

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board Sub Committee  
**DATE:** 18 November 2010  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Adults & Community  
**SUBJECT:** Bereavement Services – pre purchase of graves  
**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To approve the temporary suspension of the right to pre purchase graves pending the establishment of new grave space.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That members of the Committee:**

i) **Approve:**

- **temporary suspension of the policy allowing the pre purchase of graves;**

3.0 This item was considered by The Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on the 15 September 2010. The Board passed the item and policies without amendment.

4.0 **PRE PURCHASED GRAVES**

4.1 Both Runcorn and Widnes cemeteries have approximately 6 years of burial space remaining. As the burial space is seen to reduce an increasing number of comments and enquiries are being made to Bereavement Services staff about the diminishing grave space. At the moment the council does not restrict when a grave can be purchased or how many. There is concern that as grave space is seen to decline there could be an acceleration in the pre purchasing of graves that would further reduce the remaining years left at each site.

4.2 It is recommended that to provide continuity of burial space the pre purchasing of graves is temporarily suspended pending the establishment of new cemetery space in both Runcorn and Widnes.

This change would be managed as follows:-

- Write to all funeral directors informing them of the temporary

suspension of pre-purchasing graves

- A notice will be displayed in the Cemetery Office informing the public of the position.
- Any person enquiring about the pre-purchasing of a grave will have their names put on to a waiting list until suspension has been lifted. The allocation of pre purchased graves will then be prioritised according to your position on the list.
- A notice will be displayed in the Register Office and staff briefed on how to deal with any enquiries should they arise.

## 5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Contained within the report.

## 6.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 None identified.

## 7.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### 7.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

None identified.

### 7.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

### 7.3 **A Healthy Halton**

None identified.

### 7.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

### 7.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

## 8.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

8.1 If the right to pre purchase grave space is not suspended then there is a risk that there will be not being continuity of burials in Widnes.

## 9.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 None identified.

13.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF  
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None.