romany Gypsy / Travellers Section burial plots may provide space for two burials at double and single depth, six subsequent interments of cremated remains in caskets and a further six scatterings of ashes below ground (without caskets).

5.2.6 Burial Plots Requiring 2 Grave Spaces Section

These Sections consist of burial plots requiring 2 grave spaces to allow for the Interment of uncoffined burials, coffins which exceed the standard burial plot capacity or any other Interment which requires a non-standard burial plot.

A memorial stone of a standard size at the head of the grave leaving the remainder of the grave laid to lawn is permitted. Floral tributes may be placed in the area immediately in front of the permitted memorial stone, but not exceeding 400mm beyond the base of the memorial. For a more detailed memorial description see 10.3.

It is the responsibility of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial to remove the memorial headstone to facilitate any subsequent interment within the purchased burial plot and meet the costs for its removal and replacement. Applications must be made in writing to the Council when re-erecting amended memorial headstones See 10.2.1 for more information.

No memorabilia, edging stones or ornamental fencing of any type, is permitted on any grave. For a more detailed memorabilia description see 11.1.

Burial Plots Requiring two Grave Spaces Section burial plots, may provide space for two burials at double and single depth, and if required, six subsequent interments of cremated remains in caskets and a further six scatterings of ashes below ground (without caskets).

5.2.7 Scattering of Ashes Section

Ashes may be scattered above ground within the designated area of the Memorial Garden, Blackfield Cemetery.

In keeping with the ethos of the section, items of memorabilia are restricted to a memorial plaque mounted on the memorial rail within the scattering area

6 Management of the Cemeteries

6.1 Cemetery Operation

Cemeteries maintenance operation which includes grass cutting, landscape planting management, the upkeep of flower beds and borders and any other routine cemetery grounds work, will be carried out by the Council, at a frequency determined by the Council and subject to weather conditions.

The Cemeteries Service will endeavour to reinstate all newly excavated burial plots after an Interment, subject to weather conditions and to the season appropriate for these works being undertaken.

The reinstatement of burial plots within Lawn Sections shall include the levelling and seeding or turfing the grave surface.

The reinstatement of burial plots within Woodland Sections shall include the levelling and seeding or turfing the grave surface with the inclusion of bulb planting.

The Council reserves the Right to disconnect the water supply during the winter months to avoid the freezing and burst pipes, or when the tap is defective and requires remedial works.

The Council reserves the Right to change the appearance of any of the Cemeteries as part of the Council routine cemeteries maintenance operations and development schemes.

6.2 Admission to the Cemeteries

All persons shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner and are reminded of *Article 18.1, Offences in Cemeteries, of The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977* whereby

No person shall:

- a) wilfully create any disturbance in a cemetery;*
- b) commit any nuisance in a cemetery;*
- c) wilfully interfere with any burial taking place in a cemetery;*
- d) wilfully interfere with any grave or vault, any tombstone or other memorial, or any flowers or plants on any such matter; or*
- e) play at any game or sport in a cemetery.*

All persons contravening any of the above provisions *shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £100 and in the case of a continuing offence to a fine not exceeding £10 for each day during which the offence continues after conviction therefor (Article 19, Penalties, of the The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977).*

The Cemeteries are open to the public daily; local restrictions to pedestrian access may apply.

The Council reserves the Right to temporarily close public access to the Cemeteries or any part of a cemetery at any time without notice.

On sites that have vehicular access (see 5.1), a speed limit of 5mph is in operation in all the Cemeteries and applies to all modes of transport without exemption. No vehicle is to be left in a position so as to cause an obstruction to pedestrians or other traffic.

All persons entering the Council Cemeteries do so at their own risk. The Council shall not be liable (except in respect of personal injury or the death of a person caused by the Council's negligence) for any loss, injury or damage sustained regardless of the form of action, whether in contract, tort (including negligence and breach of statutory duty), strict liability or otherwise.

In the interest of safety, cyclists are requested to keep to the main pathways.

Dogs are permitted within the Cemeteries providing they are on a lead and are kept under proper control at all times. All dog fouling must be removed immediately in the appropriate manner and disposed of in the bins provided.

Visitors are requested to deposit litter, spent flowers and other unwanted items in the bins provided.

Damage caused to any boundary wall, fence, ground, paths, memorial, or to any other part of the Cemetery must be repaired to the satisfaction of the Service Manager by the party causing the damage. Details of these repairs should be submitted in writing to the Service Manager for approval prior to these works being carried out.

No person shall interfere with the Council employees in their duties nor seek to employ them to plant graves or execute any private work whatsoever.

All enquiries, complaints and requests by members of the public should be made to the Cemeteries Office.

7 Administration for Interment

Completion and submission of a Notice of Interment form is mandatory with all interment and scatterings of cremated remains within all the Cemeteries.

Unauthorised scattering of ashes is not permitted. Prior to the scattering of any ashes, permission from the Cemeteries Office should first be sought by completion and submission of a Notice of Interment form.

All fees and charges must be paid at the time of application, prior to the interment taking place, in accordance with the scale of fees. All payments should be made to the New Forest District Council.

The Council reserves the Right to charge a fee for cancelled or postponed Interments.

7.1 Booking an Interment

A provisional telephone booking must be made through the Cemeteries Office prior to the submission of any formal papers and / or payment of fees, to ensure the requested date and time is available.

To secure Interment bookings, the Council's Notice of Interment form must be completed in full and signed, by all the Owners of the Exclusive Right of Burial or the Applicant(s) for the Exclusive Right of Burial. Completed forms, together with Certificates for Interment and payment, need to be received by the Cemetery Office at least 2 working days prior to the Interment date.

In all cases the Grantee(s) or Successor(s) must sign the declaration on the Notice of Interment form to agree to comply with these Cemetery Regulations.

No paperwork is to be handed to the Council's Cemeteries Team on the day of Interment.

Notice of Interment and relevant forms and information are available on the Cemeteries website. Further advice and assistance on this procedure can be obtained by contacting the Cemeteries Office during Office hours or by email.

The Council advises families to contact a chosen Council Registered Funeral Director before proceeding with all family organised burial and cremated remains interments; all booking requirements apply. All family organised interments are subject to approval from the Service Manager.

All additional cremated remains interments must be declared at the time of the booking for the Burial Interment. A separate Notice of Interment form for each additional cremated remains interment will need to be completed.

7.2 Certificates for Interment

The relevant certificate from the Registrar of Births and Deaths, or the Coroner or Crematorium, must accompany the Notice of Interment. No interment, including family organised interments will take place unless the Certificate for disposal is produced at least 2 working days prior to the Interment date.

If an interment is to take place in a grave for which the Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased the Deed of Grant for the Exclusive Right of Burial must be produced as proof of Ownership. If this is mislaid, a Statutory Declaration for a Lost Document and accompanying Indemnity Agreement needs to be completed whereby instructing the reissue of a lost Deed of Grant.

When the Owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial is deceased, the Executor(s) or next of kin should arrange for the Ownership to be Transferred to the entitled legal Owner(s). Information on this procedure is available on the Cemeteries website. Further advice and assistance may be obtained by contacting the Cemeteries Office.

With all family organised burial interments, the additional Council supplied Method Statement and Statutory Declaration will need to be completed and accompany the standard mandatory certificates outlined above.

7.3 Coffins and Caskets

The exact maximum external coffin or casket sizes must be measured and specified in inches, and must include the handles, if applicable. These exact measurements must be declared on the Notice of Interment form. No measurement allowances are permitted.

Incorrect measurements are the responsibility of the Funeral Director or the person completing the Notice of Interment form with family organised interments. Inaccurate measurements may engender issues at the time of interment. In exceptional circumstances, inaccurate coffin or casket measurements may incur a penalty.

All coffin and casket sizes will determine the number of all subsequent interments.

With burial interments, coffins needing more than one burial plot space will require the purchase of two burial plots

8 Procedures for Interment

All burial and cremated remains interments and scattering of ashes are committed and registered to the requirements as laid out in *The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977*.

Animal interments are not permitted within the Council's Cemeteries.

8.1 Hours of Interment

Interments may only take place in accordance with these Regulations, subject to availability and between the hours published on the Cemeteries website.

Hours of Interment are subject to change and are at the discretion of the Service Manager.

By prior arrangement and subject to availability, interments may take place on Saturdays; however, additional charges will be incurred.

No burials may take place on Sundays, Bank or other Public Holidays or any other day the Council Offices are closed. In exceptional circumstances, interments may take place during these periods are at the discretion of the Service Manager. Additional charges will be incurred.

8.2 Allocation of New Interment Plots

8.2.1 Burial Plots (including children's graves and Woodland cremated remains plots)

Allocation of next in line graves is subject to availability and in all cases shall be at the discretion of the Service Manager.

If requested at the time of booking the interment, new graves may be available for selection when the next in line grave is not the preferred choice. Selection choice is subject to the approval of the Council and payment of the appropriate fee. Burial plots will not be available for Selection in areas not currently active.

Some cemeteries contain sections which are segregated by religious denominations. Specific requirements should be made at time of booking. Requesting a preferred section will not incur a Selection Fee.

Traditional / Romany Gypsy / Travellers Sections are available within selected Cemeteries (See5.1); these Sections permit alternative burial preferences other than within the Lawn Cemetery. Requesting this preferred Section will not incur a Selection Fee. Burial plot Selection may be available, subject to the approval of the Council and payment of the appropriate fee.

Woodland Sections are available within selected Cemeteries (See5.1); these sections provide for a more natural interment. Burial plot types include memorial tree, shrub and bulb graves. Selection of a burial plot type will not incur a Selection Fee, but specifically chosen graves, which are not next in line, will incur a Selection Fee.

8.2.2 Cremated Remains Plots

Allocation of next in line cremated remains plots are subject to availability and in all cases shall be at the discretion of the Service Manager.

If requested at the time of booking the interment, new cremated remains plots may be available for Selection when the next in line plot is not the preferred choice. Selection choice is subject to the approval of the Council. Selection of cremated remains plots does not incur a Selection Fee. Cremated remains plots will not be available for Selection in areas not currently active.

