Cabinet

22 September 2011

Policies for the Management of the Councils Cemeteries

Key Decision: NH/NS/15/10

Report of Corporate Management Team
Terry Collins, Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services,
Cllr Brian Stephens, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider, in the light of public consultation, proposals for the management of the County Councils Cemeteries.

Background

2. On 13 April 2011 Cabinet reviewed a series of draft policies for the management of the County Councils cemeteries. These proposals were informed using feedback from a Members Seminar held on 15 November 2010 and covered the following areas:
   - Further development of cemeteries as space runs out.
   - Dealing with unsafe memorials
   - Approach to kerbside surrounds
   - Approach to adornments on graves
   - Approach to charging for residents from outside the County.
   - Approach to municipal funerals, incurred at public expense
   - Approach to woodland burial sites
   - Approach to charging for family searches

3. Members recognised that this is a sensitive, and potentially emotive issue in sometimes balancing the wishes of many cemetery visitors, with their expectation of a well maintained and respectful surroundings, with the personal needs of the bereaved who may hold strong views as to the look of their friend or relatives graveside and how they feel they wish them to be remembered. In view of this sensitivity, Members approved a consultation exercise to be undertaken with residents and stakeholders involved in bereavement services (for example clergy, funeral directors, stonemasons and others).

4. Consultation began on 3 May 2011 and ended on 25 July 2011, with a wide variety of organisations contacted and alongside residents invited to respond either directly or using a questionnaire format on the County Councils website.

A total of 235 responses were received, with 218 being online and 17 returned in paper format. The majority of responses (92%) were from members of the public, however clergy, monumental masons and funeral directors also responded. Whilst the majority of respondents (78%) considered themselves of Christian faith, there were small (or single) numbers of Jewish, Humanist, Jehovah's Witness, together with those expressing atheist and 17.7% expressing none. Written responses included a meeting and subsequent letter from the Durham Diocesan Advisory Committee.

5. It is noteworthy that five of the County Councils cemeteries were awarded Green Flag status this year in recognition of their standards of maintenance, environmental practices and community involvement. This represents the largest number awarded for cemeteries in the Country and represents well the future ambitions of this service in providing high quality and respectful surroundings that meet the needs of visitors and the local community.

6. The remainder of this report sets out the consultation findings on the draft proposals (frequency tables in **Appendix 2,** full copy of report in Members library), and concludes with recommendations of the proposed policies. Subject to Members approval, these will be developed into accessible leaflets for bereaved and cemetery visitors' reference, as well as formally adopted in the cemetery rules and regulations.

Proposals - Capacity

7. **Subject to funding, seek to extend or develop new / existing cemeteries where there is demonstrable need.** As a Council there is a statutory duty to make provision for the committal of the deceased, however the method by which this is achieved is not prescribed, and might be for example, if the Council elects, to be reliant solely on crematoria when cemeteries are full. The consultation has revealed however that 80.2% of the respondents supported the proposal of developing more cemetery space as opposed to using up the available space without further extension.

8. It is proposed that Members adopt the principles of cemetery development where there is demonstrable need and subject to resources availability. Further work is being undertaken in conjunction with Town and Parish Councils to establish areas of greatest need, and an operational strategy will be developed to establish further opportunities for expansion should funding become available.

9. **To introduce an increased charge for those who wish to be buried in County Durham but live outside the County.** A large number of Councils control capacity and improve value for money for Council tax payers by charging more for non-residents; indeed this included some of the former Durham District Councils. To put it into perspective however, in the last 12 months 93% of burials were for residents, 7% (43) were non-residents.

10. The consultation has identified that a majority (56.3%) of respondents agreed that there should be an increased charge introduced for those who wish to be buried in County Durham but live outside the area.

12.6% expressed no view however 31.1% disagreed with this proposal, and of those, 62.1% of the comments regarding this specific question said that people born, raised or with family in the area should be exempt from the charge.

11. Many surrounding local authorities like Darlington, Newcastle, South Tyneside, and Gateshead charge more for those who do not live in these areas. Considering the majority in favour, it is suggested that the proposed alterations to fees be included as part of the new cemetery charges from 1 April 2012.

