

# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CEMETERY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2022 AT 7.00PM IN THE GREENACRE CENTRE, STOTFOLD

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## Committee Members present:

Councillors B Collier (Chairman), Mrs T Bhasin, A Cooper, Mrs M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, Mrs J Hyde.

## Also present:

Town Clerk – Mrs K Elliott-Turner

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### **1/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence, as all committee members were present.

### **2/22 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

There were no disclosures of interest or requests for dispensation. 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.

### **3/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES**

None present.

### **4/22 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION**

#### Correspondence received

Receipt of an email from owner of land adjacent to the cemetery, regarding three separate matters – asking committee to revisit decision re fencing to prevent rabbits from entering his farmland from the cemetery, asking committee for views on potential installation of a solar farm on land adjacent to the cemetery, asking committee for views on his proposed alternative location for a cemetery extension. These requests will be considered at a future meeting, as appropriate.

#### Matters Arising for Information

Minute 40/21 – Hertfordshire Driveways are waiting for a frost free, dry day to do the work to install resin surfacing in the Walled Garden of Rest, as it won't set when cold or wet.

### **5/22 QUEEN'S JUBILEE – BEACON LIGHTING CEREMONY**

Members agreed to lighting the Beacon as part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations and national Beacon lighting on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2022. It was suggested that the Salvation Army Band might like to take part in the event. Reverend Bill Britt has suggested the possibility of holding a Thanksgiving Service at the Church during the morning of the same day, with the Beacon lighting taking place that evening. The office will discuss the matter further with Reverend Britt and arrange an appropriate Beacon lighting ceremony.

## **6/22 EXECUTIVE ACTION – BEACON GARDEN OF REST PLANTING & RABBIT PROOF FENCING**

Members noted executive action taken by the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to accept a quote from Rik Golder to supply and plant Euonymus hedging at the new Beacon Garden of Rest (to fit with the correct planting season and bulk purchase for Walled Garden of Rest planting). To purchase and plant x60 Euonymus Japonicus 2ltr potted plants £680 plus vat.

Members further noted executive action taken by the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to install rabbit proof fencing along the length of newly planted Euonymus hedging. To purchase and install rabbit proof fencing, with posts (0.5m high) £180 materials and labour, plus vat.

## **7/22 REPAIRS TO ENTRANCE GATE PILLAR**

Members considered a quote to carry out repairs to the damaged vehicle entrance gate pillar.

**RESOLVED** that the quote from S.J. Thompson Builders Ltd to carry out full rebuild repairs, including steel bar in the central of the pillar, at £5,060 plus vat, plus additional bricks at £1.50 each, is accepted. Additional bricks should match those in the current pillar. Funds from EMR – Cemetery Projects.

## **8/22 DRAIN CLEARANCE & CONDITION CHECK**

Members considered quotes to clean out the drains in the car park and at the bottom section of the internal roadway, and to carry out a drain condition check.

**RESOLVED** that the quote from Drain Doctor at £680 plus vat is accepted. Councillor Cooper is to meet them on site to show the location of the drains and the drain runs.

## **9/22 PROVISION OF BENCH FOR GARDEN OF REST AREAS (TOP OF CEMETERY)**

Members considered purchasing and installing a bench near the Garden of Rest areas at the top of the cemetery, as per report previously circulated.

**RESOLVED** that a bench is purchased (as per our usual Memorial bench type) and is to be installed on the roadside to the right of the Walled Garden of Rest. EH Crouch and Austins Funeral Directors, as our local undertakers, are to be offered equal sponsorship of the bench, with a plaque to indicate that they have sponsored it. If they do not take this up, the space across the top slat of the bench is to be used to affix memorial plaques. Cost of bench with one plaque £691.91 plus second plaque, and installation by Handyman Contractor at £100.00.

## **10/22 CONSULTATION - ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2016**

Members noted, with thanks, the response submitted by the Clerk to DEFRA's consultation on the above Regulations, which aim to improve the way in which groundwater activities, and some related surface water discharge activities are regulated. The consultation affects all burial authorities, and existing cemeteries/burial grounds, and states that if implemented, proposals under consultation could reduce remaining burial capacity by up to 50%. Response available on file.

### **11/22 INTERMENTS – ORDER OF BURIAL AND PRE-PURCHASED PLOTS**

Members considered a report regarding interring burials every other plot, rather than the next adjacent plot and no longer allocating pre-purchased plots. This is a proposal to try and address concerns about grave side collapse.

Discussions expanded further, with a proposal that instead of interring one after the other side by side, the direction is switched to one below the previous one, running from the top of the cemetery in the downhill direction.

**RESOLVED** that pre-purchasing of plots is no longer permitted and that burials in the Beacon Sections will now start at the top of a column and finish at the bottom of that section, before returning to the top of the next column, rather than interring in a row.

### **12/22 INCREASING PLOT SIZE – REVISED LAYOUT PLAN**

Members considered a quote from CDS Group to undertake a topographical survey to form the base of a plan and provide layout drawings to accommodate larger, 5m<sup>2</sup> burial plots. This is in response to the above Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 consultation, however CDS feel that there is no urgency to increase plot sizes at this stage, as this suggested plot size is receiving a lot of 'push back from the industry'.

This matter will be held in abeyance for the time being.

### **13/22 CEMETERY INSPECTION**

Councillor Cooper gave a report following his recent inspection of the cemetery:

- Thanks were given to the Landscape Contractor for recent planting work at the two top Garden of Rest areas, which were carried out very well.
- There are now three interments in the new Beacon Garden of Rest.
- There is very little evidence of rabbit burrows in the cemetery.
- Hedges and shrubs remain well maintained.
- In the Old Section, the path running north and south has a lot of surface moss, which needs spraying off when weather next permits.

### **14/22 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY**

Nothing to report.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 7.59pm.

**MINUTES APPROVED (date):**

**SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN:**