



Supplementary: Audit Advisory Committee

Tuesday 5 December 2017 at 6.30 pm

Boardrooms 7&8 - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,
Wembley HA9 0FJ

Membership:

Members

Mr Ewart (Chair)
Mr Sullivan

Substitute Members

Councillors:

A Choudry (Vice-Chair)
Davidson
Nerva
Perrin
Krupa Sheth

Councillors:

Hoda-Benn, Long, McLeish and Pavey

Councillors:

Kansagra and Warren

For further information contact: Tom Welsh, Governance Officer
Tel: 020 8937 6607; Email: tom.welsh@brent.gov.uk

For electronic copies of minutes, reports and agendas, and to be alerted when the minutes of this meeting have been published visit:

www.brent.gov.uk/committees

The press and public are likely to be excluded from part of this this meeting.

Notes for Members - Declarations of Interest:

If a Member is aware they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent and must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If a Member is aware they have a Personal Interest** in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent.

If the Personal Interest is also a Prejudicial Interest (i.e. it affects a financial position or relates to determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission, or registration) then (unless an exception at 14(2) of the Members Code applies), after disclosing the interest to the meeting the Member must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item, except that they may first make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the matter, provided that the public are allowed to attend the meeting for those purposes.

***Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:**

- (a) **Employment, etc.** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit gain.
- (b) **Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of election; including from a trade union.
- (c) **Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between the Councillors or their partner (or a body in which one has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) **Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) **Licences** - Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) **Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which the Councillor or their partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) **Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

****Personal Interests:**

The business relates to or affects:

- (a) Anybody of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management, and:
 - To which you are appointed by the council;
 - which exercises functions of a public nature;
 - which is directed is to charitable purposes;
 - whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including a political party or trade union).
 - (b) The interests of a person from whom you have received gifts or hospitality of at least £50 as a member in the municipal year;
- or

A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting, to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral ward affected by the decision, the well-being or financial position of:

- You yourself;
- a member of your family or your friend or any person with whom you have a close association or any person or body who employs or has appointed any of these or in whom they have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000, or any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are a director
- any body of a type described in (a) above

Agenda

| Item | Page |
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| 13 Exclusion of Press and Public | |
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The following items are not for publication as they relate to the following category of exempt information as specified under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, namely:

3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

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| 14 Paddington Cemetery Groundworks | 1 - 48 |
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The purpose of this report is to set out the findings from an investigation into the circumstances for procuring works to conduct landscaping work at Paddington Cemetery and the steps being taken to address concerns about contamination of the site.

Wards Affected:
All Wards


Contact Officer: Michael Bradley, Head of Audit and Investigations
Tel: 020 8937 6526
Email: michael.bradley@brent.gov.uk

Date of the next meeting: Wednesday 10 January 2018



- Please remember to **SWITCH OFF** your mobile phone during the meeting.
- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.

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|  | Audit Advisory Committee 5 December 2017 |
| | Report from the Chief Finance Officer |
| Paddington Cemetery Groundworks | |

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| Wards Affected: | N/A |
| Key or Non-Key Decision: | N/A |
| Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act) | Not for Publication: Appendix A of this report is not for publication as it contains the following category of exempt information as specified in Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: "Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)" |
| No. of Appendices: | One |
| Background Papers: | None |
| Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details) | Michael Bradley, Head of Audit & Investigations Tel: 020 8937 6526 Email: michael.bradley@brent.gov.uk |

Reason for Urgency

There is significant public concern about the discovery of asbestos contamination at Paddington Cemetery. This report provides some reassurance to the public and members about the actions being taken by the Council.

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the findings from an investigation into the circumstances for procuring works to conduct landscaping work at Paddington Cemetery in 2010; specifically whether works were adequately specified and signed off as required.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Audit Advisory Committee notes the report and considers what further work may be necessary

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 This review was undertaken following concerns raised by a Councillor in an email dated 10th November 2017. The email raised concerns about contaminated waste discovered in Paddington Cemetery.
- 3.2 The Audit review report concludes that procurement procedures within the Cemeteries service were inadequate at the time that work was undertaken at the cemetery. The Audit report and recommends that management ensure that procedures within the Cemeteries team to procure contractors and approve goods/services are urgently reviewed to ensure they meet the Council's expectations and that management consider the recommendations in from consultants' to proportionately mitigate the soil contamination identified.
- 3.3 The report and its findings have been welcomed by management whose response includes:

"The report concludes that procurement procedures within the Cemeteries service were inadequate at the time that work was undertaken and recommends that management ensure that procedures within the Cemeteries team to procure contractors and approve goods/services are urgently reviewed to ensure they meet the Council's expectations and that management consider the recommendations in from consultants' to proportionately mitigate the soil contamination identified.

The report and its findings have been welcomed by management who have agreed to work to ensure that any deficiencies in the council's protocols or processes that may still apply are remedied as a matter of great urgency. The council cemetery operation is now much changed and is out-sourced. It is anticipated that any deficiencies that led to this contamination are now no longer relevant and/or could no longer happen.

Most importantly, the council has an obligation to give customers complete reassurance that the site can continue to be visited without concern and that it is properly remediated. That is our commitment going forward. The advice to date is that the contamination is very low risk and can be properly contained.

Work to make that happen is underway. A final report is due that will set out options for the council to cleanse the site. We have also appointed specialist contractors to undertake burials at graves that have previously been used. That satisfies a particular commitment to families wishing to have relatives buried together."

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The final decision on regularising the land at the cemetery will consider costs against potential revenue.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 The Chief Legal Officer has been consulted on the preparation of the report.

6.0 Equality Implication

6.1 None.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

7.1 None.

8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

8.1 None.

Report sign off:

Conrad Hall

Chief Finance Officer

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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