Proposals - Unsafe Memorials (Headstones)

12. **All new headstones and cemetery fixtures be undertaken by suitably qualified memorial masons** this will be in accordance with the National Association of Memorial Mason's (NAMM) Code of Practice current at the time of installation. All memorial mason companies who work in the cemeteries must be registered with the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM). Of those who responded 89.7% agreed that all new headstones and cemetery fixtures should continue to be undertaken by a suitably qualified memorial mason, with just 4.5% disagreeing. Of those that disagreed, the most common reason was that memorial masons are too expensive (although this was just four responses). This affirmation of current practice will help to ensure future safety and reduced risk of faults. The proposal reflective of current practice will be maintained subject to Member's approval.

13. **To "pocket" (where possible) unsafe memorials in instances where no relatives can be traced or the family unwilling to fund full re-instatement.** Pocketing involves the half burying of a headstone in the ground to make it safe. It is considerably less expensive than a full reinstatement, typically will not damage the inscription and is reversible if at some stage the family funds reinstatement.

14. 84.2% of respondents agreed that unsafe memorials should be pocketed (where possible) in instances that no relatives can be traced or the family is unwilling to fund re-instatement, with 11.8% disagreeing. Of those that disagreed, the main reason for this was that inscriptions should be recorded/information maintained. It is considered however that pocketing is the most cost effective, provided a good option for maintenance and visual aesthetics. The proposal would be introduced with immediate effect subject to Member's approval.

15. **To re lift all current memorials that are lying down and pocket (where possible) from existing budgets.** Over two-thirds (66.8%) of respondents agreed that current monuments that are lying down should be lifted and pocketed (where possible) from existing budgets, whilst 19.3% disagreed. Of those disagreeing over half stated that the lying monuments were safe and maintained inscription information. This work is estimated to be in the region of 5,000 and this would be planned over the next 10 years and will be prioritised on current risks and maintenance issues, this will also be in line with the headstone testing programme and the work completed whilst work is being undertaken in each cemetery.

Proposals – Kerb Surrounds

16. **New kerb surrounds will not be allowed in cemeteries that are currently free from them, including new burial sections and cemetery extensions**. Of those that responded 75.7% agreed that new kerb surrounds should not be allowed in cemeteries that are currently free of them, including new burial sections and cemetery extensions, with just 15.4% disagreeing. Of those that disagreed the most common complaint was that it should be up to the plot holder/relatives to decide how the grave is presented. At the members seminar 77% of Members voted for 'no surrounds' thus improving the ascetics and reducing maintenance. The Diocesan Advisory Committee, in their feedback on the consultation "wholeheartedly supported any policy which opposed the position of curb surrounds".

17. **Appendix 3** identifies the areas and sections that are proposed to remain kerb surround free (maps displaying cemetery sections available in the Members library). It is also proposed to create a database of those graves in each cemetery that are currently free of kerb surrounds in order to ensure a consistent approach. The proposal to be introduced from 1October 2011 subject to member's approval.

18. **To permit kerbside surrounds in cemeteries (or parts) areas where there has been a tradition of their use, but this is subject to it being installed by a suitably qualified memorial mason.** Two-thirds of respondents (66.7%) agreed that new kerb surrounds should be allowed in cemeteries (or parts of cemeteries) where there is a tradition of their use, but subject to it being installed by a qualified memorial mason. 13.5% disagreed and of these the most common reason was that cemetery maintenance becomes expensive/difficult.

19. This proposal recognises the current position across many cemeteries. A one off charge is proposed at £308 which takes into consideration the increased costs on the Council for grounds maintenance incurred by these features. This charge also reflects the views of the Members who voted that the highest Authority charge should be set. **Appendix 3** identifies the areas and sections where kerbside surrounds will be permitted. It is also proposed that we create a database of those cemeteries that have kerb surrounds and what types are in existence in order to ensure a consistent approach. The proposal to be introduced from 1 October 2011 subject to member's approval.

20. **In future where new unauthorised surrounds are erected then the Council will contact the family and request removal giving families one month to remove these or they will be removed and stored for collection.** With good communication, these circumstances would be avoided as relatives will be advised at the time of burial which cemeteries (or sections) they may have kerbside surrounds if they are especially keen to have them. In some cemeteries, currently free from kerbs, the introduction of a single unauthorised kerb can spoil the appearance for others.

21. A majority (57.7%) of respondents agreed that it is suitable to allow one month from the moment of the Council contacting families to remove unauthorised surrounds erected, or they will be moved and stored for collection. 32.9% disagreed however, and over three-quarters of these felt a longer period of 2-3 months should be allowed instead.

