

ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL CEMETERY WORKING GROUP
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6th October 2022
AT ELLESMERE TOWN HALL

Members Present:

Chair : Graham Dyke

Vice Chair : Tim Hunter had resigned as Councillor prior to tonight's meeting

Councillors : Kay Egerton, Geoff Elner, Paul Goulbourne and Joan Mowl

Jo Butterworth the Ellesmere Town Council Clerk was in attendance at tonight's meeting

Public Participation Session

No members of the public were present this evening.

Apologies Received

Apologies had been received from John Baker, Pat Clubbe, Graham Hutchinson and Anne Wignall.

Councillor Dyke advised the meeting that Pat Clubbe was currently in hospital. The CC will send a get well card to Pat at her home address on behalf of all her friends and colleagues on the CWG.

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

No disclosures were made.

Public Participation Session

Nothing further was discussed.

31/22 Minutes

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 28th July 2022 are confirmed, approved and signed.

32/22 Matters Arising

Wheelie bins

The CC advised Councillors that the new wheelie bins were now in position at the cemetery. Councillor Dyke showed the meeting some stickers he had had made detailing "Ellesmere Cemetery" on them which he will put onto the new bins.

Chapel ramp area

The CC, so far, had only received a quote from Mike Jones to carry out the work. Carl Dulson had advised that he would give a quote but this was still awaited. Councillor Dyke thought that his contractor Mark may also quote for the work and will ask him if he can do so.

Chapel rear window (removal of purple glass)

Mark had now removed this glass

Refurbishment of Hayley Roberts' bench

Mark also had now refurbished this bench

Yew trees, other trees, bushes and vegetation in cemetery

The CC has arranged to meet with Chris Egerton on 19th October in the cemetery to assess the situation, make recommendations and provide a quote. As Councillors know we have relied on Chris previously for various work to be undertaken.

Councillor Egerton wanted to ensure that the yew trees to the right of the main entrance would be clear of both the existing telephone and electric lines in this area.

The CC advised councillors that he had been in contact with Shaun Burkey regarding the branches overhanging the fence adjacent to the Shropshire Council land. Shaun had advised that we could arrange to have these cut and return them over the fence into the Shropshire Council area. Councillor Egerton felt that we should perhaps ask Chris to give a quote to have this work carried out and present this to Shaun Burkey in order to try and encourage him to arrange for his teams to undertake this work. The CC will discuss all of this with Chris when he is at the cemetery.

Possible new bench (Sadie Knight) to be situated on grassed area at bottom of cemetery

The CC advised that he had spoken to Ian Walford regarding the matter and Ian advised that he would speak to Danny Knight to gauge his thoughts. Ian also knew Mike Jones so getting a bench made to match the existing metal ones in the cemetery would not be a problem. The CC will now wait to hear anything further on the matter from the family.

Possible new information boards in cemetery

These information boards would primarily refer to the grassed area at the bottom of the cemetery where many people had been interred over the years both from the old workhouse and beyond. It was felt that possibly Councillor Wignall may be someone who would enjoy looking into this and that the knowledge of Chris Jobson (local historian) could be utilised if he were willing to assist in the matter. Again, it was mentioned that some form of plaque should be erected in this area also. However, Councillors decided to put this proposal in abeyance for the time being.

33/22 Proposed amendment to Cemetery Regulations (10a – kerbstones) for approval

The CC had amended this part of the Regulations and given a draft copy to each of the Councillors present tonight. This amendment was unanimously approved by all present at tonight's meeting and will now form part of the Regulations going forward from tonight.

34/22 Possible grave space external to cemetery (Jo Butterworth to give an overview of the situation)

It was noted that, prior to tonight's meeting, some Councillors had been to have a look at a plot of land in Berwyn View in Ellesmere to assess its possible suitability for new grave space.

Jo Butterworth now gave her report to the meeting. She advised that before considering any land to be used as a cemetery we would need to check if there are any constraints or covenants relating to the land. The most important thing after that is to ensure that an extended Tier 1 land water survey is completed to ensure that the water level does not exceed 2.8 metres. Tier 2 means bore holes will need to be drilled and monitored for ground water for one year. Tier 3 refers to mapping the proposed cemetery land, estimating the pollution that the capacity allowed for will create and any pathways that the pollutants created will follow will need to be assessed. Jo advised that land in our area had hit a lot of impasses due to ecology, archaeology and water levels. Other reports needed (based on looking at the plots the CWG were originally considering were ecological, archaeological, topographical, tree surveys each of which would cost approximately £2,000. An impact assessment would also be required.

Money would also have to be set aside for any planning discharges applied to a planning application and also drainage design which will be expensive.

To employ a company to look at the layout and manage a planning application through the planning stages would cost approximately £4,000 to £5,000 and would depend on the site and its complexity. The technical design stage will cost much more.

Other things to consider - highways access and any other issues / the land will need to be assessed on the risk and vulnerability matrix / whether a new cemetery would require any buildings, toilet facilities or water supply.

Even when the application has been submitted there is no guarantee that planning permission would be approved.

The Environment Agency can only be consulted at the pre-application stage which is a paid for service and they will only consider an application if it has had the Tier 1 with trials pits.

It was approximated that, for either plot of land that the CWG were tentatively considering, the cost for the land and preparing it would be £100,000. Consultancy fees would be approximately £10,000.

35/22 Formulate a plan for future grave space in the cemetery going forward from now

This matter was discussed in some detail by Councillors present. It was agreed that the CC would contact some specialist firms in order to enquire if they might be able to assess the cemetery or assist in any meaningful way. Jo Butterworth said she would give the CC contact details of the firms she was aware of.

36/22 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.

37/22 Cemetery Co-ordinator's Report

The CC advised Councillors that since our last meeting on 28th July there had been four interments. Three were coffin interments with one a new double in the Q Section, one a new single in the M Section and one a re-opening in the P Section. There was one cremated remains interment into a new double plot in the Memorial Garden.

Groundforce are continuing to carry out their grounds maintenance to a high level and the cemetery continues to look in excellent condition.

Councillors Elner and Hunter with Jack Frost and the CC had a look at the feasibility of extending the cemetery into land owned by Shropshire Council at the bottom of the cemetery. Councillor Elner agreed to explore the possibility further with Shropshire Council and report back.

After our last meeting Councillor Wignall had gone ahead by herself and purchased plants and compost which she used to re-fill the two plant pots at the entrance to the cemetery at a cost of £65.95. The CC advised that this purchase now needed to be formally agreed and approved by Councillors. This approval was unanimously agreed by Councillors and thus Jo Butterworth will now re-imburse Councillor Wignall for this amount.

The CC advised that he had chased up Shaun Burkey regarding the vegetation encroaching the cemetery fence and had copied his reply to all Councillors.

Jo Butterworth had been stopped on the street on Tuesday of this week by a member of the public who advised her that Edgertons were still offering kerbstones on graves in the Q Section. Jo asked me to contact Edgertons in this regard and ensure that, if this was the case, it does not happen again.

Income received by the CC for the 2022 / 2023 financial year to date was :

Interments	£4,505.00
Headstones / MV	£1,670.00
<u>Total :</u>	<u>£6,175.00</u>

Date of next scheduled meeting

Thursday 24th November at 7.00 p.m. in Ellesmere Town Hall.

End of meeting.

