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Briefing Note
South Avenue Cemetery Drainage Improvements

For Finance, Governance & Estates Committee 17 September 2026

Background

The Council plans to add an additional fifty two grave plots and fourteen ashes plot (with space for headstones) into South Avenue Cemetery. At the Council meeting on 21 May 2026, this was agreed as follows:

C26/27.014: Committee Minutes: Members received and where appropriate, considered the recommendations of the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee (14 May 2026). There were two recommendations for Council:

a) **F25/26.154: Additional Grave Plots in 'P' Section:** The Committee considered a briefing note setting out a proposal to bring into use fifty-two additional burial plots located at the southern end of the cemetery, to be designated as the 'P Section', and authorise their recording and release for use. It was noted that the drainage works will need to be completed prior to the proposal being implemented, and it was: RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the proposal to bring into use fifty-two additional burial plots located at the southern end of the cemetery, to be designated as the 'P Section' and authorise their recording and release for use and to recommend it to Council for approval and adoption. Members expressed their congratulations on the identification of additional grave spaces in the South Avenue Cemetery, and it was:
RESOLVED: That Council AGREED the proposal to bring into use fifty-two additional burial plots located at the southern end of the cemetery, to be designated as the 'P Section' and authorise their recording and release for use once the drainage works are completed.

b) **F25/26.155: Additional Half Graves Plots for Ashes:** The Committee considered a briefing note setting out the introduction of up to fourteen "half plots" within the cemetery for ash interments, to be designated as the 'T Section', with a proposed pricing level of £375, and that no further sales of full-size burial plots for ashes interments be permitted, and it was: RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to recommend the following to Council for approval and adoption:

(i) The introduction of half burial plots within the 'T Section', including up to 14 plots within the 'S mound' area;
(ii) The proposed pricing level of £375 for 2026/27; and
(iii) That no further sales of full-size burial plots for ashes interments be permitted, and it was:
RESOLVED: That Council AGREED the following for approval and adoption:
(i) The introduction of half burial plots within the 'T Section', including up to 14 plots within the 'S mound' area;
(ii) The proposed pricing level of £375 for 2026/27; and
(iii) **That no further sales of full-size burial plots for ashes interments be permitted**, and it was:

Following the ground penetrating radar survey, and the agreement to add more graves along the southern section and S mound of South Avenue Cemetery, it was agreed that to make these graves useable we must improve the drainage on site, as presently in wet weather the Southern area gets very wet.

Current Supply of Grave Plots

It should be noted that only five grave plots remain available for sale in the Cemetery (on the S mound). The Cemetery income for 2026/7 is currently at £11,067 (the budget was £10,645) after only five months have passed.

Proposed Works

It is therefore proposed to install a French drain in the southern section of the cemetery to collect surface water around the garden of rest and southern boundary and direct it through a French drain, west towards the culvert running down the west side of the Cemetery. A French drain is simply a small trench filled with a perforated pipe and aggregate, then re-turfed, that will redirect surface water away from the area. Please see the plan below with the red lines marking the extent of the French drain.

Summary
Two quotations for these works have been received from our current grounds maintenance contractors:

Contractor 1 has quoted **£5,885.00 plus VAT.**
Contractor 2 has quoted **£7,788.35 plus VAT.**

Recommendation
It is recommended that Barcombe Landscapes be appointed to install the French drain at a cost of £5,885+VAT and funds are used from the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve (320) currently holding £25,017, and to recommend to Council that the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve be used to fund the works.

RECOMMENDATION: The Committee is asked to recommend to Council that Barcombe Landscapes be appointed to install the French drain at a cost of £5,885+VAT, and to use the funds from the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve (320) currently holding £25,017.