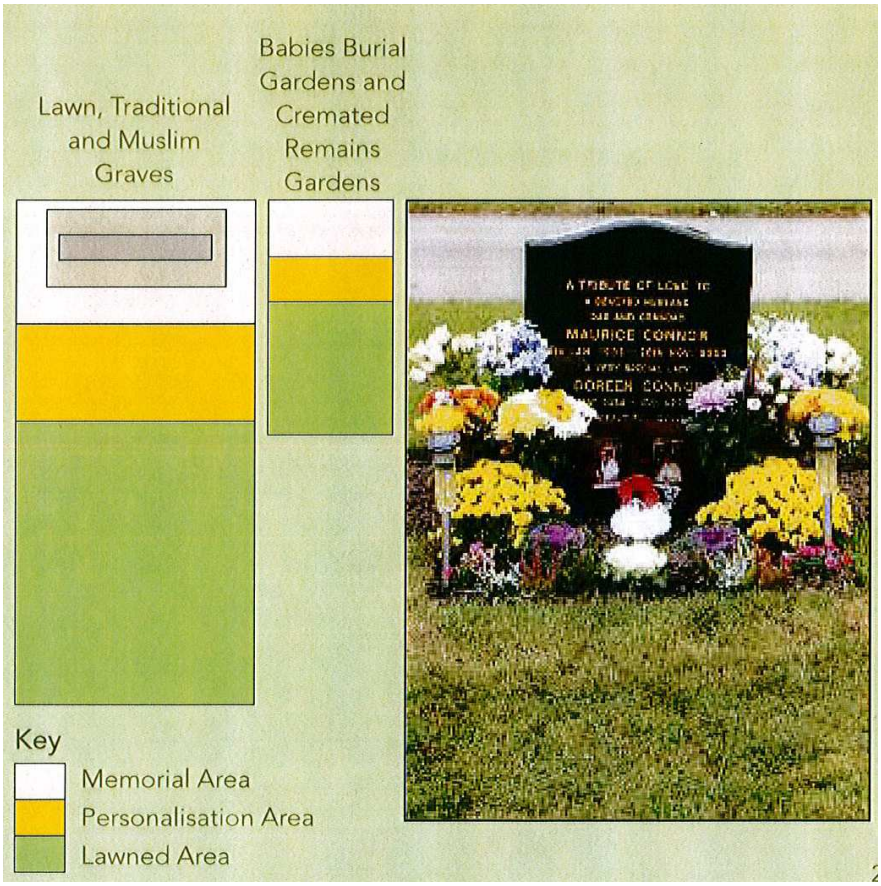
The unauthorised kerbside surrounds are likely to have been planned as a permanent feature, unlikely have been put in my qualified memorial masons (who would be aware of the rules), and it is felt that that one month strikes the balance between giving the families time, whilst not too long for the kerbside surround to become established.

22. It is also proposed that we create a database of those cemeteries that have kerb surrounds and what type are in existence in order to ensure that any unauthorised surrounds are dealt with by means of enforcement of the Rules and Regulation. The proposal to be introduced from 1October 2011 subject to member's approval.

23. It is not proposed to apply this rule retrospectively, however if an existing kerbside surround falls into significant disrepair, or looks unsightly the Cemetery Managers will, exercising discretion approach owners in the interest of good cemetery management.

Proposals – Adornments

24. **To allow adornments within a personalisation area at the base of the memorial.** The illustration below outlines a typical personalisation area. 69.9% of respondents agreed that it is suitable to allow adornments within a small personalisation area at the base of the memorial, whilst 45 (20.9%) people disagreed. Of those that disagreed the most common reason was that adornments are not appropriate at all. In view of the majority in favour, it is suggested that the proposal to be introduced from 1St October 2011 subject to member's approval.



25. **Adornments within the curtilage of the grave to be allowed for a period of up to two months, beyond which time the family will be requested to remove all but a couple of smaller items left at the base of the memorial.** Just over half (56.9%) of respondents agreed that it is suitable to allow adornments for two months within the boundary of the grave, beyond which time the family will be asked to remove all but a couple of smaller items left at the base of the memorial. However, 29.2% disagreed with this; with the most common reason being a longer period of time should be allowed (ranging from 3 months to a year). The disagreement did range between those who were pro and anti adornments.

