



**Cabinet Members for Clean & Green Environment
(Adur & Worthing)**

14 July 2009

Decision not before 22 July 2009

**Key Decision: No
Ward: N/A**

Joint Cemetery Fees and Charges

Report by the Executive Head of Leisure & Cultural Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out for the Cabinet Members, details of how the merging of Adur and Worthing cemetery fees and charges can be harmonised and the cost of future burials fully recovered through charges levied.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Previously Adur's fees and charges were annually reviewed and changed in April each year, whilst Worthing's are changed annually in January.
- 2.2 Although both Council's burial operations are very similar, the costing structures have evolved completely differently and reflect the years of independent operation. It will be necessary, in line with the agreed proposal to develop a new joint service to establish a common structure and set of charges.
- 2.3 With the development of more detailed financial cost breakdowns of both Councils Cemetery service, future burial costs can be set against actual costs incurred and the cost of providing the service recovered through charges. This can never be exact as there are so many variables, but Members of both Councils have stated their intension to move to a situation as close to full cost recovery as possible.

3. CEMETERY PROVISION

- 3.1 Councils have a statutory duty to run and maintain Cemeteries and Closed Churchyards and therefore there will always be a service provision cost to Council-tax payers.
- 3.2 This report however aims to set charges which seek, as closely as possible to recover full costs for all future new burials, reopeners or memorials including the proportion of support costs these incur from January 2010 in both Councils.

- 3.3 This report also aims to introduce one simplified set of fees and charges that will be applicable from January 2010 in both Council areas through one point of contact, at the new joint Parks and Cemetery offices at Commerce Way, Lancing.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 It is intended that the proposed increases to fees and charges for 2010 onwards will seek to fully recover the costs as stated in 3.2.
- 4.2 In Adur it is forecast that for 2010/2011 there would be a resulting increase in income of approximately **£13,000** and in Worthing an additional income of **£30,000** provided the number of new burials remain at current average levels shown in Appendix A (ADC 75 and WBC 150).
- 4.3 The additional income will either deliver an efficiency gain or contribute to achieving budgeted income levels and will therefore help with achieving budget targets.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Officers have checked the fees and charges of neighbouring Council's and although our fees would then be above our neighbours, many neighbouring authorities are also investigating how to fully recover their actual incurred costs, which can only be achieved with similar increases and higher charges being set which are broadly in-line with those proposed in this report.
- 5.2 From the information available, the actual cost of the operations in Adur and Worthing were very similar.
- 5.3 The proposals set out in this report have already been considered by the Crematorium and Cemeteries Advisory Group

6. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- 6.1 **The respective Cabinet Members agree that from January 2010 there will be a joint Fees and Charges for Cemetery services.**
- 6.2 **Cabinet Members approve the proposed new fees and charges and charging structure, based on seeking to achieve fully recovery of operational costs, based on those shown on Appendix A.**
- 6.3 **The new joint fees and charges structure includes rationalising purchase of new graves to a joint standard 50 year, non charging for children up to the age of 16 and the abolition of 'out of district' additional fees in both Councils.**

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Background Papers: None

Schedule of Other Matters

1.0 Council Priority

1.1 Not specifically related a priority.

2.0 Specific Action Plans

2.1 Full January 2010 Fees and Charges document to follow.

3.0 Sustainability Issues

3.1 A requirement for further burial space will be required in Worthing in the future which will be investigated and reported back with proposal separately.

4.0 Equality Issues

4.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

5.0 Community Safety issues (Section 17)

5.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

6.0 Human Rights Issues

6.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

7.0 Reputation

7.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

8.0 Consultations

8.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

9.0 Risk assessment

9.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

10.0 Health & Safety Issues

10.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

11.0 Procurement Strategy

11.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

12.0 Partnership working

12.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

Appendix A

Below shows the financial costs of Adur and Worthing new burials.

The report is based on New graves purchased for 2 and 2 being interred within the 50 years or purchase. This happens on the majority of occasions and is the largest single element of the Cemetery additional operations fees and charges.

Adur	£	£
Maintenance Costs	44,380.00	
Utilities (%)	1,670.00	
Supply and Services (%)	850.00	
Support Costs (%)	<u>31,346.00</u>	
Total Cost Per Year	78,246.00	
Average 75 Graves per year – per grave	1,043.00	
Additional Maintenance over 50 years £1.50 per grave x 16 cuts x 50 years	1,200.00	
Cost to the Council to provide each new grave for two		2,243.00

Worthing	£	£
Routine maintenance	23,679.00	
Graves proportion of the Grounds Maintenance	32,000.00	
Proportion of all Utilities	1,600.00	
Proportion of Supply and Services	1,000.00	
Direct support costs (proportioned)	71,085.00	
Indirect support costs (proportioned)	<u>24,363.00</u>	
Total cost per year	153,727.00	
Average 150 Graves per year – per grave	1,025.00	
Additional maintenance over 50 years £1.50 per grave x 16 cuts x 50 years	1,200.00	
Cost to the Council to provide each new grave for two		2,225.00

Current New Graves Purchase Costs:	£	£
<u>Adur</u>		
Purchase £400.00 plus interment x 2	1,950.00	
<u>Worthing</u>		
Purchase £489.00 plus interment x 2 Plus turfing £136.00	1,915.00	

New Adur & Worthing Fees & Charges – commencing Jan 2010		
	£	£
Purchase new grave plot for 50 years	500.00	
Additional charge for 3 rd burial in plot (to be paid at the time of purchase of the plot)	150.00	
Interment Fee	875.00	
Total cost of grave with 1 burial		1,375.00
Total cost of grave with 2 burials		2,250.00
Total cost of grave with 3 burials		3,275.00