

ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL CEMETERY WORKING GROUP  
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2023  
AT ELLESMERE TOWN HALL

**Members Present:**

Chair: Graham Dyke

Councillors: John Baker, Kay Egerton, Paul Goulbourne, Graham Hutchinson  
Joan Mowl, Geoff Elner, Tony Richardson and Anne Wignall

Officers: Jo Butterworth, Town Clerk & Andy Chatting, Cemetery Co-ordinator.

**Public Participation Session.**

No members of the public were present.

**12/23 Welcome.**

New Cemetery Co-ordinator Andy Chatting was welcomed and introduced to all members.

**13/23 Apologies.**

None received.

**14/23 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests.**

No disclosures were made.

**15/23 Grant Dispensations.**

None requested.

**16/23 Minutes.**

It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr G Elner and

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the CWG meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**17/23 Finance.**

**(a) CWG Payments. Noted.**

Chq/Bank Payments made Feb 23						
Payment	Supplier	Description	Net	Vat	Gross	Act
so	Groundforce Ltd	Swan Hill Grounds Maint	1120.83	224.17	1345.00	LGA1972,S.214(6)
Fasterpay	Bowen Son & Watson	Management Fee	71.88	14.38	86.26	LGA1972,S.214(6)
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1192.71</b>	<b>238.55</b>	<b>1431.26</b>	

**(b) New Laptop & External Hard Drive.**

The Clerk reported that a new laptop at a cost of £330 and an External Hard Drive £57.99 had been purchased with for A Chatting as the previous Cemetery Co-ordinator had used his own equipment.

**(c) Tap Repair.**

It was reported to members that the tap at the Cemetery had burst, but that it had been repaired by Bowenson & Watsons plumber, costs will be reported at the next meeting.

### **18/23 Cemetery Report.**

The Clerk informed members that since the previous meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023 there had been 4 new interments and 1 re-opening. Having visited the site she reported that it was likely that the remaining number of new plots amounted to 7. 5 double plots in the Q-Section and 2 singles in the M section.

The upcoming possibility of the closure of the cemetery to new burials was discussed. Whilst it is appreciated that there are approximately 7 plots available for NEW interments the practice of re-openings and interring created remains could continue. Advice is required from SC and ICCM in relation both to the process of closing the cemetery to new burials and the possibility of exhuming old remains (possibly in interments over 100 years old) to free space for new burials.

Advice from Shropshire Council had been received which recommended holding a public meeting to inform residents that the Cemetery will likely be closed for new burials. It also recommended that a letter should be sent to all funeral directors informing them of the situation and also other municipal cemetery providers (e.g. Oswestry/Wem).

It was reported that the new Cemetery Co-ordinator (Mr Andy Chatting) was part way through an induction process and had completed two site visits to the Cemetery. His contact details were now uploaded to the ETC website, and the cemetery noticeboards had been updated.

Members heard that The Probation Service have been completing tasks in the town and that they would be visiting again on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April. The Town Council does not currently have any more work for them 'so the Clerk asked members' if they would like to use their services to tidy up old graves at the Cemetery and remove the ivy from old headstones.

All members were in agreement.

### **19/23 Complaints.**

The Clerk reported that she had received 2 complaints in relation to the cemetery since the last meeting. One in writing and one verbally.

The first related to track marks left by grave-digging machinery at the top of Q section beside the wrought iron bench. It appears that in manoeuvring around the bench over wet soil the gravediggers had crossed part of a grave and left track-marks over the burial.

The second related to a grave where spoil from adjacent plots had twice been moved and exposed an existing grave. Although it was believed that the situation was not likely to re-occur the Cllrs again found this unacceptable.

This prompted a request by the CWG for contact to be made by letter to the relevant Funeral Directors to outline these concerns and ensure that these issues were addressed.

It also prompted suggestions of moving the bench, the Cemetery Co-ordinator will look at this possibility.

### **20/23 Future Agenda Items.**

A plan to be created by the Cemetery Co-ordinator and shared with the members of the CWG.

Future of the Cemetery including how to close it to new burials and its ongoing income and plans to maintain it with more limited income following closure (*KE and GE*).

Meeting Closed 7.40pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

DRAFT