

ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL CEMETERY WORKING GROUP
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7th April 2022
AT ELLESMERE TOWN HALL

Members Present:

Chair : Paul Goulbourne

Vice Chair : Graham Dyke

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

Public Participation Session

No members of the public were present this evening. Jack Frost was in attendance.

Apologies Received

Apologies had been received from Anne Wignall

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

No disclosures were made.

Public Participation Session

Nothing further was discussed.

07/22 Minutes

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2022 are confirmed, approved and signed.

The Cemetery Co-ordinator gave all Councillors present a copy of an e-mail received from Jo Butterworth regarding minute 3/22 of the meeting on 27th January. This related to putting money aside for possible land for future grave space outside the cemetery. Councillors took note of her comments.

08/22 Matters Arising

Proposed tarmacking at entrance to cemetery (to recommend a contractor)

This matter was discussed by Councillors who decided to recommend James Clarke Contracting to carry out the proposed work. James had previously tarmacked a small test area towards the top of the cemetery and various Councillors had gone to have a look. James had split this area into two different types of surfacing and it was unanimously agreed that the portion on which he had placed the grey overlay would best suit the entrance to the cemetery. Councillor Baker wanted to ensure that the grey dusty overlay surface was tidily brushed off to ensure a smooth surface for any bier to negotiate. The CC will advise the Town Clerk, Jo Butterworth, of this CWG recommendation.

New grounds maintenance contract (to recommend a contractor)

This matter was also discussed by Councillors in some depth. It was finally agreed that our existing contractor, Groundforce, should be offered the new contract for the coming period 1st June 2022 to 31st May 2025. The CC will also advise Jo Butterworth of this CWG recommendation.

Water Butts

It was agreed by Councillors to proceed with the purchase and installation of four suitable water butts to be situated on the four downpipes on both sides of the Chapel. The CC will liaise with Councillor Graham Dyke regarding the matter.

Metal benches in the cemetery

Councillor Goulbourne explained the situation regarding the placing of plaques on any of the metal benches within the cemetery. Regarding the metal bench which replaced Councillor Wignall's previous dilapidated bench it was noted that Councillor Wignall had, in fact, purchased this bench and was thus able to place a suitable plaque on it. The other two metal benches, and arbour, are owned by Ellesmere Town Council and no plaques would be allowed on them unless agreed by ETC.

09/22 Q Section headstones / kerbstones

The CC explained to Councillors the situation relating to the placing of identical black granite kerbstones on two graves Q2 and Q3. The CC advised that there was another application in the pipeline to place kerbstones on Q8. Councillors discussed this and agreed to allow the Q8 application provided that the kerbstones and infill was exactly the same as on Q2 and Q3. However, after this no further kerbstones would be allowed in the Q Section. The CC will now advise Edgertons and Paul Sumner regarding the situation.

The CC also advised Councillors that he had received requests from Edgertons and a member of the family to place kerbstones on a grave in the M Section. The CC advised that this Section was a traditionally lawned area of the cemetery and Councillors denied this request. The CC will advise Edgertons regarding the matter.

10/22 Q Section take-up of burial space

The CC advised Councillors that, since the first new double grave in April 2021, eleven graves had now been utilised in this Section. This equates to approximately 40% of the total available space in the Section. It was agreed by Councillors to look at utilising the second tarmac path, or part of it, for additional grave space as soon as feasible. The possibility of having a path immediately adjacent to the fence at the top of the cemetery was mentioned to allow access from the top of the cemetery to the Memorial Garden. It was agreed that the CC would meet with Councillor Baker and Jack Frost at the cemetery to assess the situation going forward.

11/22 Wild flowers / trees / plaque in the lawned mass graves area at bottom of cemetery

This was again mentioned and it was agreed that Councillors John Baker, Graham Dyke and Tim Hunter would arrange to meet in the cemetery to look further at the possibility.

12/22 Possible area within cemetery to be allocated for the scattering of cremated remains

The CC advised Councillors that Jo Butterworth had mentioned the possibility of having an area in the cemetery on which to scatter cremated remains and that she thought that the proposed wild flower area may be a possibility. This can be looked at again going forward.

13/22 Oak tree

Councillor Mowl advised that she and Councillor Wignall has access to a small oak tree for planting as part of the Queen's Jubilee celebrations and that they thought it might be appropriate to place it in the cemetery. They felt that it could be planted at the top of the cemetery between the arbour and top gate. Councillors were in full agreement with this and asked them to go ahead and arrange for it to be planted in that area.

14/22 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.

15/22 Cemetery Co-ordinator's Report

The CC advised Councillors that since our last meeting on 27th January there had been eleven interments. Six of these were coffin interments with three new doubles in the Q Section, two re-openings in the N Section and one re-opening in the D Section. There were five cremated remains interments with three new doubles and two re-openings all in the Memorial Garden extension.

James Clarke had laid a sample tarmac area at the top of the cemetery and some Councillors had been to have a look at it.

With regard to the DEFRA consultation, the CC had been advised by Jo Butterworth that the cemetery does not meet the exemption criteria for two reasons :

1. A grave must have at least one metre clearance between the base of the grave and the top of the water table and must not have any standing water in it when dug
2. A grave must not be dug in an area susceptible to groundwater flooding

A complaint had recently been received regarding some wheely bins being full to over-flowing. This particularly applied to the two bins nearest the top gate and the two bins adjacent to the Memorial Garden area. Groundforce were asked to empty them as soon as possible which they did.

Mention was made of possibly having some new bins to replace those that were looking the worse for wear and the CC will see if Shropshire Council can replace these. Councillors Baker, Dyke and Hunter will take a look at possible paving slabs on which to site the bins to try and enhance the look of the cemetery in this regard.

Income received by the CC for the 2021 / 2022 financial year was :

Interments	£10,930.00
Headstones / MV	£ 4,860.00
<u>Total :</u>	<u>£15,790.00</u>

Date of next scheduled meeting (Annual Meeting)

Thursday 26th May at 7.00 p.m. in Ellesmere Town Hall.

End of meeting.

