

AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE OF THE CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT

The Guildhall, Axminster on Monday, 3rd March 2020 at 7.00 p.m.

1. PRESENT : Councillors : M.D.G. Spurway (Chairman), A.L. Young (Vice-chairman), M. Adamson-Drage, A.E. Bourner, M. Featherstone, D.R.H.Hull, A. Sedgewick, the Town Clerk.

No members of the press or public.

2. APOLOGIES: Cllrs. C.W.C. Hall, D.J. Moore,

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS: the minutes of the meetings held on 23rd July and 30th July 2019, having been approved and adopted by the Town Council were signed by the Chairman.

4. PUBLIC FORUM: None.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF MEETINGS HELD ON 23RD AND 30TH JULY 2019: In response to a question regarding the interment of the ashes of pets, Cllr. Adamson-Drage pointed out that this was permitted only in areas licensed by the Environment Authority.

6. MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR WORK:

a) Trees and Hedges: the contractor had been approached regarding the hedges. The Chairman reported that the Buildings and Finance Committee had approved the removal of a birch tree whose roots were pushing up part of one of the paths. Cllr. Featherstone suggested that removal of the root itself might be sufficient. The views of contractors will be sought.

b) Fences, Gates and Walls – the Chairman reported that no works had been done on the walls since the last meeting. The Caretaking staff had cut back the ivy to prevent it invading the wall structure any more than it had done already. Cllr. Featherstone urged that this be done on a regular basis during the year. All gates are in working order. Gaps in the top boundary will be plugged with appropriate native hedging species.

c) Seats – the Town Clerk will check whether the area outside the Cemetery Gates is controlled by the Highway Authority and seek permission for a licence for a public bench. It was noted that staff had expressed concerns regarding any reduction of available space for manoeuvring of vehicles in this area.

d) Paths – following discussions at the Buildings and Finance Committee regarding the inadequacy of the existing paths for modern vehicles, the Town Clerk suggested that, to future-proof the Cemetery, consideration be given to creating a new path up through the field to the field gate at the bottom side of the Z section. She had obtained a specification from the District Council for such a path. She said that this would be easier and more cost-effective than trying to widen the existing paths. It was agreed that this should be placed on the Future Plans agenda for the next Town Council meeting. Other matters such as drainage and kerb stones would need to be considered as part of any such scheme.

Simpler measures will be taken to cut out the sides of some existing paths and cutting in tarmac to remedy the damage already caused by vehicles so that it does not cause a trip hazard.

e) Chapels – following discussion of the quotes received Cllr. Spurway, seconded by Cllr. Sedgewick, proposed that the original contractor be asked to attend a site meeting to discuss the works required. Agreed.

f) Security – no matters were raised regarding this item.

7. MEMORIAL MATTERS:

CLLR. HULL DECLARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM, AS BEING THE APPLICANT, AND LEFT THE CHAMBER FOR THE DURATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

Councillors discussed an application for a memorial to be sited in a particular position. Cllr. Young, seconded by Cllr. Bourner, proposed that permission be granted in these exceptional circumstances. Agreed.

The Town Clerk raised the matter of plastic memorials and will send off for some samples of what is available.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a) Revised Fee Sheet Wording – the Town Clerk will check that the current fee sheet reflects the change in wording for minors agreed at the previous meeting. Some changes had been made but others appeared to have been omitted.

b) Copying of Cemetery Maps – this matter had been resolved by going down the avenue of Digital Mapping.

c) Review of Cemetery Regulations – Cllrs. Young, Sedgewick, Spurway, Bourner, Featherstone and the Town Clerk will meet to review these, along with the fee sheet and right of burial terms.

Cllr. Young proposed that 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.

9. STAFFING MATTERS: there were no matters to discuss.

Signed Date