

# MUNICIPAL YEAR 2016/2017 REPORT NO. 102

## MEETING TITLE AND DATE:

Cabinet, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016

## REPORT OF:

Director—  
Regeneration & Environment

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**Agenda - Part: 1**

**Item: 13**

**Subject: The Development of Edmonton Cemetery**

**Wards: Bush Hill Park**  
**Key Decision No: KD 4234**

**Cabinet Member consulted:**  
**Councillor D Anderson**  
**Councillor K Fonyonga**

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report outlines the Council's proposal to extend Edmonton Cemetery, onto part of the land owned by the Council adjacent to the A10 (currently occupied by 14 tennis courts), to meet the growing demand for burial space within the Edmonton area and for the Borough as a whole.
- 1.2 The Council also needs to adapt to meet the demands of the diverse communities within Enfield by extending the range and choices of burial options and locations.
- 1.3 Addressing these areas will also assist the Council in achieving a medium-term sustainable income stream for the cemeteries service.
- 1.4 As a result of the development, and to mitigate the proposed reduction in tennis courts (from 14 down to 4) the report also proposes the approach, supported by Sports England and the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), subject to planning approval and consultation, to invest £250K into tennis facilities and the development of the sport across the borough.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve, Option 2, the redirection of capital expenditure, funded through borrowing, of £1.8million to extend Edmonton Cemetery onto part of the land owned by the Council adjacent to the A10. This will enable the provision of 1718 new burial plots to assist in meeting the future burial demand, subject to planning approval.
- 2.2 That Cabinet approves, to assist the development, the reduction of 10 tennis courts (of the 14 currently provided) on the proposed site and to ring-fence a

dedicated capital sum (also redirected from within the existing capital programme) of £250K, as part of the overall £2.05Million budget, to assist the development of tennis within the borough.

- 2.3 That Cabinet approves, subject to 2.1 and 2.2, and consultation with stakeholders, to appropriate the land for planning purposes and to delegate to the Director Regeneration & Environment (in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member) the decision to procure, negotiate and award contracts (in accordance with the Council's Procurement Rules) for the works as appropriate.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Council's cemetery service is facing a number of challenges over the next few years with the priority of addressing the issue of growing demand and limited supply for burial space within the borough, in particular within the Edmonton area. The Council needs to adapt to meet the demands of its diverse communities within Enfield by providing a range of burial options and locations in the borough. Addressing these issues will assist the cemetery service in securing a medium-term solution that is financially sustainable moving forward.
- 3.2 Enfield Council operate five cemetery sites within the borough, and until 2012 when limited reuse burial provision was made available and in 2013 the new burial chambers provision introduced at Edmonton Cemetery, the cemeteries service has only been able to offer new Lawn Graves for burials at Strayfield Road. However, capacity at Strayfield Road is estimated to be no more than 10-15 years (short-term) at the current rates of burials.
- 3.3 An independent review was completed in 2015 with regards to Market Analysis and Projected Demand within the borough. The review highlighted the need for additional burial provision and an increased range of burial types, to meet the demand of the communities within and outside Enfield, over the next 20years (medium-term).
- 3.4 The conclusions with regards to projected demand referenced the most recent work carried out by the Cemetery Research Group's 2011-Audit of London Burial Provision. This calculated the likely demand for burial space in London using a combination of factors including mortality rates, cremation rates and the preferences of different religious and ethnic groupings. This analysis projected that Enfield would require a potential 13,540 burial spaces over the 20 year period from 2010/11.
- 3.5 The review investigated options (detailed in section 5) to meet the future demand with the conclusion that the extension of Edmonton Cemetery, rather than other options, such as the creation of a new cemetery, is the only feasible and financially viable option available to the Council.

