

CLAUSE	MM01
TITLE	Recommendations from the Cemetery Working Group
FROM	John Dal Broi, Councillor
TRIM REF	17/92806

SUMMARY

Notwithstanding this Mayoral Minute is authored by Mayor John Dal Broi, the substance of the Mayoral Minute has been produced as a consequence of outcomes of the Cemetery Working Group.

I reserve the opportunity to make commentary to any matter contained in the Mayoral Minute and attachments.

The following Notice of Motion raised by Cr Zappacosta was adopted at the Ordinary Meeting of Council 13 June 2017:

RESOLVED on the motion of Councillors Dino Zappacosta and Simon Croce that:

- (a) *As a matter of urgency, Council review the policy on ornaments placed at grave sites at the Griffith and Yenda Cemeteries.*
- (b) *A moratorium be in place on the removal of ornaments placed on grave sites at Griffith and Yenda Cemeteries until the review process is completed.*
- (c) *Cemetery rules to apply to any new interments from this point forward until the review process is completed.*

The matter was referred to Council's General Facilities Committee who resolved to form a Cemetery Working Group to review the Cemetery Management Plan. The Working Group was to consist of Councillors, local funeral directors and community members.

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) **Council place the proposed draft amendments (Attachment (a)) to the Cemetery Management Plan on public exhibition for 28 days.**
- (b) **If any submissions are received, a further report be prepared for Council.**
- (c) **If no submissions are received, the draft amendments be considered as adopted by Council as at the date of the conclusion of the advertised exhibition period.**

REPORT

Chaired by Councillor Curran, the Cemetery Working Group held a number of meetings to review the Cemetery Management Plan and also conducted a site visit to the lawn cemetery to identify problem areas. Minutes of Meetings and accompanying outcomes are attached. The Working Group focused on addressing the issues in the Lawn Sections of the cemetery and the resolved that the Monument & Infant sections of the cemetery will be reviewed at a later date.

The Group focused on reviewing the following key issues in the lawn sections of the cemetery:

- Flower Vases
- Embellishments
- Solar lights
- Flags
- Special Occasions
- Plot identification signage
- Next of kin contacts

The Working Group identified a number of plots in the Lawn Cemetery that had flower receptacles that were not able to accommodate reasonable sized bunches of flowers. The Working Group recommended that a test core drill be done on four test plots to determine if flower receptacles could be enlarged. If the tests are successful, the process is to be made available to other plots on an application process.

The Working Group recognised that on Council's current Right of Burial forms there is only space for one name to be listed. The Working Group requests that the form be modified to allow the collection of additional contact details for more than one person.

The Working Group identified inconsistencies between the existing Cemetery Management Plan and the signage placed in the cemetery and requested that these be addressed as well as new brochures and fact sheets to be prepared and published on Council's website. These documents can also be distributed by local funeral directors.

OPTIONS

- (a) Council place on public exhibition the attached amendments to the Cemetery Management Plan for 28 days
- (b) Council make further amendments to the Working Group recommendations
- (c) Council not approve amendments of the Working Group to the Cemetery Management plan

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Cemetery Management Plan is currently a public document that guides the operational procedures of the cemetery, this plan is reviewed on an as needs basis. The Working group have recommended that the cemetery management plan be changed to a Cemetery management policy and this will enable a regular review every term of council (four years).

The recommendations from the Cemetery Working Group will form part of the new policy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- a) The Cemetery Working Group have recommended those flower receptacles identified as not-fit-for purpose require rehabilitation to be more suitable. It is proposed to undertake a trial implementation of new flower receptacles to be installed on specifically identified lawn plots. If this trial is successful the procedure will be available on application to the rest of the lawn cemetery. There are some unbudgeted costs associated with these works and which will initially be funded from Councils operational allocation to the cemetery. Future implementation of the rehabilitation may require a quarterly budget review adjustment.
- b) The implementation of some of the recommendations from the Cemetery Working Group may require additional administration resources. These resources are currently not funded and may result in an increase in Council's cemetery fees.

LEGAL/STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

The Cemetery Working Group reviewed the status of the Cemetery and found that it was a Crown Reserve Cemetery gazetted in 1920 and subject to the *Crown Lands (General Reserves) By-law 2006*:

26 *Placing of objects on or near burial places*

(1) The following objects are not to be placed on or near a grave, monument, crypt or vault in a reserve:

- (a) ceramic or glass objects that are fragile or breakable,*
- (b) metal objects, or any other objects, that are likely to cause a risk to health or safety,*
- (c) any item that extends beyond the boundaries of the grave, monument, crypt or vault.*

(2) Any vase, statuette, jar, bottle or other item of embellishment is not to be placed on or near a grave, monument, crypt or vault in a reserve in contravention of a direction given to the person by an authorised person.

These sections of legislation are binding on Council as the trustee of the Griffith Cemetery. The recommendations of the Cemetery Working Group incorporates the intent of this section of legislation by upholding section 26 (1) and also providing conditions for the placement of some embellishments within section 26(2).

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

COMMUNITY IMPLICATIONS

Council formed through the General Facilities Committee a Cemetery Working Group to review the Cemetery Management Plan, and this enabled members of the community to have an input to the review and subsequent modification of the Cemetery management Plan.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This item links to Council's Strategic Plan item 1.2 Be well informed, proactive and responsive to current issues that impact our community.

CONSULTATION

Senior Management Team

ATTACHMENTS

- (a) Final recommendations from the Cemetery Working Group to the Cemetery Management Plan
- (b) Responses to Cemetery Issues Raised - 4 August, 28 August and 4 September 2017
- (c) Minutes - Cemetery Working Group - 4 September 2017

- (d) Minutes - Cemetery Working Group - 28 August 2017
- (e) Minutes - Cemetery Working Group - 21 August 2017
- (f) Minutes - Cemetery Working Group - 4 August 2017