    Adornments are clearly a sensitive issue, and from the 29.1% who disagreed, nearly a thirds (32.1%) wanted longer time. In view of this, it is proposed that a period of time of three months should be allowed beyond this period, items are carefully removed to a safe place for collection and any anniversary will be respected and time given to the family. Areas are also being identified in cemeteries where suitable locations can be used to place these adornments i.e. summer houses, existing buildings etc. The proposal is to be introduced from 1 October 2011 subject to Members approval.

26. The vast majority of existing graves are already consistent with this policy. In instances where the adornments do spill over, onto the graves of others, or impacting on the maintenance of the cemetery, staff will sensitively approach relatives, giving time for adjustments to be made.

Proposal – Municipal Funerals

27. **To provide for a religious/ non denominational representation to attend municipal funerals if denomination can be ascertained.** In cases where no family can be identified it can fall to the local authority to provide a municipal funeral. There were seven during 2009/10. The majority of these are through cremation; however there are instances when the deceased preference for burial is known. There is currently an inconsistency however, in that if the deceased religion/denomination is known, and referred through a hospital, a Minister is provided, although this is not the case, if the death was other than at hospital.

    Over four-fifths (81.0%) of respondents agreed that it is suitable for a Minister of religion or other funeral Celebrant to attend municipal burials, if religion/denomination can be ascertained with just 8.5% disagreeing. Of those that disagreed, half said that the Council must be first aware of the deceased's preferences on this matter. This is acknowledged, and where faith cannot be ascertained the current practice of no minister in these circumstances would be respected. It is proposed to introduce these changes with immediate effect subject to Members approval.

Proposal – Family Searches

28. **To continue to charge for searching for family history and introduce a website facility.** 69.8% of respondents agree that we should continue to charge for searching for family history, with 20.0% disagreeing. 89.4% of respondents agreed that it was suitable to introduce a website facility to search for family history.

Just three people disagreed; with the most popular reason being that this should not be funded by the tax payer. However this would provide increased access to the records available for local residents as well as those now further a field. By using this system families wishing to carry out a search will be able to go to our website and make a single credit card payment, enabling them to perform a number of searches. Therefore a charge of £17 is continued subject to member's approval for providing this facility.

Proposal – Woodland Burial Sites

29. **To appraise potential options for implementation and delivery of the woodland burial site at the Durham South Road Cemetery.** There is an increasing interest in a more natural woodland burial, with over 160 sites throughout the Country already established and two, privately operated sites in County Durham. A potential area for a woodland burial site at South Road Cemetery has been recognised for some time, with the former City of Durham Council working in collaboration with a Durham based Community Interest Company who have led the development of the project to this point. It is understood that the site has been confirmed as suitable for this purpose by the Environment Agency.

30. Of those that responded 68.9% agreed that the Council should examine a business case for a proposed burial site at the existing Durham South Road Cemetery. Just 5.3% disagreed with this proposal, with protection of funding of current cemeteries being the most popular reason against the proposal (although this was just two responses).This proposal would extend the service provision possible and make valuable addition on an existing facility.

31. During the consultation exercise a business case has been submitted by the community interest company who have had a longstanding interest and involvement in this site. It is suggested that this is closely examined and progressed subject to this being a robust proposal. A key requirement will be to ensure that this is self funding, and compliments the wider work in the adjacent cemetery.

Conclusion and Next Steps

32. The consultation has revealed an endorsement to the draft proposals from residents and stakeholders with a majority of respondents in favour of each of the specific measures. Strongest support is given to extending cemeteries where there is a need (80.2%), using qualified memorial masons (89.7%), not allowing kerbside surrounds in certain areas (75.7%), providing a minister (where religion can be ascertained) at Municipal funerals (81%) and allowing adornments (69.9%). There was still a majority in favour of charging more for burial for non residents (56.3%), and limiting adornments (with the exception of smaller items) to two months (57%), although with the latter proposal, in the light of 32.1% of those disagreeing citing longer time, it is suggested that this period be lengthened to three months.

33. The rules and regulations are important aspect of cemetery management and will allow a consistent and fair approach to be made. It is important that the bereaved and visitors are familiar with them, and the reasons why, in the interests of the cemetery they are there. To this end, subject to approval, an accessible guide would be produced providing an explanation in a user-friendly way.

Separate and more service specific guides will be distributed to Funeral Directors and Memorial Masons. It is proposed that any enforcement is of course a last resort, with cemetery managers continuing their practice of being sensitive and respectful to the needs of the bereaved as far as possible.