- 3.6 Before arriving at the recommended option there were a range of other options, as set out within section 5 of this report, explored around the exact location of the proposed extension. This entailed a review of all adjacent land being discounted, if not appropriate, through an assessment of suitability and financial viability. For example the land adjacent to the cemetery at the southern boundary, Firs Farm, was investigated originally as one of the options and discounted due to the inability to develop the land owing to major drainage issues. This has consequently been developed into a sustainable urban drainage scheme that prohibits development further.
- 3.7 The other options available for the development of the Edmonton site are limited with the only viable option, the recommended option, to investigate the area currently used for 14 tennis courts. This site is underutilised, predominately due to its location adjacent to the A10, and is also not seen by the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) as a priority site for investment within the borough.
- 3.8 With this in mind the Council decided to undertake an independent survey, during May 2016, using the LTA's assessment methodology, (a full summary of results can be found within appendix 3) to understand the actual usage of this site if used for development. The survey demonstrated that the site has very little use and the reduction of 10 courts (from 14 to 4 courts) would have no impact on the public's use. A similar survey was also undertaken during the summer holidays (August) and the usage of the courts was also confirmed.
- 3.9 It is therefore also recommended that investment, as part of the overall package of funding for tennis within this proposal, will be made available to ensure the remaining 4 courts are provided to the required recognised (LTA) recreational standards and will be maintained using the 2016/18 capital improvements budget and future approved capital programmes. The proposed development of the site will have no impact on the skateboard park adjacent to the tennis courts.
- 3.10 Based on these conclusions this report proposes part of the land adjacent to the Edmonton Cemetery (detailed in Appendix 1) has limited use for recreational purposes and that it be appropriated for planning purposes (subject to consultation) and developed, subject to planning approval, to provide burial space for an additional 1,718 burial plots based on an appropriate mix of earth graves, engineered vaulted graves and mausoleum chambers, depending on demand.
- 3.11 The four main strategic reasons why the development of Edmonton Cemetery should be considered and approved are:-
1. Meeting the Needs of the Community;
  2. Improved Customer Choice;
  3. Sustainable Revenue;
  4. Enable Investment in Tennis.

### **3.12 Meeting the Needs of the Community**

There is currently limited scope to meet the faith and cultural needs of all sections of the community as Strayfield Road Cemetery is limited to lawn grave burials (headstone only) and the grave reuse project at Edmonton Cemetery does not allow for areas to be allocated to particular traditions, due to lack of available space. This proposed development will enable Edmonton Cemetery greater burial choice for residents. .

### **3.13 Improved Customer Choice**

The Council has offered little choice other than a Lawn Grave burial service at Strayfield Road for the last 10 years and residents must go elsewhere for other options. The re-use of common grave space to offer traditional graves, prefabricated vaulted graves and mausoleum chambers at Edmonton Cemetery has proved popular and demonstrates that there is a demand for a greater choice of burial options and locations. Currently the people of Edmonton, and other residents east of the borough, have limited options when it comes to burial provision and without this development, it is predicted, that there will be no options available within two years.

#### **Sustainable Revenue**

- 3.14 A sustainable supply of new burial space is essential to meet burial demand in the medium-term and ensure a continuous revenue stream into the service and the Council to support the proposed and existing cemeteries provision.
- 3.15 Edmonton Cemetery, based on current demand, has only enough reusable capacity for approximately 3 more years. With no further capacity available the cemeteries budget, and the Council, will have a net loss of income (profit) of £178K, if the new provision is not provided within this timeframe.
- 3.16 The success of the pilot grave reuse scheme and the provision of new burial options at Edmonton have achieved a gross income of £1.35million over the last 3 years, to meet increased income targets, through the sales of 192 traditional earth graves, all of the new 48 vaulted grave options and 31 of the 66 new mausoleum chambers.
- 3.17 This is a clear indication that there is demand for burials within Enfield cemeteries if suitable provision can be made and a range of burial options are offered. These new provisions proposed coupled with the expected demand for burials enables the business case to be financially viable.

#### **Enable Investment in Tennis across the borough**

- 3.18 The proposed recommendation to develop the site will provide improvements to be made to the remaining 4 courts that will enable residents an enhanced experience when using the tennis courts. This will include exploring the feasibility of enhancements to the court surfaces, the inclusion of a coaching offer (to help those users keen on developing their tennis skills) and, similarly, an outreach programme, as part of Enfield's Move More campaign, to increase

sports participation and encourage healthy lifestyles in the borough. This opportunity, resulting from the development, will also provide investment to be made, prior to the cemetery extension being completed and a condition of the development taking place, to other sites within the borough and would not be possible without the financial benefit from the development of the site. With the investment gained from the development a detailed funded plan will be provided to support the planning application required to extend the cemetery. This plan will highlight investment that will be made on the remaining tennis courts and some of the initial sites identified in Appendix 4.

#### **4. PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 The proposal is to develop part of the Council owned land adjacent to the A10 that currently occupies 10 of a total 14 underutilised public tennis courts (independent usage survey attached in Appendix 3). This will require a total of £2.05Million of funding to extend the Cemetery onto this land and will enable the provision of 1718 new burial plots, with the potential to achieve £7.9Million of gross income over a 20yr period, subject to planning approval. The breakdown of the proposed burial types and the indicative quantities is detailed within table 1.

