

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of People & Places (Introduced by the Executive Member for People)	Executive Cabinet	15 August 2013

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES MEMORIAL POLICY

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide an update following consultation on the Parks and Open Spaces Memorial policy and seek approval for the adoption of the policy.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. That the consultation and responses are noted and that the amended policy is formally adopted with immediate effect.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. The report details the consultation that has taken place on the draft policy agreed as Executive Cabinet 18th October 2012.
4. The report details the consultation feedback and policy changes and the revised policy recommended for approval.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

5. To clarify the Council's position regarding memorials and to provide officers with an approved mechanism for accepting / refusing requests, and to manage on-going memorial maintenance.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

6. Continue to consider requests for memorial items on an ad-hoc basis. A shortage of remaining space and the suitability of some requests would make this option unsustainable.
7. No longer accepting any form of memorial requests for any of our sites - an unnecessary measure.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	✓	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities	✓	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	

BACKGROUND

9. The Council has for many years received a number of requests for memorial items in the parks and open spaces.
10. Many of the appropriate locations within the various sites are now taken and as a result very few spaces remain. Requests for memorials, which are often emotionally sensitive, can be difficult for staff to manage, especially when they are not in keeping with the site and there is no policy in place to provide guidance.
11. A policy is needed to clarify the Council's position regarding memorials and to provide officers with an approved mechanism for accepting / refusing requests, and to manage on-going memorial maintenance.
12. Following approval of the draft policy for consultation on 18th October 2012, consultation has now taken place.

CONSULTATION

13. The public consultation period started in December 2012 until the end of January 2013.
14. The draft document and consultation was sent out to key stakeholders and discussed at group meetings such as Astley Advisory Group and Yarrow Valley Advisory Group.
15. Press releases, social media and the Councils website were used to promote the consultation.
16. A total of 7 responses were received as detailed in Appendix 1.
17. The majority of the responses are broadly in favour and supportive of the policy. However, requests for greater flexibility of memorial requests, including non-military items have been made for Astley Park.
18. The feedback regarding Yarrow Valley includes concerns regarding the number of benches and a request to allow memorial trees. The number of benches at Yarrow Valley will be managed appropriately and memorial trees are not included in the policy as the significant existing tree stock is already difficult to manage.
19. The request regarding Whittle-le-Woods has been passed to and dealt with by the Parish Council.

20. In light of the consultation, the draft policy has been amended as follows:

- Slight change to phrasing in paragraph one and change to front cover.
- Provision for military and non-military related memorial requests in Astley Park in separately defined areas. From the Memorial Arch to Pets Corner only applications from military or ex-military personnel will be considered to reflect the parks war memorial status. Non-military related applications will only be considered for other areas of the park from Pets Corner to the Hallgate and Ackhurst Lodge entrances.
- Rewording of the exceptional circumstances to allow for greater flexibility and consideration of both other and exceptional circumstances.

21. The amended policy is attached in Appendix 2. Following approval the policy will be implemented with immediate effect.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

22. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	✓	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	✓
Legal	✓	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	✓

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

23. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

24. The policy will provide consistency and clarity for officers and residents and will assist the Council in discharging their functions.

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

25. The policy should not pose any issues for the Council in meeting the objectives of its equality scheme and statutory responsibilities.

JAMIE CARSON
DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE FOR PLACES

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Jamie Dixon	5250	17-07-2013	EC 15-08-2013 POS Memorial Policy