

**Minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting
held on Thursday 18th January 2018
in the St James's Church Centre, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.00pm**

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

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

CEM 17/27 Apologies

Councillor S Allcroft.

CEM 17/28 Declarations of Interest

None.

CEM 17/29 Minutes of Last Meeting – to raise any matters not covered by the agenda

None.

CEM 17/30 Cemetery Activity

ACTIVITY

The Town Clerk took councillors through the Cemetery activity data as at January 17th. So far in 2017/18 there had been 37 burials (30 burials and 7 ashes burials). He reported that 16 plots had been purchased with burial (5 in areas 38A/39A/40A, 5 in the ashes area and 6 in the newly consecrated area 37A area).

He also reported that 13 plots had been purchased without burial (1 in areas 38A, 39A and 40A, 3 in the old part, 4 in the ashes area, 1 in natural burial area 41A, 2 plots in newly consecrated area 37A and 2 plots in the un-consecrated section of area 37A).

There has been an increase in the use of the Chapel which has been used on 9 occasions and there was 2 out of Parish surcharge.

Remaining plots – Old part area 19A has 20 plots available, the Natural Burial Area has 33 plots available (7 have also been sold but not used); area 37A (consecrated) has 66 plots available (6 have also been sold but not used), area 37A (un-consecrated) has 16 plots available (3 have also been sold but unused) plus ashes plots. All the plots in areas 38A/39A/40A have now been sold and 42 remain unused.

He reported that there were 2 burials that week and 3 burials the following week. The end of year figure for burials should be somewhere between 50 and 60 burials.

RESOLVED: To note the update.

CEM 17/31 2017/18 budget update

BUDGET

The Town Clerk took councillors through the 2017/18 budget sheet. So far in 2017/18 there had been £30,312.10 expenditure and he noted the following lines:

Wages – 9 months of salary costs.

Stationery/Phone – 9 months phone bills. Increased expected year end figure

Machine Repairs – delivery date for new tractor now May 2018 so budget will need to be carried forward into 2018/19. Will also request a meeting with John Deere representative.

Building repairs – Chapel has been painted and some panelling replaced. Carpet will be replaced next. Contracts have been let with 2 contractors for pointing work (£3k). A boiler contract has been taken out with British Gas (£19.97 per mth).

Supplies – end of year expected figure increased slightly.

Grounds – figure includes the cost of the masonry paint for the Chapel.

Electricity – end of year figure should be under budget.

Water – could be over the end of year predicted figure.

He reported that Income was at £35,955.00 and that this should be at around £44k by the end of the year.

Councillor Swinbank felt it would be worth keeping an eye on the water costs as there might be a leak.

Councillor Symmonds asked if the existing tractor should be serviced as this would be beneficial when it was sold. The Town Clerk advised that an on-site check could be requested.

Councillor Swinbank asked if the new tractor had a service plan included. The Town Clerk advised that it didn't.

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

CEM 17/32 Updates

a) Children's Area Update

The Town Clerk reported that following the previous meeting with some of the families with children buried in the children's area a follow up meeting had been agreed. February 13th has been agreed and the Town Clerk and Assistant to the Town Clerk will meet the families at 5.30pm at the Mechanics Institute to give them the recommendations agreed by councillors at the November committee meeting.

b) Works

The Town Clerk reported that the next phase of pointing work was underway. The Chapel carpet would be replaced and the path in the new area still needs to be done.

c) Tree Survey

The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that she had met with the tree surveyor at the cemetery. They had looked at a number of areas identified by officers and councillors as potential work needed including the Leylandii in the new ashes area. He had confirmed that the tree was not a Leylandii but a specimen conifer and felt that it should be retained but pruned. He did feel that the Leylandii hedge at the back of the area should be lowered to allow more light into the new ashes area.

She advised that his report had been received setting out the works needed – there are 5 trees which needed felling, some pollarding work as well as removal of overhanging lower branches. He had also enclosed a quote for the works.

d) Roundabout Planting

The Assistant to the Town Clerk issued councillors with a suggested planting scheme for one quadrant of the roundabout showing the number and variety of plants with images. She reported that this used the plants suggestions from Tom Pattison and were mainly evergreen. The colour scheme would be green and white with some bedding planting to add colour which would be shades of purple. Each of the four quadrants would be planted up in a slightly different way to give as much all year round interest as possible.

Councillor Swinbank felt Councillor Edge should be asked for his opinion on the scheme.

Councillor Symmonds felt the planting scheme was good and that a budget of £1,500 should be allocated so that it can go ahead.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that she had spoken to the Cemetery Superintendent about taking out the heathers in February and to undertake the new planting in March. He will retain around 12 heathers to be replanted near the Chapel.

RESOLVED: To set a budget of £1,500 for the new planting scheme for the roundabout.

CEM 17/33 Any Other Business

None.

The meeting closed at 7.58pm