**Table 1-Edmonton Extension Burial Capacity**

	<b>Total Numbers of Burials</b>
Mausoleum	372
Traditional	1049
Vaults	297
<b>Total</b>	<b>1718 (average of 86 per year)</b>

- 4.2 The plan to invest £2.05Million into the cemetery extension that will provide the Council with a medium-term sustainable source for burial plots and income; to support the operational costs of running the Council's 5 cemetery sites over this same period of time.

#### **Financial Summary & Justification**

- 4.3 The sales at Edmonton Cemetery, over the last 3 years, currently average 60 burials per year, and with the predicted burial forecasts and increased interest in Mausoleum and Vault burials this will meet the required average number of annual burials (86) that enable the business case to be viable over the 20yr period.
- 4.4 Table 2 below shows the estimated investment and net income over the life of the extension, based on an average 86 sales per year from year 3 for 20 years. As it can be seen in the table below income is estimated to exceed total investment costs, over the life of the project, by £1.805m.

**Table 2-Financial summary over the 20yr period**

Total Capital Financing Cost (Borrowing)	£2.911m
Total Net Income (New Burial Provision)	-£4.716m
<b>Net potential profit (-)</b>	<b>£-1.805m</b>

The full financial appraisal, with details of all assumptions made, can be found within Appendix 1.

- 4.5 The Council acknowledges that the development of the site will reduce the tennis court provision by 10 courts, but based on the current usage and through negotiations with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and Sports England a proposal has been reached to support a wider development of tennis within the borough. This report seeks agreement to provide a dedicated sum of £250K, as part of the requested £2.05M of capital, to invest into the development of the remaining courts and other tennis sites in Enfield, and to work in partnership with the LTA to deliver, over the next 15yrs, a sustainable plan to assist the growth of tennis participation, within the borough.
- 4.6 The Council has identified an initial 8 sites (appendix 4), working with the LTA, to invest the funding provided from this development. The recommendation is firstly to prioritise, working with other stakeholders, the opportunity of gaining additional match funding that can support a wider more extensive investment into these sites and tennis, within the borough. This process will allow engagement with other stakeholders to understand further the local demand for tennis and ensure the investment provided is sustainable and supported moving forward.
- 4.7 The final decision around the investment plan will also be informed following the completion of the Councils Playing Pitch Strategy in late 2016. The final proposals will be formalised to coincide with the proposed planning application and consultation for the sites development as an extension to the cemetery.

## **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 The options that have been considered are:-

- **Option 1** - Develop all the land next to the A10, replacing all the tennis courts (14) and the skate park.
- **Option 2** - Develop part of the land next to the A10 (excluding the skate park), removing 10 of the existing 14 tennis courts and investing in the remaining 4 tennis courts and other tennis facilities within the borough.  
**(Recommended option)**

- **Option 3** - Develop other land adjacent to the cemetery
- **Option 4**- Create a new cemetery at a different location
- **Option 5**- Do nothing

- 5.2 **Option 1** has been considered as unviable, at this point in time, due to the capital (£3.485million) and revenue costs against the return on investment.
- 5.3 There is a requirement for additional burial spaces within Enfield but extending the cemetery over such a large area and the implications on other sports re-provision (Skate Park) and maintenance costs of the site, prior to it being used fully for burials is not efficient use of space and resource. This option may need to be investigated at a later date if demand increases at a faster rate than expected.
- 5.4 **Option 2** is the recommended option as it is financially viable and has minimal impact on the existing environment of the overall site and secures ongoing recreational opportunities (tennis) and improvements, at the site, and across the borough.
- 5.5 **Option 3** has been considered but due to drainage issues and the sustainable drainage scheme implemented at Firs Farm this option is not physically or financially viable.
- 5.6 **Option 4** was considered, though a new cemetery in isolation to any other cemetery would require additional infrastructure, welfare and operational (Chapel) facilities. The capital costs of these facilities and the additional revenue costs to operate them makes this option not financially viable.
- 5.7 **Option 5** of doing nothing will mean the priorities for Enfield with regards to burials will not be met. The borough has only a few options available to meet the current and expected demand for numbers and types of burials. With no long-term options available to meet these demands the Council will find it difficult to sustain the level of service provision provided with limited and reducing revenue streams and choices available to its residents. This option will also create also a £178K net pressure on the Council due to no income being gained through burials at Edmonton.

## 6. Stakeholder Market Analysis and Engagement

- 6.1 Local funeral directors have been consulted as part of the market engagement exercise of the review. The survey clearly indicates that the single most important factor in choosing a preferred burial location was the family connection to the local area or specific cemetery and there was strong support for increasing the range of burial options to additional sites. Cost was the second most important factor in the decision making process, but in only 3 cases was it considered to be equal or more important to the local/family connection. The ability to pre-purchase graves was generally considered the third most important factor, usually in the context of demand for pre-paid funeral plans to include the guarantee of a reserved plot.