8.3 Excavation of Interment Plots

All burial plots shall be prepared and completed by persons employed by the Council.

All burial and cremated remains plots are excavated to the requirements as laid out in Part 1 of Schedule 2 to *The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977*.

8.3.1 Burial plots (excluding children's graves)

All new burial plots for persons above 17 years of age shall be prepared at double depth, subject to the ground conditions at the time of interment, allowing for two burials to take place in each grave space (See Section 3 Cemeteries Sections for grave capacities 5.2).

With single depth graves, the top of the coffin will be at a depth of no less than 3 feet (900 mm) below the level of the ground adjoining the grave.

Where a burial has taken place the grave shall be entirely backfilled and made tidy on the day of the interment and will be continually topped-up with soil until settlement ceases. As soon as practical, the burial plot will be seeded or turfed. Once the turfing has taken place, the turf shall not be removed except for additional interments, exhumations or the placing of authorised memorials.

Removal of turf, for reasons other than previously stated, will entitle the Council to take proceedings to recuperate the cost of replacing the said turf.

With double depth burials, if conditions at the time of the first interment prevent the deeper grave, alternative arrangements may be required. An alternative, more suitable, burial plot may be available. An additional adjacent burial plot may need to be purchased to accommodate two burials when double depth burials are unattainable.

8.3.2 Cremated Remains Plots (including Woodland cremated remains plots)

Unless otherwise stated at the time of booking the interment, all new cremated remains plots shall be excavated at double depth, subject to the casket size, allowing for two cremated remains interments at double depth.

8.3.3 Baby / Children's Sections

All graves for children of 17 years of age or under shall be excavated at single depth only.

8.4 Re-opening of Interment Plots

8.4.1 Burial Plots

Graves may be re-opened for further interments, subject to space availability.

Reopened graves will be prepared at single depth.

No burial interment shall take place in a re-opened grave unless the coffin is separated from the coffin already in that grave by the means of a layer of earth no less than 6 inches (150 mm) thick.

If the layer of earth is calculated to be less than 3 feet from the top of the coffin to ground level, a concrete capstone / slab will be required to permit the interment at single depth.

No person shall disturb any human remains or remove any soil that may be contaminated. After the Interment has been committed to the ground it shall not be removed or otherwise disturbed except for lawful exhumation, by Licence and / or Faculty, or by the Order of a Coroner. This includes disturbing the earth / turf following the scattering of Ashes.

8.4.2 Cremated Remains Plots

Reopened single depth cremated remains plots will be excavated at single depth, providing for two cremated remains interments in caskets.

No person shall disturb any human remains or remove any soil that may be offensive. After a casket has been committed to the ground it shall not be removed or otherwise disturbed except for lawful exhumation, by Licence and / or Faculty, or by the Order of a Coroner. This includes disturbing the earth / turf following the scattering of Ashes.

8.5 Scattering of Cremated Remains

8.5.1 Scattering of Cremated Remains within Purchased Burial and Ashes Plots

Scattering of cremated remains without a casket is permitted below ground within all purchased burial and cremated remains plots, subject to space availability.

The Cemeteries Service will remove a small area of turf from a previously purchased grave, including Woodland cremated remains plots, providing for an area for the scattering of cremated remains. The turf will be replaced over the remains to complete the scattering interment.

The act of the scattering of the ashes is the responsibility of the person(s) instructing the scattering of ashes interment. The persons employed by the Council will not scatter the ashes during the interment.

The location of the scattering of cremated remains will be recorded within the Cemetery Registers and records.

8.5.2 Scattering of Cremated Remains within the Memorial Garden

The scattering of ashes within the area of the Memorial Garden may only be above ground and in areas designated by the Council for this purpose (See 5.2.7).

The act of the scattering of the ashes is the responsibility of the person(s) instructing the scattering of ashes interment. The persons employed by the Council will not scatter the ashes.

8.6 Exhumation

After interment, no body or cremated remains may be removed from a burial or cremated remains plot without the production of an ecclesiastical Faculty and / or Home Office Licence for exhumation required by law. Original documents will be required for this purpose.

All burial and cremated remains exhumations must adhere to *The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977*.

9 Burial Plot Ownership and Burial Rights

The Exclusive Right of Burial entitles the registered Owner(s):

To be interred in the burial or cremated remains plot, subject to space availability (See 5.2 for plot capacities);

To determine who is to be interred within the said burial or cremated remains plot, subject to space availability; and

To apply for the Right to erect a memorial on the burial or cremated remains plot, in accordance with the Regulations.

Purchasing the Exclusive Right of Burial, however, does not extend to possession of the land; this remains in the Ownership of the Council.

The Council reserves the Right to allocate the provision of space with its Cemeteries.

9.1 Purchasing the Exclusive Right of Burial

The Exclusive Right of Burial may be purchased in advance of an interment taking place to reserve the burial or cremated remains plot, or at the time of the interment, subject to space availability.

The Exclusive Right of Burial does not specify the number of interments that can be accommodated within the burial or cremated remains plot; this will be dependent upon the depth of the first interment, the size of coffin / casket interred in the plot, and the ground conditions at the time of excavation (See 5.2 for plot capacities).

The Council recommends a maximum of three people hold the Rights to the Exclusive Right of Burial; please note all Holders must agree to give consent for future interments and memorial applications on the purchased plot.

Once the Exclusive Right of Burial has been purchased, a Deed of Grant will be issued to all elected Owners of the burial or cremated remains plot. The Deed of Grant is proof of Ownership and must be produced with all prospective interments and memorial applications.

A burial or cremated remains plot may not be reserved unless the appropriate fee to purchase the Exclusive Right of Burial has been paid in full.

The selection of burial and cremated remains plots, both for interment and pre-purchase, is subject to availability and the approval of the Service Manager.

The Exclusive Right of Burial for burial and cremated remains plots may be purchased for 30 years; when this time has lapsed, the purchase of an additional 30 years may be available, subject to payment of the appropriate fee.

For existing Exclusive Right of Burial which have been purchased for more than 30 years, when this time has lapsed, the purchase of an additional 30 years may be available, subject to payment of the appropriate fee.

For existing Exclusive Right of Burial which have been purchased for perpetuity, the Rights will remain in perpetuity.

When the Exclusive Right of Burial tenure has lapsed, the Ownership reverts to the Council, unless additional years are purchased by the previous Owner(s) or interested parties / next of kin. The purchase of additional years is subject to payment of the appropriate fee.

9.2 Transfer or Assignment of Exclusive Right of Burial

The Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial, may Transfer or Assign the Ownership to any other person(s) of at least 18 years, upon payment of the appropriate administration fee.

When the last Owner to the Exclusive Right of Burial is deceased, a Transfer of the Right is required to enable future interments and memorial headstone installations and amendments. The Exclusive Right of Burial forms part of the Estate of the deceased Owner, which can only be Transferred, for the remaining years on the Deed, to the entitled person(s).

The entitled persons(s) may instruct the Council of the Transfer of the Exclusive Right of Burial, upon production of the original Grant of Probate, the Grant of Letters of Administration or the relevant Statutory Declaration and supporting legal documentation, together with the appropriate administration fee.

9.3 Lost or Mislaid Exclusive Right of Burial

The Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial are responsible for informing the Council if the Deed of Grant has been lost or mislaid and must request a Deed of Grant reissue from the Cemeteries Office.

Reissuing the Exclusive Right of Burial Deed of Grant if lost will incur a Reissue administration fee.

9.4 Surrender a Burial Plot with an Exclusive Right of Burial

Where no interment has taken place in a purchased burial or cremated remains plot, the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial may request the Surrender of the plot in return for a refund of the original purchase payment, less the years of Ownership.

No refund will be made where the Exclusive Right of Burial tenure has lapsed; the Ownership reverts to the Council.

9.5 Change of Address or Name Change

The Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial are responsible for informing the Council of any changes of address or Deed registration details.

Reissuing the Exclusive Right of Burial Deed of Grant through change of address or Deed registration details will **not** incur a Reissue administration fee.

9.6 Unpurchased Burial and Cremated Remains Plots

With previously unpurchased burial and cremated remains plots, the Exclusive Right of Burial must be purchased after an interment has taken place in order to erect a memorial and / or to re-open the plot for further interment. All purchases are at the discretion of the Service Manager.

The Council reserves the Right to reuse any Common Grave for future interment.

10 Erecting and Maintaining a Memorial

A memorial may only be erected on a burial or cremated remains plot within the Cemeteries in accordance with the current Regulations in force at the time of Application.

The type of memorial permitted is determined by the section that has been selected by the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

All memorial installations must be in accordance with the current BRAMM and NAMM standards.

Memorial Applications will only be approved from Memorial Masons and Funeral Directors who have registered with the Memorial Masons and Funeral Director Registration Scheme.

10.1 Authorisation to Erect and Maintain a Memorial

The Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial may only apply to erect a memorial, subject to the payment of the appropriate Memorial Application fee. If the Owner is deceased, the Exclusive Right of Burial will need to be Transferred prior to Memorial Application approval (See 9.2.)

With previously unpurchased burial and cremated remains plots, the Exclusive Right of Burial must be purchased after an interment has taken place in order to apply to erect a memorial. All purchases are at the discretion of the Service Manager.

10.2 Applying and Approval of Memorial Applications

10.2.1 Memorial Stone Application

A Memorial Application to erect or amend an existing memorial must be made prior to installation. The Council Memorial Application must be completed in full and signed by all the Owners of the Exclusive Right of Burial to agree to the proposed Application.

A Memorial Application is not needed for *insitu* memorial cleaning maintenance where the original stonemason installed the memorial. It is the responsibility of the Memorial Mason to ensure works are undertaken with consideration to adjacent memorials. All sub-contractors will need to be Registered under the Memorial Masons and Funeral Directors Registration Scheme.

Memorial Applications cannot be submitted; neither can Applications be approved, prior to interment.