Recommendations and reasons

34. That Cabinet note the content of the report and

a) Consider and agree the principles to extend or develop new / existing cemeteries where there is demonstrable need, and subject to available resources.

b) Consider and agree to an increased charge for those who wish to be buried in County Durham but live outside the area from 1st April 2012. This would be set out as part of charges for 2012/13.

c) Consider and agree that all memorial mason companies who work in the cemeteries must be registered with the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) scheme and to be implemented with immediate effect.

d) Consider and agree to pocket (where possible) unsafe memorials after we have written to families informing them of the issues and giving them a period of time to repair, those that we are unable to pocket i.e. crosses/columns will be laid flat.

e) Consider and agree to re lift all current memorials that are lying down and pocket **(**where possible) from existing budgets and this would be planned over the next 10 years and will be prioritised on current risks and maintenance issues, this will also be in line with the headstone testing programme and the work completed whilst work is being undertaken in each cemetery.

f) Consider and agree that new kerb surrounds will not be allowed in cemeteries that are currently free from them, including new burial sections and cemetery extensions. To be implemented from 1 October 2011.

g) Consider and agree to permit kerbside surrounds in cemeteries (or parts) areas where there has been a tradition of their use and to setting a one off charge of £308 from 1st October 2011, thereafter to be incorporated in charges.

h) Consider and agree in future to contact families and request removal of unauthorised kerbside surrounds giving families one month to remove these or they will be removed and stored for collection at a suitable location identified within the cemetery from 1 October 2011.

i) Consider and agree to allow adornments within a personalisation area at the base of the memorial from1 October 2011.

j) Consider and agree to allowing adornments within the curtilage of the grave for a period of up to three months, beyond which time the family will be requested to remove all but a couple of smaller items left at the base of the memorial from1 October 2011.

k) To consider and agree to provide for a religious/ non denominational representation to attend municipal burials if denomination can be ascertained, to be implemented with immediate effect.

l) To consider and agree to continue to charge for searching for family history at a charge of £17 to be implemented with immediate effect and to introduce a website facility once all records have been updated.

m) To examine the business case for the development of a woodland burial site at Durham South Road Cemetery, implementing arrangements subject to no budgetary pressure.

n) To consider and agree implementation of the Rules and Regulations documents that reflect these policies from1 October 2011.

Background papers

Members Seminar – 'Grave Matters' 15 November 2010
Cabinet Report – 13th April 2011
Consultation Report – full copy available in Members Library
Draft Rules and Regulations for Cemeteries
Maps to display cemetery sections relating to kerbside surrounds (allowed or prohibited) – available in Members Library

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - The proposals outlined in this report will be met from existing budgets. Any new cemeteries or extensions will be subject to a separate business case to be considered by Members.

Staffing - There are no implications**.**

Risk – A comprehensive risk assessment has been reviewed with no reportable risks.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – An Equality Impact Assessment screening (EqIA) was undertaken as part of the proposals and presented with the Cabinet report in April 2011. This identified that the introduction of a harmonised County Durham Bereavement Services Cemetery Policy would benefit all regardless of gender, age, disability, race/ethnicity, religion/belief or sexual orientation and that by changing the way that we provide some of the services we offer, we will be increasing the choices increasing consistency that we provide for the bereaved, for example extending burial options, provision of ministers where belief/religion can be confirmed.

The EqIA **(Appendix 4)** has been reviewed and updated as a result of further evidence from the consultation process.

Accommodation – There are no implications.

Crime and Disorder – There are no implications

Human Rights – There are no implications

Consultation – This report has been formulated based on considerable consultation, first informed from a Member Seminar held on 15th November 2010, and more recently from extensive consultation with residents and interest groups connected with bereavement services.

Procurement - There are no implications

Disability Discrimination Act - No implications

Legal Implications - The proposals introduce new rules and regulations that if they are not followed, as a last resort, and following contact with relatives will be enforced using the principles outlined with sensitivity and fairness.

Appendix 2 Bereavement Consultation Frequency Tables

Q1: Do you think we should continue with our current provision of cemeteries, using up available space without further extension or seek to extend existing cemeteries and develop new cemeteries where there is demonstrable need, subject to availability?

