

**Minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on Thursday 20th July 2017
in the St James's Church Centre, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.00pm**

Present: Cllrs J Humphries (Chair), S Allcroft, M Swinbank and A Symmonds.

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

CEM 17/07 Apologies

Councillor Westendarp.

CEM 17/08 Declarations of Interest

None.

CEM 17/09 Minutes of Last Meeting – to raise any matters not covered by the agenda

None.

CEM 17/10 Cemetery Activity and 2017/18 budget update

ACTIVITY

The Town Clerk took councillors through the Cemetery date activity data as at July 19th.

2017/18 - there had been 20 burials (15 burials and 5 ashes burials). He reported that 12 plots had been purchased with burial (2 in areas 38A/39A/40A, 2 in the old part, 2 in the ashes area and 2 in the newly consecrated area 37A area). He also reported that 4 plots had been purchased without burial (2 in the old part, 4 in the ashes area, 1 in natural burial area 41A and 1 plot in newly consecrated area 37A).

Remaining plots – there are 2 plots in areas 38A/39A/40A (excluding the new consecrated area) and 19 the new row in the old part plus ashes plots.

BUDGET

The Town Clerk took councillors through the 2017/18 budget sheet. So far in 2017/18 there had been £10,367.37 expenditure noting the following lines:

Wages – 25% of the budget figure.

Stationery/Phone – three months phone bills.

Rates / Water Rates – NNDR for Chapel £419.87 plus £44 water rates (one 12th payment).

Building repairs - £153.14 for security contract.

Grounds - £256.40 for trade waste, £264.78 for materials and £108.51 for tools.

Sundries – ICCM membership £90.

Water - £69.57 for quarter 1 bill.

Currently income is £17,580 which is above the budgeted figure.

He reported that the new tractor was ordered and would be delivered at the end of September.

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

CEM 17/11 Update on:

1. Update on Scattering of Ashes area

Councillor Humphries reported that no actions had been taken since the last meeting but that the area was now being maintained by the cemetery staff. The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that she had started to put together a planting list of trees and shrubs which she would bring to the next meeting. She reminded councillors that the area would have four trees (one for each season) with under planting.

Councillor Allcroft asked about the idea for the path she had forwarded. The Assistant Town Clerk advised that a path would be incorporated into the area which could have names added to it.

2. Works Programme

The Town Clerk advised councillors that some more pointing works was needed, as well as some decorating in the Chapel and the Cemetery Lodge. He also advised that some work was needed at the top of the driveway.

3. Children's Area

The Town Clerk advised that it had been reported that some items had been taken from under one of the trees between the ashes area and the children's area. There are also lots of items on the new children's graves but this usually settles down once a headstone is erected.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk issued a proposed sign for the trees requesting people to not put items in or around them. Councillors agreed it should be attached to the two large trees and that the smaller tree have a sign stating that damage to the tree had been noted during the latest tree survey and that the tree would be moved to a new location in the cemetery in the autumn.

Councillor Allcroft suggested that a press release with the information in the poster be sent to the Gazette. This should also explain that the Town Council do not wish to ban all items from graves, as many cemeteries do, but limit them to the actual grave itself and not placed in other areas around the cemetery.

RESOLVED: To write a press release for the Gazette.

4. New area

The Assistant to the Town Clerk explained that she had met with the blacksmith who would be making the arch into the new area. He had given her samples of the finishes that the metalwork could have. Councillors reviewed the samples and selected the silver finish for the arch. A final cost and timescales will be bought to the next meeting.

Councillor Swinbank reported that the Cawledge View hedge needed trimming.

Natural Burial Area – Councillor Humphries felt that more publicity was needed.

Councillor Allcroft thought that funeral directors could be invited to the cemetery for a tour and drinks and nibbles.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk explained that magazines, including church magazines, could be used.

Councillor Symmonds thought adverts in The Cryer and a Gazette Article might be useful.

Councillor Humphries thought that mentioning the chapel was available for religious services might also help.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that details of the cemetery, including guidelines and fees were emailed to local funeral directors annually adding to the recipient list each year. It was suggested that leaflets including images also be sent to funeral directors.

RESOLVED: To accept the updates.

CEM 17/12 Any Other Business

A date for the Friends of the Cemetery needs arranging for September and it was suggested that Councillor Westendarp be asked to look after the FOTC volunteers.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that the Northumbria in Bloom judges had visited the cemetery on July 13th and that the result would be known in September.

The meeting closed at 8.09pm