



Title of Report:	CEMETERY PROVISION
Committee Report Submitted To:	ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	9th March 2021
For Decision or For Information	FOR DECISION

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Protecting, promoting and enhancing our unique natural environment and assets
Outcome	Continued Cemetery provision across the Borough
Lead Officer	Head of Estates

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Not Known
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

To update members on current Cemetery provision and requirements for the future.

2.0 Background

On 28th February 2017 Council approved a tendering process to appoint a cemetery development specialist to undertake a study to investigate potential cemetery development throughout the Borough. Based on the initial report further work has been ongoing at the existing locations at Ballymoney, Coleraine, Portrush, Portstewart and also at Ballycastle.

Given limited design life of the existing Portrush cemetery, efforts were initially concentrated on examining the options in at this location. Successful ground investigations subsequently led to planning approval with Council approving the purchase of land adjacent to the existing cemetery. Measures are now underway to extend the existing boundary to incorporate this land. (Plan 1)

Following a delay (due to pandemic restrictions) work has now been completed on the potential to develop the other cemeteries where design life is relatively short. The table below summarises the current status.

Location	Address	Design Life Remaining (years)	Comment
Ballymoney	Knock Rd	12 - 15	See below
Ballywillan	Portrush	50+	Includes new section
Coleraine	Atlantic Rd	15 - 17	See below
Kilrea	Blackrock Road	100+	
Limavady	Scroggy Rd	50+	
Portstewart	Agherton Rd	5 - 7	See below
Portstewart	Coleraine Rd	20+	Site still to be investigated
Rasharkin	Finvoy Rd	100+	
Ballycastle	Ramoan Rd		Potential site

Ballymoney – investigations were permitted by the land owner in the field adjacent to the existing site. Results indicate that the land would be suitable for cemetery development subject to planning approval and purchase of the land. It would provide another 50 years +. (Plan 2)

Coleraine – investigations were carried out on a section of land adjacent to land owned by Council (Cornfields site). Results indicate that the land would be suitable for cemetery development. The section under consideration would add 9 years to the current design life. There is potential for further development should Council wish to include the rest of the Cornfields site. This would provide 50+ years. Contact has also been made with NIHE to ascertain if they are amenable to selling the land to the north of the existing

cemetery. We await a response. (Plan 3) Any development would be subject to planning approval.

Portstewart – between Agherton Rd and Coleraine Rd there is approximately 25 years left. Efforts to gain permission to carry out ground investigations in the land adjacent to the Coleraine Rd site have so far not been successful – there are a number of land owners involved. Efforts are ongoing. (Plan 4)

Ballycastle – Council own a green field site on Ramoan Rd which is currently under-utilised. Site investigations indicate that it would be suitable for cemetery development subject to planning approval. It would have a design life of approximately 16 years less any parking provision. (Plan 5)

3.0 Proposal

Council should actively plan ahead to increase burying capacity throughout the Borough.

Having successfully extended the site at Ballywillan, Portrush, it would be prudent at this time to look at both Coleraine and Ballymoney cemeteries which have the least space left at current burial rates.

Subject to the response from NIHE, Council may wish to consider the future of the Cornfields site to avoid additional land purchase in Coleraine.

In respect of the Ballymoney site it may be to Council's advantage to discuss the purchase of the adjacent field (subject to planning approval). Whilst the need is not urgent it may be prudent to enter into a legal agreement now giving Council an option to purchase within a set timeframe rather than lose the current opportunity. The land sits within an area zoned for housing.

No public cemetery exists in Ballycastle but a suitable site has been identified which is under Council ownership albeit with limited life expectancy.

Land & Property department are best placed to implement recommendations, involving purchase, with assistance from the Estates Department.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 Do nothing. Ultimately Council will run out of burying space.
- 4.2 Proactively seek to purchase land adjacent to existing cemeteries for their development on a priority basis (Coleraine & Ballymoney)
- 4.3 Subject to planning approval develop the Ramoan Rd site in Ballycastle. This avoids the need to purchase land and would, during its lifetime, confirm the demand for public burial space in Ballycastle.

5.0 Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Environmental Services Committee recommends to Council that the Land & Property department explores the options to purchase land adjacent to the existing Coleraine and Ballymoney sites for future cemetery development subject to planning approval. Further report to then be brought back to committee.



Plan 1 Ballywillan, Portrush



Plan 2 Knock Road, Ballymoney



Plan 3 Coleraine



Plan 4 Coleraine Road, Portstewart



Plan 5 Ramoan Road, Ballycastle