Minutes of a Meeting of the

Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group

held at Thornton Cemetery

on Monday, 24th April, 2017 at 10:00 am

PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor W. D. Elliott BA QTS)

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor C. A. Sharp)

Councillors: E. R. Harries (Chairman) J. W. Cole

A. W. Eden

Mr. P. Johnson, Cemetery Supervisor, was also in attendance.

284. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R. Gray, M. P. Rickard, Mrs. Y. G. Southwell and G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons).

285. SITE INSPECTION OF CEMETERY:

Members made a site inspection of the Cemetery.

(a) Chapel Doors:

The Chairman, Councillor E. R. Harries, reminded Members that the Chapel had to be kept permanently locked as the doors could only be opened with great difficulty. This caused distress to those people who wished to sit in the Chapel.

The Clerk said that she had received a quotation in the sum of £500 from a local carpenter for the repair of the Chapel doors.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the quotation

is accepted for the repair of the Chapel doors.

(b) Chapel Roof:

The Chairman advised that he and the Clerk had met with a roofing specialist to inspect the Chapel roof.

The roofing specialist had surveyed the roof both internally and externally.

The specialist believed that the present roof may well be the original Welsh slated roof. Close inspection found many of the slates cracked and there is much nail fatigue that has been repaired by being nailed right through the slate rather than bonding or clipping.

The lead flashings and soakers to the gable parapets are breaking down, particularly where they have been bedded into the sand stone joints.

Ridge tiles are cracked, chipped and broken with mortar beds becoming unstable. There is no underfelt and the slate batten supports that are fixed to rafters set to purlins that in turn are linked to hammer type beam trusses with an internal timber T & G ceiling.

The specialist considered that the condition of the slates, the lack of underfelt and defective lead bedding warrants the need to re-roof the Chapel completely with a written guarantee and a life expectancy of 50 years, for long term.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT quotations are

to be sought for the re-roofing and associated

works of the Chapel roof.

(c) New Roads and Paths:

The Chairman said that he had received very positive comments regarding the new roads and paths.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the information be

received.

(d) Soil:

Mr. P. Johnson referred to the poor quality soil when excavating graves and asked whether he could source better quality soil to backfill.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the Clerk and

Cemetery Supervisor obtain better quality

soil from appropriate suppliers.

(e) Benches:

The Clerk was asked the Council’s policy regarding the provision of benches at the Cemetery.

She replied that it had been agreed that benches were permitted in all sections of the Cemetery, providing there was not a preponderance in any one Section. This policy has been recently amended as it has been agreed not to allow any more benches in L and M Sections until further notice.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT any person wishing

to place a bench in memory of their loved ones

in Sections other than L and M Sections must

request permission in writing.

(f) Pots on Graves:

A Member referred to the Cemetery Rules and Regulations which stated that only one pot could be placed on a grave. He noted the many graves in L Section where there were many graves with two or more pots.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT letters are sent to those

people who have more than one pot on their graves

to ask them to move the pots closer to the headstone

in order that the Cemetery staff can carry out their

grass cutting duties.

(g) Stillborn Section:

The Cemetery Supervisor explained that work had to be carried out on the graves surrounding the Stillborn Section before this Section could be

refurbished.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the information be

received.

286. SITE SAFETY:

The Chairman reported that a lady had fallen at the Cemetery during a weekend when the staff were not present at the Cemetery. The Emergency Services had been called. As the gates were locked there was no vehicular access into the Cemetery so the Paramedics had to trolley the lady through the Cemetery to the Ambulance.

The lady had fallen at the Cemetery previously when the staff had been present and had been advised not to visit the Cemetery at weekends when the staff were not at work. Neither the lady, nor the Emergency Services had complained to the Clerk. A visitor to the Cemetery at the time of the incident had telephoned the Clerk on the Monday to tell her about the unfortunate occurrence. The visitor had suggested that a keysafe be placed on Cemetery House and the Emergency Services advised of the access code.

Members discussed the options available. They were informed that other Cemeteries had their gates locked over the weekend. It was pointed out that no complaints had been received from either the lady who had fallen or the Emergency Services. Furthermore, there is a sign stating that “Visitors Enter the Cemetery at their Own Risk” on the Cemetery noticeboard.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT, as there have

not been any complaints from either the

lady or the Emergency Services, no action

is to be taken but the situation will continue

to be monitored.

287. ACQUISITION OF LAND:

It was RECOMMENDED THAT this issue be

deferred until the next meeting of the

Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition

Group.

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