All memorial stones for burial plots must display the installer's trade name and the plot details on the reverse of the memorial. The lettering used must be 1 inch (25mm), of uniform height, and placed on the left hand side of the base, 6 inches (150mm) above ground level. No other Inscriptions or drawings are permitted to be shown on the reverse side of the headstone.

All memorials for cremated remains plots must display the installer's trade name and the plot details on the front of the memorial base. The lettering used must be 1 inch (25mm), of uniform height.

Memorial Applications must be submitted with the appropriate fee and include a copy of the Deed of Grant for each Owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

Memorial Applications for burial plots can be submitted any time after interment. The Council, however, recommends a period of deferment for one year to allow for adequate ground settlement.

Memorial permits will be issued upon memorial application approval and are valid for one year from date of approval. If the Permit has expired, a new memorial application will need to be submitted together the correct application fee.

The Owners of the Exclusive Right of Burial are responsible to ensure memorial installations are safe from settlement, and to ensure the elected registered stonemason will guarantee remedial works (Please consult the Memorial Masons and Funeral Director Registration Scheme).

The Owners of the Exclusive Right of Burial are responsible for ensuring works are guaranteed against faulty installation.

Memorial Applications for cremated remains plots and designated sections with precast plinths can be submitted any time after interment. A period of deferment to allow for ground settlement is not required; memorials can be installed any time after interment.

The Council reserves the Right to exclude any memorial that would in any way disfigure any of the Cemeteries or which is considered inappropriate in design. It also reserves the Right to refuse any inscription which it considers may cause offence. The Service Manager's decision is final.

10.2.2 Memorial Plaque for Burial and Cremated Remains Plots within Woodland Sections Application

The memorial plaque and plinth are purchased through and installed by the Cemeteries Service upon submission of a Memorial Application and payment of the appropriate application and purchase fee.

The Memorial Application must be completed in full and signed by all the Owners or the proposed Owners of the Exclusive Right of Burial to agree to the proposed Application.

10.2.3 Memorial Tree or Shrub for Burial plots within Woodland Sections Application

The memorial tree / shrub can only be purchased through and installed by the Cemeteries Service upon submission of a Memorial Application and payment of the appropriate Application and Purchase Fee.

The Memorial Application must be completed in full and signed by all the Owners or the proposed Owners of the Exclusive Right of Burial to agree to the proposed Application.

10.2.4 Memorial Plaque within Memorial Garden Application

The memorial plaque is purchased through and installed by the Cemeteries Service upon submission of a Memorial Application and payment of the appropriate Application and Purchase Fee.

10.2.5 Memorial Bench Donation Application

The memorial bench can only be purchased through and installed by the Cemeteries Service upon submission of a Memorial Bench Donation Application and payment of the appropriate Application and Purchase Fee. Memorial Bench spaces are regulated and are available within each Cemetery's design plan. When the allotted memorial benches have been donated, further donations are not permitted.

Applications for Memorial Bench Donations can only be submitted to memorialise those who have been interred within the chosen cemetery.

10.3 Permitted Memorials

10.3.1 Burial plot within Lawn Sections

A memorial headstone is only permitted within the Lawn Section of any of the Cemeteries the section that has been selected by the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

The memorial headstone must not exceed 4 foot 6 inches (1350mm) in height, 2 foot 6 inches (750mm) in width and 1 foot 6 inches (450mm) in depth. Memorials falling outside these measurements will not be approved or permitted to be installed.

Flower vases must be an integral part of the memorial or, if removable, must be placed no more than 15 inches (380mm) in front of the authorised memorial headstone base (See 11.1.1).



Milford Road Cemetery. An example of an NFDC Cemeteries Lawn Section.

10.3.2 Burial plot within Baby / Children's Sections

The memorial headstone must not exceed 2 foot 6 inches (760mm) in height, 2 foot 6 inches (760mm) in width and 1 foot 6 inches (450mm) in depth. Memorials falling outside these measurements will not be approved or permitted to be installed.

The kerb-set must not encroach outside the integral space of the burial plot.

10.3.3 Burial plot within Traditional / Romany Gypsy / Traveller Sections

A memorial headstone and kerb-set is permitted within the Traditional Section of the Cemeteries.

The memorial headstone must not exceed 4 foot 6 inches (1350mm) in height, 2 foot 6 inches (750mm) in width and 1 foot 6 inches (450mm) in depth. Memorials falling outside these measurements will not be approved or permitted to be installed.

The kerbing must not encroach outside the integral space of the burial plot.

10.3.4 Cremated Remains Sections

A memorial stone is only permitted within the Cremated Remains Section of the Cemeteries.

The memorial stone must not exceed 22 inches (550mm) in height, 22 inches (550mm) in width and 22 inches (550mm) in depth, and must be fixed to the supplied paving. Memorials falling outside these measurements will not be approved or permitted to be installed.

10.3.5 Burial and Cremated Remains plots within Woodland Sections

The memorial plaque is provided and installed by the Cemeteries Service and will measure a maximum of 6 inches by 4 inches (150mm by 100mm). The permitted inscription will state the name of the deceased, their duration of life and the plot number details. The memorial plaque will be secured to a plinth and positioned at the top end of the burial plot.

One memorial plaque for each interment is permitted within the Woodland Section of any of the Cemeteries.

Following an interment, the Cemeteries Service will provide and install the predetermined memorial tree or shrub for each allocated burial plot within the Woodland Section planting scheme.

The Council are responsible for the maintenance and management of all planted memorial trees and shrubs.

10.3.6 Memorial Garden

The memorial plaque is provided and installed by the Cemeteries Service and will measure a maximum of 6 inches by 4 inches (150mm x 100mm). The permitted inscription will state the name of the deceased, their duration of life and the plot number details. The memorial plaque will be secured to the Memorial Garden memorial rail.

10.4 Memorial Bench Donation

The memorial bench is provided and installed by the Cemeteries Service and will only be installed at an agreed location, subject to availability within the predetermined layout, and on payment of the appropriate donation.

A memorial bench donated to the chosen cemetery is for public use.

The Council will maintain the donated memorial bench for 10 years; after this period the Council reserves the Right to remove and replace the bench with a newly donated bench.

10.5 Owner(s) of Exclusive Right of Burial Memorial Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial to maintain their memorials in a safe condition.

The Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial shall fully comply with these Regulations guaranteeing the burial or cremated remains plot is maintained in a safe condition to the satisfaction of the Service Manager. Repairs will be at the expense of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

If the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial cannot be contacted, the Council reserves the Right to make safe or remove any memorial that is allowed to fall into disrepair or become unsightly or dangerous. The Council will seek reimbursement from the Owner(s) or the successor(s) in title for the whole of the costs of these works.

Should a memorial fail the Council's Statutory Inspection, it is the responsibility of the Owner(s) to organise repairs and to meet the full costs of those repairs.

It is the responsibility of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial to organise the removal of memorials or kerb-sets prior to interment. The replacement of the memorial without inscription amendment will not require submission of a Memorial Application.

It is the responsibility of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial to submit a Memorial Application with any proposed amendments to existing memorials or kerb-sets.

10.6 Registered Memorial Masons and Funeral Directors Responsibility

Any organisation undertaking works within the Cemeteries must be registered under the Council's Memorial Masons and Funeral Directors Registration Scheme.

All Registered Memorial Masons and Funeral Directors must ensure the Cemeteries Office possess current copies of the mandatory Registration insurance certificates prior to any works being undertaken within the Cemeteries.

All Registered Memorial Masons must ensure the Cemeteries Office possess current copies of Association Membership certificates.

For Memorial Masons or other person(s) involved in the production and installation of memorials, Employers Liability, Public Liability with £5,000,000 cover and Professional Indemnity insurance are required.

For Funeral Directors, Employers Liability and Public Liability insurance with £5,000,000 cover are required.

It is the responsibility of the Registered Memorial Masons or Funeral Director to ensure the persons requesting the memorial are the Holders of the Exclusive Right of Burial. All Holders need to agree to the Memorial Application.

A copy of these Regulations must be made available to the Holders of the Exclusive Right of Burial to clarify the Council's permitted memorials and memorabilia.

It is the responsibility of the Registered Memorial Mason / Funeral Director to ensure all applications received comply with the current Regulations in force at the time of submission. All applications containing inaccurate or erroneous information must be rectified prior to formal submission to the Cemeteries Service.

Suitable foundations must be provided in order to prevent memorials from sinking or tilting. All memorials erected in any of the Cemeteries must comply with BS8415 and the National Association of Memorial Masons Recommended Code of Practice.

Works must be guaranteed for at least 10 years to safeguard against faulty installation.

10.7 Removal of a Memorial for Access

The Council retains the Right to remove memorials, prior to an impending interment, to gain access to adjacent burial plots. The Cemeteries Service will make contact with the Holder(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial; when contact is not possible, the Council will remove and replace the said memorial. The Holder(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial will not incur any memorial removal and replacement costs.

10.8 Memorial Inspection and Rights of the Cemeteries Service

Statutory Inspections and testing of memorials will be periodically carried out by the Cemeteries Service or its contractors, in line with the recommendations stated in *Article 16.1 of The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977*.

11 Memorabilia

Authorised memorabilia are only permitted on a burial or cremated remains plot within the Council's Cemeteries in accordance with the current Regulations in force.

The type of memorabilia permitted is determined by the Exclusive Right of Burial Owner(s) chosen Section.

No flowers or plants are permitted to be planted either side of the burial or cremated remains plot access space.

11.1 Permitted Memorabilia

11.1.1 Burial plot within Lawn Sections

Flower vases which are not integral to the memorial headstone are permitted, but must be placed no more than 15 inches (380mm) in front of the authorised memorial headstone base.

All memorabilia must remain within the integral space of the burial plot.

11.1.2 Burial plot within Baby / Children's Sections

For all unauthorised memorabilia see 11.2.

All memorabilia must remain within the kerb-set or the integral space of the burial plot (See 10.3.2).

11.1.3 Burial plot within Traditional / Romany Gypsy / Traveller Sections

For all unauthorised memorabilia see 11.2.

All memorabilia must remain within the kerb-set or the integral space of the burial plot.

