



FULL COUNCIL REPORT

Date Written	22nd February 2021
Report Author	Paul Jones
Service Area	Neighbourhood Services
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non exempt
Committee Date	3 rd March 2021

To: Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen

Proposal to Prohibit Vehicle Access to Cefn Coed and Pant Cemeteries at Night

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update members on the current position regarding access to Cefn Coed and Pant Cemeteries and the problems being encountered due to the gates being left open.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION that

2.1 The proposal to prohibit vehicle access to Cefn Coed and Pant Cemeteries at night be approved.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

3.1 As a result of previous efficiency savings, Cemetery gates throughout the County Borough have been left open. Due to recent adverse publicity this report has been written to advise Council of issues being encountered within Pant and Cefn Coed cemeteries as a result of this.

4.0 CURRENT SITUATION

4.1 Since cemetery gates have been left open there have been numerous public concerns raised through various channels, ie. local Councillor representation, derogatory comments on social media, as well as receipt of a petition with over 500 signatures requesting that the gates be locked at night.

- 4.2 In recent months complaints have increased due to various issues. These include anti-social behaviour, a stolen vehicle smashing into the garden of rest at Cefn Cemetery causing thousands of pounds worth of damage to memorials, and also an increase in fly tipping within cemetery grounds.
- 4.3 Burial grounds are sacred places and when people visit, they should feel safe in the knowledge that their loved ones have been laid to rest in a safe environment which is both tranquil and pleasing to the eye. To ensure this, it is proposed that a budget is made available for a security company to lock the cemetery gates to prohibit vehicles at Cefn Coed and Pant Cemeteries (the gates at Pant Cemetery are not fully functioning at present and as such a bollard at each entrance will be erected at night to prohibit vehicles entering until the gates can be repaired).
- 4.4 The following schedules are proposed throughout the year:
- Winter months - 1st October to 31st March - open 08:00 and close 17:00.
 - Summer months - 1st April to 30th September - open 08:00 and close 20:00.
- For all bank holidays times are as specified above.
- 4.5 Consideration has been given for our own Cemetery staff to lock the gates but this was deemed unfeasible due to staff being based at one cemetery and operational requirements/capacity to cover leave and sickness etc.
- 4.6 Standby officers, the Police and Fire Services will all be allocated spare keys for the cemetery gates.
- 4.7 Bedlinog ward members (Graig Fargoed Cemetery) and Merthyr Vale ward members (Aberfan Cemetery) have confirmed that they want their cemeteries to remain open. Treharris ward members (Beechgrove Cemetery) would like to consult the public before deciding whether or not to close that cemetery at night.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The security firm currently contracted by MTCBC has been approached to provide a cost for opening/closing Cefn Coed and Pant Cemeteries for the following:
- Winter months - 1st October to 31st March - open 08.00 and close at 17.00.
 - Summer months - 1st April to 30th September - open 08:00 and close 20:00.
- To open and close during all Bank Holidays, times as set out above.
- 5.2 A breakdown of the costs is as follows:

Description	Costs:
Mobile Patrol vehicle with officer	£30.00 + VAT/round
Contracted hours as set out above - Daily Open/Close Cemeteries	£60.00 + VAT/day
	£60.00 x 357 days + £120 x 8 days
	£21,420 + £960
Total:	£22,380 + VAT/Year

6.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives	1 of 4	0 of 4	3 of 4
2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term • Prevention • Integration • Collaboration • Involvement 	2 of 5	0 of 5	3 of 5
3. Protected Characteristics <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	0 of 10	0 of 10	10 of 10
4. Biodiversity	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 1
<p><u>Summary:</u></p> <p>The main positive impact is that access will be restricted therefore it is anticipated that there will be no anti-social behaviour during the evenings and fly tipping will be reduced.</p> <p>No negative impacts have been identified.</p>			

JUDITH JONES
CHIEF OFFICER (PLANNING & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES)

COUNCILLOR DAVID HUGHES
CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No

Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.