

## **SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Report of:** Councillor Rodney Grocock – Portfolio Holder – Assets and Planning

**To :** South Holland District Council Thursday, 29 July 2021

**Author:** Marc Whelan Strategic and Operational Property Manager

**Subject** Allocation of funding for planned works to be undertaken at Spalding Cemetery, Pinchbeck Road, Spalding.

**Purpose:** To secure agreement to amending the Council's Capital Programme for the 2021-22 Financial Year to make a provision for planned capital works to be undertaken at Spalding Cemetery and approve the draw-down of the Spalding Special Expenses Reserve to fund revenue works.

### **Recommendation(s)**

- 1) To approve the Council's Capital Programme for the Financial Year 2021-22 be amended to provide a capital allocation to fund works required to be undertaken at Spalding Cemetery, Pinchbeck Road, Spalding.
- 2) To approve that the net capital receipt proceeds from the sale of the Cemetery Gatehouse (£151k), sold in 2008 and previously providing a revenue income towards the running of the cemetery, be used to fund the capital works referred to in recommendation 1 above.
- 3) To approve the allocation of up to £20k from the Council's Capital Programme to be a sum set aside as project contingency.
- 4) To approve a sum of up to £26k of the Spalding Special Expenses Reserve will be used to fund enabling works (revenue item works required to be undertaken prior to the capital funded works commencing).
- 5) To note that following a procurement exercise to determine a suitable contractor to undertake the capital works a further decision will be required, in this case a Portfolio Holders decision, to enable the award of a contract for these works.

### **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Council owns and manages the Spalding Cemetery on Pinchbeck Road, Spalding. The asset requires capital investment to ensure that deterioration of the roadways through the cemetery over time can be addressed. The roadways have on a regular basis been patched repaired but the point in time has now come where patch repairing is no longer a viable option and comprehensive resurfacing works are required.
- 1.2 Due to the absence of kerbing and narrowness of some roadways, compounded by not having a one-way system within parts of the cemetery, there has been a deterioration to the road edging. Works are planned to address this too in specific areas where this occurs most often, if the recommendations set out in this report are approved

1.3 The cemetery has very few areas where cars can park off road. Consequently, grassed areas are regularly trafficked in certain areas and, cars parked within the grounds can sometimes hinder the easy flow of other vehicles through the cemetery. The proposed works include the creation of formal parking bays in some areas and the creation of a one-way system within certain parts of the cemetery in order to manage traffic flow better. New signage will be erected and the speed limit reduced from 6mph to 5mph with the installation of speed bumps in a small number of areas.

1.4 In advance of the programme of capital works commencing, enabling works are required (enabling works are those revenue funded works that have to be undertaken before the main capital works can commence) in order that those works can be undertaken effectively and efficiently without what would be inevitable delays in dealing with these items whilst a road resurfacing contract is underway. These works include demolition of the old and unused toilet block where new car parking will be created, the removal of surplus mounded soil, tree works to remove dead or diseased trees and shrubs in certain areas and, the cutting back of branches which overhang roads and footpaths.

Self-sown trees, i.e. those that have not been formally planted are a particular problem in certain parts of the cemetery and create issues in close proximity to graves. As part of the “enabling works” recommended for approval to be funded from the Spalding Special Expenses Reserve a significant number of these will be removed, This programme also includes a specialist clean down of the exterior of the two Chapels and the Mausoleum. These revenue funded works are shown as phases 1& 2 of an overall 3 phase programme. A summary of the planned works within these 3 phases can be found in **Appendix 2**. This Appendix should be read in conjunction with **Appendix 1**. **Appendix 1** contains a colour coded site plan with useful annotations.

1.5 Works referred to be undertaken in sections 1.1 to 1.3 above are capital items recommended to be dealt with through an adjustment to the approved capital programme as set out in this report (recommendations 1, 2 and 3 refer).

Items set out in 1.4 above are to be funded through the Spalding Special Expenses Reserve balances as revenue items. As at the end of June 2021 the reserve balance was approximately £98k against which it is recommended in this report that a sum of up to £26k is allocated for enabling works (phases 1&2 in **Appendix 2**). The Spalding Special Expenses Reserve is intended to fund one off items of expenditure such as these.

1.6 Following a procurement exercise to source a suitable contractor for the capital funded items (Phase 3 works) a further decision will be required, in this case a Portfolio Holder decision. Such a decision is required to enable the award of a works contract. The total capital allocation recommended in this report is **£171k** of which **£20k** will be a contingency. Provided suitable tenders are received and recommendations set out in this report being approved, it is proposed that the contractor would be appointed during August 2021.

