

## MUNICIPAL YEAR 2017/2018 REPORT NO. 54

**MEETING TITLE AND DATE:**

Cabinet – 13th September 2017

**REPORT OF:**

Executive Director –  
Regeneration &  
Environment

<b>Agenda – Part: 1</b>	<b>Item: 10</b>
<b>Subject: Edmonton Cemetery Extension (Revised approach) Wards: Bush Hill Park Key Decision No: 4558</b>	

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### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks authority to amend the scope of the Cabinet decision made on 19th October 2016 through Report No.102 (KD 4234) to extend Edmonton Cemetery.
- 1.2 At a meeting of the Cabinet on 19th October 2016, approval was given to extend Edmonton Cemetery onto the adjacent Council land that is currently occupied by 14-tennis courts, to meet the growing demand for burial space. As part of the recommendations agreed within Report No.102 (KD 4234), the extension of the cemetery would create 1718 new burial plots and secure £250k of investment for tennis across the Borough.
- 1.3 Since the decision was taken by Cabinet in October 2016 the Friends of Firs Farm have requested (appendix 1) that the Council considers relocating the four remaining tennis courts that were to be upgraded through the original project, from the land adjacent to the cemetery to Firs Farm Playing Fields that is located immediately south of the cemetery. Sport England and the Lawn Tennis Association have both been also engaged and support the proposal (appendix 2).
- 1.4 The revised scope of the project would increase the number of new burial plots to 2137, and investment in the Borough's tennis facilities would increase to £500k. The proposal would delay the completion of the cemetery expansion from September 2018 until late 2018/early 2019.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve plans to move the four tennis courts that would have been upgraded through the Edmonton Cemetery Expansion Programme from the land adjacent to Edmonton Cemetery to Firs Farm, subject to Planning Permission.
- 2.2 The land on which the four tennis courts currently stands becomes part of the wider Edmonton Cemetery Expansion Programme, increasing the number of burial plots to 2137 and increasing investment in tennis provision to £500k.
- 2.3 Cabinet recognise that approval of the revised scope would result in a delay of up to three months to the completion of the Edmonton Cemetery Expansion Programme.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 At a meeting of the Cabinet on 19th October 2016, approval was given to extend Edmonton Cemetery onto the land adjacent that is currently occupied by 14 tennis courts. The plans approved by the Cabinet were for the extension of the cemetery to provide 1718 new burial plots. The proposal was developed to meet the growing demand for burial space within the Borough, particularly within the Edmonton area, and the need for new burial options for the diverse communities of the Borough.
- 3.2 Report No.102 outlined the growing need for additional burial space within the Borough given the projected demand over the 20-year period from 2010/11. The report considered five different options to address the issue:
  - **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
  - **Option 3** - Develop other land adjacent to the cemetery
  - **Option 4** - Create a new cemetery at a different location
  - **Option 5** - Do nothing

Cabinet approved option 2 as it was financially viable and had minimal impact on the existing environment of the overall site.

- 3.3 To mitigate the loss of 10 of the tennis courts, Cabinet agreed to invest £250k into tennis provision within the Borough. The investment would allow for the upgrading of the 4 remaining courts on the land adjacent to the cemetery and improvements at other sites through the ring - fencing of £250k of funding from the project.
- 3.4 Since Cabinet approved the plans in October 2016 through Report No.102 (KD 4234) the Friends of Firs Farm have requested (appendix 1) that the Council considers relocating the four courts that would be

upgraded in situ through the original scope of the project to Firs Farm Playing Fields. The Friends of Firs Farm have requested that the tennis courts be moved there because historically tennis courts were present on Firs Farm, and with the recent addition of the wetlands and new walking routes, the playing fields are becoming a destination open space. The addition of new tennis courts would support the wider leisure offer at Firs Farm.

