

HARMONISATION OF CEMETERY RULES & REGULATIONS	2nd February 2016
To: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE	
For Decision	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets
Outcome	All environments in the area will benefit from pro-active decision making which protects the natural features, characteristics and integrity of the Borough
Lead Officer	Gareth Doyle
Cost: (If applicable)	N/A

1.0 Background

Three out of the four legacy councils provided burial grounds which operated under their own Rules and Regulations. New Rules and Regulations have been drafted to provide a consistent, coherent and equitable approach to the administration and management of cemeteries under the control of Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council.

1.1 Detail

The proposed new Rules & Regulations (*attached at Appendix III*) were drafted following consultation with the Registrar's office and local Funeral Directors. They were presented to Members at a workshop on 5th January 2016. Key points include:

1. Strict adherence to a 'lawn system' for cemetery layouts. This restricts the available space for memorials and floral arrangements. It allows for the efficient use of mechanised equipment for grave digging and cemetery maintenance. (*presentation will be given to highlight lawn system benefits*)
2. No pre-purchase of graves. Graves will be allocated on an "as needed" basis. Note that Funeral Directors include for grave purchase within their Funeral Plans which allow for all financial arrangements to be completed prior to death.

Historically since the introduction of the 'lawn system' in legacy council areas, there has been good compliance with the Rules and Regulations requirements. However, there are a number of graves, specifically in Ballymoney and to a lesser extent, Coleraine where a number of graves now feature a variety of unapproved additions (surrounds, limestone chippings, artificial grass etc).

Over the years many non-compliances in Coleraine cemetery have sensitively been addressed and this process of having unapproved additions removed is ongoing. It is anticipated that with the approval of new Rules and Regulations efforts would continue to work with families to have the 'lawn cemetery system' respected.

1.2 Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approve the implementation of the proposed new Rules and Regulations for the administration and operation of Council cemeteries and encourage the sensitive resolution of unapproved memorials and other grave adornments within designated lawn cemeteries.