

Cabinet Response to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Board – Memorial Bench Policy

Recommendation 1:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend to Cabinet that consideration be given to implementing a single zone to consider all areas in Torbay including parks , regardless of residential or tourism designation, and that the Cabinet report back to a future Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting with an amended strategy based on this single-zone approach with costings, in accordance with Governance process.

Response/Update:

Cabinet thanks the Overview and Scrutiny Board for its further consideration of the revised Memorial Bench Policy. Cabinet recognises that memorial benches are a deeply personal and emotive matter for families, friends and communities.

The purpose of developing the Memorial Bench Policy was to address an area where the Council did not previously have a consistent or transparent process for considering requests, renewals, maintenance expectations and the long-term management of benches across Torbay. Development of a formal policy ensures that residents and sponsors are treated consistently, and that the Council is able to manage public spaces responsibly.

Cabinet has carefully considered the Board's recommendation that a single zone approach be introduced across Torbay, including parks. Having considered the implications Cabinet's position remains unchanged. Cabinet does not support moving to a single zone approach at this stage, as this would limit the flexibility to manage different locations appropriately and could also reduce the range of affordable choices available to families. Cabinet therefore confirms that the revised Memorial Bench Policy on the basis previously agreed, with implementation kept under review and any future changes considered through the Council's established governance arrangements if evidence demonstrates that further amendment is required.