

# MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE CEMETERY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021 AT 7PM

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## Committee Members present:

Councillors B Collier (Chairman), A Cooper, Mrs M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, Mrs J Hyde, H Pickering, B Saunders

## Also present:

The Town Clerk – Mrs K Elliott-Turner, Assistant Clerk – Ms C Jenkins, Councillors Mrs A Clarey and S Hayes

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### **8/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **9/21 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE AGENDA**

Nothing to declare. Members were reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

### **10/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES**

None present.

### **11/21 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION**

Nothing to report.

### **12/21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC**

The Chairman proposed that under section 3d of Standing Orders, the press and public are temporarily excluded whilst matters pertaining to financial and contractual issues are discussed and that they be instructed to withdraw from the meeting for the following agenda item only. **PASSED by members.**

Non-committee members, Councillors Mrs Clarey and Hayes were moved to the virtual waiting room for the following item. Members agreed that the Assistant Clerk could remain, as she carries out the day-to-day administration of the Cemetery and may be able to respond to questions.

### **13/21 CONFIDENTIAL – GARDEN OF REST – HISTORY & PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Members considered and noted a confidential report on the history, procurement and budget implications for two ongoing projects – to carry out significant repairs and construct replacement supporting walls to the existing Garden of Rest, and to construct a new Garden of Rest in slab-layout.

Press, public and non-committee members were permitted to return at the conclusion of this item.

### **14/21 GARDEN OF REST – CONSTRUCT NEW**

Members considered a quote to construct the proposed new Garden of Rest in the Beacon Section. A second quote, despite being chased, had not been received.

The estimated value of the work had been considered to be below the threshold which requires tenders to be sought.

**RESOLVED** that the quote received from SJ Thompson Builders Ltd to construct a new Garden of Rest, as per drawings and specification provided, at £26,860 plus vat, is approved. Funds from Earmarked Reserves – Cemetery Projects.

The Chairman advised members that consideration of a policy for scattering of ashes will be considered at a future meeting.

#### **15/21 GARDEN OF REST – REPAIR EXISTING**

As per confidential report (agenda item 6), members considered how to proceed:

- 1) Ask those who have previously quoted to provide updated quotes
- 2) Ask those who have previously quoted to provide quote for a reduced build – one square section only
- 3) Consider different construction to reduce cost of build, i.e. block and render or block with brick facing – a revised set of drawings will need to be commissioned if changes are made to initial approved design

**RESOLVED** that those who have previously quoted, are asked to provide an updated quote for the previously agreed ‘walled-area’ works (option 1).

#### **16/21 BEACON SECTION – CONDITION OF SOIL**

For information, we have received reports from the grave digger about waterlogging and soil condition issues in some areas of the Beacon Section, which is affecting our ability to continue burials at this time. An urgent site meeting has been arranged with the Technical Director at Cemetery Development Services for a site assessment, and report on measures required. An extra committee meeting will be arranged to consider his report and any measures required.

#### **17/21 LETTER OF COMPLAINT**

Members considered a response to a letter of complaint to the committee from a family representative regarding the condition of the Beacon Garden of Rest, where their loved one is interred.

Due consideration was given to the content of the letter, the condition of the Garden of Rest, the history in getting appropriate repairs carried out and that information on this situation can be found on the council’s publicly accessible website, and it was:

**RESOLVED** that a response is sent apologising for the delay in getting appropriate repair works completed, explaining the difficulty in finding a contractor to undertake the work and that we hope that in the near future this situation will be resolved.

#### **18/21 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Members reviewed this committee’s Terms of Reference and proposed amendments by the Clerk to update and clarify certain points within.

**RECOMMENDED** that the updated committee Terms of Reference for the Cemetery Management Committee, forming part of the council’s Standing Orders, are adopted.

## **19/21 BUDGET & RESERVES REVIEW**

Members considered the Budget & Reserves Review report as at month 11. There were no points of concern. Members noted the need to continue to put funds aside in order to continue with our aim to extend the cemetery, particularly with potential costs involved in the two current projects with funds coming from the committee Earmarked Reserves.

**RESOLVED** that any remaining funds in this committee's budget at the end of the financial year are vired to the committee's Earmarked Reserves – Cemetery Projects.

## **20/21 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY**

The Clerk advised that BT Openreach will be installing a cable from Mill Lane, into the cemetery from the area of the car park, running in front of the chapel, under the path in the New Section, through the gap in the fir trees, into the Beacon Section under the roadway, and into the telecommunications mast compound, as part of an upgrade to the system. Any junction boxes along the route will be underground, with a concrete cover, and any trenches dug in paths or roadways will be temporarily covered for visitor safety and to retain vehicle access, and then reinstated. Our solicitor has viewed the plans and documents sent by BT Openreach and confirms that this is above board. We will be receiving a one-off payment of £2,564.60. A request has been made for the contractor's contact details and a copy of their Risk Assessment and Method Statement prior to commencing work.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 7.56pm

**MINUTES APPROVED (date):**

**SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN:**