	Frequency	Percentage
Continue with current provision of cemeteries	44	19.8%
Extend and develop cemeteries	178	80.2%
TOTAL	222	100.0%

Q2: Do you agree or disagree that we should introduce an increased charge for those who wish to be buried in County Durham but live outside the area?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	45	19.5%
Agree	85	36.8%
Neither agree nor disagree	29	12.6%
Disagree	44	19.0%
Strongly disagree	28	12.1%
TOTAL	231	100.0%

Q2a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
If born/raised/family in County Durham should be exempt	41	62.1%
Funeral costs expensive already	9	13.6%
Can't be justified	7	10.6%
Makes things too complicated	3	4.5%
Boundary changes mean some people are no longer within the County	2	3.0%
People have a right to be buried where they want	3	4.5%
It is illegal to do so	1	1.5%
TOTAL	66	100.0%

Q3: Do you agree or disagree that all new headstones and cemetery fixtures should continue to be undertaken by suitably qualified memorial masons?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	113	50.4%
Agree	88	39.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	13	5.8%
Disagree	5	2.2%
Strongly disagree	5	2.2%
TOTAL	224	100.0%

Q3a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Memorial masons not of a great standard	1	14.3%
Memorial masons too expensive	4	57.1%
Council staff could perform this	2	28.6%
TOTAL	7	100.0%

Q4: Do you agree or disagree that unsafe memorials should be pocketed (where possible) in instances that no relative can be traced or the family is unwilling to fund full re-instatement?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	76	34.4%
Agree	110	49.8%
Neither agree nor disagree	9	4.1%
Disagree	20	9.0%
Strongly disagree	6	2.7%
TOTAL	221	100.0%

Q4a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Lay flat instead	4	16.0%
Record inscriptions/information maintained	10	40.0%
Maintain in full	4	16.0%
Few graves are unsafe	1	4.0%
Illegible memorials should be removed	1	4.0%
Increase mason's professional levels	2	8.0%
Aesthetics of churchyard lost	2	8.0%
Are there any recognised safety standards to follow?	1	4.0%
TOTAL	25	100.0%

Q5: Do you agree or disagree that current monuments that are lying down should be lifted and pocketed (where possible) from existing budgets?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	50	22.4%
Agree	99	44.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	31	13.9%
Disagree	35	15.7%
Strongly disagree	8	3.6%
TOTAL	223	100.0%

Q5a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Lying monuments safe and maintain inscription information	20	58.8%
Waste of council money	5	14.7%
Record inscription first	2	5.9%
Only pocket where there is a real Health & Safety issue	5	14.7%
Do on a case by case basis	2	5.9%
TOTAL	34	100.0%

Q6: Do you agree or disagree that new kerb surrounds should not be allowed in cemeteries that are currently free of them, including new burial sections and cemetery extensions?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	80	37.4%
Agree	82	38.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	19	8.9%
Disagree	15	7.0%
Strongly disagree	18	8.4%
TOTAL	214	100.0%

Q6a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Charge additional fee for kerb surrounds	2	8.0%
Grass cutting speed not a relevant argument	5	20.0%
Should be up to plot holder/relatives	9	36.0%
Employ more people at cemeteries	2	8.0%
Agrees with reasons	1	4.0%
Designate areas for kerb surrounds	1	4.0%
Kerb surrounds look nice/personal	3	12.0%
As long as installed by memorial mason	1	4.0%
Kerb surrounds reduce cemetery capacity	1	4.0%
TOTAL	25	100.0%

Q7: Do you agree or disagree that new kerb surrounds should be allowed in cemeteries (or parts of cemeteries) where there is a tradition of their use, but subject to it being installed by a suitably qualified memorial mason?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	41	19.2%
Agree	101	47.4%
Neither agree nor disagree	21	9.9%
Disagree	23	10.8%
Strongly disagree	27	12.7%
TOTAL	213	100.0%

Q7a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Kerb surrounds not suitable anywhere	8	23.5%
Memorial masons not required	6	17.6%
Cemetery maintenance becomes expensive/difficult	11	32.4%
Kerb surrounds unsightly	7	20.6%
Should be allowed in all cemeteries	1	2.9%
Kerb surrounds reduce cemetery capacity	1	2.9%
TOTAL	34	100.0%

Q8: Do you agree or disagree that it is suitable to allow one month from the moment of the Council contacting families to remove unauthorised surrounds erected, or they will be moved and stored for collection?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	32	15.0%
Agree	91	42.7%
Neither agree nor disagree	20	9.4%
Disagree	51	23.9%
Strongly disagree	19	8.9%
TOTAL	213	100.0%