- 3.5 If approved, the revised scope would allow increased burial space within a revised area of expansion, with the number of new burial plots increasing from 1718 to 2137. Based on a projected 86 sales per annum from year three, as per the previously agreed business case (Cabinet 19<sup>th</sup> Oct 2016), the proposed revised scope would increase the life of the extension from 20 years to approximately 25 years.
- 3.6 As outlined above, Sport England and the Lawn Tennis Association both support these proposals, subject to granting of Planning Permission for the construction of four new courts at Firs Farm Playing Fields. The current courts are underutilised, presumably due to their position adjacent to A10 and their location away from residential areas. Their movement to Firs Farm Playing Fields would facilitate increased usage due to a better location.
- 3.7 The revised scope outlined within this report will retain the skateboard park in its current location along with the former toilet block that stands adjacent to the skate board park. The four tennis courts that were due to be retained and upgraded will now be moved to Firs Farm and provide a better facility than would not have been possible at their existing location.
- 3.8 The cost estimate of the original project approved by Cabinet in October 2016 was £2.05m, which with interest on the loan repayments (the capital loan is required to deliver project) would equate to a total estimated cost of £2.911m. With the change of scope as outlined within this report, the cost of the project is estimated to rise to £3.411m. The estimated cost increase, as supplied by the quantity surveyors working on the wider project, would be subject to detailed site surveys and land assessments, should approval be given to proceed by Cabinet. It is proposed that the additional capital required for the revised scope will be funded from the Cemeteries reserve fund so no additional borrowing would be required.
- 3.9 The potential income from the expanded area will increase from £4.716m to £7.163m, resulting in a net potential profit of £3.752m over the life of the project. As outlined above (in section 1.4) £500k will also be ring-fenced from the project to invest in tennis within the Borough.
- 3.10 Subject to approval of the revised scope, the completion of the cemetery expansion project will be delayed from September 2018 by

up to three months. However, the delay will not undermine the business plan due to the Council's ability to pre-sell certain burial plots.

3.11 Table below summarises the original plan versus the revised approach proposed within this report:

	<b>Original Plans</b>	<b>Revised Approach</b>
Number of burial plots	1718	2137
Target completion	September 2018	Up to 3 month delay
Planning application submitted	July 2017	Up to 3 month delay
Cost *	£2.911m	£3.411m
Income	£4.716m	£7.163m
Net	£1.805m	£3.752m
Investment in tennis	£250k	£500k
Stakeholders	Support from LTA & Sport England	Support from LTA, Sport England & Friends of Firs Farm

\*includes the cost of the investment in tennis

3.12 In addition to the Edmonton Cemetery Expansion Project, the Council's Property Team is currently disposing of the 'Cemeteries House' asset. The Bereavement Services Team currently use cemeteries House for office & welfare accommodation, customer sales, enquiries and the storage of burial records, but part of the receipt from the sale of Cemeteries House will be used to rehouse the team in another building within Edmonton Cemetery. Whilst the two projects are not directly linked, together they will ensure business continuity for the next 25 years.

#### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

4.1 Aside from the alternative options considered in Report No.102 (KD 4234), officers have considered continuing with the original scope approved by Cabinet in October 2016. However, the revised scope of the project is being pursued because it provides the best outcomes for the Cemetery Service, tennis provision within the Borough, and meets the aspirations of the local community.

#### **5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 The revised scope meets all of the objectives agreed in Report No.102 (KD 4234), but allows increased burial space that will meet demand for a further five years than the original scope agreed by Cabinet, allows greater investment in tennis, and meets the Friends of Firs Farm's aspirations of delivering new facilities at the playing fields.

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

### **6.1 Financial Implications**

6.1.1 This report seeks authority to amend the scope of the Cabinet Decision made on 19th October 2016 through Report No.102 (KD 4234) to extend Edmonton Cemetery.

6.1.2 The revised scope of the project would increase the number of new burial plots to 2137, and investment in the Borough's tennis facilities would increase from £250k to £500k.

6.1.3 The total cost estimate of the original project approved by Cabinet in October 2016 was £2.911m. With the change of scope as outlined within this report, the total cost of the project is estimated to rise to £3.411m.

The additional capital cost of £500k includes the initial additional £250k investment for the development of tennis facilities (from the original report). all survey / design work, and the construction costs associated, will be funded from the Mausolea / Cemeteries reserve.

6.1.4 If approved, the revised scope would allow increased burial space within a revised area of expansion, with the number of new burial plots increasing from 1718 to 2137. Based on a projected 86 sales per annum from year three. The potential income from the expanded area will increase from £4.716m to £7.163, resulting in a net potential profit of £3.752m over the life of the project. This is summarised in the table below.

	<b>Original Plans</b>	<b>Revised Approach</b>
Number of burial plots	1718	2137
Target completion	September 2018	Delay of 3 months
Cost*	£2.911m	£3.411m
Income	£4.716m	£7.163m
Net	£1.805m	£3.752m
Investment in tennis	£250k	£500k

\*includes the cost of the investment in tennis

### **6.2 Legal Implications**

6.2.1 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.

- 6.2.2 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 Legal and Governance.