## 2.0 **OPTIONS**

2.1 **Option 1 - To amend the Council's Capital Programme** for the 2021-22 Financial Year to make provision for Phase 3 capital works to be funded and for Phases 1& 2, the enabling works, to be funded from the Spalding Special Expenses Reserve balances – **Recommended option.**

2.2 **Option 2 – Fund in a different way to that set out in this report** –The sale of the cemetery gatehouse has provided the opportunity to fund a substantial programme of works at the time when patch repairing is no longer a cost effective and viable option. The Spalding Special Expenses Reserve is intended to be used on items such as those set out in paragraph 1.4 above and referred to in **Appendix 2** as Phases 1&2. The Spalding Cemetery is one of those assets where the operational cost of running the facility is covered by a special area expense account given Spalding is not covered by a town or parish council which would ordinarily own and manage local cemetery assets - **Not recommended..**

2.3 **Option 3 - Do Nothing** – namely do not agree the funding recommendations. This would result in these essential asset works not being undertaken and the roadways further deteriorate leaving the Council with a potential future health and safety issue as well as potentially damaging the reputation of the Council.

The planned capital works (summarised in **Appendix 2** as phase 3) are essential for the future safe operation of the cemetery as well as helping to improve the environment for visitors and support the good work that is already undertaken there by volunteers. They will also reduce the need to regularly fill potholes over the short/ medium term which could if not addressed now prove a significant annual cost liability as the road continues to deteriorate - **Not recommended**

### 3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

3.1 To enable a significant upgrade of the roads within the cemetery, creating a safer environment and an improved experience for visitors through a range of initiatives such as the creation of car parking and more passing places, the cleaning of buildings, new bench seating, improved signage and traffic calming measures.

The introduction of a one-way traffic flow in areas that are specifically susceptible to vehicle blockages is an important feature of these works. Essential investment into roads where potholes are increasingly more difficult to repair and damage continues to occur to roadway edgings will reduce the amount of maintenance required to be undertaken by the Council in the short to medium term to address these issues.

### 4.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS

4.1 The allocation of funding (capital and revenue) will allow a significant upgrade to the road surface/ circulation system and add parking spaces to areas within the Cemetery and other improvements referred to throughout this report.

4.2 Minimise potential future slips and trips and car damage claims which are more likely to happen if the road surface further deteriorated.

4.3 Increase visitor satisfaction through a variety of operational improvements.

### 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues;

Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Data Protection; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Transformation Programme; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

## **5.1 Corporate Priorities**

- 5.1.1 Supporting Spalding to be an attractive place to visit  
Ensuring the delivery of cost-effective high-quality service provision

## **5.2 Financial**

- 5.2.1 The cost of the capital works described in the report are to be funded from the Councils capital receipts, which have accrued, in part, from the net sale proceeds from the sale of the Cemetery Gatehouse (£151k), sold in 2008. The revenue element of the works will be funded from the Spalding Special Expenses Reserve balance.

## **5.3 Reputation**

- 5.3.1 The Cemetery road infrastructure is in need of repair before the onset of Winter with the previous process of patching no longer economically viable given the age of the road and its condition.

The Council has already received representations and complaints about the condition of the roadways in certain areas and works are required. To not carry our essential works could impact on the reputation of the Council. A programme of works which also addresses the issue of limited car parking and potential for certain roads being blocked by parked or oncoming vehicles can only be positively received and help to maintain and enhance the Councils reputation.

## **5.4 Risk Management**

- 5.4.1 A potential for slips and trips as the roads and paths fall into further disrepair will be significantly reduced through carrying out the programme of works set out in this report.

## **5.5 Constitutional and Legal**

- 5.5.1 The Councils Constitution requires an amendment to its Capital Programme to be approved by Full Council.

The placing of a works contract for Phase 3 of the works as set out in this report will follow the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and be subject to a separate Portfolio Holder Decision once a tendering process has been completed and tenders duly evaluated to identify a preferred contractor.

## **5.6 Equality & Diversity**

- 5.6.1 In developing the scope of works to be procured (Phases 1-3 inclusive) due consideration has been taken to Equality & Diversity. These matters will be dealt with more fully in a Portfolio Holder report to follow once the tender process has concluded and a preferred

contractor is identified.

## **6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 All Spalding wards

## **7.0 ACRONYMS**

7.1 None

## **8.0 CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 Councillor Gary Taylor as Ward Councillor, Cllr Bryan Alcock as Chair of Performance Monitoring Panel and Cllr Roger Gambba-Jones as Chair of Spalding Town Forum have all been briefed on the basis of the proposals set out in this report.

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Background papers:- None

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### **Lead Contact Officer**

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**Key Decision:** N

**Exempt Decision:** N

**This report refers to a Discretionary Service**

**Appendices attached to this report:**

**Appendix 1 : Plan of Cemetery with useful annotations**

**Appendix 2 : Scope of Works Summary (All Phases)**