To demarcate the integral space of the burial plot, traditional rounded picket fencing is permitted for one year from interment, but must not encroach beyond the said space. Once the year has elapsed, the Council reserves the Right to remove the temporary picket fencing to make space for the authorised memorial, subject to Memorial Application approval (See 10.3.3).

No other fencing is permitted.

11.1.4 Cremated Remains Sections

No memorabilia is permitted other than the authorised memorial (See 10.3.4).

11.1.5 Burial and Cremated Remains plots within Woodland Sections

Flower vases are provided and installed by the Cemeteries Service and are available upon request.

To preserve the ethos of a woodland burial area, other items of memorabilia are not permitted. The Service Manger reserves the Right to remove any unauthorised memorabilia without prior notification to the Owner(s) Exclusive Right of Burial.

11.1.6 Memorial Garden

To preserve the ethos of a memorial garden, other items of memorabilia are not permitted. The Service Manger reserves the Right to remove any unauthorised memorabilia without prior notification.

11.2 Unauthorised Memorabilia

Unauthorised memorabilia are items which are not explicitly stated under the *Permitted Memorabilia* Section (See 11.1). The classification of unauthorised memorabilia is at the discretion of the Service Manager whose decision is final.

Memorabilia items which could potentially cause harm, offence or are a safety concern to cemetery visitors and Cemeteries Representatives are not permitted and will be removed immediately. This list is not exhaustive; the key, unsafe items include:

Glass vases, wind chimes, solar lights, lanterns and wire fencing.



An example of unauthorised, hazardous memorabilia

11.3 Owner(s) of Exclusive Right of Burial Memorabilia Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial to ensure any authorised memorabilia within the said burial or cremated remains plot are maintained in a safe and secure condition.

Any *items* which could potentially cause harm and are a safety concern to cemetery visitors and Cemeteries Representatives are not permitted (See 11.2). The removal of these unauthorised, unsafe items is primarily the responsibility of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

It is the responsibility of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial to ensure any memorabilia floral tributes are removed and placed in the designated bins provided once spent.

11.4 Removal of Unauthorised Memorabilia

All memorabilia *items* which could potentially cause harm, offence, or are a safety concern to cemetery visitors and Cemeteries representatives will be removed immediately, labelled and stored for one month. The Cemeteries Service will make contact with the Holder(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial to invite collection of the unauthorised memorabilia. After one month of storage, the unauthorised will be disposed of.

11.5 Removal of Memorabilia for Access

The Council retains the Right to move authorised memorabilia, prior to an impending interment, to gain access to adjacent burial plots or to facilitate grounds maintenance. The Cemeteries Service will make contact with the Holder(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial; when contact is not possible, the Council will move and replace the said memorabilia. The Council will remove and replace the memorabilia at no cost to the Holder(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial.

The Council retains the Right to remove unauthorised memorabilia prior to an impending interment, to gain access to adjacent burial plots, or to facilitate grounds maintenance. Unauthorised memorabilia will be removed, labelled and stored for one month. The Cemeteries Service will make contact with the Holder(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial to invite collection of the unauthorised memorabilia. After one month of storage, the unauthorised items will be disposed of.

The Council does not accept liability for any alleged damage to any unauthorised memorabilia items.

11.6 Seasonal Memorabilia

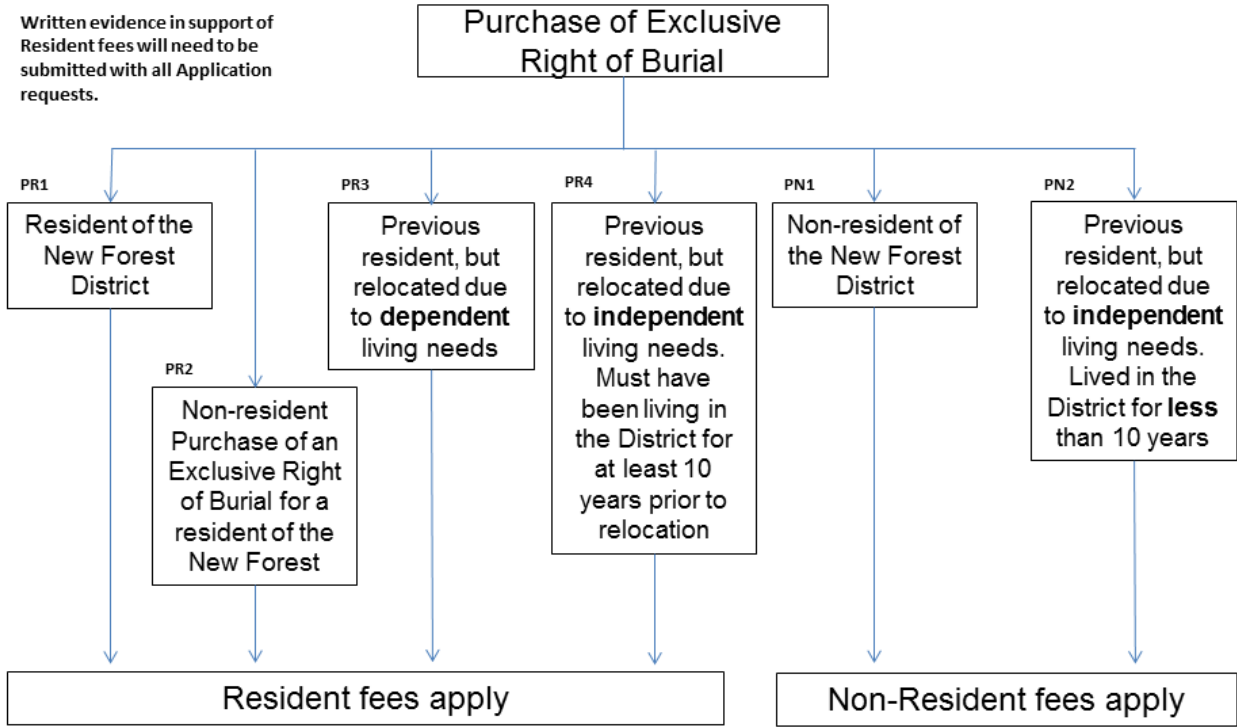
Seasonal memorabilia which are not integral to the memorial are permitted and must be placed at the head end within the integral space of the plot.

Disposal of spent seasonal memorabilia is principally the responsibility of the Owner(s) of the Exclusive Right of Burial; after a maximum period of 2 months the Cemeteries Service will remove and dispose of spent memorabilia as part of routine maintenance works.

12 Appendices

12.1 Appendix 1a

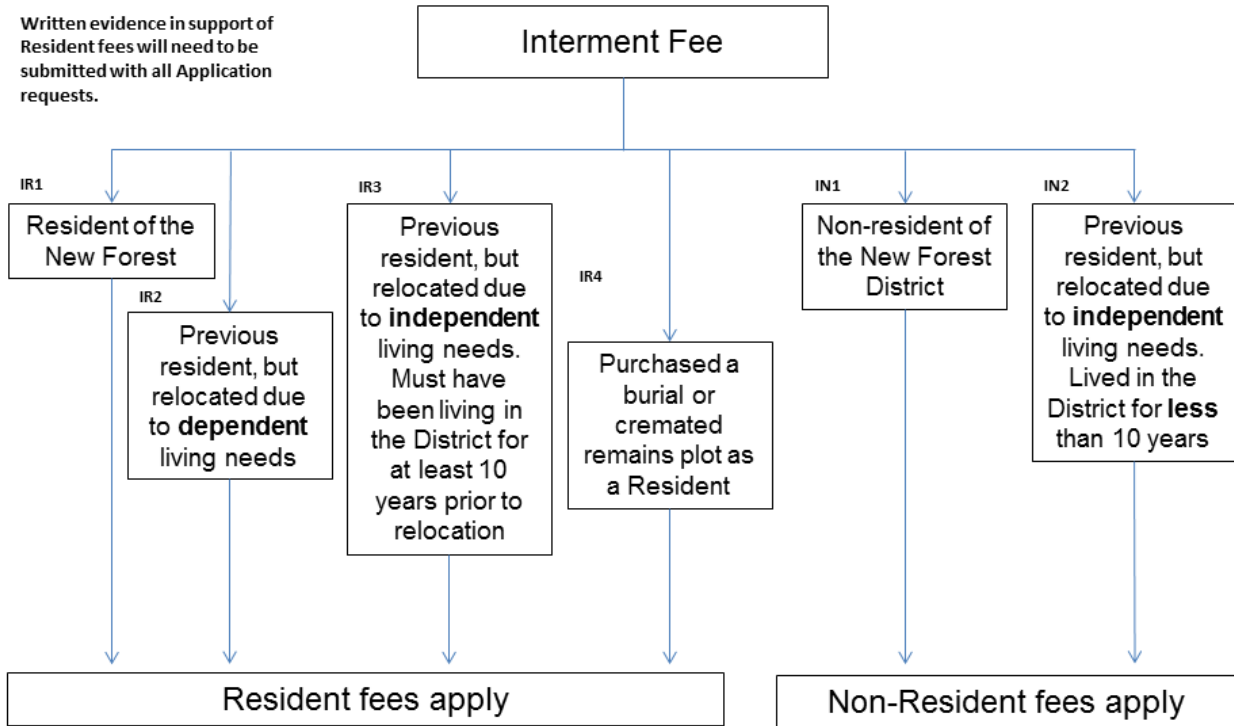
Purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial - Resident and Non-Resident Fees and Charges flow chart



- Dependent living needs – individual who needs care and assistance.
- Independent living needs – individual who is able to care for oneself.

12.2 Appendix 1b

Interment Fee - Resident and Non-Resident Fees and Charges flow chart



Memorial fees are dependant upon residency status and subsequent interment fees incurred.

- Dependent living needs – individual who needs care and assistance.
- Independent living needs – individual who is able to care for oneself.

