

**Minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on Thursday 19th January 2017
in the Mechanics Institute, Percy Street, Alnwick at 7.00pm**

Present: Cllrs J Humphries (Chair), P Allcroft, S Allcroft, S Bell, S Mavin, K Moore, M Swinbank and A Symmonds.

In attendance: J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk.

CEM 16/39 Apologies

None.

CEM 16/40 Declarations of Interest

None.

CEM 16/41 Minutes of Last Meeting – to raise any matters not covered by the agenda

16/35 The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised councillors that a letter had been sent to Mr Harrison advising him of the committee's decision.

16/36 The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised councillors that she had spoken to the Co-operative Funeralcare in Alnwick about the ability to pay for funerals. She had been advised that around 1 person in 30 have difficulty paying for the funeral. They advise people of the help available from DWP. They are also able to offer credit terms to some people but do try to ensure that 3rd party fees, such as cemetery fees, are made before the funeral. For people with no family a cremation is usually paid for and arranged by the County Council.

CEM 16/42 Cemetery Activity and 2016/17 budget update

ACTIVITY

The Assistant to the Town Clerk circulated the Cemetery year to date activity data as at January 17th. She reported that so far in 2016/17 there had been 39 burials (32 burials and 7 ashes burials) of which 19 had resulted in new plots being purchased (15 in the new part, 1 in the natural burial area and 1 in the new un-consecrated section in 37A plus 2 free plots in the children's area).

10 plots have been purchased without burial (3 in the current burial area, 2 in the old part, 1 in the ashes area, 3 in the natural burial area and 1 plot in the area left un-consecrated in the new consecrated area). The Chapel had been used on 6 occasions and 7 burials had an out of parish surcharge.

Remaining plots – there are 8 plots which can be purchased in the current burial area (excluding the new consecrated area) 1 in the old part (although someone has now reserved this) plus ashes plots. There is also a new row in the old part which will give an additional 20 plots. 47 plots have been purchased in 38A and 39A which have not been used yet.

It is anticipated that the year-end figure will be around 48 burials.

BUDGET

The Assistant to the Town Clerk circulated the 2016/17 Cemetery Income and Expenditure sheet as at January 19th 2017 which showed expenditure at £41,907.31 and income at £35,007.06. She itemised the following lines:

Wages, PAYE – salary and pension payments up to December 2016.

Fuel – expected year end figure increased slightly to cover additional fuel delivery. 2017/18 will only have one delivery.

Rates / Water Rates – budget sheet shows £3,135.14 this includes the figure for NNDR which has been credited back and is included in the income figure.

Machine Repairs – figure includes expenditure for JCB service and tractor tyre repairs since last time.

Building repairs – end of year budget figure reduced by £2k.

Grounds – currently at £6,288.52 but remaining budget will cover any works identified in the tree survey.

Electricity – reduced bills are due to turning off the heating in the chapel when not in use.

New Area – budget used so far is for consecration. Path not done yet.

Income does not include the outstanding £2k from two recent funerals.

RESOLVED: To note the update and receive the budget figures.

CEM 16/43 Scattering of Ashes area

Councillor Humphries advised councillors that the area identified as the new area for the scattering of ashes has now started to be cleared. He advised that there were still some shrubs which needed to be removed and a tree which will be looked at as part of the tree survey. He explained that area might contain roses which people could buy with the memorial plaque.

Councillor S Allcroft thought Tom Pattison could be asked for an input into the layout of the new area.

RESOLVED: To ask Tom Pattison for his input into the layout of the ashes scattering area.

CEM 16/44 Update on

a) Building Works

The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised councillors that there will be some more pointing work undertaken and that the budget for this was £3k.

Councillor Humphries advised that an additional soakaway was needed at the side of the cemetery behind the workshop.

b) Tree Survey

The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised councillors that she and the Town Clerk had met with the tree surveyor at the cemetery and that he would complete the survey and have the report produced the following week. Once the report is received a Schedule of Works and Plans will be sent out for quotes.

They had asked him to look at the lime tree in area 39A, following concerns a resident had about causing problems with adjacent grave and which he felt might cause the same issues with a family grave close by. The tree surgeon

had advised that the tree should be taken down.

She advised that he had been asked to include the trees in the current burial area in the tree survey.

c) Tree Planting

The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised councillors that there were trees which had been bought previously which would be used to replace some of the trees that will be felled as a result of the tree survey.

Councillor Swinbank asked if the same number of trees will be replaced as were taken down. The Assistant to The Town Clerk advised that this was what usually happened although the trees may not be planted in the same location and may not be the same type as native trees were being used more widely.

Councillor Swinbank felt that the hedge at Cawledge View should be cut to a sensible height to keep it from becoming too problematic.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that new volunteers were needed to be Friends of the Cemetery. She felt that a press release might be helpful and, as in other cemeteries, more volunteers might offer to help if the sessions were during the week rather than on a Saturday. This would also enable the Cemetery Superintendent to oversee the work being done.

RESOLVED: To accept the updates.

CEM 16/45 Any Other Business

Councillor Humphries reported that whilst at the cemetery the Cemetery Superintendent had advised that in the natural burial area if a strimmer was used this would spread the weeds. Councillor Swinbank felt that a hand-held mower should be used.

The public meeting closed at 7.48pm

**CEM 16/46 PRIVATE AGENDA ITEM
Exclusion of the Public and Press**

The resolution was passed to exclude the public and press.

“That pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business, on the grounds that if members of the public were present during the discussion of these items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Section 100 1 and paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act”. The item considered in private was:

To brief the Committee of an Urgency Decision taken.