

AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Held at The Guildhall, Axminster on Monday 3rd April 2017 at 7.15 p.m.

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

No members of the press or public.

2. APOLOGIES : Cllrs. D.R.H. Hull, P.G. Hayward (conflicting engagement) and The Deputy Town Clerk.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS : the minutes of the meeting held on 24th October 2016, having been approved and adopted by the Town Council were signed by the Chairman.

4. PUBLIC FORUM :

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24th OCTOBER 2016:

a) Scattering Bed: The Chairman said that this would given a spring-clean in the next few weeks.

b) Waste Disposal Procedures – it was agreed that the policy of having smaller bonfires on a more regular basis seemed to be causing less distress to neighbours.

6. REVIEW OF CEMETERY RISK ASSESSMENT: this was reviewed and amendments as per attached document made.

7. MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR WORK:

a) Trees and Hedges:- the Town Clerk will draw up a specification and seek quotes from various contractors for work to the hedges.

b) Fences and Walls including rear boundary:- the Town Clerk will draft a strongly-worded letter to the District Council regarding problems with fly-tipping and security on the eastern boundary which have not been resolved despite it having been agreed that the District Council would take action. The Town Clerk will contact the contractor to arrange for the approved works to the gates.

c) Seats:- these were in good condition.

d) Paths:- the quotes received would be taken in committee. Contractors will be invited to meet the Vice-chairman with a view to providing a firm path for vehicular access to the work shop.

e) Chapels:- the gutters had been cleared and the staff would undertake some minor repairs to them. A valuation will be sought for the chapel bell. A use for the bier had not yet been identified.

f) Security:- it was noted that the Town Clerk had spoken to the insurers who had expressed satisfaction with the existing security arrangements.

8. MEMORIAL MATTERS:

a) Leveling of Soil on Grave Spaces – this had been covered under matters arising from the previous meeting.

b) Grass on Memorials after Strimming – following comments from some residents, it was agreed that the Caretaker should be asked to use the leaf blower to clear grass from the headstones once he had strimmed round them.

c) Ornaments on Graves and Disappearance of Same – the Chairman reported that the Regulations had been reworded to cover all items left on graves.

d) Clarification of Base Sizes for Memorials – nothing to report.

e) Clarification of Prior Purchase of Interment or G.O.R. Spaces – nothing to report.

f) Systems for Non-Conformist Interments – nothing to report.

The Chairman said that a suggestion had been received regarding provision of a woodland burial area. She said that this tied in with a general need to consider provision for those of all faiths and of

none. It was agreed that further information be sought and the matter will be discussed further at the annual site meeting.

The Chairman reported that the matter of damage to a memorial discussed at the previous meeting had been resolved to the satisfaction of the person concerned.

9. REVIEW OF REGULATIONS AND FEES: the Town Clerk will update the regulations to include the alteration agreed in October and emphasise the fact that no memorial should be put in place without the prior written approval of the Town Council. A recent trend for headstones to be put in place at the same time as ashes were being interred had highlighted the need for information about the regulations relating to memorials to be brought to the attention of the bereaved at the time a request for interment is received and prior to any interment. The Town Clerk will draw up a suitable pro forma in consultation with the local undertakers.

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

11. REVIEW OF EQUIPMENT:

a) Servicing/condition of existing equipment – Cllr. Jeffery reported that he had serviced all the equipment and the Chairman expressed her thanks for this work.

b) New equipment – The Chairman said that the Caretaker was delighted with his new ride-on mower which now gave him the facility to record his daily work load.

Cllr. Jeffery 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. Cllr. Hall seconded the proposal. Agreed.

12. CONSIDERATION OF QUOTES RECEIVED RELATING TO WORKS AT CHAPELS: none.

13. CONSIDERATION OF QUOTES RECEIVED RELATING TO WORKS ON PATHS: A quote had been received to install an environmentally friendly hard surface to enable vehicular access in the Z section along the path from the gate from the Y section for 26 metres towards the allotment site. A subsidiary quote had been obtained to install the same surfacing on the two side paths. After discussion Cllr. Jeffery, seconded by Cllr. Hall, proposed that, subject to compliance with Financial Regulations, the quote be accepted to undertake the 26 metre section but not to undertake any further work until it had been demonstrated that the surfacing was sufficiently robust to cope with the traffic in the cemetery. Agreed.

14. STAFFING MATTERS: The Chairman asked that the annual appraisal for the Caretaker be done as soon as time allowed.

Signed Date