

Ref: RDB/RP/MM/17.09.2019

25 September 2019

Councillor Michael Michael,
Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling & Environment,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Michael,

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 17th September 2019

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank you and the officers for attending the Committee meeting on Tuesday 17th September 2019 to discuss the item on 'Affordable Funeral Strategy & Burial Space Provision'. The comments and observations made by Members on the areas relevant to your portfolio of responsibility are set out in this letter.

- Members would like to congratulate you and the staff in Bereavement & Registration Services for winning 'Best Service Team of the Year – Cemetery & Crematorium Category' at the recent APSE awards. Being presented with such an award clearly demonstrates the professionalism of staff and reflects well on the Council and Cardiff.
- During the meeting Members were told that Bereavement & Registration Services was looking into the development of some type of funeral plan or bond to help local residents to save for funeral expenses. The Committee was told that there were some potential barriers to delivering such a scheme, however, they still felt that it was a good idea that merited further investigation. I would be grateful if you could provide the Committee with information on the type of plan or scheme that the Council is looking to deliver, along with an explanation of the potential barriers and benefits that various options might provide.
- The Committee was told that people are generally reluctant to talk about future funeral arrangements; however, avoiding such a conversation could make things difficult for those left to pick up the pieces and potentially

channel families and individuals into funeral poverty. Members were told that Bereavement & Registration Services is due to start a 'Broader Conversations Campaign' that would provide 'pre-need advice' along with counselling and support for those struggling to manage the financial and emotional difficulties that can accompany the planning of a funeral. The Committee welcomes the roll out of such a campaign, but has asked for assurance that all staff providing the counselling and advice are properly trained.

- Members welcome the news that the Council has identified an ashes scatter area along the River Taff, and ask to be informed of the exact location just before the announcement is made public.

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and provide a response to the content of this letter.

Regards,

Handwritten signature of Ramesh Patel in black ink.

Councillor Ramesh Patel

Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

- Andrew Gregory - Director of Planning, Transport & Environment
- Martin Birch – Operational Manager, Bereavement & Registration Services
- Davina Fiore - Director of Governance & Legal Services
- Members of Cardiff's Environmental Scrutiny Committee