

**Cheltenham Borough Council**  
**Cabinet**  
**24 June 2014**  
**Scrutiny Task Group Review - Cemetery and Crematorium**  
**Covering Report**

<b>Accountable member</b>	Councillor Chris Ryder, Chair of Scrutiny Task Group
<b>Accountable officer</b>	Rosalind Reeves Democratic Services Manager
<b>Executive summary</b>	<p>At its meeting on 25 November 2013 Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee commenced a review of the Cheltenham Cemetery and Crematorium. A Scrutiny Task Group was set up and the findings and recommendations of that Group are set out in detail in the attached Scrutiny Task Group Report contained in Appendix 2.</p> <p>The O&amp;S committee considered the task group's final report at their meeting on 3 April 2014. They endorsed the recommendations and asked for them to be forwarded to the June meeting of Cabinet.</p>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>The O&amp;S Committee recommends to Cabinet that:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. the recommendations in relation to procurement (i-v) be accommodated within the Authority's Procurement Strategy,</b></li><li><b>2. the recommendations in respect of staff management (ix and x) be implemented by the appropriate Director,</b></li><li><b>3. the recommendation regarding abatement (xv) is taken forward by the responsible Cabinet Member,</b></li><li><b>4. the recommendation in respect of legal options (xii) is taken forward by the Borough Solicitor,</b></li><li><b>5. the recommendations in respect of project management (vi and vii and viii) are included within the Authority's project management processes and procedures,</b></li><li><b>6. the recommendation in respect of risk management and the Corporate Risk Register (viii) is endorsed by the Authority's senior leadership team, and</b></li><li><b>7. the remaining recommendations (xi, xiii and xvi) are actioned by Cabinet/appropriate Cabinet Member</b></li></ol>

<b>Financial implications</b>	<i>The Cabinet Member Sustainability indicated that he would request officers to assess the financial implications and include these in a report setting out his response to the recommendations.</i>
<b>Legal implications</b>	<p>The recommendations in respect of procurement processes will require legal input when updating the procurement strategy to ensure that any changes made are legally robust.</p> <p>Whilst there can be no certainty for recovery of the losses incurred by the Authority in this matter, One Legal is continuing to explore possible routes for legal redress.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: peter.lewis@tewkesbury.gov.uk, 01684 272012</b></p>
<b>HR implications (including learning and organisational development)</b>	<i>The Cabinet Member Sustainability indicated that he would request officers to assess the HR implications and include these in a report setting out his response to the recommendations.</i>
<b>Key risks</b>	These are outlined in the task group report
<b>Corporate and Community Plan implications</b>	
<b>Environmental and climate change implications</b>	<p>There is no statutory requirement for mercury abatement equipment to be fitted as the cremation sector operates a 'burden sharing' approach (the CAMEO scheme). This is because the government's target for cutting mercury emitted into the environment can be met without the need for all crematoria to fit abatement equipment. The government has set national, rather than local, targets because mercury emissions do not impact directly on the local environment. However mercury is toxic and when released into the environment accumulates in the air and water and has an effect on health via the food chain, particularly when it is deposited in water and taken up by fish.</p> <p>Whilst there is no direct local impact, the council is committed to enhancing and protecting the environment and it would therefore be good practice and support this objective to ensure the abatement equipment is brought into operation.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: Gill Morris, Climate change and sustainability officer,</b> <b>Gill.morris@cheltenham.gov.uk</b> <b>01242 264229</b></p>
<b>Property/Asset Implications</b>	None

<b>Report author</b>	<b>Contact officer: Rosalind Reeves@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 774937</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extract from the minutes of O&amp;S 3 April 2014</li> <li>2. Task Group report (including its appendices)</li> </ol>
<b>Background information</b>	O&S meeting 3 April 2014

## Appendix 1

### Extract from the Minutes of O&S Committee 9 April 2014-06-09

#### **Cemetery and Crematorium**

Councillor Chris Ryder presented the Scrutiny Task Group's final report following a review set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in its meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

Councillor Ryder informed the members that a few matters contained in the report were still waiting resolution and hoped that the Cabinet would pursue those items in due course. She highlighted to members that although the cremators were working satisfactorily currently this was without the abatement system and clarity was needed on the implications if the council was to come out the CAMEO scheme.

She thanked her fellow task group members and Rosalind Reeves for her support to the group. The chair also thanked those involved for the excellent practice adopted.

Councillor Roger Whyborn, Cabinet Member, assured the meeting that Cabinet would review the recommendations contained in the report when he would provide his response to the task group report. In the meantime he said that the task group report had been very helpful in highlighting particular issues though there was one or two areas where he felt the task group had not fully understood how the procurement process works. Regarding the reference in the task group report to a Cabinet report in June he clarified that this would not be a report but a briefing paper on the way forward for the cremators.

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

**The recommendations of the Cemetery and Crematorium Scrutiny Task Group be endorsed for onward recommendation to Cabinet in June.**