

**Minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting
held on Thursday 15th March 2018
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 17/34 Apologies

None.

CEM 17/35 Declarations of Interest

None.

CEM 17/36 Minutes of Last Meeting – to raise any matters not covered by the agenda

None.

CEM 17/37 Cemetery Activity

ACTIVITY

The Town Clerk took councillors through the Cemetery activity data as at January 17th. He reported that the last few weeks had been busy and had included the burial of Cassie Hayes who had been buried with her father. So far in 2017/18 there had been 49 burials (42 burials and 7 ashes burials). He reported that 20 plots had been purchased with burial (5 in areas 38A/39A/40A, 5 in the ashes area and 9 in the newly consecrated area 37A area). There had also been 1 burial in the children's area.

He also reported that 16 plots had been purchased without burial (1 in areas 38A, 39A and 40A, 5 in the old part, 5 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 11 occasions and there were 4 out of Parish surcharges.

Remaining plots – Old part area 19A has 15 plots available, the Natural Burial Area has 33 plots available (9 have also been sold but not used); area 37A (consecrated) has 63 plots available (17 have also been sold but not used), area 37A (un-consecrated) has 16 plots available (4 have also been sold but unused) plus ashes plots. All the plots in areas 38A/39A/40A have now been sold.

He reported that the end of year figure for burials should be around 52.

RESOLVED: To note the update.

CEM 17/38 2017/18 budget update

BUDGET

The Town Clerk took councillors through the 2017/18 budget sheet. So far in 2017/18 there had been £32,479.66 expenditure and he noted the following lines:

Wages – 9 months of salary costs plus £175 for staff training.

Stationery/Phone – 11 months phone bills.

Machine Repairs – the tractor has been serviced free of charge as the delivery date for the new tractor is delayed. The price for the new tractor and trade in price for the old tractor will remain as per original quote.

Building repairs – £1k pointing has been carried out since last meeting.

Grounds – tree survey cost added.

Water – all expenditure in.

He reported that Income was at £44,870 and that the end of year income figure should be at least £45,500. The income includes £400 contribution from Denwick Parish Council.

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

CEM 17/39 Updates

a) Children's Area Update

The Town Clerk reported that he and the Assistant to the Town Clerk had held a follow up meeting with some of the families with children buried in the children's area and the recommendations agreed by councillors at the November committee meeting had been shared. The meeting had been generally positive and families were pleased about the extra bench.

They had also been shown the suggested planting for the areas under the two main trees and the new bed which will be at the front of the children's area. They were pleased that the area was being brightened up but asked that some of the pink planting be replaced with blue or purple.

The families asked if councillors could consider a request to put some lights into the area and suggested that these could be low lights put either side of the new bench. They also asked if shaped stones could be put into the new bed.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk has emailed one of the parents with suggested wording for a memorial plaque for the bench and the updated planting scheme.

Councillors were in favour of putting two low solar lights in the new bed but although they were not in favour of allowing any individualised memorial stones, they asked that pebbles could be incorporated as part of the overall planting scheme.

RESOLVED: To incorporate two low lights, and pebbles if appropriate, into the new children's area planting scheme.

b) Works

The Town Clerk reported that the weather had meant that neither the path in the new area or any more pointing had been able to be done. The tree works were almost complete and an additional Elder tree, which was found to growing through the centre of a Cyprus which was being felled, was agreed to be felled at an additional £120.

c) Planting

The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that there were 3 areas in the Cemetery which were being replanted:

- i) New ashes area – two additional trees were ordered and should arrive shortly.
- ii) Roundabout – the heathers have been removed but were not able to be kept for replanting due to their condition. The suggested replacement planting scheme for the roundabout had been discussed with Councillor Edge who felt that it should give all year round interest. These plants would be ordered and the roundabout replanted by the end of April.
- iii) Children's area – she distributed the suggested planting for under the two main trees and the new bed at the front of the children's area. An initial budget of £200 was set for the additional bed.

RESOLVED: To set a budget of £200 for the planting scheme for the new bed at the front of children's area.

CEM 17/40 Review of a) Fees for Child burials b) Cemetery Guidelines

The Town Clerk asked councillors to consider if fees payable for out of parish stillborn burials should be the same as an out of parish child burial at £250 (burial right) + £160 (burial fee) or the same as in parish stillborn which was £Nil. He also asked them to consider if there should be any charge for use of the chapel. Councillors felt that no charges should be made for any in or out of parish stillborn burials. They also felt that the chapel should also be offered free of charge. They asked that more research be done on this and reported back.

RESOLVED: To amend the Cemetery Fees for 2018/19 to show the fees for stillborn burials and use of the Chapel for stillborn burials as £nil.

CEM 17/41 Request to Install Headstone

The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that she had received a request to install a headstone in one of the old area of the Cemetery. The headstone was requested in 10C for a burial in 1937 located outside the current children's burial area. She explained that 10C was a 'free' area so the family did not own the plot so a fee would be payable. She showed councillors the headstone design which had been requested. This is quite a slim design and does not need a headstone base to be fitted as it sits down in the ground. The last similar request paid £140 to erect a headstone. Councillors agreed to grant the request to install a headstone and charge a fee of £140.

RESOLVED: To advise the relative that their request is granted and that a fee of £140 is payable.

CEM 17/42 William Davison Grave Marker

The Assistant to the Town Clerk reminded councillors that this was agreed at the Full Council meeting and a budget of £200 had been set to for the Town Council to mark William Davison's grave which currently has no headstone. Councillor Patience had asked if a tree could also be planted.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that 5 trees had been felled and would be replaced as part of the recent tree works and that one of the replacements could be sited near Davison's grave. She distributed suggestions showing a 2 foot by 1 foot area where the headstone base would usually sit with a memorial stone and tree or shrub.

The Town Clerk advised that he and the Assistant to the Town Clerk had undertaken some research to find the exact location of Davison's grave. Whilst his exact burial location is not numbered in the burial registers his wife's burial is. Councillors agreed that some more research was needed to find the exact location of Davison's grave.

RESOLVED: To undertake more research to find the exact location of William Davison's grave and to progress with marking the grave.

CEM 17/43 Any Other Business

Councillor Swinbank reported that the new gym on the Sawmill Estate was going to be doing an outside boot camp and this needed to be monitored to ensure no unnecessary disturbance was created.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm