

Cemeteries Policy

Adopted: June 2013

Reviewed: November 2016

Background

Council carries out cemetery activities, as required by statute, to meet burial and remembrance needs of the community in those areas of the District where the service is not provided by others. Council is aware of the importance of places of remembrance to the community and would like to ensure they are always well maintained.

Council administers and maintains 11 cemeteries and is responsible for all sexton duties such as booking plots, record keeping and fee setting. Mowing, grave digging, litter bin emptying, gardening, and maintenance and is undertaken by contract.

Cemetery committees are responsible for all aspects of operation and maintenance for 15 local cemeteries.

In relation to this service, the Community Board's role is to oversee the operation of cemeteries within the above policy guidelines by:

- monitoring the need for future facilities and their likely location.
- liaising with representatives of local cemetery committees to ensure compliance with Council policy.
- monitoring (through the Contracts Manager) the effectiveness of maintenance.
- recommending to Council on decisions related to capital expenditure.

Legislative Context

Section 4.1 of the Burials and Crematoria Act 1964 ('the Act') states that "It shall be the duty of every local authority, where sufficient provision is not otherwise made for the burial of the bodies of persons dying within its district, to establish and maintain a suitable cemetery."

The Minister of Health, through the Northland Medical Officer of Health, administers the Burials and Crematoria Act 1964.

Objectives

1. That Council have an appropriate network of cemetery facilities in the district.
2. That the community be proud of their public cemeteries and that they be managed and maintained efficiently while providing for the community's remembrance needs in an appropriate and respectful way.

Policies

1. Council will provide an appropriate network of cemeteries throughout the District at least cost to the ratepayers.
2. Record keeping will be centralised and accessible from Council's website.

3. Plot and burial fees will be uniform across the District for those facilities operated by Council.
4. Cemetery committees are required to:
 - a. Submit annual accounts to Community Boards
 - b. Operate on a "break even" basis as a minimum
 - c. Secure funding of capital expenditure either by way of a loan from Council to be funded from income derived or from the community grants scheme
 - d. Supply names of committee members so that the Council can appoint or remove these and publicly notify the appointments, as required by the Act
5. Council will recommend that the Minister close a local cemetery if the community cannot find suitable community members to control and manage the local facility.
6. Council will maintain a closed cemetery to a minimum rural reserve standard.
7. Council will support the Minister re-opening a closed cemetery if it can be demonstrated that there is sufficient community support to control and manage the cemetery on behalf of the community at no cost to Council.

Procedures

1. On 1st July each year, Council contacts committee-run cemeteries to request:
 - a. annual accounts to Community Boards
 - b. new burial details for updating Council's records
 - c. names of new committee members or names to be removed so that the Council formally resolves as required by section 23 Burial and Cremation Act;
2. On 18th September 1933, under the Cemeteries Act 1908, the Governor-General delegated to the former Council in the Far North his powers to appoint and remove trustees in respect of the cemeteries listed in NZ Gazette, No 67, 21st September 1933, page 2429. These are:

Waiharara	Motukaraka [closed]
Herekino	Broadwood
Mangonui	Waiotemarama
Takahue	Umawera
Houhora	Waipapakauri
Orira	Punakitere [closed]
3. Council shall appoint or remove Trustees as requested. This is done by Council unless delegated to a Committee of Council.



Appendix A – Other relevant policies and bylaws

This policy should be considered along side the following:

- Reserves
- Dog Control

Appendix B – List of cemeteries in the District

Council-Operated Cemeteries

Kaeo	Kawakawa
Totara North	Kaikohe
Kerikeri	Okaihau
Paihia	Rawene
Russell	Kohukohu
Kaitaia	

Committee- Managed Local Cemeteries

Houhora	Fairburn
Waiharara	Takahue
Waipapakauri	Towai
Mangonui	Herekino
Oruaiti	Broadwood
Peria	Mangungu
Waiotemarama	Orira
Onekura	Umawera

Closed Cemeteries

Waikare Avenue, Kaeo	Punakitere
Motukaraka	