

**Minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting  
held on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017  
in the St James's Church Centre, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.00pm**

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

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

**CEM 17/19 Apologies**

None.

**CEM 17/20 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**CEM 17/21 Minutes of Last Meeting – to raise any matters not covered by the agenda**

CEM 17/17 The Assistant the Town Clerk advised that the new Ashes Area trees had been ordered and would be delivered after Christmas with the annual tree order.

**CEM 17/22 Cemetery Activity**

ACTIVITY

The Town Clerk took councillors through the Cemetery date activity data as at November 15<sup>th</sup>. So far in 2017/18 there had been 29 burials (22 burials and 7 ashes burials). He reported that 12 plots had been purchased with burial (5 in areas 38A/39A/40A, 4 in the ashes area and 3 in the newly consecrated area 37A area).

He also reported that 10 plots had been purchased without burial (1 in areas 38A, 39A and 40A, 3 in the old part, 3 in the ashes area, 1 in natural burial area 41A and 2 plots in newly consecrated area 37A). The Chapel was used on 4 occasions and there was 1 out of Parish surcharge.

Remaining plots – Old part area 19A has 20 plots available, the Natural Burial Area has 33 plots available (8 have also been sold but not used); area 37A (consecrated) has 69 plots available (6 have also been sold but not used), area 37A (unconsecrated) has 18 plots available (1 have also been sold but unused) plus ashes plots. All the plots in areas 38A/39A/40A have now been sold and 47 remain unused.

He reported that there was 1 burial and 2 ashes burials in the current week.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that she had been received a request on behalf a relative buried in the cemetery asking if they could either buy the plot with a view to erecting a headstone.

She explained that the burial was for a child, aged 2, and had taken place in 1939. The burial was the 3<sup>rd</sup> burial in the grave, the previous burials had taken place in the 1800s with the latest in 1893.

Councillors discussed the alternatives and agreed to offer 2 options:

- a) To purchase the plot for a current fee of £570.
- b) To purchase the right to erect a headstone and pay for the headstone base at a cost of £255.

**RESOLVED: i) To note the update; ii) To give feedback on the request and the options available.**

## **CEM 17/22 2017/18 budget update including proposals for remainder of the financial year**

### BUDGET

The Town Clerk took councillors through the 2017/18 budget sheet. So far in 2017/18 there had been £22,089.42 expenditure and he noted the following lines:

Wages – 7 months of salary costs. Below budget as no additional staffing had been needed.

Stationery/Phone – 7 months phone bills.

Machine Repairs – New tractor delivery has been delayed by the manufacturer.

Building repairs – quotes being received for painting the Chapel. 2 quotes also received so far for the next batch of pointing work to the boundary wall.

Grounds – still to spend the budget on driveway repairs and tree survey.

New Area – path in new area still to be done.

He reported that the end of year expenditure should be at or better than the budgeted figure.

He reported that Income was at £25,870.00 and that this could be under budget at the year end.

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

## **CEM 17/23 Children's Area Update**

The Town Clerk reported that a meeting had taken place with some three of the families with children buried in the children's area to discuss the items in and around the trees and Town Council's request to remove them. Families had been asked to send in ideas to be reviewed and discussed at tonight's meeting. He issued mood boards which had been sent in by one of the families who had been at the meeting.

He also reported that he had received phone calls from three other families with children buried in the children's area who were supportive of the Town Council.

He reported that the items had been removed from the right hand tree and that, following the meeting, the items had also been removed from the small tree at the front of the children's area. The items in the left hand tree had been left until further discussions had taken place.

He reported that parents wanted lights in the trees to brighten up the area. He added that the lights in the left hand tree were no longer flashing.

He reported that they had been reminded that they could put anything within the grave space itself.

Councillor Humphries felt there needed to be a balance or where would it stop?

Councillor Allcroft suggested that families could have lights on the grave itself.

Councillor Symmonds felt that the agreed guidelines were for all the trees in the cemetery not just the children's area.