### **6.3 Property Implications**

- 6.3.1 The revised option for extending the burial area creates a logical extension to the cemetery and achieves a significant increase in burial plots. This will result in the relocation of four tennis courts, as well as increasing the investment in tennis provision, to Firs Farm Playing Fields which increases and supports the wider leisure opportunities that become available.
- 6.3.2 Whilst maintenance costs for the tennis provision at the land adjacent to Edmonton Cemetery will cease it must be remembered that for the new provision at Firs Farm the early year's maintenance costs are likely to be relatively low, but rising as the facilities age and there will be a likely requirement for an increase in future maintenance provision.
- 6.3.3 The concentration of sporting facilities at Firs Farm will also create management efficiencies.
- 6.3.4 The Council's Property Procedure Rules (the Rules) set out mandatory procedures regarding the acquisition, management and disposal of property assets, which must be followed and commits the Council to a rigorous and business-like approach to the management of its property assets.
- 6.3.5 The recommendations made in this report fully comply with the requirements of the Rules.

## **7. KEY RISKS**

- 7.1 The risks for the proposals outlined within this report are consistent with those for the wider expansion programme outlined within Report No.102. They are:

- Capital infrastructure costs exceed estimates;

#### Mitigation

Independent, qualified quantity surveyors have supplied provisional sums to identify all known costs for the project. The Council's

Corporate Maintenance and Construction Team have reviewed the provisional sums. A contingency fund has been created to mitigate unknown costs.

- 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 Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. This option will also prohibit investment into tennis facilities within the Borough;

#### Mitigation

Agree to the extension of Edmonton Cemetery, including the revised scope as outlined within this report to meet the financial pressure and provide additional income to support the ongoing maintenance required to sustain the standard of the Council's cemeteries.

## **8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

### **8.1 Fairness for All**

The proposals outlined within this report will provide additional burial space for residents within the Borough. The proposals include a choice of different burial options for the community.

### **8.2 Growth and Sustainability**

The proposals outlined within this report will provide additional burial space that will meet the growing demand within the community. The proposals will also ensure that the Cemetery Service can continue to operate with financial sustainability.

### **8.3 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. The Friends of Firs Farm support the proposals outlined within this report, because the proposals will provide new tennis provision in a more suitable

location. New facilities at Firs Farm will support the creation of a destination park within the Bush Hill Park Ward and this will bring people together to help build stronger communities.

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Corporate advice was sought for Report No.102 and 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.
- 9.2 It may however be necessary for Predictive Equalities Impact Assessments be undertaken on various work streams to ensure that proposed extension schemes benefit the community and it remains fully accessible particularly by those in the protected characteristic groups.
- 9.3 It should also be noted that the any contracts awarded should include a duty on the successful applicant to assist us with meeting our obligations under the Equalities Act 2010.

## **10. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Officers will monitor uptake of new burial plots through the Commercial Services monthly Performance Dashboard. Performance will be monitored against the business plan projections of 86 burials per month.

## **11. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 It is not believed that there are any specific health & safety risks associated with the Edmonton Cemetery Expansion Programme. Subject to approval, officers will ensure that contractors have fully risk assessed the works that are required to transform the existing tennis courts into cemetery land. As part of the programme of work, the contractor will be expected to supply method statements for the works and deliver safe systems of working that protect those involved in the works and members of the public.

## **12. HR IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 There are no HR implications due to the proposals outlined within this report.

## **13. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1 Reducing obesity is a priority for Enfield, as outlined in the borough's Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Obesity and particularly childhood obesity is a national problem with the number of Year 6 pupils classified as overweight or obese (ALS, 2015/16) on average being



34.2% in England and 38.1% in London. If left unchanged, this situation will lead to serious health complications later in life, such as diabetes, heart disease and cancers.

- 13.2 Being physically inactive is a known contributor for obesity and in Enfield a high percentage of residents are not doing enough physical activity to benefit their health. This is concerning because people who are insufficiently active have a 20% to 30% increased risk of death compared to people who engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most days of the week. People who are physically active live longer and have a lower risk of heart disease (20%), breast cancer (20%), depression and dementia (20%), type 2 diabetes (30%), colon cancer (30%) and hip fracture (35%).
- 13.3 The proposal outlined within this report will ensure that four tennis courts are retained close to their current position, at a location better suited to promoting physical activity. There will also be a significant amount of money invested into tennis facilities across the Borough, which is expected to result in an increase in the number of people playing tennis. The use of the courts will be free of charge for certain groups vulnerable to poverty. This will become part of work in Enfield to increase physical activity in all areas so that it becomes part of everyday life and leads to an overall improvement of public health in Enfield.

## **Background Papers**

None