

ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL CEMETERY WORKING GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5th December 2019

AT ELLESMERE TOWN HALL

Members Present:

Chair : Paul Goulbourne

Vice Chair : Graham Dyke

Councillors : John Baker, Pat Clubbe, Kay Egerton, Geoff Elner, John Frost
and Anne Wignall

Public Participation Session

No members of the public were present this evening.

Apologies Received

No apologies had been received for tonight's meeting.

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

No disclosures were made.

Public Participation Session

Nothing further was discussed.

41/19 Minutes

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October 2019 are confirmed, approved and signed.

42/19 Matters Arising :

Cemetery Lodge guttering and rainwater downpipes

The CC advised that Carl Dulton had now completed the replacement guttering and rainwater downpipes in "cast iron lookalike" plastic.

Memorials Testing

The CC advised that he and Councillor Goulbourne had met recently with Steve Jones (of Jones and Hughes stonemasons) at the cemetery and discussed the whole situation regarding memorials testing throughout the whole of the cemetery. They had walked through various parts of the cemetery and Steve gave his initial thoughts on how the testing could be phased and carried out. He will now go away and report back in due course with his further thoughts on the matter. Any testing is likely to take up a fair amount of time and be quite expensive.

Headstones on new graves (elapsed time before siting)

Councillors discussed this in some depth and it was felt that there should be a minimum elapsed time period of six months from interment to erection of any headstone on a new grave. However, it was felt by Councillors that the CWG should recommend that this period be twelve months. It was agreed that the CC would reflect this in the Cemetery Regulations. The reason for this is to try and mitigate any instability of the headstone once sited. The CWG is aware that some families may wish to erect a headstone as soon as possible after an interment and so would allow a headstone to be erected once the minimum six months timescale had passed. The CC will advise relevant funeral directors of this update to the Cemetery Regulations. The CC advised Councillors that, in general terms, most funeral directors have observed the six month period in the past as a matter of course.

43/19 Proposed contemplative area / harbour in the Cemetery

Following on from the last CWG meeting ETC Councillors had subsequently given their approval in principle to a suggestion made by Councillor Wignall previously as to the siting of an harbour at the top corner of the cemetery adjacent to the roadside hedge and close to the top gate. This proposal had also been approved by ERPC Councillors. Due to the time of year currently it was agreed by Councillors to put this item on the CWG Agenda for March 2020 as the weather was more likely to be clement at that stage. Councillor Elner thought it might be possible to get a specification for the harbour "off the peg". Councillor Dyke wondered if the harbour would need a roof. Councillor Baker thought it would need a roof as shelter from the rain. Councillor Baker said he would obtain some quotes for the meeting in March. Councillors could then discuss this in more detail and make a decision on the way forward.

Councillor Wignall again mentioned the possible refurbishment of the existing benches in the cemetery and this will also be considered at the CWG meeting in March. Further to this Councillor Elner went on to say that it might be a consideration to site another commemorative bench within the cemetery in respect of the 75th year anniversary of "VE (victory in Europe) day". Councillors all felt that this was an excellent idea and this proposal would also be put on the Agenda for the CWG March meeting.

44/19 Financial Information received from ETC

The CC advised Councillors that Jo Butterworth had recently been ill and off work and so he had not received any information from her for tonight's meeting.

45/19 Cemetery Co-ordinator's Report

The CC advised Councillors that, since the last meeting on 3rd October there had only been one interment. This was a new cremated remains plot in the Memorial Garden extension area.

Following a request from Melanie Joyce (ERPC Clerk) Councillor Baker and the CC had carried out an analysis of interments from the year 2014 / 2015 to date. This related to Melanie wishing to know how many of the interments were for people living in the ETC area and how many related to people living in the ERPC area. The CC had sent a copy of this breakdown to Melanie, Jo Butterworth and all CWG Councillors. This broke down into the following percentages (rounded) :

ETC area 69% ERPC area 16% "outside area" 15%

"outside area" refers to interments for people who were living out of the area at the time of their death. Most of these people had a strong previous connection to either Ellesmere or Ellesmere Rural Parish but it could not be quantified at the time of interment as to which of the two their previous connection had been.

The CC advised Councillors that he had e-mailed Gary Jones of Groundforce to thank him for all the hard work he and his staff had undertaken at the cemetery to bring it to the condition in which it currently was. The CC advised Councillors that he had received various comments from people over the past few months regarding how well the cemetery was looking.

Income received by the CC for the year to date is :

Interments	£2,215.00
Headstones / MV	£2,210.00
<u>Total</u>	<u>£4,425.00</u>

Date of next scheduled meeting

Thursday 30th January 2020 at 7.00 p.m. in Ellesmere Town Hall.

End of meeting.

