

ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL CEMETERY WORKING GROUP
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 27th January 2022
AT ELLESMERE TOWN HALL

Members Present:

Vice Chair : Graham Dyke

Councillors : John Baker, Geoff Elner, Graham Hutchinson, Joan Mowl and Anne Wignall

As Councillor Paul Goulbourne was not in attendance this evening the Vice Chair, Councillor Graham Dyke, chaired the meeting.

Public Participation Session

No members of the public were present this evening.

Apologies Received

Apologies had been received from Paul Goulbourne and Pat Clubbe

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

No disclosures were made.

Public Participation Session

Nothing further was discussed.

01/22 Minutes

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 25th November 2021 are confirmed, approved and signed.

02/22 Matters Arising

Proposed tarmacking at entrance to cemetery

The Cemetery Co-ordinator advised Councillors that he had met with Aaron from AJP Groundwork at the cemetery and that he had now given us a third quote for Councillors to consider.

Meanwhile, James Clarke, who had previously offered to do a test area at the top of the cemetery, hopes to complete this sometime next week. James thought to do two different types of surface in order that Councillors could judge which, if either, would be suitable for the area at the entrance to the cemetery. Once James has done the test area the Cemetery Co-ordinator will advise Councillors in order that they can have a look at their leisure and hopefully then make a decision as to which contractor to use.

Proposed water butts at the Chapel

It was agreed by Councillors to install the four water butts towards the end of March or beginning of April. The CC will liaise with Councillor Dyke in order to arrange this.

Possible future work at the cemetery

It was felt that the Lodge could benefit from an exterior painting spruce up and that this should be included within the budget for 2023/24. The path, immediately behind the Lodge, could be tarmacked up to the gate at the top of the cemetery and water run up to the area of the harbour. Other items mentioned were painting of gates and railings, and putting water at the bottom of the cemetery. Councillor Dyke had previously mentioned the possibility of having solar panels on the roof of the Chapel but the CC advised that we could not derive an income in this regard as tariffs are no longer available in England. Councillor Baker again mentioned the possibility of covering

the grassed mass graves area with wildflowers and possibly also planting some trees in this area. Councillors felt that something similar could be worthwhile between the arbour and top fence. Councillor Baker did advise that the cost of this would not be cheap. However, all Councillors were strongly in favour of doing this. It would involve destroying the existing grass, rotivating the area, sowing the seed and then rolling the whole area. A suitable plaque could be situated on the site regarding the people who are interred here. This will be placed on the Agenda for our next meeting in March. In the meanwhile Councillor Baker will look into the matter a little more closely.

DEFRA Consultation

This was still ongoing. The Town Clerk, Jo Butterworth, had advised the CC that there would be an £800 permit payable annually in April as the cemetery does not meet the exemption criteria. Councillors wanted to know what the exemption criteria is and the CC will ask the Town Clerk about this.

Funeral Directors Protocols

The CC advised Councillors that this had been agreed with the Town Clerk and sent out to all funeral directors who have used the cemetery in the past few years. So far, no comments had been received back from any funeral director.

03/22 Possible land for future additional grave space

The CC advised Councillors that Jo Butterworth had suggested that the CWG starts to put money aside for future burial space. Councillors discussed this in some detail and it was agreed that the Town Council, the Rural Parish Council and the Cemetery Working Group should each set aside £5,000 per year going forward starting in 2022/23. It was suggested that this money could be incorporated into a "Land Fund" which would be "ringfenced" going forward. The possibility of a local landowner donating some land suitable for a new cemetery was discussed in some detail. The CC advised that he would be prepared to write to anyone if Councillors could give him details of who they thought might be approachable in this regard.

04/22 Cemetery Fees and Charges for 2022 / 2023

Following the last CWG meeting in November the CC had now increased the relevant fees and charges by the 5% agreed by Councillors and gave all Councillors a copy of these which were rounded to the nearest £0 or £5. These will become effective from 1st April 2022 and the CC will advise all funeral directors in due course.

05/22 Financial Information received from ETC

As normal the CC had previously e-mailed Councillors with all relevant financial information relating to the CWG he had received prior to tonight's meeting. This showed that the finances of the CWG continue to be in a healthy state.

06/22 Cemetery Co-ordinator's Report

The CC advised Councillors that since our last meeting on 25th November there had been five interments. Four of these were coffin interments with three new doubles in the Q Section and one was a re-opening in the N Section. One cremated remains interment went into a grave in the E Section.

The CC also advised that next week there will be an interment into the ninth new grave in the Q Section. This will, in effect, take up about a third of the available space in this Section with the first grave being dug in April 2021. The CC advised that we should now perhaps be looking at a timescale for taking up the second tarmac path for new grave space.

The CC advised that the current cemetery grounds maintenance contract ceases on 31st May 2022 and that he was just about to send out invitations to some companies to quote for a new contract to run from 1st June 2022 to 31st May 2025.

Councillor Goulbourne had mentioned to the CC in an e-mail that he felt that the exterior of the Lodge could do with a spruce up and that perhaps we could look at doing this within the 2023 / 2024 budget. Councillors were in agreement with this.

The CC advised that he had recently been contacted by a Mandy Bridge who asked if she could place a plaque on the new metal bench nearest to the Cremorne Gardens entrance as her mother's grave is directly opposite this bench. Councillors discussed this in some depth but eventually decided that they did not want this to happen. During this discussion the question was raised about one of the new metal benches which had been placed on the site of a previous bench which had become dilapidated. The dilapidated bench, which was wooden, had originally been sited with a plaque which was dedicated to Councillor Wignall's parents. Councillor Wignall had previously paid for this new metal bench. Councillors, after more discussion, were now of the opinion that the new arbour and three benches should all be in the ownership of the Town and Parish Councils and that Councillor Wignall should be re-imbursed with what she had paid for the bench.

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

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Interments | £ 8,205.00 |
| Headstones / MV | £ 4,270.00 |
| <u>Total :</u> | <u>£12,475.00</u> |

Date of next scheduled meeting

Thursday 31st March at 7.00 p.m. in Ellesmere Town Hall.

End of meeting.