

2 CEMETERY HEADSTONE SAFETY (AN148-2015)

Reference is made to item VII of the Environment Committee of 29th October, 2012, when a pilot scheme of utilising spare capacity within the Construction Division of the Environment Department to undertake inspection testing and making safe of stones was agreed.

The pilot has performed well over the last three years and significant progress has been made. A full record of the condition of the stones has been recorded in the Council database and any dangerous stones up to 1.5 metres were dealt with during the inspection process. Dangerous larger stones were sub-contracted to a specialist contractor to make safe. A key benefit of the scheme was to properly record the condition of headstones and by dealing with dangerous stones during the inspection process the risk in the cemeteries have been reduced. The scheme has therefore been successful. However there are still ongoing problems of dangerous headstones within cemeteries and there is a need from a health and safety perspective to continue the inspection and action programme.

It is proposed to continue this current approach and accept the offer from the Construction Division of the Environment Department to undertake the inspection, testing, recording and making safe of stones up to approximately 1.5m in height. It is intended that, where possible, such headstones would be made safe on a more permanent basis. Any headstones in excess of 1.5m will be referred to the specialist contractor who will be appointed using 'Quick Quote' under the Council's E-procurement system.

Committee are asked to approve the above works and to authorise the Director of Environment to undertake these works. The Director of Corporate Services advises that the capital improvement works of £60,000 can be met through allowances within the Environment Department's Capital Plan 2015/16.