

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CEMETERY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2020 AT 7.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, STOTFOLD**

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Committee Members present: B Collier (Chairman)

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| A Cooper    | Mrs M Cooper |
| S Dhaliwal  | Mrs J Hyde   |
| H Pickering | B Saunders   |

Also present: Councillors Mrs S Bundock and S Hayes, and the Town Clerk – Mrs K Elliott-Turner

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**1/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were none, as all committee members were present.

**2/20 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE AGENDA**

There were none. 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.

**3/20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES**

None present.

**4/20 CLERK’S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION**

Nothing to report.

**5/20 UPDATE ON REFURBISHMENT OF GARDEN OF REST (BEACON)**

Following production of detailed plans and specification for refurbishment of the Garden of Rest (Beacon), indications of costs for the work mean that, as per our Financial Regulations and statutory limits, we cannot proceed with quotes and must follow tender procedures. This will involve producing further specification papers to be submitted to the Government’s Contract Finder website. Unfortunately, this can be a longer process than obtaining quotes, and therefore refurbishment work will be delayed.

In the meantime, the Handyman will be making remedial repairs to the wooden front boundary (right hand side) in front of existing interments.

**6/20 GARDEN OF REST (LOWER) – MEMORIAL BENCH**

Following consideration at the last meeting for two memorial bench locations to be added to the lower Garden of Rest bench plan, the Landscape Contractor was asked for his opinion. He feels that there is enough room for benches on the Mill boundary of the Garden of Rest, and that installation of two new benches would make the area more symmetrical with the original benches on the opposite Garden of Rest boundary.

**RESOLVED** that two memorial bench locations are added to the lower Garden of Rest bench plan – Mill boundary.

## **7/20 CEMETERY KEYS**

For some years, a £10 deposit has been taken in return for a cemetery key. These were previously issued to those generally unable to walk up/down the hill in the cemetery, enabling them to access the cemetery by car. The cost of the keys, which are a security type and so cannot be copied, has increased somewhat, and where they were around £10 each 10+ years ago, they now cost almost £19. The council does not take the deposits as income, and as it is extremely rare for anyone to return a key they no longer require, this is becoming an increasing cost to the council. In recent years, the number of keys being issued has increased annually. Members considered making a charge, rather than deposit, for keys issued.

**RESOLVED** that for cemetery keys issued from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, a £25 charge will apply. The key will remain in the ownership of the person applying and paying for one and does not need to be returned to the council. Those who had keys issued prior to this date on the deposit scheme, will receive their deposit on return of the key.

Councillor Mrs Cooper requested that her name be recorded as voting against this decision.

## **8/20 TO CONSIDER ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM THE INSPECTION OF THE CEMETERY FOLLOWING THE WALKABOUT CARRIED OUT BY COUNCILLOR MRS HYDE**

During a walkabout in the days prior to this meeting, Councillor Mrs Hyde noted the following. Any actions required will be carried out:

- Litter around the car park and inside the hedge by the skip needs clearing away
- There is a flat memorial in the Lower Section, left hand side by bench, which has white stones around it – contrary to our cemetery regulations
- The Diana Memorial Garden needs weeding
- In the Beacon Section, there is a very large Box shrub growing close to a grave plot, which needs removing
- The burning area is looking untidy, but should be looked at again during the summer walkabout
- In general, the cemetery is looking very good

## **9/20 BUDGET & RESERVES REVIEW**

Members considered the Budget & Reserves Review report as at month 11. There were no points of concern.

**RESOLVED** that any remaining funds in this committee's budget at the end of the financial year are vired to the Committee's Cemetery Projects Earmarked Reserves to continue building up funds for a future Cemetery extension.

The Clerk advised that the Government has now brought in The Children's Funeral Fund for England, which can help to pay for some of the costs of a funeral for a child under 18. This covers fees for burial, cremation, coffins, memorials and other items. The burial authority and funeral directors may make a claim for their fees and the family of the child should not be charged. Claims must be made within 6 months of the burial. In the case of the Town Council, we are able to claim for the purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial, interment fees, maintenance of the plot, renewal of the Right of Burial, Memorial Permit. Our fees table should still include our rates relating to child burials/plots in order that we have a figure to make a claim against.

**10/20 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY**

Nothing to report.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.22pm

**CHAIRMAN**

**DATED**