

**NOTE OF A CALL-IN MEETING
HELD ON 13th OCTOBER, 2017 AT THE TOWN HALL, NELSON
TO DISCUSS THE EXECUTIVE DECISION IN RESPECT OF
AN INCREASE IN CEMETERY FEES**

PRESENT:

Councillors:

M. Iqbal	Leader
J. Cooney	Caller-In
A. R. Greaves	Deputy Leader/Finance Portfolio Holder
K. Turner	Scrutiny Management Team (Chairman)

In Attendance:

P. Mousdale	Corporate Director
D. Walker	Environmental Services Manager
L. Rowland	Committee Administrator – Scrutiny Lead
J. Watson	Head of Democratic Services

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors W. Blackburn, M. Goulthorp and C. Wakeford).

Chairman

Councillor K. Turner	Chairman – Scrutiny Management Team
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1. INCREASE IN CEMETERY FEES

Decision Called In

At its meeting on 21st September, 2017 the Executive took the decision shown in the minute below which resulted in a Call In Notice being submitted by Councillors J. Cooney, M. Goulthorp and C. Wakeford:

“70 INCOME REVIEW 2017

The Financial Services Manager submitted a report which reviewed fees and charges for the 2018/19 budget process in line with the Fees and Charges Policy but equally in response to the significant financial pressures faced by the Council.

A list of the proposed changes in fees and charges from 1st October, 2017 to 1st April, 2018 were attached at Appendix A and proposals for changes to cemetery charges for 2018/19 were attached at Appendix B.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the proposed changes to fees and charges, as outlined in Appendices A and B attached to the report, be approved.

- (2) That the possibility of Lancashire County Council taking the administration of resident parking permits back in-house during 2018 ending the current arrangements and the implications for this Council, be noted.

REASON

To implement the Council's financial strategy action plan, specifically in support of the 'charging' theme outlined as part of the updated Medium Term Financial Plan reported to the Executive in May, 2017."

REASONS FOR CALL IN

Councillor Cooney explained that the reason for the Call In was that his group did not believe that enough consultation had been taken on the proposals to increase cemetery fees across Pendle and believed it was unfair to hike the increase without any regard on the impact of the decision taken.

EXECUTIVE DECISION

Details of comparison charges for cemetery fees with other local authorities were circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that public consultation on proposed increases fees had not been carried out in previous years despite these often being above inflation. It was also acknowledged that for 2017/18 there had been a 10% increase as a significant step towards covering the full cost of the service which had not caused any significant public outcry.

The increase in the cost of the vaults was of concern to some Members and Officers had been asked to look at this further.

SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ACTION

Following discussion no decision was reached on an alternative course of action to the present decision to be put to the Executive.

It was suggested that the Executive might consider formally adopting as a policy objective working towards setting fees at a level which would cover the cost of the service in full; and that as part of this officers should undertake a detailed review of the cost of the service.