STONEMASONS
&
FUNERAL DIRECTORS
REGISTRATION SCHEME

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Stonemasons & Funeral Directors Registration Scheme – v1.7 DRAFT (inc. consultee comments)

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2 Definitions & Responsibilities

The Council – New Forest District Council (NFDC)

Member / Scheme Member – is any registered participant including any individual or body who has agreed to be bound by this Registration Scheme. This includes their employees, and any other person contracted or instructed by them to carry out works as defined in this Registration Scheme.

Cemeteries Representative – Is any member of staff appointed by the Council Service Manager to carry out Cemeteries administration or supervision work on behalf of the Council.

Memorial – A memorial is a permanent, fixed, typically inscribed, structure used to memorialise the person(s) interred. Memorials include memorial headstones, kerbsets and integrated flower vases.

Memorial Bench - a bench to memorialise a loved one who has been interred within the chosen Cemetery.

Professional Indemnity Insurance - important cover for businesses that give advice or provide a professional service. It can pay for compensation claims and legal fees that may arise if a client suffers a financial or professional loss due to negligence in your work.

Regulations – current version of the Council’s Cemetery Regulations.

Scheme – Stonemasons & Funeral Directs Registration Scheme.

Service Manager – The Service Manager responsible for Cemeteries.

All obligations and requirements of this Registration Scheme with which Scheme Members are required to adhere by are outlined below.

No aspects or obligations of this Registration Scheme may be assigned, subcontracted or transferred to a third party without the written approval of the Service Manager. In any event such approval will only be given to those individuals / companies / other bodies that are already Scheme Members as defined above.

3 Introduction

The Stonemasons & Funeral Directors Registration Scheme (*referred to as “the Scheme”*), establishes a standard level of workmanship and working practices throughout all of the Cemeteries and graveyards administrated by the council.

The Scheme is needed to establish a standard level of working practice within all Cemeteries administrated by the Council, including “closed cemeteries” maintained by the Council.

Registration with the Scheme ensures common standards are practiced by Funeral Directors and Stonemasons for

- Burials
- The installation, repair and maintenance of memorials, both new and existing
- Insurance cover, health and safety and administrative requirements

Through the provision of the Scheme, it is the Council’s objective to identify and promote best practice within the industry by all registered participants.

3.1 Aims of the Scheme

The Scheme aims to achieve three primary purposes:

- To ensure the highest standards of workmanship, competence and customer care and promote industry best practice
- To ensure the safety of those visiting and working within Cemeteries, meeting all relevant standards
- To promote partnership, good long-term working relationships, innovation and development initiatives between all registered participants and the Council.

It is considered that working together will assist all Scheme Members to comply with the Regulations.

Registration emphasises the Council’s intent that all work carried out for and on behalf of the deceased and his family/representatives is of the highest standard.

4 Scope & Administration of the Scheme

Any Stonemason or Funeral Director who works, intends to work, or liaises with clients wishing to any of the Council's Cemeteries is required to be a registered member of the Scheme.

Stonemasons and Funeral Directors who are not Scheme Members are not permitted to work within any Cemetery under the management of the Council.

All Scheme Members must comply with the current Regulations at all times.

All applicants who wish to be considered for Registration must complete and submit Form A1, available on request from the Council (Section 11 below).

This Scheme is administered on behalf of the Council by the Service Manager, with support from the Cemeteries Representatives.

4.1 Requirements of the Scheme

All Scheme Members are required to adhere to the obligations detailed in the Scheme. These are the minimum acceptable requirements of the Council and may be amended and reviewed by the Council's

5 Eligibility

5.1 Insurance Requirements

Stonemasons and Funeral Directors applying for registration are required to be insured for Public Liability to the value of Five Million Pounds (£5,000,000) for any one incident. It is mandatory for all Scheme Members to provide current copies of insurance certificate(s) both in support of an application for membership and whenever these expire during Membership. Work within the Council's Cemeteries will not be processed unless the required insurance is in place.

Stonemasons need to provide copies of certificates outlining:

- Public liability, employers liability and professional indemnity cover.

Funeral Directors need to provide copies of certificates outlining:

- Public liability and employers liability cover.

Before or at expiry of this certificate it is the Scheme Member's responsibility to provide new current certificate copies promptly to ensure on-going membership and maintain permission to work within the Council's Cemeteries.

5.2 Workmanship, Materials and Construction

Stonemasons, Funeral Directors and persons instructed to undertake work on their behalf shall be suitably qualified, experienced and competent to perform all works necessary when arranging and carrying out a funeral. All memorial works, including erecting, dismantling and repairing memorials must conform with current

industry and statutory Health and Safety requirements and guidelines. The materials used should comply with industry recommendations.

Stonemasons and Funeral Directors are encouraged to attain current membership and qualifications from an accreditation scheme operated by a recognised industry body. Examples include the National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) or British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM). Copies of such certificates may accompany your application for Scheme Membership. *In-house* company schemes will be recognised if they are demonstrated to meet the required national standards, details will need to be provided when applying for membership.

5.2.1 Stonemasons

All Scheme Members will guarantee all individual memorials for safety and stability for a period of 10 years. Stonemasons must issue a guarantee (no less than 10 years). All guarantees issued must include an obligation to repair/replace all joints and materials that may fail during the course of the guarantee.

Scheme Members may not process or submit an application without first ensuring that the applicant is the current holder(s) of the EROB (Exclusive Right of Burial or Deed of Grant) for that grave.

Scheme Members are responsible for advising their customers on the best use of the memorial stone, to ensure all future internments (burial and subsequent cremated remains) can be included within the Regulations.

Sacrificial stones must straddle the integral space of the excavated grave to prevent subsidence.

Scheme Members must ensure that all materials used in the construction of memorials comply with industry codes of practice (Section 5.2) and are drawn from legal and sustainable sources.

All Scheme Members working on memorials within the Cemeteries administered by the Council are encouraged to be BRAMM or NAMM registered or submit copies of their qualifications and experience. A letter or certificates detailing qualification and experience of each contractor will accompany registration applications along with trade references.

5.2.2 Funeral Directors

Scheme Members are responsible for ensuring that they have visited the Cemetery in advance of the internment, carried out a Risk Assessment, implementing any findings and planned the route from gate to grave, including use of Chapel where applicable.

Scheme Members must continue to attend the grave-side until the internment is completed and the Council Cemeteries team are ready to back-fill.

5.3 Registration Scheme Compliance

Each Stonemason and Funeral Director joining the Scheme is required to have a copy of and comply with the following:

- Local Authorities Cemeteries Order (1977)
- NAMM Code of Working Practice (Latest Relevant Edition) / BRAMM Blue Book
- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- The Council's Safety Policy and Risk Assessment
- The relevant British Standards, (including BS8415)
- All other relevant statutory requirements.

Each Stonemason and Funeral Director will be supplied with and must comply with the following:

- The Council's Cemetery Regulations
- The Council's Stonemasons and Funeral Directors Registration Scheme

5.4 Previously Expelled Scheme Members

Stonemasons and Funeral Directors that have been banned from performing work in any of the Council's Cemeteries or elsewhere or otherwise disciplined within the last two years may be refused Registration onto the Scheme at the Council's discretion.

Each such case will be considered individually, with membership offered or withheld at the discretion of the Service Manager.

Stonemasons and Funeral Directors must submit details of any such exclusions or other disciplinary actions with their application for registration. Should they fail to disclose details of such exclusions or disciplinary actions, subsequently coming to the attention of the Council, it will result in the immediate expulsion from membership. The Council may consider imposing a further restriction precluding the Stonemason or Funeral Director from applying for re-registration for up to 2 years, after which a formal renewal application must be made.

6 Procedures

All internments and memorial installations in the Council's Cemeteries by registered participants of the Scheme must fully comply with the Regulations and the procedures outlined below.

6.1 Applications to Carry Out Work Within New Forest District Council Cemeteries

Prior to works within the Council's Cemeteries being undertaken, all works to be carried out must be approved by the Cemeteries Office. The Cemeteries Representative can be contacted using the details below:

E-mail: cemeteries@nfdc.gov.uk

Letter - Cemeteries Office, New Forest District Council, Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington SO41 9ZG

Fax: 02380 285755

Scheme Members are required to give the Cemeteries Office at least 2 working days' notice in writing prior to undertaking any work within one of the Council's Cemeteries, to avoid clashes with burials or other works being undertaken.

Scheme Members are responsible for ensuring that all applications comply with the Regulations. Scheme Members are required to advise their customers and the customer's families of the Council's requirements set out within the Regulations and to issue them with the most recent copy of this document. This prevents additional distress to the bereaved as a result of applications requiring amendment or rejection.

A valid copy of the EROB **must accompany all applications** for Internments, Memorial Applications or other related requests. Non-production of the EROB will delay their customer's request being progressed.

The Council will hold the Scheme Member submitting an application liable for the content, accuracy and correct completion of all necessary forms and applications.

Scheme Members are reminded of the requirement within the Regulations that the exact maximum external coffin or casket sizes must be measured and specified in inches, and must include the handles, if applicable. **These exact measurements must be declared on the Notice of Interment form when submitted.** No measurement allowances are permitted. Inaccurate details on these forms will result in disciplinary procedures (Section 8).

Scheme Members are responsible for ensuring they explain and issue their customers a copy of the Regulation, emphasising the requirements for the customer's chosen section (Lawn, Woodland, Traditional (kerbed), Cremated Remains or Children/Babies Sections) prior to a Notice of Interment application being made.

Scheme Members are responsible for advising their customers if their internment is outside of the maximum sizes that can be accommodated and if a double-plot is therefore required, prior to any application being made.

Memorial Applications must be checked by the Scheme Member before submission to ensure they comply with maximum sizes. Kerbset applications will only be permitted within traditional/permitted sections only.

Scheme Members identified to be failing to advise and issue customers the NFDC Regulations or those deemed to be submitting speculative Memorial Applications will be subject to Disciplinary Procedures (Section 8).

Scheme Members agree to rectify at their own expense any works that need to be dismantled as a consequence of the Scheme Member erecting a memorial that does not meet the requirements of the Regulations.

