

# Provision of Cemeteries

Presentation to Society Executive  
Advisory Board

5<sup>th</sup> July 2018

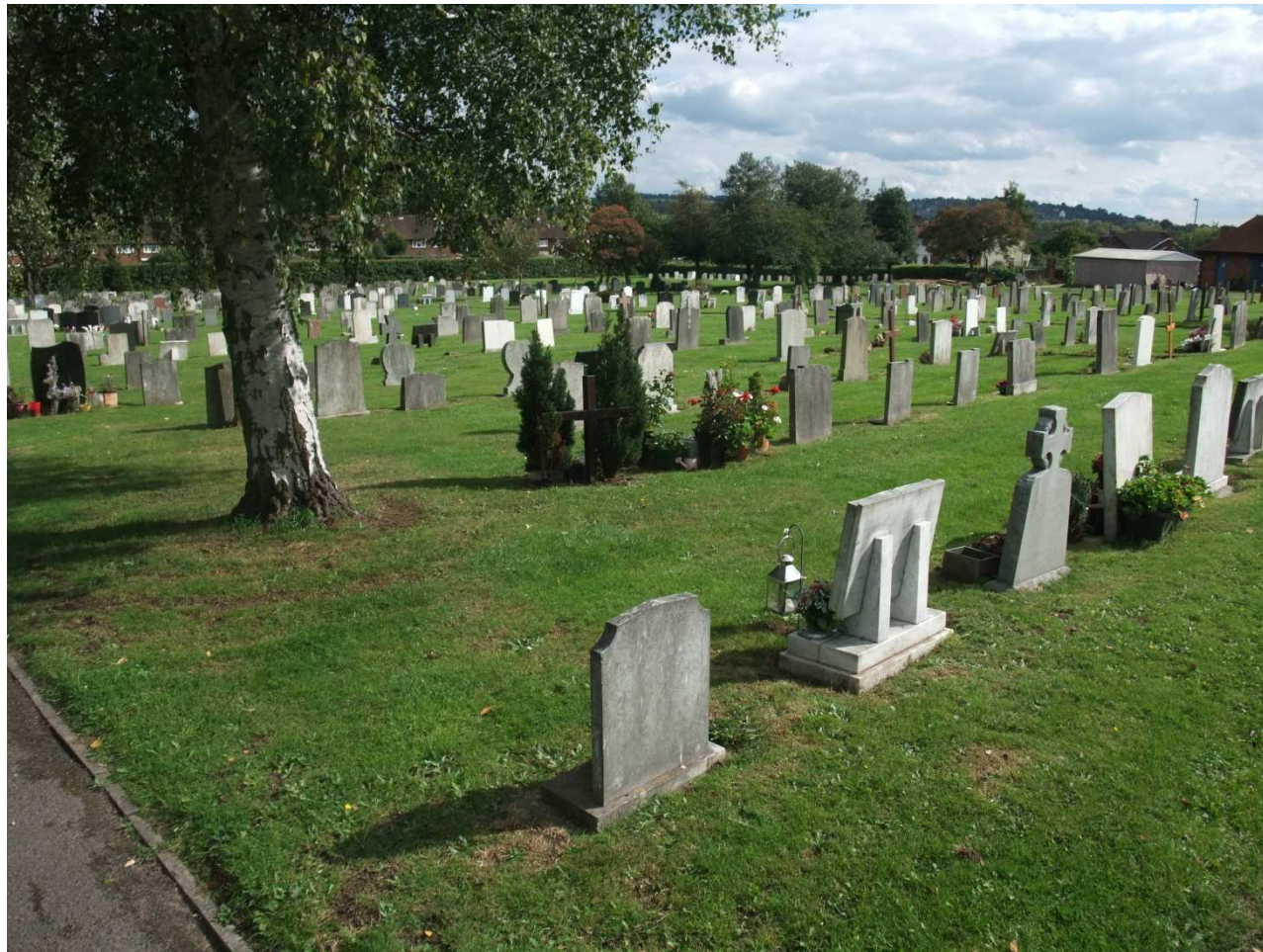
Paul Stacey and Natasha Precious

# Should the Council provide new cemetery space?

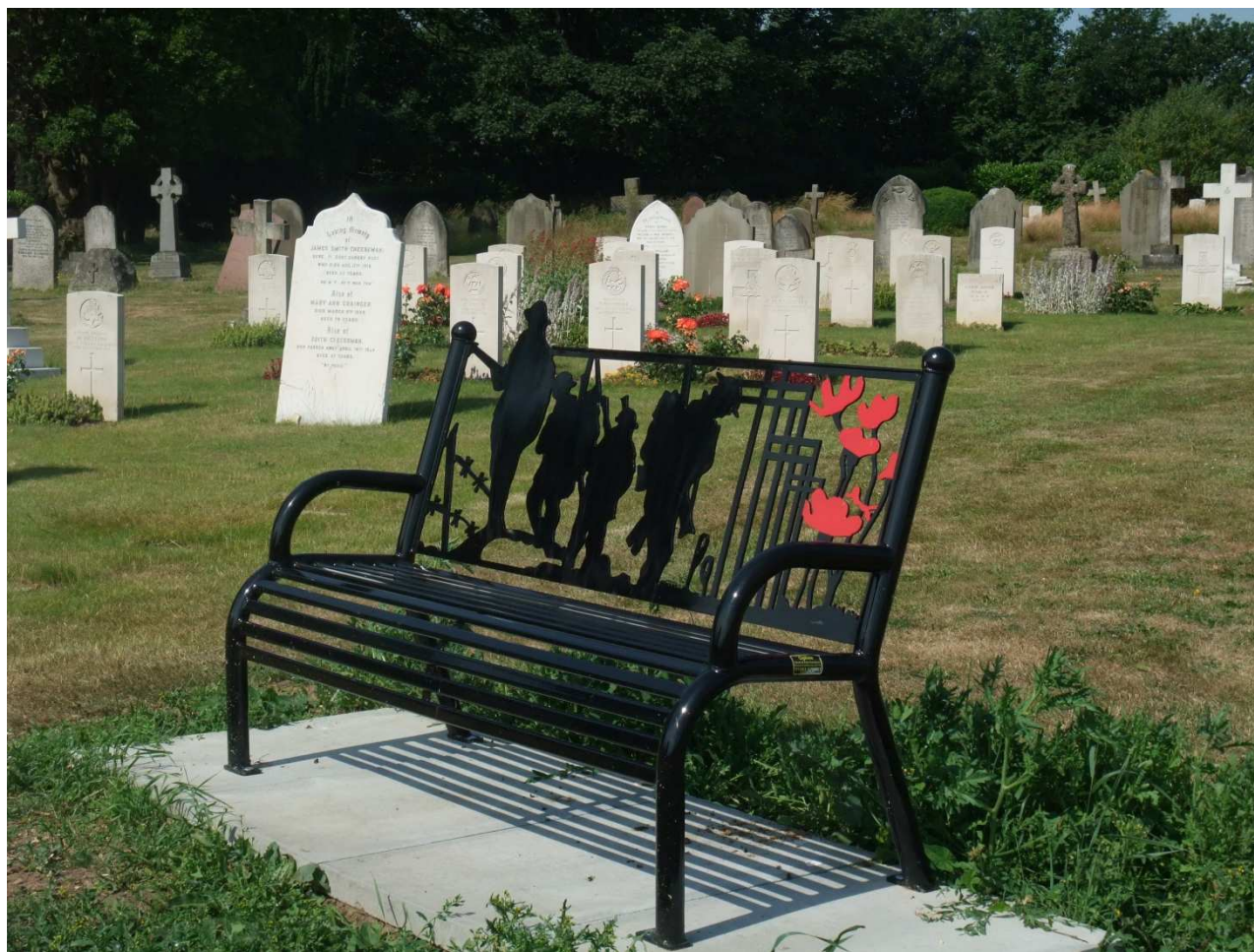
- Following a service review in 2013/14 the Executive agreed to:

*‘Endorse the acquisition and establishment of new burial ground within the borough of Guildford in close proximity to the town centre to ensure accessible provision for different faiths, cultures and practices, while continuing to examine other options and the suitability of land’*

# Stoke New Cemetery



# Stoke Old Cemetery



# The Mount Cemetery



## Background to current service provision and obligations?

- Provision of burial grounds is not a statutory duty for Local Authorities. They are however considered an important service to the community.
- Today's increasingly diverse society has a variety of requirements.
- Local authority's are legally required to dispose of the dead in cases where there are no family or estate and to do this in accordance with their religious beliefs.

## Background to current service provision and obligations?

- GBC operates two open burial grounds, Stoke Cemetery and The Mount Cemetery, both based in central Guildford.
- The service is also responsible for eight closed churchyards

## Current borough capacity

- GBC has 5-10 years of capacity left
- There are sections of the community that we are not able to cater for, such as:
  - Catholic traditional graves
  - Natural burial
  - cremated remains plots
- We also have very limited space left for
  - catholic lawn graves
  - Non-conformist with no marked provision for members of the travelling community or followers of the Muslim faith.



## Current borough capacity (cont.)

- Local parish churchyards
- Brookwood Cemetery
- Clandon Wood Natural Burial Reserve
- Nightingale and Eashing Cemeteries

## Delivering a new cemetery

- A site has been allocated for cemetery use in the draft Local Plan
- A new cemetery will cost in the region of £5-7 million
- A business case has been developed using the estimated capital cost and assumptions for ongoing costs and income.
- To break even the site would need to undertake around 80 full new burials per annum, including the associated memorial income
- At this rate the pay back period would be 170 years

## Discussion

- 1) Should the Council provide a cemetery or let the private sector do this?
- 2) If the answer to 1) is “yes” are councillors willing to support this as:
  - a subsidised service,
  - break even or
  - net income generating?
- 3) Where does this decision fit when judged alongside other priorities for the Service e.g the delivery of the crematorium?