- 6.2 In terms of choice, in most cases, lawn or traditional earth graves were considered to be the most important offer for what is seen to be a relatively conservative clientele.

### **Consultation**

- 6.3 Subject to the recommended decision being taken consultation will be undertaken, in addition to the communications highlighted within this report with Sports England and the LTA, as part of the appropriation, planning and implementation process advertisements and site notices will be displayed so that all stakeholders holding or having an interest in the site and its future use will have an opportunity to comment on the proposals.

## **7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 The recommended option is option 2 this option retains the skateboard park and 4 tennis courts on the site meeting the public's demand and usage.
- 7.2 To summarise the reasons to recommend this option over other options is that it will:-
- **Meet the Needs of the Community**-by extending the range of burial options and locations;
  - **Improve Customer Choice**- through increasing, much needed, numbers (1781) of burial spaces and providing choice of burial options, 372 Mausoleum, 1049 Traditional Graves and 297 Vaults, available to residents;
  - **Sustain Revenue**-by providing additional income of a total of – £1.805M, meeting and sustaining the annual revenue cost of the service;
  - **Enable Investment in Tennis**-through providing a dedicated strategic fund for development of tennis facilities, on the site and within the borough, which would not be available without the development of the site.

Without this recommended development proposed the Council will not meet the burial demands of the borough's residents (numbers and choice), sustain income required to maintain the service and provide investment into tennis facilities within the borough.

- 7.3 The report is seeking recommendation by Cabinet to gain the necessary approvals to commit the Council to the capital investment of £2.05million, redirected from the existing capital programme, required to extend the Edmonton Cemetery site and provide funding of £250K, for the development of the remaining tennis courts and other tennis sites within the borough, subject to the necessary planning approvals. This decision will increase the capacity for burials within the borough, meet the future demand and increased choice of burial options and provide important investment into tennis facilities within the borough. The estimated completion of the proposed extension and



the investment provided into tennis would be, subject to planning, by the autumn of 2018.

## **8. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS**

### **8.1 Financial Implications**

- 8.1.1 The proposed £2.05m required for the extension of Edmonton Cemetery can be funded by redirecting existing capital resources and will be reflected in the quarter 1 capital monitoring report. The borrowing costs, detailed in Table 2, of circa £800k will be covered from the existing and new revenue income streams and from the use of an earmarked reserve to support additional burial provision at Edmonton Cemetery in the first two years.
- 8.1.2 The cost of borrowing and the additional revenue costs associated with the increased grave space have been estimated over the next 20 years. Analysis undertaken by a specialist consultant has forecasted the estimated income levels from the increased grave space at minimum, median and maximum levels. The average forecast of 86 burials per year is within the minimum to median bracket.

**Table 3- Capital Costs of New Provision**

Capital Borrowing	£2.050m
Total Interest	£0.861m
<b>Total Capital Financing</b>	<b>£2.911m</b>

- 8.1.3 The income generated from the additional burial provision will sustain the current income levels whilst also supporting the achievement of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) expectations for an additional £100k in 2017/18 and a further £100k in 2018/19.

### **8.2 Legal Implications**

- 8.2.1 London Environment Directors' Network (LEDNET) guidance highlights that London Local Authorities must plan ahead regarding future burial capacity within or adjacent to its existing cemeteries and reference is made to developing a cemetery strategy to ensure the future delivery and funding of the service.
- 8.2.2 The Council has power under section 214 of the Local Government Act 1972 (LGA 1972) to provide land for use as a cemetery. The Council's existing site alongside the A10 can be formally appropriated for that purpose in accordance with section 122 of the LGA 1972. As part of this process it is necessary to place an advertisement in a local paper circulating in the area

for two consecutive weeks and to consider any representations received. Given that this is designated as Metropolitan Open Land it will be necessary to seek the views of Development Control early on in respect of the proposed change of use. This is tracked as a risk with regards to the project although informal indications are that there is a low risk of the change of use being refused.

- 8.2.3 An up to date due diligence exercise of the legal title to the A10 Land would also be necessary to ascertain the nature of subsisting restrictive covenants that may affect the proposals and to discover who may now have the benefit of such covenants and, if necessary, undertake negotiations with the beneficiary to try and lift or vary them. This again is a risk to the delivery of this project although in most instances the risk of anyone attempting to enforce covenants in this kind of scenario is fairly low.
- 8.2.4 The procurement of works and services must be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procurement Rules and all contracts entered in to must be in a form approved by the Assistant Director of Law and Governance.

