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|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>ESTATES SAVING PROPOSALS 2018/19</b>     | <b>1<sup>st</sup> May 2018</b> |
| <b>TO: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE</b> |                                |
| <b>FOR DECISION</b>                         |                                |

| <b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)</b> |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Strategic Theme</b>                       | Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets  |
| <b>Outcome</b>                               | To ensure that Council resources are used to protect and enhance Council assets and not used to do the work of other agencies |
| <b>Lead Officer</b>                          | Head of Estates   |
| <b>Cost: (If applicable)</b>                 | Savings c£90,000. Increased income £5,565   |

## Background

Over the years Council has undertaken to provide both paid and unpaid additional grounds maintenance work on behalf of other agencies. By cutting back on this service there is potential to save £90,000. A small increase in income from increased burial charges would also help achieve the £1.8m savings/income identified at the Rates meeting held 8<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

## Detail

**Grounds Maintenance.** As outlined in previous reports, legacy councils previously undertook to cut agreed areas of grass on behalf of DFI Roads Service. Council were paid c£55,000 for this service. Council has continued to cut this grass even though payment was stopped in 2015. Over the years Council has ‘adopted’ grass cutting in other areas such as housing development green space. No payment was ever made and Council continue to provide this service. The required £90,000 saving can be achieved by reducing the number of seasonal agency staff employed each summer along with some floral display reductions. Remaining staff would focus only on grass under the responsibility of Council, for example, pitches, parks, council open spaces, coastal paths, cemeteries and old graveyards. Sponsored roundabouts would continue to be maintained as Council receive an income for their presentation. No other grass would be maintained. To achieve the required savings, this would mean that:

1. Grass not under the responsibility of Council would cease to be cut. This includes DFI grass verges (approximately 250,000m2).
2. Grass 'adopted' over the years by Council would also cease to be cut. This includes, for example, green areas within housing developments which have not been maintained by those responsible for their upkeep (approximately 60,500m2).
3. A number of floral displays are within DFI verges and would not be seen if grass not cut. These areas would be 'returned' to grassland.

The above steps would have significant impact on the visual amenity but the areas in question do not belong to Council therefore it is not Council's responsibility to maintain them.

**Cemetery Charges.** In 2017/18 cemetery charges amounted to £92,760. Potential to increase charges to gain additional income as follows in 2018/19:

| Increase percentage | Additional Income |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| <b>2%</b>           | <b>£1,855</b>     |
| <b>3%</b>           | <b>£2,783</b>     |
| <b>4%</b>           | <b>£3,710</b>     |
| <b>5%</b>           | <b>£4,638</b>     |
| <b>6%</b>           | <b>£5,565</b>     |

The current list of cemetery charges is attached as Appendix 1.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Council immediately cease to maintain grassed areas which are not Council responsibility and agree cemetery charge increase as part of overall strategy to remain within 2018/19 budget.

## APPENDIX 1

| Cemetery Charges                      | 2017/18  |              |
|---------------------------------------|----------|--------------|
|                                       | Resident | Non-Resident |
| Purchase of Plot                      | 150      | 0            |
| 1st Opening                           | 210      | 335          |
| 2nd                                   | 210      | 335          |
| 3rd                                   | 210      | 335          |
| Charges for opening on Sat,Sun or PH: | 0        | 0            |
| 1st Opening                           | 210      | 335          |
| 2nd                                   | 210      | 335          |
| 3rd                                   | 210      | 335          |
| Transfer of Burial Rights             | 40       | 55           |
| Permission to Erect Headstone         | 55       | 85           |
| Duplicate Certificate                 | 20       | 40           |
| Search or Extract from Register       | 20       | 25           |
| Purchase of Plot for Ashes            | 40       | 75           |
| Cremations                            | 65       | 120          |
| Still Born                            | 50       | 95           |
| Child under 1 year                    | 50       | 95           |
| Child under 2 year                    | 50       | 95           |
| Tree for Garden of Remembrance        | 95       | 120          |
| Plaque for Garden of Remembrance      | 70       | 95           |
| Exhumations                           | 790      | 1050         |