6.2 Memorial Installation or Maintenance

No work on in-situ or new memorials shall be carried out unless the appropriate application has been approved in writing by the Cemeteries Representative. There will be no exceptions to this requirement which must be strictly adhered to. Scheme Members are reminded of the requirements set out within Section 6.2. The Scheme Member will be given a Permit for each memorial application granted which must be available to be produced for inspection when requested by a Cemeteries Representative.

Scheme Members do not need to complete a Memorial Application for in-situ memorial cleaning maintenance for memorials they installed. It is the responsibility of the Scheme Member to ensure works are undertaken with consideration to adjacent memorials. It is the scheme member's responsibility to ensure that ONLY work instructed by the EROB is carried out regarding cleaning of headstones.

All memorials must comply with BS8415 & the NAMM Recommended Code of Practice.

Scheme Members are not permitted to install any memorials or plaques within Woodland Sections, Memorial Garden areas or on any donated or the Council's memorial benches.

Scheme Members must install the memorial within 12 months of the memorial application being approved; failure will require the submission of a new application and repayment of the fee.

Scheme Members must take pictures of the front and the reverse of the memorial on which they worked and submit these alongside the cut off section of the form to the Cemeteries Office for confirmation of works.

6.2.1 Memorial Inspections

The Council staff may inspect the installation of a memorial either as the work proceeds or after completion. Where work is found to be unacceptable either because it does not conform to the Scheme standards or for any other reason, the Cemeteries Representative will instruct the Scheme Member and EROB holder(s)

that rectification works are required to meet the Council's standards at the expense of the Scheme Member who installed the memorial and not the EROB holder.

The Council undertakes its duty to ensure the provision of safe open spaces and Cemeteries through mandatory memorial "topple" testing. This is undertaken on a cyclic programme, with all memorials tested by trained personnel as outlined in Section 6.3.

6.3 Post Work Inspection

The Council may inspect a memorial following installation or completion of other work. This may occur during routine Cemetery maintenance or in response to an enquiry.

Where work is suspected or identified to not meet the required Scheme standards, the Cemeteries Representative may instruct the Scheme Member to re-erect the memorial to ensure compliance with the Scheme's standards, the Cemetery Regulations and any other relevant standards (such as BRAMM, NAMM etc).

The costs of dismantling and re-erecting in these circumstances is the responsibility of the Stonemason or Funeral Director. The Council reserves the right to charge a fee for re-inspection of the memorial where this arises due to the actions of the Scheme Member.

All memorials are subject to mandatory inspections by the Council at least every 5 years to comply with our duty of care, Health and Safety Executive & Ministry of Justice Guidelines. Scheme Members should take this into consideration when issuing their guarantee. Any repairs, replacement of joints or other parts of the memorial considered necessary from the inspection shall be notified to the registered EROB Holder(s) in writing. All remedial works need to be completed within 28 days of written notification being issued.

6.3.1 Refusal to Co-operate

If the Scheme Member refuses to co-operate following post-work inspections the Cemeteries Representative may, at their discretion, engage a third party (a qualified Stonemason registered under the Scheme) to perform the work. In these circumstances, whether the work complies or fails to comply with the Scheme standards, the costs incurred by the third party will be the responsibility of the Scheme Member originally installing the memorial.

Scheme Members refusing to cooperate will face action under the Disciplinary Procedures (Section 8) of the Scheme.

7 Tendering

The Council may require the submission of tenders for a range of memorial works, including inspection, repair, removal and replacement of memorials. Scheme Members will be eligible to tender for any such works, tenders above EU thresholds will be tendered under EU guidelines.

8 Penalty Procedures

To ensure that the Scheme standards are maintained and Scheme Members are operating in uniformity with these standards, the Cemeteries Representative will operate a procedure which applies to all Scheme Members.

8.1 Stage 1: Breach of the Scheme Standards

Following an investigation by the Cemeteries Representative indicating a confirmed breach of the Scheme standards, a written warning will be issued by the Service Manager. The written warning shall be maintained on the Scheme Member's record for a period of 18 months from the date of issue.

If no further breach(es) occur during that period, the warning will be removed from the record.

8.2 Stage 2: Subsequent Breach of the Scheme Standards or failure to Rectify Stage 1 Breach

Throughout the 18 month period following a Stage 1 Breach (Section 8.1), another breach of the Scheme standards is committed, or the original Stage 1 breach is not rectified to the satisfaction of the Service Manager, this will result in the issue of a Final Written Warning.

A Final Written Warning shall be maintained on the Stonemason's or Funeral Director's record for a period of 36 months. If no further breaches occur during that period the warning will then be removed from the record.

8.3 Gross Misconduct

Certain circumstances shall be considered Gross Misconduct and will not be subject to the above stages of the disciplinary procedure. The Service Manager will decide, at his/her discretion, whether or not an incident constitutes Gross Misconduct. Examples include unsafe working practices or undertaking actions which directly, indirectly, or has the potential to bring the reputation of the Council into disrepute.

8.4 Exclusion from Registration

Scheme Members found guilty of Gross Misconduct or committing a further breach of the Scheme standards within the 36 month term, as described in Stage 2 (Section 8.2) will be removed from the Scheme.

The Scheme Member will be precluded from applying for re-registration and from carrying out any work within the Council's Cemeteries for a period of 2 years from the date of expulsion.

In instances of exclusion for Gross Misconduct the Service Manager, at their discretion, may consider advising other local authorities or industry registration schemes of the circumstances.

8.5 Re-registration following an Exclusion

A Scheme Members committing any breach of the Scheme Standards, or an act of Gross Misconduct, during the 18 month period following his/her re-registration following expulsion, may be excluded from Registration for a further period at the discretion of the Service Manager.

8.6 Penalty Procedure Appeal

A Stonemason or Funeral Director not satisfied with the decision made under this y Procedures is entitled to appeal.

An appeal may only be made in writing and must be submitted within 14 days from the date of the decision letter that notified the Stonemason or Funeral Director.

An appeal must clearly state the reasons for the appeal and only these reasons will be admissible at the appeal hearing. Appeals will be heard by the Executive Head responsible for Cemeteries.

9 Review of Scheme and Modifications

Scheme Members and the Council may jointly review the rules, requirements and performance of the Scheme on a periodic basis.

Following notification of a revision of the Scheme rules, Scheme Members may allow their membership to lapse or submit a new Scheme application. The Council reserves the right to ask all Scheme Members to re-register following a major review of the Scheme.

To promote meaningful and representative Registration Scheme procedures, any registered member may propose amendments to the Scheme. The Cemeteries Representative, in conjunction with the Service Manager, shall conduct an initial appraisal of these suggestions. Feedback to the Scheme Member will be given. Those suggestions providing an improvement to the Scheme will be progressed for inclusion within future revisions.

10 Further Reading

- New Forest District Council; www.newforest.gov.uk
- Managing the safety of Burial Ground Memorials – Ministry of Justice, UK Government.
- British Standard BS8415
- Documents outlined in Section 5.3
- Natural Burial Grounds (2009), Ministry of Justice, UK

Stonemason & Funeral Directors Registration Scheme



email: cemeteries@nfdc.gov.uk

Please sign and post to:

Cemeteries Office, Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington SO41 9ZG,

Telephone: 023 8028 5952

11 Form A1 - Scheme Registration Agreement

ALL boxes to be completed in BLOCK CAPITALS. **Part completed forms will be returned.**

I declare that I have read and understood the New Forest District Council's Stonemasons and Funeral Director's Registration Scheme requirements and the Council's current Cemetery Regulations and declare that I will comply with the Council's Cemeteries Regulations and the above named Registration Scheme requirements.

Company Name:	
If Subsidiary, State Parent Company:	
Address:	
Post Code:	Telephone:
Email:	Website:
Date of commencement of business:	
Details of Insurance and Public Liability Cover: (Copy Enclosed, of a valid certificate must be resubmitted). <i>Please tick that copies are enclosed.</i>	
Stonemasons: Public Liability <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Liability <input type="checkbox"/> Employee Liability <input type="checkbox"/> Sample Risk Assessment <input type="checkbox"/>	Funeral Directors: Public Liability <input type="checkbox"/> Employee Liability <input type="checkbox"/> Sample Risk Assessment <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Association Membership(s): (Optional)</i> BRAMM, Membership Number: Current Certificate Attached <input type="checkbox"/> NAMM, Membership Number: Current Certificate Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Other Association / Company Scheme(s):	
Trade References:	
1)	2)

As an authorized person of the above stated organization, I agree to adhere to all Rules, Bye-Laws, Cemetery Regulations, Health and Safety Requirements, Insurance liabilities, Installation and Maintenance Specifications, Inspection procedures and all other Requirements as laid down by this Scheme. I have not been excluded from the Council's and/or other council schemes within the last 2 years.

Signed by:	
Print Name:	
Position:	Dated:

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CABINET - 5 APRIL 2017

**PORTFOLIOS: FINANCE AND
EFFICIENCY AND HEALTH AND
LEISURE**

ELING TIDE MILL AND LEARNING CENTRE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet of the significant work that has taken place in recent weeks in tendering a number of contract packages that make up the total project at Eling Tide Mill and Learning Centre.
- 1.2 To seek additional funding to allow the project to continue.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council, at its meeting on the 8 September 2014 (minute 24 refers), approved a recommendation from the Cabinet that the Council should act as the Accountable body for the delivery of the Eling Tide Mill and Learning Centre project, at an estimated total budget costs of £1,657,675 and acknowledged the grant conditions and responsibilities related to the award from the Heritage Lottery Fund of £1,379,300.
- 2.2 The District Council had approved a budget contribution of £165,000 towards the total budget cost, with Totton and Eling Town Council contributing £65,000. The remainder of the budget is made up of Volunteer contributions (£8,300) and External Fund Raising (£40,075)
- 2.3 On the 28 July 2015 the District Council, as part of the Lottery Funding agreement, granted Totton and Eling Town Council a 26 year lease of the Eling Tide Mill and Toll Bridge, with the lease expiring on 31 December 2039.
- 2.4 The project has proved to be very complex and is currently behind its original programme timing. In the last 12 months work has been progressed, with all of the various elements of this project now exposed to formal competitive tendering arrangements. The Council has engaged Ramboll as a specialist in project management to assist the Council with the professional and technical advice that is needed to procure works of this nature. Work is currently underway to agree project management protocols with Ramboll for the continued project management arrangements for the restoration on the Eling Tide Mill and Learning Centre.
- 2.5 Following the return of all the tender packages the project projected a shortfall in funding of £398,135. The Council has looked where possible to value engineer some of the tender returns to reduce this shortfall.
- 2.6 On 16 September 2016 the Eling Tide Mill Project Board met and discussed the projected overspend and the possible actions going forward. It was also noted by the Board that inflation on construction projects like this had risen by 17.15% since the project submission in 2014. This amounts to £270,400 on a project of this value.
- 2.7 The Project Board recommended that the District Council, as the Accountable Body, approach the Heritage Lottery Fund to seek further funding for the additional costs of

this project. Previously the Lottery fund had awarded an 83% grant (£1,379,300) compared to a total project cost of £1,657,675.