Q8a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Longer period of time required (2-3 months)	49	76.6%
Allow for diplomacy	4	6.3%
Leave alone altogether	7	10.9%
Inform of rules beforehand	1	1.6%
Struggle to enforce	2	3.1%
Allow kerb surrounds erected by memorial masons	1	1.6%
TOTAL	64	100.0%

Q9: Do you agree or disagree that it is suitable to allow adornments within a small personalisation area at the base of the memorial?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	44	20.4%
Agree	107	49.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	20	9.3%
Disagree	28	13.0%
Strongly disagree	17	7.9%
TOTAL	216	100.0%

Q9a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Adornments not appropriate at all	11	31.4%
Adornments often too excessive	3	8.6%
No alcohol	1	2.9%
Up to the plot holder	4	11.4%
Allow limited adornments only	4	11.4%
Targeted by thieves/vandals	3	8.6%
Only allow floral arrangements	4	11.4%
They require too much upkeep by relatives	3	8.6%
Cost extra money for cemetery maintenance	1	2.9%
Not all plots have memorials	1	2.9%
TOTAL	35	100.0%

Q10: Do you agree or disagree that it is suitable to allow adornments for two months within the boundary of the grave, beyond which time the family will be asked to remove all but a couple of smaller items left at the base of the memorial?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	28	13.0%
Agree	95	44.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	30	13.9%
Disagree	37	17.1%
Strongly disagree	26	12.0%
TOTAL	216	100.0%

Q10a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Longer period of time (3 months to a year)	17	32.1%
Start with/allow on a permanent basis limited adornments to solve any problems	9	17.0%
Deal with on a case by case basis	3	5.7%
No adornments	9	17.0%
Leave alone	11	20.8%
Make regulations clear	2	3.8%
Have kerb surrounds to hold adornments within	1	1.9%
Reduce time allowed	1	1.9%
TOTAL	53	100.0%

Q11: Do you agree or disagree that it is suitable for a Minister of religion or other funeral Celebrant to attend municipal burials?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	69	32.7%
Agree	102	48.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	22	10.4%
Disagree	10	4.7%
Strongly disagree	8	3.8%
TOTAL	211	100.0%

Q11a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Must be aware of deceased's preferences	7	50.0%
Must be aware of family's preferences	3	21.4%
Just meet legal requirements	1	7.1%
Waste of public funds	1	7.1%
Ministers should offer service for free	1	7.1%
Everyone deserves dignity	1	7.1%
TOTAL	14	100.0%

Q12: Do you agree or disagree that it is suitable to continue to charge for searching for family history?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	57	26.5%
Agree	93	43.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	22	10.2%
Disagree	26	12.1%
Strongly disagree	17	7.9%
TOTAL	215	100.0%

Q12a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Reduce the price	9	25.0%
Should be free	14	38.9%
Put on-line and make cheaper/free	3	8.3%
Keeps staff employed	1	2.8%
Free for relatives	2	5.6%
Other sites don't charge	1	2.8%
Problem using from long distance	1	2.8%
No initial charge for searches, but for further in depth searches/certificates	3	8.3%
Work with commercial organisation (Ancestry/Deceased)	2	5.6%
TOTAL	36	100.0%

Q13: We are considering introducing a system whereby people can use a search facility for their family history. Do you agree or disagree that it is suitable to introduce a website facility?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	105	48.6%
Agree	88	40.7%
Neither agree nor disagree	12	5.6%
Disagree	9	4.2%
Strongly disagree	2	0.9%
TOTAL	216	100.0%

Q13a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Should be free	1	12.5%
Recoup implementation costs by charges	1	12.5%
Work with commercial organisations (Ancestry/Deceased)	1	12.5%
Do not remove current system	2	25.0%
Shouldn't be paid for by tax payer	3	37.5%
TOTAL	8	100.0%

Q14: Do you agree or disagree that we should develop a business case for a proposed woodland burial site at the existing Durham South Road Cemetery?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	50	23.9%
Agree	94	45.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	54	25.8%
Disagree	6	2.9%
Strongly disagree	5	2.4%
TOTAL	209	100.0%

Q14a: If you disagree, please state why.

