

COUNCIL

17 NOVEMBER 2015

ITEM 6 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR D EVERITT TO COUNCILLOR A V SMITH MBE

From time to time, sadly people die without leaving any funds whatsoever, and no relatives or friends are able to help. It is not generally known that when this happens it falls on the council to arrange funeral and burial arrangements. Will the Portfolio Holder please state how many times the council has carried out these duties in the last five years giving figures for each year. Can she also tell us something about how this important service is provided.

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR A V SMITH MBE

The Council has a duty under the Public Health Act 1984 to make arrangements for the burial or cremation of any deceased residents on the following grounds;

- if the deceased have no remaining family
- If their family cannot be traced (the Council is required to make reasonable enquiries to trace relatives)
- if their family do not have the financial means to provide for a funeral

Where no relatives are found or if they do not have any financial means to pay for the funeral the Council will arrange and fund what is termed a Welfare funeral. The average cost of a Welfare Funeral in North West Leicestershire is £900. Wherever possible the Council seeks to recover these costs from the deceased estate.

The duty to manage Welfare Funerals falls to the Council's Environmental Health Officers in conjunction with Burials Officers both within the Street Action Team.

The number of welfare funerals provided over the last 5 years are as follows:

2011/12 - 1
2012/13 - 1
2013/14 - 2
2014/15 - 2
2015/16 - 1