- 2.8 The Project Board also recommended that the Heritage Lottery Fund be approached to seek funding on a similar basis to the previous 83% (£330,900) with the District Council and the Town Council contributing to the remaining 17% (£67,235) equally, £33,618 for each organisation.
- 2.9 Following discussions with the Heritage lottery Fund we have now received confirmation of the additional funding of £330,900.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The capital budget requires a gross increase of £398,135. The additional budget contribution by this Council of £33,618, as identified in paragraph 2.8, requires Cabinet approval.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council has a requirement to protect its historic buildings.

5. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None

6. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

Finance and Efficiency: I support this and am pleased to see the project going forward.

Health and Leisure: I am obviously very pleased that our request for extra funding for the Eling Tide Mill project has been approved by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Since we started the scheme inflation has increase by a significant 17.15%. This increase in building costs has naturally put pressure on the original proposals, which, due to the complexity of the site, has meant a delay in the original programme.

Nevertheless, working in partnership with Totton and Eling Town Council we have been able to find a solution which, when completed, will enhance the cultural and historical value of the New Forest further still.

With this grant allocation we can now begin to award contracts and move the project forward.

Finally, my thanks to go to the Officers for their hard work in this endeavour

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That Cabinet approve the additional funding of £33,618

For further information contact:

Colin Read
Executive Head of Operations
Tel: 02380 285588
E-mail: colin.read@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Published documents

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WRITE OFF POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Following the recent senior management restructure, officer delegations and authorisations have been reviewed. The review highlighted the need to update the process for writing off debt.
- 1.2 This report seeks approval for the adoption of a new write off code of practice, principally to ensure the limits are reasonable and appropriate and to ensure the delegations fit with the new senior management structure.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The write off procedure falls under Financial Regulations which states that:
 - the S151 Officer is authorised to write off uncollectable or cancelled debt;
 - prior to write off all debts must be submitted with full details; and
 - all written off debt must be reported to the Audit Committee annually.

3. EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 The following ten service areas are responsible for the collection of income and administration of debt write offs:
 - Council Tax
 - Business Rates
 - Overpaid Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit
 - Accounts Receivable
 - Housing Rents
 - Garages
 - Penalty Charge Notices
 - Stores
 - Health and Leisure Centres
 - Estates and Valuations
- 3.2 The S151 Officer delegates to the relevant Service Manager the approval of debt write offs that fall within a pre-agreed set of parameters and circumstances.
- 3.3 The code of practice (Appendix 1) requires the ten service areas to prepare write off schedules for approval in the same way but ensuring the write off is coded against criteria for write off. The criteria are listed in Appendix 2.
- 3.4 Where a write off is requested outside of the standard reasons the account with full supporting paperwork must be submitted to the S151 Officer via Internal Audit (which may highlight possible system failures) for approval.
- 3.5 The effectiveness of these arrangements is reported on as follows:

- Annually each Service Manager arranges for a full system reconciliation to demonstrate write offs have been processed accurately and report collection performance and the annual amount and breakdown of write off reasons to the S151 Officer.
- From this information a single report is submitted to the Audit Committee by the S151 Officer. (Example of pro forma at Appendix 3)

Additionally, Internal Audit will complete an annual systems audit on write offs processed.

4. PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 The existing arrangements as outlined above are being adhered to, and the annual reporting process is deemed as sufficient and appropriate.
- 4.2 Some minor housekeeping is required to update the Code of Practise (Appendix 2) to take into consideration the new Senior Management structure. A couple of minor changes are also proposed to the established policy;
- The delegated 'upper limits per debtor' values are in need of updating, as outlined within Appendix 2.
 - The Section 151 officer may be required to agree appropriate write-off limits, if new lines of income are generated, not covered by the list of service areas in paragraph 3.1.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct budget implications. Whilst write offs impact on the level of revenue received, this is not affected by this report.

6. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENT AND CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet approve the updated code of practice for write offs, as attached as Appendices 1 and 2 to this report, with effect from 5 April 2017.

For further information please contact:

Alan Bethune
 Service Manager – Finance (S151) & Audit
 Tel: 023 8028 5588
 Email: Alan.Bethune@NFDC.gov.uk

Background Papers:

None

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that “every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of financial affairs and shall secure that one of their Officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs”. This responsibility is vested with the Section 151 Officer. This code of practice seeks to ensure that the role of the Section 151 Officer is not compromised.
- 1.2 To ensure this proper administration, the Section 151 Officer has an obligation under the Authority’s Financial Regulations for write offs. The Section 151 Officer may authorise an officer (Service Manager) to authorise an uncollectable or cancelled debt to be written off. This delegation carries with it accountability.
- 1.3 The previously established Code of Practice has now been updated with the intention of formalising procedures and to maintain consistency across the Authority.

2.0 POLICY

- 2.1 The code of practice will set out standards to act as a guide for each Service Manager to follow. Appendix 2 sets out the service area, the maximum amount per debtor and criteria for the write off that each Service Manager can approve.
- 2.2 Each of the **ten** identified service areas in appendix 2 will prepare write off schedules.
- 2.3 A summary page will show the total amount to be written off or on and the number of accounts by criteria. Accompanying paperwork will show the account to be written off **or on**, the value, which of the criteria the write off falls under and any background information or evidence.
- 2.4 The Senior Manager within the service is then responsible for checking the summary details and carrying out spots checks, with exception to the Accounts Receivable team, who will send individual schedules to BRO’s for approval and spot checks, before signing the schedule. Any queries should be raised at this time. Once satisfied the Senior Manager will sign the schedule.
- 2.5 The signed schedule is passed to the relevant Service Manager for approval. Authorised Service Managers for each service are listed in appendix 2.
- 2.6 Where the write off is for an exceptional item or over the maximum amount per debtor as listed on appendix 2, the Service Manager must submit the account to the Section 151 Officer for approval via Internal Audit.
- 2.7 Approved accounts for write off should be sent to the relevant Systems Officer for action who will retain all paperwork.
- 2.8 Collection performance and write offs approved to be reported to the S151 Officer.

Year End Process

- 2.9 Each Service Manager to ensure that the approved accounts to be written off **or on** have been actioned correctly through system reconciliations.
- 2.10 Following the reconciliation (attached as appendix 3), a nominated Service Manager or a delegated officer, to compile and submit a report by 31st May each year, to include write offs for all services, to the Section 151 Officer (for the annual report to Audit Committee) showing;
- the total amount (£) and
 - the number of accounts written off by agreed criteria

APPENDIX 2

SERVICE AREA	SERVICE MANAGER RESPONSIBLE	WRITE OFF / ON CRITERIA	UPPER £ LIMIT PER DEBTOR
Council Tax	Housing & Community	Bankruptcy Abscond Small Balance (up to £500) Deceased Bailiff unable to collect/no goods on which to levy Indiv. Vol. Agreement / Debt Relief Order	£3,500
Business Rates	Housing & Community	Bankruptcy/Liquidation Abscond Small Balance (up to £500) Deceased Bailiff unable to collect / no goods on which to levy Indiv. Vol. Agreement / Debt Relief Order	£3,500
Council Tax and Housing Benefit (including Fraudulent cases)	Housing & Community	Bankruptcy Abscond Small Balance (up to £500) Deceased LA Error DWP Error Collection Agency unable to collect Indiv. Vol. Agreement / Debt Relief Order	£3,500
Housing Rents	Housing & Community	Bankruptcy Abscond Small Balance (up to £500) Deceased	£3,500
Accounts Receivable	Housing & Community	Bankruptcy Abscond Small Balance (up to £500) Deceased Uneconomic to pursue through the court Indiv. Vol. Agreement / Debt Relief Order	£1,500
Penalty Charge Notices	Street Scene	Bankruptcy Abscond Deceased Bailiff unable to collect / no goods on which to levy Foreign Vehicle	£1,500
Garages	Housing Property & Performance	Bankruptcy Abscond Small Balance Deceased	£1,500
Stores	Building Works	Obsolete / Damaged Stock Picking Error	£1,500
Health and Leisure Centres	Health & Leisure	Small Balance (up to £500) Missing Membership Proofs	£1,500
Estates & Valuations	Legal / Estates	Bankruptcy Abscond Small Balance (up to £500) Deceased	£1,500
All	Section 151 Officer	Any write off/on including; Partial write offs of live accounts, paying accounts, large balances, any other exceptional reason	NO LIMIT

Example of the Annual Submission and Quarterly Report

Service Area	Reason for Write off	Amount Written off £'000	No of Accounts	Annual Income / Turnover £M	Provision Made 31/3/xx £'000	Arrears Balance as at 31/3/xx £'000	Write Off as % of Turnover %
Council Tax	Bankruptcy						
	Abscond						
	Small balance						
	Deceased						
	Bailiff unable to collect / no goods on which to levy						
	Indiv. Vol. Agreement / Debt Relief Order						
	Total						

Service Area	Reason for Write off	Amount Written off Q1 £'000	No of Accounts Q1	Amount Written off Q2 £'000	No of Accounts Q2	Amount Written off Q3 £'000	No of Accounts Q3	Amount Written off Q4 £'000	No of Accounts Q4
Council Tax	Bankruptcy								
	Abscond								
	Small balance								
	Deceased								
	Bailiff unable to collect / no goods on which to levy								
	Indiv. Vol. Agreement / Debt Relief Order								
	Total								

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FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT (2016/17 provisional outturn)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides a provisional outturn on the 2016/17 budget following on from the previous monitoring report to Cabinet in November.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council's financial strategy of a continuous review of activities and services to identify opportunities for savings in expenditure alongside opportunities to generate income has been successful in addressing the significant reductions in government funding whilst at the same time maintaining key service levels. Budget monitoring reports form an important part of this process and support the ongoing development of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
- 2.2 It is important that this report is reviewed in the context of the MTFP as it includes material upfront transitional costs that have been incurred as a result of the Council's need to identify on-going savings in order to deliver a significantly reduced balanced budget going forward.

