



Minutes of the Meeting of the Cemetery Committee
held at the Council Meeting Room, Trane Cemetery, Tonyrefail
at 6.30pm on Tuesday, 31st October 2023

Present: Cllr Glenn Evans (Chair)
Cllr Debra James
Cllr Linda Michel
Cllr Greg Powell
Cllr Amanda Richards

Officers: Ms Jo van Tonder (Clerk & RFO)

1. Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence had been received; all present.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting: 27th June 2023

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 27th June 2023 as a true and accurate record.

4. Cemetery Committee Finance report

5. Complaints, comments and compliments

Members noted no complaints had been received since the last meeting.

The Clerk advised that there had been visitors to the Cemetery office who had complimented the Council on the condition of the Cemetery and helpfulness of the staff.

6. Purchase of land to the North of Trane Cemetery

Members noted the amendments to the Contract that had been agreed at the Full Council meeting earlier in the month.

7. Memorial Bench Policy

To be deferred to the next meeting.

8. Matters pertaining to Remembrance Day

a) Arrangements for Remembrance Day Service

Members were advised of the arrangements in place to ensure the smooth running of the Remembrance Day Service. The Clerk advised that all members of staff would be on site to act as marshals.

The Clerk confirmed there would be at least one keyholder for the office on site in the event of an emergency.

b) Metal posts in situ around War Memorial

Members discussed the existing metal posts that were in a poor state of disrepair.

It was agreed to remove the posts at the earliest opportunity in the first instance, and seek quotations for hot-dipped steel replacement posts for consideration at a later date.

c) Preparation of Cemetery in advance of Remembrance Day

The Clerk outlined the preparatory work that had been undertaken by both the grounds and burials teams in the run up to Remembrance Day. She advised all graves in the lower section of the Cemetery had been tidied of dead flowers, road ways swept and moss scraped.

Members discussed the impending storm and the Clerk confirmed all debris would be cleared before the start of the service.

9. Matters pertaining to Cemetery Maintenance

a) Update on remedial works to Operations block

Members were advised that the contractors commenced work on the roofs of the Operations block on 9th October 2023.

Upon stripping the old felt from the flat roof, the contractors encountered a significant number of bees that had survived the first treatment of the colony in June. Work ceased in this area and the roofers concentrated on the apex roofs with a view to completing the flat roof once the bees had been removed.

The Clerk advised that, despite efforts to cover up the partially exposed roof, ingressing rain water had caused a significant leak within the staff room. Mitigating actions had been taken to limit damage to Council property and staff would not be making use of the room until it could be made safe. The impact of Storm Ciaran on the temporary roof cover would be closely monitored with further risk mitigation measures taken as needed.

b) Recurrence of bees in Operations block

Due to the location of the bee colony, the Clerk had been informed by the pest controllers that two technicians would need to be deployed at a cost of £950 + VAT.

It was noted the Committee had agreed via an electronic show of hands to proceed with the removal at the cost quoted. The Clerk advised members that the technicians had carried out the removal of the bees and honey the previous day.

c) Replacement of strimming equipment

Members were advised that the three strimmers in operation were reaching the end of their economical lives.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To purchase one piece of equipment of specification 535RXT at a cost of approximately £600 + VAT during this financial year and a further two pieces of equipment (1x 535RXT, 1x 545RXT) in financial year 2024/25.

d) Works needed to upper garage shutter doors

Members were advised that the locking mechanism on the shutter door of the upper garage was in need of replacing as were a number of the shutter slat end caps.

It was noted the works were anticipated to cost no more than £200.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To proceed with the repairs to the shutter door at a cost of up to £200.

e) Replacement of push taps with cross head taps

Cllr G Evans suggested the three push taps in the Cemetery could cause problems for some visitors with limited hand strength and/or function.

Members discussed what type of fitting would offer the greatest ease of use and it was agreed to investigate the option of lever taps for consideration.

Other maintenance

Members discussed the moss on the roads, agreeing it needed to be dealt with and considered the possibility of scarification or the use of biological treatments. The Clerk was asked to enquire as to what RCTCBC used in its cemeteries.

In light of the more tempestuous weather experienced of late, it was felt the Council should have an emergency box containing essential materials and equipment that might be needed in the event of an emergency within the Cemetery, such as storm damage to a roof.

It was agreed the angel atop the War Memorial and the monument itself was in need of cleaning with some lettering missing on the tablets.

10. Matters pertaining to Memorial Managements

a) Testing of larger memorials

Members were reminded that there were a number of grave plots, mostly in A and B sections, with large and sometimes ornate memorial stones.

The Clerk reported approximately fifty large memorials had been identified that fell outside of the scope of expertise for in-house testing and so required a specialist to assess the stability of the memorials.

Members considered the quotations provided and it was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To accept the quotation from Memsafe for the testing of larger memorials at Trane Cemetery at a day rate of £350 + VAT.

It was noted that the publication of notice of the testing would need to be done in advance of the scheduled testing.

11. Contemplation Spaces / Willow dome project

Members viewed the prepared map showing the proposed sites for the five willow domes and noted the timetable for plant purchasing, land preparation and completion.

12. Preparation of draft Budget 2024/25

The Clerk asked members to consider what projects, improvements or major works they would like included in the draft budget for 2024/25 and to forward details on to her by mid-December.

13. Date of the next Cemetery inspection

The next Cemetery inspection would take place on 15th November 2023 at 10:30.

14. Date of the next Committee meeting

It was agreed not to hold a meeting in December so the next meeting of the Committee will be on 8th February 2024 at 6:30pm.

Meeting concluded at 8:06pm.