**AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Held at The Cemetery, Axminster on Monday 18th July 2016 at 7.15 p.m.

1. PRESENT : Councillors : Mrs. S.R. Spiller (Chairman), H.J.A. Jeffery (Vice-Chairman), I.L. Hall, D.R.H. Hull, Mrs L.A. Rowe The Town Clerk and The Deputy Town Clerk.

No members of the press or public.

2. APOLOGIES : Cllrs. P.G. Hayward (conflicting engagement) and Mrs. D.J. Hull (conflicting enagement).

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS : the minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2015, having been approved and adopted by the Town Council were signed by the Chairman.

4. PUBLIC FORUM : None.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 20th JUNE 2015: None.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT: it was resolved that the Risk Assessment be amended to reflect recent changes in staffing and use of the buildings. Inspection of the memorials will be scheduled for late winter/early spring as part of the Caretaker’s schedule of work.

7. MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR WORK:

a) Trees and Hedges, Fences and Walls including rear boundary:-

i. Contact will be made with a tree surgeon to obtain advice on condition of trees and on height at which yew trees should be maintained for ease of maintenance by Cemetery staff.

Manual handling and working at height training courses will be sourced.

ii. A local contractor will be contacted for advice regarding the ivy on the front walls and the condition of the stone walls generally.

iii. Quotes will be sought for refurbishment of the gates.

iv. Assistance will be sought from the District Council in stopping up gaps in the rear boundary.

b) Chapels, Gates and Seats: –

i. Quotes will be sought for the provision of outside lights for the chapels.

ii. Various security matters will be referred to the Town Council’s insurance company.

iii. A seat which is at present in the town centre but is due to be replaced will be re-furbished and installed at an agreed location at the cemetery in due course.

iv. Advice will be sought from the insurers regarding security.

c) Paths & access to graves - it was agreed to seek quotations for the creation of an permeable/porous material or tarmacadam path into the Z section to enable all areas to have easier access. 3 quotations will be sought.

d) Drainage – nothing to report.

e) Scattering Bed – this needed attention but the dry conditions were a problem.

f) Arrangements for Non-Conformist Burials – this matter was discussed and it was agreed that existing arrangements would cover all eventualities.

8. MEMORIAL MATTERS: Contact will be made with those families in the Z section whose graves were in need of levelling. It was noted that some memorials were being placed on base plates which did not comply with regulations. Memorial masons will be reminded of the correct dimensions. It was noted that it is not always possible to account for damage which takes place in the cemetery when the Caretaker is not present. The Town Clerk will respond to a request regarding the purchase of particular grave plots.

9. REVIEW OF REGULATIONS: it was known that the District Council would be reviewing regulations but these revisions were not yet to hand. Nor were any changes to fees. It was acknowledged that it was difficult for all who bring tributes to graves to be made aware of Cemetery Regulations despite the fact that these are supplied to relatives at the time an interment takes place and again if a memorial is erected and that this could cause problems for the Caretaker. It was felt generally that the existing regulations covered most issues but it was agreed to alter regulation 30 to read “.Nothing may be removed from the cemetery without the permission of the Council and any person detected stealing plants or flowers or any other item will be prosecuted”.

10. REVIEW OF CEMETERY FEES: No recommendations had been received from the District Council.

11. NEW EQUIPMENT FOR NEXT YEAR’S BUDGET:: The Vice-chairman suggested that a replacement for one of the existing ride-on mowers would be a prudent investment and put forward recommendations.

The Vice-chairman proposed that under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings ) Act 1960, (as amended by the Local Government Act 1972 the public, (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. Agreed.

12. STAFFING MATTERS: A letter from the Caretaker was discussed and will be referred to the Employment Committee.

Signed ……………………………………………………. Date …………………………………….