

**Minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on
Thursday 28th November 2013 in
the Committee Room, Clayport Street Alnwick at 6.30pm.**

Present: Cllrs K Moore (Chairman), D Farrar, B Griddale, S Mavin, M Swinbank and A Symmonds.

In attendance: W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk.

CEM13/25. Apologies: Cllrs S Allcroft and J Humphries.

CEM 13/26. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

CEM 13/27. Cemetery Activity and 2013/14 Budget Update

The Clerk circulated the 2013/14 budget for the Committee with expenditure as at 25th November 2013. This showed expenditure of £25,612 and income of £18,828. Councillors went through the budget line by line and the budget appeared to be on target for the year. In addition to the budget sheet, year-to-date cemetery activity data was circulated. This showed that there had been 27 burials and 5 ashes interred. Out of the 27 burials, 14 had resulted in new plots being purchased. During the year 7 new plots had been purchased by individuals making burial arrangements. The cemetery chapel had now been used on 7 occasions, 5 of these were in the last two months.

RESOLVED: To receive the update.

CEM 13/28. Tree Survey and potential new planting

The Clerk reported that a tree survey had been carried out and copies of the schedule were circulated. A total of 10 trees had been identified for felling and works were required to another 18. In addition a small number of trees were to be subject to monitoring. The clerk was seeking competitive quotes for the tree works and the closing date was 11th December. Councillor Farrar had looked into the possibility of planting some new trees and had taken advice on types. He agreed to work up proposals in more detail for the meeting. Councillor Moore informed the Committee that another Woodland Trust bid could be made for additional trees and he promised to investigate this.

RESOLVED: To note the current position and the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee accept a quote for the necessary tree works.

CEM 13/29. New Area Update

The Clerk reported that he had visited Woodhorn Achieves and obtained a copy of the planning permission for the cemetery extension. This was still valid and there were no outstanding conditions. Given that planning permission was in place, Councillors discussed the need for a groundwater audit and felt that it would be prudent to undertake an audit prior to any design works. The Clerk was looking at obtaining quotes for this

RESOLVED: To receive the update.

CEM 13/30. Chapel of Rest

The clerk reported that the area of dampness near the entrance door had been investigated and it would appear the soakaway is not large enough in periods of very heavy rainfall. It would be necessary to put a new soakaway in, further away from the building. Once this was done, redecoration could be considered.

RESOLVED: To note the update.

CEM 13/31. Budget proposals for 2014/15, including consideration of cemetery fees.

A table of cemetery fees and charges was also circulated showing the current fees charged by at Alnwick Town Council, Amble Town Council, Hexham Town Council and Northumberland County Council. The fees were discussed and it was agreed to recommend dropping the burial charges for children under 12 years, from 1st April 2014. The table included the other proposed fees and charges, these were discussed and agreed. The suggested burial charge and purchase of a grave showed an increase of nearly 6% on 2013/14, this was still well below the charges made by Northumberland County Council in the cemeteries that it administers. The proposed charges are listed in the table below.

	Alnwick Town Council Proposed Charges 2014/15
BURIALS	
Burial Rights for up to 100 years incl. right to erect headstone	£430
Burial of person over 12 years old	
- Depth 4ft	£250
- Depth 5ft	£375
Burial of child (1 month old up to 12 years old)	
- Depth 4ft	Nil
- Depth 5ft	Nil
Burial of child (stillborn or child up to 1 month old)	Nil
CREMATED REMAINS	
Burial Rights for up to 100 years incl. right to erect headstone	£240
Burial Charge	£120
Scattering of Ashes	£85
MEMORIALS ETC	
Right to erect headstone for graves prior to 1/4/12	£105
Right to place vase/shield/cross etc.	£55
Extra Inscriptions	£30
Headstone foundation	£80
Search of Cemetery records (by post)	£30
Search of records with superintendent in attendance	£30
Use of Chapel	£110
Non residents	+100%
Saturday/public holidays increase	+100%

RECOMMENDED: That the above fees and charges are approved for implementation from 1st April 2014 and inclusion in the 2014/15 budget.

A draft cemetery budget for 2014/15 was also considered, this included a new cost of £8,000 towards works required on the new extension and well as an increased budget for building repairs. In total the proposed expenditure was £56,000 and the expected income £29,500 giving a net budget of £26,500.

RECOMMENDED: That the Cemetery Committee draft budget for 2014/15 be £26,500.

CEM 13/32. Any Other Business

Councillor Moore stated that Alnwick in Bloom had requested assistance with 8 trees that needed a temporary home over the winter and they hoped that they could be planted in the cemetery somewhere. They were due to be delivered tomorrow. The Clerk promised to discuss this with the Cemetery Superintendent and assist if possible.

Councillor Moore also requested a meeting be set up with the Cemetery volunteers to look at their capabilities and arrange future tasks.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm