

Cabinet
Council

28th August 2018
4th September 2018

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for City Services – Councillor Innes

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Capital Funding for Phase 2 Extension Plans for Lentons Lane Cemetery

Is this a key decision?

Yes – Council and Cabinet are being recommended to approve the addition of this scheme to the Capital Programme at a cost of £2,153,000 to be funded from Corporate Capital Resources

Executive Summary:

This report seeks approval to commence with phase 2 of the extension programme for Lentons Lane Cemetery.

This extension will ensure that Coventry City Council will be able to supply burial as an option for the residents of Coventry for approximately the next 35-40 years.

In 2011/12 Bereavement Services began and completed phase 1 of the Lentons Lane Cemetery extension. This work included: a new cemetery entrance gate off Shilton Lane, and a building with toilet and mess room facilities.

At the same time an assessment of medium term burial provision was made across the City including the potential use of land at Canley Cemetery. This assessment concluded that new burial provision would exist in Coventry for the next six to nine years. Therefore, the decision was taken to pause the further cemetery extension plans beyond phase 1. This released a short term saving to the City Council's capital programme.

Given the lead time to create new burial space, it is now necessary to proceed with phase 2 of the Lentons Lane extension to ensure that there will be continuing grave provision within the City. This report therefore seeks approval to proceed with phase 2 of the Lentons Lane extension.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

- 1) Approve the commencement of phase 2 of the extension of Lentons Lane Cemetery
- 2) Approve the commencement of a procurement process to appoint a contractor to carry out and complete the works necessary.
- 3) Delegate authority to the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for City Services following the completion of the tender process to approve the award of the contract to the preferred bidder.

Cabinet is requested to recommend that Council:

- 1) Approve £260,000 being made available from Corporate Capital Resources during September 2018 to commence the first part of the project, to cover the appointment of the design team and cover the ecology reports required.
- 2) Approve £1,893,000 is added to the Capital Programme being made available from Corporate Capital Resources during 2019/2020 to complete the project as described in section 1 of this report.

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List of Appendices included:

Indicative Site Design Appendix

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

Yes – 4th September 2018

Report title: Capital Funding for Phase 2 Extension Plans for Lentons Lane Cemetery

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 At her meeting of 29th July 2014, the Cabinet Member for Public Services considered a report entitled "Creating Additional Burial Space at Canley Garden Cemetery". This report approved the use of additional space at Canley Cemetery, and allowed Bereavement Service to defer a larger spend on phase 2 works at Lentons Lane.¹At that time an extension design was drawn up which is shown the Appendix to the report.
- 1.2 Currently there is approximately 4 years of new burial provision available in the new extension at Canley Cemetery. The existing Free Church areas of Lentons Lane will supply further burial opportunity for the residents of Coventry and surrounding areas for the next 2 years, however the current Muslim section is expected to be full within the next 12-18 months. At present there are approximately 85 grave spaces available for adult Muslim burials, the average number of burials carried annually is 50. (No provision has been made for grave loss due to environmental factors).
- 1.3 The proposal is to commence phase 2 of the extension of Lentons Lane Cemetery by reclaiming land previously utilised for agricultural purposes that already benefits from an existing planning approval. The extension design has been used to establish the phase 2 capital costs. The design however may change to ensure that maximised grave space is achieved.
- 1.4 A fundamental part of the phase 2 extension is to install extensive drainage in to all sections prior to burials taking place. This will include the provision of surface drains to move water to a retention reed bed for natural filtration. This will be done in consultation with the Environment Agency and will help eliminate the possibility of similar problems currently being experienced in older sections of the cemetery.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 Option 1 - Do nothing. However, this will mean that there is no burial provision for the Muslim Community beyond a 12-18 month period and all other burial provision will be exhausted within the next 3 years.
- 2.2 Option 2 - Complete phase 2 of the extension to Lentons Lane Cemetery. The works will include drainage, roads and paths and take approximately 15 months from design stage to completion so it is imperative that the works begin as soon as possible. This is estimated to cost in the region of £2,153,000 and will be funded by Corporate Capital Resources. This is the recommended option.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 Consultation for the original project was carried out 2011/12 for the 1st stage of the project. The following specifics were desired:
- 3.2 The Muslim community raised a desire for the ablutions areas to be designed similar to those which were at Walsgrave Hospital (at the time of consultation). This requires has been fulfilled as part of phase 1.

¹ Report to the Cabinet Member for Public Services 29th July 2014 – "Creating Additional Burial Space at Canley Garden Cemetery adjacent to Charter Avenue" 29th July 2014. Paragraph 5.1.1

- 3.3 The roadways need to be designed wide enough to accommodate the length and width of modern day limousines. This has been adopted as part of the original design plans and implemented in phase 1 works.
- 3.4 For an entrance to be put in off Shilton Lane. This has been implemented.
- 3.5 For any chapel built to be able to accommodate all faith services including possible utilisation by the Muslim community. This part of the project has been indefinitely suspended and further consultation will take place as and when the decision is made to build the chapel in to the existing structure on site.
- 3.6 To supply both Kerb and lawn type graves – this is current practise which will continue.
- 3.7 The Muslim community made a request for separate sections for adults and children – this is current practice.
- 3.8 **Additional request 2017** – for Coventry Bereavement Services to supply fixed construction chambers or breeze block built chambers in the Muslim adult sections. This request will be investigated further with further consultation at the development stage.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 September 2018: Communicate decision to Funeral Directors Guild for Coventry and Warwickshire
- 4.2 August/September 2018: Appoint the design team
- 4.3 November 2018 : First design sign offs will commence
- 4.4 November / December 2018: Place notices in the cemetery outlining the scheme.
- 4.5 January/March 2019: Appoint the contractor
- 4.6 Commence construction April 2019
- 4.7 Complete construction August/September 2019
- 4.8 Handover and Close out September 2019

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources

5.1 Financial implications

The total scheme cost is estimated to be in the region of £2,153,000 and will require initial investment to finance the project. Based on the number of spaces created by the new investment, it is expected at current usage rates that the life of the asset would be in excess of 40 years. At current financing rates, the revenue cost of this would be c£93k per year.

Approximately £1.9m per year is generated from burial fees, representing c1,000 burials each year. In October 2016, Cabinet member for City Services approved a policy to increase fees each year in line with the West Midlands Benchmarking Group average price for all bereavement services charges until January 2021. These increases were required to support the capital costs required to undertake the extension to burial grounds. The cost of borrowing can therefore be met from future additional income generated.

5.2 Legal implications

The Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1974 (amended in 1977 and 1986) give local government burial authorities general powers of management, that is subject to the provisions of the order a burial authority may do all such things as they consider necessary or desirable for the proper management, regulation and control of a cemetery.

Procurement undertaken in order to secure the design team and works referred to in this report will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Rules for Contract and the Public Contract Regulations 2015

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

It will ensure burial services for all faiths, cultures and beliefs can be provided by Coventry City Council for the long term.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There is a risk of public dissatisfaction due to the potential need to utilise large scale industrial vehicles which may have an impact both visually and auditory. By posting notices for visitors and letters to residents we will clearly communicate why we are doing this work engaging people openly and honestly about the need for the extension programme.

Missing the project deadline would have a significant impact on the ability of Coventry City Council to provide Muslim burial space.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

None

6.4 Equalities / EIA

There is no requirement to undertake an EIA as this does not change any of the services we provide or who we provide them to.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

Ecological surveys are in the process of being carried out these include surveys for bats and great crested newts. Sensitivity will also be demonstrated during bird nesting times. Due to the location previously having been used for agricultural purposes there will be little or no impact regarding the removal of trees or hedgerows.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None

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