Minutes of a Meeting of the

Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group

held at Thornton Cemetery

on Thursday, 17th October, 2019 at 10:00 am

PRESENT

Councillor T. J. Davies (Mayor)

Councillor Miss K. F. Gray (Deputy Mayor)

Councillor: C. A. Sharp (Chairman) W. D. Elliott BA QTS

R. D. Gray Mrs L. E. Turner

The Town Clerk was also in attendance.

103. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. Y. G. Southwell and R. Williams.

104. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

The Mayor, Councillor T. J. Davies, declared a personal interest as he is employed by a local Funeral Director. He took no part in the voting on any of the Agenda items discussed at this morning’s meeting.

105. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CEMETERY MAINTENANCE AND LAND ACQUISITION GROUP HELD ON 26TH JUNE, 2019:

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Cemetery

Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group held on the

26th June, 2019, be accepted as a true record

and passed for signature by the Chairman.

106. MATTERS ARISING:

(a) Minute 47 (c) – Levelling of Graves in K Section

The Clerk said that she had received a quotation from a contractor for the levelling of graves in K Section in the sum of £670 plus VAT per row plus soil. The Cemetery Supervisor, Mr. Paul Johnson, had asked whether he could carry out this work.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT:

(i) as there was no budget provision for this work,

Mr. Johnson be instructed to carry out this work

to be completed by the end of January, 2020;

(ii) if the work is not carried out by this time,

then Full Council will be approached to seek funding

to complete this work.

(b) Minute 47 (e) – Schedule of Works

Members discussed a proposed schedule of works for the Cemetery Staff. They felt it was important for the staff to be given the opportunity to communicate their concerns and to be provided with guidelines.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT:

(i) the Chairman of the Cemetery Maintenance and

Land Acquisition Group and the Clerk meet with

the Cemetery Staff on a regular basis;

(ii) the Cemetery Staff will be given priority jobs for

3 months which can be fitted in during interments and inclement weather;

(iii) at the end of the 3 months the priorities will be

reviewed;

(iv) any Member can contact the Clerk or the

Chairman with a suggestion to be incorporated into

the list of priority jobs;

(v) at the end of each quarter a report will be made

and considered by the Cemetery Maintenance and

Land Acquisition Group.

106. INSPECTION OF THE CEMETERY:

(a) Forget-Me-Not Baby Garden

A Member said that she had been disappointed when she visited the Forget-Me-Not Baby Garden for the recent Service to see that a plaque had been placed on the area, when it had been agreed that this was an area for general mourning and contemplation and could become very quickly overcrowded if others followed this practice.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT:

(i) the Clerk is to check the Minutes to see if

anything is recorded regarding this matter;

(ii) the person who left the plaque is asked to

remove it and place a plaque in the Chapel.

(b) Memorials on Graves and Benches

The Clerk confirmed that amendments had been made to the Cemetery Booklet (which is circulated with the deed to the purchaser of the grave) regarding the placing of artefacts on benches and that people who place more than one pot on a grave are responsible for maintaining their grave.

A discussion followed regarding the number of artefacts on some of the graves and benches in the Cemetery.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT:

(i) this situation be investigated further;

(ii) Mr. Johnson be asked to list the number of graves

independently cared for by families or friends.

(c) Public Convenience

The Chairman said that when he had visited the Cemetery recently to speak to the Cemetery Supervisor he had been informed that the ladies toilet had blocked and the drain had to be cleared. The Chairman had noticed that there was no toilet roll in the ladies, but the Cemetery Supervisor had told him that toilet rolls were regularly stolen.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT:

(i) the public convenience be closed on

a trial basis, with a view to closing it

permanently and using the building as

a storage facility;

(ii) if necessary, mourners will be able to use

the toilet in the house.

(d) Flower Oasis Foam

Members discussed the eco-friendliest way to dispose of the surplus flower oasis foam.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT investigations

are to be made as to whether the flower oasis

foam could be passed on to local businesses

and charities.

107. MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME FOR MILFORD HAVEN CEMETERY:

Members discussed the priorities for the Cemetery.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the immediate

priority is to improve Cemetery House.

(a) Cemetery House

It was RECOMMENDED THAT:

(i) a professional cleaning company be employed to

clean the house thoroughly;

(ii) the Clerk, Chairman and Cemetery Staff are to

compile a list of essential work to improve

Cemetery House, some of which the Staff can

do in inclement weather.

(b) Chapel

The Chairman said that when he visited the Chapel recently the Cemetery Supervisor had suggested some improvements that could be made to the Chapel now that the building has a new roof.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the Cemetery

Supervisor prepares a list of improvements

that could be made to the Chapel for Members’ consideration.

108. APPLICATION FOR A NEW BENCH IN “M” SECTION:

The Clerk said that she had received a request for a new bench in “M” Section.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the applicant

be informed that unfortunately there is

no more available space in this Section;

the applicant could however have a bench in

another Section, subject to compliance with this

Council’s policy regarding the installation of

benches.

109. TIMES OF FUNERALS AT MILFORD HAVEN CEMETERY:

The Clerk said that the Cemetery Supervisor had asked whether a policy could be implemented where Funeral Directors arrive at the Cemetery for interments (excluding cremated remains) no later than 2:00 pm in the Winter months of November, December and January, when it got dark early.

The Clerk had spoken to the Cemetery Superintendent and Registrar, Pembrokeshire County Council, who had said that the Pembrokeshire County Council discourages funerals in the afternoon during the Winter quarter. If an interment does take place the last scheduled for a burial is 2:30 pm.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the Milford Haven

Town Council falls in line with the Pembrokeshire

County Council and adopts a policy where the last burial (with the exception of cremated remains)

takes place at 2:30 pm during the months of November, December and January.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_