Minutes of a Meeting of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group

held at the Town Hall

on Thursday, 23rd February 2023 @ 11am

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PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor Miss K. F. Gray)

 Councillors: C. A. Sharp (Chairman)

 W. D. Elliott BA QTS

 Mrs B. J. Fitzgerald, Town Clerk / Financial Officer

 Mr P. Johnson, Cemetery Supervisor

252. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Abbott, T. J. Davies,

B. Phillips and Mrs Y. G. Southwell. Apologies for absence were not received from the Deputy Mayor, Mrs C. Stevens.

253. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

There were no declarations of interest declared.

254. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CEMETERY MAINTENANCE AND LAND ACQUISITION GROUP HELD ON 31st OCTOBER 2022:

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the Minutes of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group held on the 31st October, 2022, be accepted as a true record.

255. MATTERS ARISING:

No matters were raised.

256. CEMETERY WALL:

The Chairman, Councillor C. A. Sharp, referred to the condition of the section of Cemetery Wall which remains un-repaired. The wall is leaning inward raising safety concerns. Members discussed this and it was recommended that the Clerk seeks quotations for the replacement of the wall with a matching steel galvanised low maintenance fence as per the repaired section.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the Clerk seeks quotes for a new wall with galvanised steel fencing.

257. MEMORIAL BOX:

The Town Council has received an email from a member of the public requesting a ‘Memory Box’ is placed at the cemetery to receive ‘letters to Heaven’. It would be somewhere for families and friends to post letters to their loved ones.

A memorial book was also considered to be placed in the chapel. A book would require being in a glass case to prevent access to anyone without permission.

A book could be more difficult with no staff available to open the Chapel at weekends or holidays for the book to be viewed.

It was agreed that the Clerk should seek costs for a Memorial Box, similar to a post box but in white.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT The Town Clerks seeks costs for a Memorial Box to be sited at the cemetery. The exact site to be further discussed at the next meeting.

258. LAND UPDATE:

The Clerk gave an update on:

1. Pre-Planning

The pre-planning application is still with Pembrokeshire County Council to consider. The application was submitted on 1st December and should have been considered within 21 days. The Clerk has contacted PCC who are currently working through applications; they will consider the land application in due course.

1. Landowner

The Landowner has indicated that he has been advised that the original land valuation may have to be reconsidered, due to the time taken to purchase this land and considering the rise in the purchase cost of land.

1. Report on Tier 2 assessment.

The report on the Tier 2 assessment should be due in May, one year from the land assessment being started. There have been no interim reports. It was indicated by Quantum Geotechnic that they may give an indication of their findings in March and this update will be chased by the Clerk next month.

259. CHAPEL RENOVATION:

 The Chapel renovation is due to begin on 27th March. The builder has been asked to supply a quote to bring electricity into the Chapel from the Cemetery Lodge. With electricity in the Chapel both lighting and heating would be possible enabling the Chapel to become a possible meeting room. Once quotes are received the matter will be further discussed at this committee.

260. REMAINING LAND:

The Cemetery Supervisor advised that there are approximately 200 graves left at the cemetery. It is urgent that the remaining land is excavated to establish how many coffins can be buried in each grave (a maximum of 3 coffins is permissible if correct depth of grave is available). The cost of the excavation work is approximately £8,000. It was recommended that this cost is taken out of reserves to have this work carried out in this financial year.

In January 3 new graves were used, there were 3 re-openers and 3 cremated remains. February has had 1 new grave, 1 new re-opener and 1 cremated remains interred.

The hedge outside Cemetery Lodge has been removed and the gas tank area has been gravelled. The area where the hedge had been can be used in the future for cremated remains. Another area near the chapel has also been earmarked for a cremated remains area.

The cemetery staff have levelled 56 graves in K section with 8 ton of topsoil used. This is half of the K section. The levelling of graves will be a rolling programme.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT: The £8,000 excavation cost is taken out of reserves this financial year. The two sections of land, outside cemetery lodge and near the Chapel are used for cremated remains in the future.

261. REGULAR MEETINGS:

Councillors are to be asked to put themselves forward for consideration if they wish to become a member of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group. It is to be made clear that the meetings for this group will take place during the day and generally at the cemetery itself. At the present time meetings will take place every 8 weeks. The next meeting will take place on 24th April at 11am in the Chapel at the Cemetery.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT Councillors are invited to put themselves forward for consideration of membership of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group. Meetings of this group will take place during the day and generally at the cemetery.

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