



**Minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on Thursday September 20th 2022
at St James's Church Centre, Pottergate at 6.00pm**

Present: Cllrs L Wearn (Chair), N Coghill-Marshall, M Harrington, J Humphries, A Symmonds, D Watson and G Watson.

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

CEM22/12 Apologies

Councillor Allcroft.

CEM22/13 Declarations of Interest

None.

CEM22/14 Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on 21st July 2022 were tabled for approval.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2022 were agreed as a true record.

CEM22/15 Matters arising from minutes not covered by the agenda

CEM22/08 Councillor Harrington asked if the cemetery workshop had been tidied. The Town Clerk advised that it hadn't.

Councillor Harrington felt that a schedule of work was needed, which councillors could add to by notifying the Town Clerk, and which was monitored.

CEM22/16 Cemetery Activity 2022/23

The Assistant to the Town Clerk took councillors through the Cemetery activity data, as at the end of September 2022.

There have been 28 burials to date (23 burials and 5 ashes burials). There have been 13 plots purchased with a burial and 10 burials in pre purchased plots. There have also been 1 plot bought without a burial (in the current burial area). The chapel has been used on 4 occasions and an additional surcharge of £3,200 has been made.

Remaining plots – Old part area 3 plots are available (1 in 19A and 2 in 35A), the Natural Burial Area has 32 plots available; area 37A (consecrated) has no plots available and area 37A (un-consecrated) has 13 plots available plus ashes plots.

RESOLVED: To note the activity update.

CEM22/17 Budget update 2022/23

The Assistant to the Town Clerk took councillors through the budget sheet as at 30th September 2022 highlighting the budget lines with expenditure since the last meeting:

Expenditure for 2022/23 is currently £20,347.60.

Wages – Cemetery £16,100 (5 months salaries)

Phones - £214.24 (4 months phone bills).

Tools and Equipment - £72.03 (small hand tools).

Building repairs (planned) - £250.61 (gas contract £176.28, safety checks £74.33).

Clothing & Safety Clothing - £262.94 (PPE and safety clothing).

Grounds maint & tree works (improvements) – £148.67 (plants, compost, materials).

Grounds maint & tree works (remedial works) - £1,814.41 (materials & equipment £621.84, drain clearance £200, trade waste £362.25, tree works £660).

Water - £544.10 (16 months water charges).

Income for 2022/23 is currently £39,860.00.

RESOLVED: To receive the 2022/23 budget figures.

CEM22/18 Correspondence

Councillor G Watson advised further correspondence had been received from Mr B's family and that he had asked the family what they wanted the Town Council to do.

RESOLVED: To await the family's reply then start the formal complaint procedure.

CEM22/19 Fees and Charges 2023-24

The Town Clerk issued a sheet showing some examples of the fees for 2023-24 with various % increases.

He explained that as well as the % fees increase for 2023-24 he recommended that:

- i) fees be shown for Resident (with 50% discount) and Non-resident (full price);
- ii) that a Resident be redefined as someone who has lived in Alnwick within the last 5 years with discretions only be made by the Town Clerk and Cemetery Chair.

RESOLVED: i) To separate the fees into Resident and Non-resident; ii) To define a Resident as someone who has lived in Alnwick within the last 5 years (discretions can only be made by the Town Clerk and Cemetery Chair); iii) 2023-24 fees to be increased by 10%

CEM22/20 New Cemetery

The Town Clerk issued a document listing the early considerations which needed to be considered for the new cemetery.

He recommended that a smaller group be set up to include Andrew Robson from Northumberland Estates and Julie Parkinson from NCC.

Councillor G Watson asked if Grant Finder could be used to find potential funding.

Councillor Symmonds said that budget has been set aside each year for a new cemetery since the last area was consecrated.

RESOLVED: To set up a new cemetery working group to include Northumberland Estates and NCC.

CEM22/21 Updates

The Assistant to the Town Clerk gave the following updates:

Tree Works

The tree works in the main part of the cemetery are now complete. As the next works are at the front of the cemetery traffic management will be needed, with the work being undertaken hopefully by the end of November.

Driveway

There is some patching work needed on the main avenue and outside the chapel so the contractor who did the last patching will be asked to visit and do a quote.

Headstone repairs

The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that, following Bart Endean visit to the cemetery, the report for the repairs to the 13 headstones broken in Storm Awren had been received. The total cost of the repairs is £5,120 and, all except 2 headstones these costs should be covered on our insurance. The 2 headstones are not covered under the insurance as they were only erected in 1960 so have not reverted back to the Town Council ownership. Although not Town Council owned she was recommending that the Town Council pay for the repairs.

Cemetery buildings

The chapel and the workshop are becoming increasingly in need of some conservation / repair work, so she was recommending that a condition survey be undertaken on both buildings, then for the cemetery committee to agree what work they feel is priority. The buildings are Listed so a planning application will then be submitted.

RESOLVED: To organise condition surveys on the workshop and chapel.

CEM22/22 Any Other Urgent Business

Councillor Harrington asked if some staff time could be allocated to the allotments. He also felt that a trailer and towbar for the van would be very beneficial.

The meeting closed at 7.52pm