3. GENERAL FUND 2016/17 OUTTURN PROJECTION

- 3.1 A General Fund budget of £17.192m for 2016/17 was agreed by Council in February 2016. Net positive variations reported to Cabinet in August and November amounted to **£1.436m** and a reduced updated budget total for 2016/17 of **£15.756m**.
- 3.2 This report identifies new positive budget variations of **£881k** and new budget requirements of **£430k**. In addition, the report identifies budgets rephased to later years of **£1.103m** with the amount returned to reserves. **The latest General Fund estimated outturn is now £15.305m**. The following table provides an overview of the variations and full details are provided in sections 3.5 to 3.7:

	Para.	Savings £'000	New Req. £'000	Rephasing £'000	Total £'000
Original Budget 2016/17					17,192
Variations agreed in August	3.1	-731	110	2,297	1,676
Transfer from Reserves in August	3.1		-33	-2,297	-2,330
Variations agreed in November	3.1	-1,061	279	-272	-1,054
Transfer to Reserves in November	3.1			272	272
Updated Budget November 2016		-1,792	356	0	15,756
Portfolio / Committee Items	3.5	-765	412	-200	-553
Asset Maintenance / Replacement	3.6	-116	18	-603	-701
Business Development / Third Party	3.7			-300	-300
Total Budget Variations This Period		-881	430	-1,103	-1,554
Transfer to Reserves This Period				1,103	1,103
Updated Budget 2016/17		-2,673	786	0	15,305

3.3 The table identifies total savings for the year of nearly £2.7m, with the majority of these being on-going and so included within the 2017/18 budget. In order to deliver this required significant level of on-going savings, the Council has incurred one-off costs during the year, as included within the £786k shown above.

3.4 The level of incomplete projects and so rephasings required from 2016/17 (outlined in more detail between 3.5 – 3.7) will necessitate a review of the total revised 2017/18 programme to ensure that the updated 2017/18 budget, including the rephased projects, reflects a deliverable programme. The outcome of this exercise will be included on the first Financial Monitoring report of 2017/18 (August '17 Cabinet).

3.5 PORTFOLIO/COMMITTEE ITEMS

Savings; £765k

- £230k – Various savings have occurred throughout the Environment Portfolio; predominantly £100k in Streetscene, £70k in Recycling and £40k in Environmental Health (ENV).
- £100k – Health & Leisure Centre Income is ahead of target to the value of £100k, bringing the total income generation to just over £6m for the year (H&L).
- £100k – Car Parking Income is ahead of budget to the value of £50k and staffing expenditure is £50k lower than the budget (P&T).
- £91k – Additional benefits administration grants have been received in 2016/17, totalling £50k, and other miscellaneous savings have occurred across the Finance and Efficiency Portfolio totalling £41k (F&E).
- £79k – Expenditure in Customer Services has been reduced in 2016/17 as a result of a new structure in order to meet required savings. Savings in Business Improvement have occurred due to a post vacancy (F&E).
- £70k – Planning Fee income will be ahead of the annual budget by £100k, partially offset by increased staffing expenditure of £30k (PDC).

- £50k – Taxi Licensing income is ahead of budget by £50k (GP&L).
- £45k – A one-off bulk purchase of Brand New Forest cards from the externally funded glass recycling text reward scheme has resulted in additional Economic Development income of £45k (Leaders).

New Requirements; £412k

- £352k – Further one-off costs have been incurred in 2016/17 relating to staff redundancies, in order for the Council to set a significantly reduced budget for 2017/18, in line with government funding reductions. (Various).
- £60k – Land Charges income is behind on the annual target. An adjustment will need to be made to the 2017/18 budget (P&T).

Rephasings; £200k

- £200k – A delay in the kerbside glass recycling project has resulted in a rephasing of budget of £200k into future years (ENV).

Other Comments

- Building Control – Despite a reduction in income in 2016/17 against the budget and in comparison to the 2015/16 financial year, offsetting savings have been identified, predominantly in staffing, in order to achieve a breakeven position against the budget.
- Community Housing Fund – A strategy will be drawn up in line with government requirements to spend this new fund, £488k of which was received by the Council in 2016/17. This amount will be placed into earmarked reserves.

3.6 ASSET MAINTENANCE / REPLACEMENT

Savings; £116k

- £116k – The overall total is £127k, of which £11k relates to the Housing Revenue Account. The impact on the General Fund is therefore a reduction in costs of £116k;

	GF	HRA
• Offices & Depots	£50k	£11k
• P&T (Parking)	£47k	
• Health & Leisure	£19k	

New Requirements; £18k

- £18k – Minor overspends totalling £18k have occurred;

• ICT	£16k
• Environment	£2k

Rephasings; £603k

- £603k – incomplete projects in need of rephasing to future years total £603k;

• Offices & Depots	£6k
• P&T (Parking)	£165k
• Health & Leisure	£243k
• ICT	£165k
• Environment	£24k

3.7 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT/THIRD PARTY GRANTS

Rephasings to 2017/18; £300k

- £300k – The rebuild of 2 Public Conveniences is well underway, but will not complete until April 2017 (ENV).

4. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE (General Fund and Housing Revenue Account)

- 4.1 The Capital Programme agreed in February 2016 amounted to £20.669m. New requirements approved by Cabinet in August and November amounted to **£1.463m** and this, together with net rephasings into 2017/18 of **£789k** resulted in a revised capital budget of **£21.343m**.
- 4.2 This is now reduced to a revised capital budget of **£17.799m** to reflect net budget adjustments of **£1.494m** and rephasings of schemes to future years of **£2.050m**, as outlined in the table below and reflected in paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4:

	Savings £'000	New Req. £'000 Para 4.3	Rephasing £'000 Para 4.4	Total £'000
Original Budget April 2016/17				20,669
Variations agreed in August		1,363	2,161	3,524
Variations agreed in November		100	-2,950	-2,850
Updated Budget November 2016/17	0	1,463	-789	21,343
Public Sector Housing	-1,694	231		-1,463
Other Services	-161	130	-2,050	-2,081
Total Budget Variations This Period	-1,855	361	-2,050	-3,544
Updated Budget 2016/17	-1,855	1,824	-2,839	17,799

4.3 Savings; £1.855m

- £1.6m – The Compton & Sarum project will now commence in 2017/18, rather than in 2016/17. The original budget for 2017/18 already includes the relevant sum, so the 2016/17 budget will be returned to reserves (HRA).
- £94k – Minor underspends on other HRA capital projects (HRA).
- £161k – No Social Housing Grant has been required in 2016/17 (£100k), and an underspend has occurred on the home repairs budget (£61k) (H&C's).

4.4 New Requirements; £361k

- £231k – The outturn position on the £4m House Acquisition budget for 2016/17 is forecast to be £230k over.
- £130k – Additional Open Space projects have been approved in 2016/17, increasing the spend by £130k, funded by use of Developers' Contributions.

4.5 Rephasings; £2.050m

- Capital costs originally assumed for 2016/17 now rephased to 2017/18 or future years broken down as follows:

	£'000	£'000
Housing & Communities		
· Disabled Facilities Grants	310	
		<hr/> 310
Environment:		
· Procurement of Cemeteries' Land	200	
· Milford-on-Sea Project	400	
		<hr/> 600
Finance & Efficiency:		
· Vehicle & Plant Acquisitions	268	
		<hr/> 268
Health & Leisure:		
· Eling Experience	872	
		<hr/> 872
TOTAL		<hr/> <hr/> 2,050

5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

- 5.1 A break-even HRA budget for 2016/17 was agreed in February 2016. The following table summarises the revised position, taking into account the previously reported and new variations (detailed in paragraphs 5.2 – 5.4):

	Original Budget	Previously Reported Variations	New Variations (Para. 5.2 - 5.5)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Income	-28,113		-14
Revenue Maintenance	4,770		
Supervision & Management	5,027	-61	-211
Rents, Rates, Taxes & Other Charges	11		
Provision for Bad Debt	150		
Capital Financing Costs	4,488		
Contribution to Capital	13,667	-1,900	-94
Expenditure	28,113	-1,961	-305

5.2 The majority of the £211k variation as included in the table above relates to staffing savings (£90k) and delayed ICT purchases (£50k). Asset Maintenance and Replacement programme savings identified for offices and depots, in paragraph 3.6, will result in an £11k saving for the Housing Revenue Account.

5.3 As a result of savings within the capital programme, as outlined in section 4, the HRA contribution towards the capital programme will reduce by £94k.

5.4 In accordance with current policy any underspend in the Housing Revenue Account at the year-end, after ensuring the optimum use of capital and revenue resources available, will be transferred to the Acquisitions and Development Reserve, retaining the current Housing Revenue Account general reserve balance at c£1m.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER / EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no Crime & Disorder, Equality & Diversity or Environmental implications arising directly from this report.

7. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

7.1 Given the challenging economic climate in which local government operates I am pleased to see better than expected income delivery on improved end of year outturn.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that Cabinet notes the latest budget forecasts of the General Fund (para 3.2), Capital (para 4.2) and HRA (para 5.1) for 2016/17.

For Further Information Please Contact:

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Background Papers:

Financial Monitoring Report 03-08-16
Financial Monitoring Report 02-11-16
Medium Term Financial Plan 01-02-17