

MILFORD HAVEN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group
held at Cemetery Lodge
on Monday 24th April 2023 at 5:00 pm

PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor Miss K. F. Gray)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Mrs C. Stevens)

Councillors: C. A. Sharp (Chairman)
D. Abbott T. J. Davies W. D. Elliott BA QTS

Mrs B. J. Fitzgerald, Town Clerk / Financial Officer
P. Johnson, Cemetery Supervisor

344. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs Y. G. Southwell (attending a NLMA Roose Deanery Meeting). Apologies for absence were not received from Councillor B. Phillips.

345. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Councillor T. J. Davies declared a personal and prejudicial interest in all Cemetery matters as he is employed by a local Funeral Director. Councillor Davies has received dispensation from the Monitoring Officer to speak but not vote on this issue at Meetings.

346. MEMBERSHIP OF GROUP:

Councillor Mrs N. Beavis-Morrissey was voted onto the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** Councillor Mrs N. Beavis-Morrissey becomes a member of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group.

347. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CEMETERY MAINTENANCE AND LAND ACQUISITION GROUP HELD ON 13th MARCH 2023:

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Minutes of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group held on the 13th March 2023 be accepted as a true record.

348. MATTERS ARISING:

No matters were raised.

349. CEMETERY COSTS 2023 – 2024 (Report from the Full Council Meeting on 13th March 2023):

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the report be received.

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350. QUOTES FOR POST BOX:

A large vintage outdoor letterbox at £26.95 was chosen to purchase for the 'Letters to Heaven'. The post box is bronze in colour and will be resprayed white in keeping with other memorial post boxes. The position of the post box is to be decided at a later date.

It was **RECOMMENDED THAT** the bronze post box be purchased, subject to being sprayed white.

351. PHOTOGRAPHY AT CEMETERY:

There has recently been concern raised by residents of Milford Haven (via a local community Facebook Group) regarding individuals taking photos of headstones and publishing them online to the "Billion Graves" website.

The Institute of Cemetery and Crematoria Management were contacted for advice. They stated that it is not illegal to take photos of graves that are open to the public. The organisation also advised that individual families could contact the company taking the photographs directly and request the removal of the images. The Town Council cannot do this on residents' behalf. A notice will be placed on the notice board that anyone taking photographs please be respectful and mindful of others.

It was **RECOMMENDED THAT** a notice goes onto the notice board asking anyone taking photographs to be respectful and mindful of other people.

352. LAND UPDATE:

The Clerk received an email from the Planning Department of Pembrokeshire County Council on 24th April. The email stated that in principle the development of new land would be supported by the Local Planning Authority, dependent on the outcome of required details. The Planning Department is aiming to have a report to the Town Council by 12th May 2023.

The land survey being carried out by Quantum Geotechnic is due to be completed by the end of May with a report given to the council soon after.

It was **RECOMMENDED THAT** this information be received.

353. CHAPEL RENOVATION:

The Chairman and other Councillors commented on how good the Chapel looks now after its renovation. The Chapel is to be open Monday to Friday and used as much as possible. Signs are to be put up to 'Mind the Step' as there is a small step up to the pews which needs to be highlighted.

RECOMMENDED THAT:

- (i) the Chapel be open from Monday to Friday, and used as much as possible;

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- (ii) 'Mind the Step' signs be put up, as there is a small step up to the pews which needs to be highlighted.

354. REMAINING LAND EXCAVATION / GRAVES AMOUNT:

It was agreed to have one row of graves prepared in advance. Once this work is being carried out the committee will be invited to take a look. The Clerk is to find out if there are regulations over water seepage into graves and whether it would be advisable to dig 200 graves at one time.

Concern was raised over water pooling in the graves once dug and unused. A discussion took place on whether a digger could be purchased once any new land is bought. This matter will be considered in due course.

It was **RECOMMENDED THAT** one full row of graves be dug with the members of the Committee invited to view the work.

355. PRIORITY WORK AT CEMETERY / CHAPEL:

- (i) Cemetery Wall

A quote from the original builder of the wall and the railings has been received. The quotes amount to £51712.80 which includes VAT of £8618.80. Because of the positioning of this part of the wall, traffic lights and security fencing are also required. Renewal of the pillars are included in this work. The cemetery wall is bowing out and if falls the cost to the Town Council could be extortionate. It was recommended that the cost (£43,094 without VAT) is taken out of reserves as a matter of urgency for the work to be carried out.

- (ii) Cremated Remains Section at Cemetery Lodge

There are two sections of cremated remains planned, the first section can be funded out of the budget with some materials already available at the Cemetery.

- (iii) Electricity Provision for Chapel

This matter can be considered in the future.

It was **RECOMMENDED THAT** the cost for the wall and pillars to be rebuilt with railings atop be taken out of reserves as a matter of urgency.

356. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

A meeting will be held once the report on land investigation and report from Pembrokeshire County Council are received.