

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 26TH SEPTEMBER, 2018

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER

**PRESENT: Leader of the Council/Executive Member Corporate Services
Councillor N.J. Daniels (Chair)**

**Executive Member – Environment
Councillor G. Collier**

**Executive Member –
Regeneration & Economic Development
Councillor D. Davies**

**Executive Member – Education
Councillor C. Meredith**

**Executive Member – Social Services
Councillor J. Mason**

WITH:
Managing Director
Corporate Director Social Services
Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services
Head of Education Transformation
Chief Officer Resources
Service Manager Public Protection
Principal Environmental Health Officer
Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
	<u>DEPUTY LEADER/ENVIRONMENT MATTERS</u>	
No. 13	<u>CEMETERIES TASK AND FINISH GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS (PART 2)</u> Consideration was given to report of the Head of Community Services. The Deputy Leader/Executive Member Environment presented the report which provided the findings from the Cemetery Task and Finish Group. The Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services said the need for investment in the Borough's cemeteries was accepted for the reasons outlined in the report. He referred to the Task and Finish Group preferred Option 1 to utilise the grant from the Crematorium, and said from a service area perspective this would need to be considered along with other funding bids. The Deputy Leader said the deterioration of the cemeteries was the result of lack of investment over the years, and he commended the work of the Task and Finish Group in addressing the issues, however, the method of resolving the situation financial does not comply with the Council's current arrangements. He said the £247k surplus funds from the Crematorium, when received, should be put into the Council's general reserve and any investment of these funds be considered along with other Council priorities. The Leader said he had no issue with the principle of the report and he was pleased to see acknowledgement from all political groups that the cemeteries had deteriorated to an unacceptable standard. However, he pointed out that the £247k from the Crematorium had not been formally introduced into the Council via a report stating that we have the money, and he agreed with the Deputy Leader's comments that the	

money should go into the general reserve and balanced against other corporate priorities. He said whilst the report correctly highlighted the situation with the Borough's cemeteries, he found it difficult to support the preferred Option 1 as the money had not been formally declared to Council, and no opportunity for it to go down the corporate priority funding route.

The Leader then suggested an alternative Option, namely that the Corporate Director instruct the Technical Services Department to undertake an urgent comprehensive feasibility study of the Borough's cemeteries to ascertain the level of work that was needed to be undertaken, and these works be prioritised on a cemetery-by-cemetery basis; and that a meeting be arranged with the Chief Officer Resources and the Neighbourhood Services Team to discuss funding proposals for a rolling programme of works over the next few years.

RESOLVED that the report be not accepted, and the following alternative Option be approved:

- The Corporate Director to instruct the Technical Services Department to undertake an urgent comprehensive feasibility study of the Borough's cemeteries to ascertain the level of work that was needed to be undertaken, and these works be prioritised on a cemetery-by-cemetery basis; and
- That a meeting be arranged with the Chief Officer Resources and the Neighbourhood Services Team to discuss funding proposals for a rolling programme of works over the next few years.