	Frequency	Percentage
Funding of proper cemeteries must be protected	2	33.3%
Woodland burial sites motivated by profit	1	16.7%
Keep away from proper cemeteries	1	16.7%
Incoherent sentence	1	16.7%
Future costs could be extensive	1	16.7%
TOTAL	6	100.0%

Are you answering this survey on behalf of an organisation or as a member of public?

	Frequency	Percentage
On behalf of an organisation	17	8.0%
As a member of public	196	92.0%
TOTAL	212	100.0%

What is your position?

	Frequency	Percentage
A member of the clergy	2	11.8%
A funeral director	1	5.9%
A monumental mason	3	17.6%
Other	11	64.7%
TOTAL	17	100.0%

If *other* please specify.

	Frequency	Percentage
Cemetery Officer	1	10.0%
Church Warden	2	20.0%
Parochial Church Council	1	10.0%
Parish Council	2	20.0%
Executive Officer	1	10.0%
House of Laity Chairman	1	10.0%
Town Council	1	10.0%
Parks and Cemeteries Manager	1	10.0%
TOTAL	10	100.0%

What is your gender?

	Frequency	Percentage
Male	89	46.4%
Female	103	53.6%
TOTAL	192	100.0%

What is your age?

	Frequency	Percentage
18-24	5	2.9%
25-34	15	8.7%
35-44	29	16.9%
45-54	31	18.0%
55-64	56	32.6%
65+	36	20.9%
TOTAL	172	100.0%

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	23	12.0%
No	169	88.0%
TOTAL	192	100.0%

What is your religion or belief?

	Frequency	Percentage
Christian	145	78.0%
Jewish	2	1.1%
None	33	17.7%
Other	6	3.2%
TOTAL	186	100.0%

If other, please specify.

	Frequency	Percentage
Humanist	3	60.0%
Jehovah's Witness	1	20.0%
Atheist	1	20.0%
TOTAL	5	100.0%

How would you describe your sexuality?

	Frequency	Percentage
Heterosexual/straight	157	94.6%
Gay man	5	3.0%
Bisexual	2	1.2%
Other	2	1.2%
TOTAL	166	100.0%

What is your ethnicity?

	Frequency	Percentage
White British	173	98.3%
White Other	1	0.6%
Gypsy Roma	1	0.6%
Traveller of Irish descent	1	0.6%
TOTAL	176	100.0%

If other, please specify.

	Frequency	Percentage
White Australian	1	100.0%
TOTAL	1	100.0%

A full report of the consultation findings is available in the Members Library

Appendix 3: Kerb surround free cemeteries/areas to allow kerbs

Cemeteries	Kerb surround free cemeteries	Proposed cemetery extensions/ sections not allowing kerb surrounds	Sections allowing kerb surrounds
Bishop Auckland		17	13,15,16
Coundon	√		
Cowshill		2	1
Crook		E,C,D	A,B
Crosshill	√		
Dans Castle			8,9,10
Frosterley	√		
Howden		D	A,B,C
Hunwick		C	A,B
Rookhope	√		
South Church		C,E	A,B,D
Thornley Road	√		
West Auckland		G	A,B,C,D,E
Willington		A New,B New	A old B old
Witton le Wear	√		
Witton Park			2
Sacriston		F, New E	A,B,C,D
Lumley	√		
Pelton		OA-OF,D,E,F,L2	B,C,G,H,L1
Ropery Lane		A,B,C,D,E,F,G,I,J,K,L	H
Barnard Castle	√		
Startforth	√		
Cockfield	√		
Etherley	√		
Evenwood	√		
Gainford	√		
Hamsterley	√		
Lynesack	√		
Romaldkirk	√		
Staindrop	√		
Woodland	√		
Blackhill			All sections

Cemeteries	Kerb surround free cemeteries	Proposed cemetery extensions/ sections not allowing kerb surrounds	Sections allowing kerb surrounds
Stanley		6,30-36	3-5,7-28
Castleside	√		
Harelaw		19,20,21,26	1-18
Langley Park		D,E,F	A,B,C
Lanchester		G,F	A,B,C,D,E
Low Westwood			A,B.C
Moorside	√		
Meadowfield		F,G	A,AA,B,C,D,E,
Parkwood		G,H	A,B,C,D,F
South Road		H2	A2-A4,B1-B3,C1-C2,H3-H4,G1-G3
Ushaw Moor		F,C	1UNC,1CON,A,B,D,E

Maps displaying the individual sections are included in the Report on Consultation Process and Feedback - August 2011 which is available in the Members Library