Councillor Westendarp said he liked the brightly coloured bench in the children's area and would like to see another one.

Councillor Swinbank thought that the lights needed to come out of all trees. He felt that the area could be brightened up with some planting but that hard landscaping should not be undertaken.

Councillors agreed the following recommendations for discussions with parents which would be paid for by the Town Council:

Planting: to create shaped beds and put in plants chosen from a list put together by the Town Council.

Lights: that lights be not allowed in trees, lights should be kept to individual graves at ground level.

Seating: to order and install another rainbow seat in the children's area.

It was also felt that, although some of the mood board suggestions could not be used in the current area, they would be used when designing the next children's area.

The Town Clerk and Assistant to the Town Clerk would meet with the families to go through the recommendations.

**RESOLVED: To organise a further meeting with the families to discuss the recommendations.**

**CEM 17/24 Recommended fees for 2018/19**

The Town Clerk issued a sheet showing Cemetery fees around Northumberland. He explained that the Town Council were looking to break even in 5 years and that for 2018/19 some increase were suggested on some but not all costs. Alnwick fees would still remain below many other local cemetery fees. He advised that if capital expenditure was taken out that in 2018/19 the Cemetery would be only be £6k from breaking even.

Councillor Symmonds felt that all costs needed to be covered properly so that fees needed to reflect this.

The revised fees are listed on page 4.

**RESOLVED: To recommend the revised Cemetery Fees for 2018/19, as contained on page 4, to Full Council.**

**CEM 17/25 Proposed Budget for 2018/19**

The Town Clerk took the Committee through the Budget 2018/19 column of the Budget 2017/18 sheet highlighting the following:

- i) Machine repairs – budget reduced as no new equipment needed to be purchased
- ii) Building repairs – some budget set aside for potential work to Cemetery Lodge
- iii) Grounds – increased budget for additional planting
- iv) New area – budget added for planting diving hedging

Councillor Swinbank asked if staff training was included in the Wages, PAYE budget line. The Town Clerk advised that this was included.

The overall proposed budget for 2018/19 shows a deficit of £19,260 which would be the precept needed for the Cemetery Committee.

**RESOLVED: To take the proposed Cemetery Budget of £19,260 for 2018/19 to Full Council.**

**CEM 17/26 Any Other Business**

Councillor Swinbank asked about the letter in the Gazette which had highlighted issue in the cemetery. The Town Clerk advised that the letter had been anonymous and that he had not been made aware of any issues. He advised that another letter had been issued to residents in and around Cawledge View. He also advised that comments on Facebook were about the irresponsible dog owners and parents.

Councillor Swinbank reported litter was a real issue on the Sainsbury's side of the cemetery and wondered if a letter could be written. The Town Clerk advised that he would write to Northumberland Estates.

Councillor Humphries asked councillors if they could give some thought to the new design for the roundabout and the new ashes area for discussion at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.31pm

<b>Proposed 2018/19 Cemetery Fees from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 COSTS FOR RESIDENTS</b>	
<b>BURIALS</b>	
Burial Rights for up to 100 years incl. right to erect headstone	£600
Burial of person over 12 years old	
- Depth 4ft	£350
- Depth 5ft	£550
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
Burial of child (up 12 years old, out of parish)	£250 burial right + £160 burial fee
Natural burial	£1150 (incl stone and shrub)
<b>CREMATED REMAINS</b>	
Burial Rights for up to 100 years incl right to erect headstone	£330
Burial Charge	£200
Scattering of Ashes	£110
<b>MEMORIALS ETC</b>	
Right to erect headstone for graves prior to 1/4/12	£145
Right to place vase/shield/cross etc.	£65
Extra Inscriptions	£35
Headstone foundation	£120
Search of Cemetery records (by post)	£30
Search of records with superintendent in attendance	£30
Transfer of a Deed	£50
Use of Chapel	£160
Non residents	+100%
Saturday increase and Public Holiday increase	Up to +100%