ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL CEMETERY WORKING GROUP
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 28th September 2023
AT Swan Hill Cemetery, Ellesmere.

Members Present:

Chair: P Goulbourne (Chair)

Councillors: Graham Dyke (Vice-Chair) John Baker, John Howard, Anne Wignall, Kay Egerton, Graham Hutchinson, Tony Richardson.

Officers: Jo Butterworth, Town Clerk (TC) & Andy Chatting, (CCO).

CWG 09/23/01 **To receive apologies and reasons for absence.**

Apologies were received from Cllr. G. Elner. (holiday). Noted and approved by A. Wignall and J. Howard.

CWG 09/23/02 **Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**.

No disclosures were made.

CWG 09/23/03 **Grant Dispensations**.

None requested.

CWG 09/23/04 **Minutes.** To read and confirm the minutes of the Cemetery Working Group Meeting held on Monday 20th July 2023.

Moved by Cllr Wignall, seconded by Cllr Howard.

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2023 be signed as a true and accurate record.

CWG 09/23/05 **Finance.**
(a) CWG Payments. To note payments made during July and August 2023.

These were noted.

CWG 09/23/06 **Cemetery Report.** To discuss any items raised in the Cemetery Co-Ordinator's report.

The report was noted. The only proviso being that the CCO mentioned that since the time of the report being written additional payments relating to headstones and memorials had been forthcoming and that their processed results would appear in the next Cemetery Report.

CWG 09/23/07 **Exclusion of certain requests for interment.** To note that ETC decided to exclude burials in new plots to people from outside the parishes forming the Town and Rural areas.

It was noted that this ruling had now been sanctioned and that it had been communicated to the relevant local funeral directors. The ruling had been added to the Regulations and uploaded to the Council's website.

CWG 09/23/08 **Cemetery Regulations.** To note that these had been approved by Council and uploaded to the website. Also, that they had been sent to relevant Funeral Directors.

This was noted.

CWG 09/23/09 **Revised Notice of Internment**-

It was noted that this new document had been sent to relevant local funeral directors.

CWG 09/23/10 **CDS survey report.** To note that the work contained in the CCO report and in the separate document entitled *'Interim report into the 'Empty' Section of the cemetery occupied by 'poor/pauper's graves' or workhouse graves'* suggests that on-going investigation of the records will be required to make a proper assessment of the available land and its potential for use.

This was noted on the understanding that the records and original plans were not wholly complete or entirely accurate but that until the exercise was finalised; no final conclusions could be drawn.

CWG/09/23/11 **Fees.** To discuss the current fee structure in relation to interments, memorials and other associated income derived from the cemetery. As per separate report from the CCO entitled, *'Comparison of local council cemetery fees with Ellesmere's existing tariff.'*

The Cllrs agreed that the Ellesmere Cemetery fees are significantly lower than those of comparable, local municipal cemeteries. The point was made that with an exclusion of out of parish interments the income from that aspect would reduce. Also, that with the cemetery likely to reach capacity at some point, fees relating to burials would cease for NEW interments.

Cllrs agreed that given that as there was still capacity for the interment of NEW cremated remains and that this income stream was likely to be significant and on-going; then these fees needed to rise to secure that income to reflect local, comparable prices.

The Cllrs were content to leave the fees for headstones and memorials as they were; given that they do compare with those of neighbouring authorities.

In relation to NEW (single/double) plots Cllrs suggested that their cost should rise from £435.00 (current) to £600.00.

In relation to additional burial interments Cllrs suggested that their cost should rise from £305.00 (current) to £400.00.

In relation to NEW interments of cremated remains Cllrs suggested that their cost should rise from £210.00 (current) to £500.00.

In relation to additional interments of cremated remains Cllrs suggested that their cost should rise from £105.00 (current) to £200.00.

Cllrs agreed that fees should not become prohibitive but that they needed to be increased to ensure the cemetery's upkeep.

These increases were proposed by Cllr Egerton and seconded by Cllr Dyke.

RESOLVED: The CWG members voted unanimously to move to recommend these changes to full Council in the understanding that no increases would come into being until the 2024/25 financial year.

Separately, but in relation to costs and fees the Cllrs briefly discussed the Cemetery Lodge and its on-going maintenance.

It was requested that the issue of fees be placed as an agenda item every year in September/November.

CWG/09/23/12 **Public meeting and press release.** To note that a press release was drafted and sent out as per the CWG's instruction.

This was noted.

CWG/09/23/13 **CCO appraisal**

This was noted.

CWG 09/23/14 **Future Agenda Items.** To receive any items to be considered for a future agenda.

Items requested to be added were:

- Additional liaison with the owner of proposed new cemetery land.
- Assessment of the boundary hedge between the cemetery and Cremorne Gardens in relation to it needing a trim.
- A request to ensure that repairs to the Chapel ramp and rail (previously authorised) take place.

CWG 09/23/15 **Next Meeting.** Thursday **23rd November** 2023 at 7pm.

Chair……

Date……