

**REPORT TO:** Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

**DATE:** 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2011

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Communities

**SUBJECT:** Petition: Public Toilets to be installed in Widnes Cemetery

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To inform members of the Board about the receipt of a petition regarding the provision of public toilets at Widnes Cemetery.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That Members of the Board note the petition and inform Mr Lyon of the next steps.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 2011 the Council received a petition from a Mr Lyon. The petition signed by 73 persons asked that 'Public Toilets be Installed in Widnes Cemetery' and it stated that 'At the present time there is none for the public who attends the cemetery'.

3.2 There are public toilets at Widnes Cemetery which are located close to the main entrance at the side of the Cemetery Lodge, however, it was considered that perhaps there might be an issue with signage and managers from the Open Space Service were asked to investigate. The Strategic Director, Communities wrote to Mr Lyon on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2011 and explained to him that there were toilets at Widnes Cemetery although as 73 people had signed the petition it was obvious that many people were not aware of the toilets and that the Council would look into the matter.

3.3 On 12<sup>th</sup> October 2011, Mr Lyon returned the letter with hand written notes which indicated that the petition referred to there being no public toilets at the Crematorium, although it had not stated this. Mr Lyon's comments were acknowledged and informed the petition would be presented to this Board.

3.4 The Cemetery Lodge closed as an office on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011 and is no longer in use. The toilets which form part of the actual lodge are still open during the Cemetery's opening hours. The Asset Management Working Group has declared the lodge to be a surplus asset and a report has recommended its demolition. If a public toilet

is still to be provided at the Cemetery an alternative location will have to be identified.

3.5 An area within the Crematorium has been identified as a possible location for a public toilet. A feasibility study is currently being undertaken by Property Services to see if a Public Toilet could be provided within the Crematorium building. If it could then it would be an ideal location and it would presumably be agreeable to the petitioners.

3.6 The petition is the first request that the Council has had for public toilets to be located within the Crematorium.

#### 4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 It is the policy of the Council that petitions should be considered by the appropriate Policy and Performance Board.

4.2 An update report will be presented to the Board in 2012 which considers the feasibility study..

#### 5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 If the creation of a public toilet in the Crematorium is feasible a budget would have to be identified to carry out the works.

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

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

None identified.

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

None identified.

##### 6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

None identified.

##### 6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

##### 6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

#### 7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are no risks associated with the petition request.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Mr Lyon's hand written notes sent back with the 12<sup>th</sup> of October indicate that the lack of toilet facilities at the Crematorium prevents many elderly people from attending services at the facility.

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

None.