### **8.3 Property Implications**

- 8.3.1 Various options for extending the burial area, including the provision of vaulted graves and mausoleum chambers, have been explored in recent years. This proposal creates a logical extension to the cemetery and achieves a substantial increase in burial plots, whilst retaining the skate board park, and four of the tennis courts, as well as a dedicated sum for the improvement of tennis facilities generally.
- 8.3.2 In addition to the development, Property Services are tasked with the sale of Cemetery House, which is self-contained and is intended to be separated off from the rest of the cemetery site, with a new provision provided for the cemetery services on the existing site as a replacement, following disposal. The disposal does not include the former toilet block, adjacent to the car park, which is also excluded from the extension proposals.

## **9. KEY RISKS**

The major risks that face the successful delivery of the cemetery project are:-

- Capital infrastructure costs exceed estimates £2.05Million;

#### *Mitigation*

Provisional sums have been supplied to meet all known costs for this project and a contingency provided.

- Income projections do not meet predictions and Demand for burial space is lower than forecast;

#### *Mitigation*

Detailed, external verified, analytic data has been reviewed to enable accurate projections to be made.

Income and sales targets will be monitored regularly.

The sites full development will be phased to enable the ability to sustain annual costs, at a relative rate to burials and income raised.

- Not doing anything will create a £178K financial pressure in 2019/20 due to Edmonton cemetery being at capacity with no burial space available and will also inhibit the ability to increase income to meet the additional income target of £200k per annum from 17/18-18/19 within the Councils MTFP. This option will also prohibit investment into tennis facilities within the borough;

#### *Mitigation*

Agree to the extension of Edmonton Cemetery to meet the financial pressure and provide additional income to support the ongoing maintenance required to sustain the standard of the Council's cemeteries.

## **10. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

### **10.1 Fairness for All**

The proposed extension to Edmonton Cemetery will provide additional burial sites allocated to residents and non-residents through a fair and consistent process. The proposal will also provide additional choice to meet the increasing needs of the communities living within the borough or in its surrounding areas.

### **10.2 Growth and Sustainability**

The proposed development of Edmonton Cemetery will support the needs of the growing communities and provide increased choice for burials within the borough.

### **10.3 Strong Communities**

The proposed scheme is focused on the future demands of residents within the borough and allows for provision for non-residents with links to Enfield. The proposal with its implementation can also adapt to future priorities of the borough and its community's needs.

## **11. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

- ### **11.1**
- The development of Edmonton Cemetery aims to reduce any inequalities by providing accessible and affordable burial provision and choice for communities within or with links to the borough.

- 11.2 Corporate advice has been sought in regard to equalities and an agreement has been reached that an equalities impact assessment is neither relevant nor proportionate for the approval of this report

## **12. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 Performance management arrangements to ascertain the effectiveness of the development of Edmonton Cemetery will be agreed as part of the marketing and performance plan to deliver the required outcomes of the project. This plan will measure the success of meeting the strategic aims of the project through Increased and Sustainable Revenue, Improved Customer Choice and Meeting the Needs of the Community.

## **13. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1 There are no identifiable health and safety implications arising directly from this proposal. There will be a requirement for Risk assessments, Method statements and Safe Systems of Work to be gained prior to a contract awarded for the development work to extend the cemetery and the contract will be subject to periodic formal Health and Safety audits

## **14. HR IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.1 There are no identifiable HR implications arising from this proposal.

## **15. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1 Safe burial of bodies is an essential service provided by the Council, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has detailed the safe disposal of dead bodies for both physical and mental health reasons. The ability to do this cost-effectively will enable the service to continue for the foreseeable future. In addition extra capacity will provide further borough resilience in the event of a major public health incident.
- 15.2 The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) has been consulted and are happy that the current courts are not ideally situated and that investment in other parts of the borough is more likely to improve uptake and thereby participation in physical activity. Meeting physical activity guidelines is associated with a reduction in long-term conditions of between 20 – 40% (depending on the condition). If further investment is also targeted towards community development through supporting the social aspects of tennis a second advantage of the investment elsewhere will be to increase community resilience.

## **Background Papers**

None.

**Appendices**

<b>Appendix 1 –</b>	20year financial appraisal and business case
<b>Appendix 2-</b>	Outline plan of the proposed extension
<b>Appendix 3 –</b>	Independent usage survey report (A10 Tennis Courts)
<b>Appendix 4-</b>	LTA proposed investment opportunities
<b>Appendix 5-</b>	LTA proposed Joint Strategic Partnership