



Minutes of the Meeting of the Cemetery Committee
held at the Council Meeting Room, Trane Cemetery, Tonyrefail
at 6:30pm on Monday, 9th September 2024

Present: Cllr Glenn Evans (Interim Chair)
Cllr Mary Davies
Cllr Amanda Richards

Officers: Ms Jo van Tonder (Clerk & RFO)

In the absence of the Chair, Cllr Glenn Evans was elected to stand in.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Linda Michel.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting: 25th June 2024

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 25th June 2024 as a true and accurate record.

4. Cemetery Committee Finance report

The Clerk presented the Cemetery accounts for the quarters to 30th August 2024.

It was noted the majority of line items were well within budget for the same period. It was also noted that quarter 1 reflected a deficit of just under £4k (income vs expenditure).

5. Complaints, comments and compliments

The Clerk reported there had been a complaint made to Chris Bryant MP regarding the general state of decline of the Cemetery over the last twenty years. In addition, the member of the public had complained about the opening hours.

The Clerk advised she had responded to Mr Bryant's enquiry and invited him and his colleague to visit the Cemetery.

The Clerk outlined some remedial work that had been carried out as a result of the complaint.

Members discussed the current opening hours and agreed no change to the existing timetable was required.

6. Purchase of land to the North of Trane Cemetery

The Clerk advised there had been no update on purchase of the land.

It was agreed to wait until the next Committee meeting in November and, in the absence of further progress on this matter, take a decision to recommend to Full Council a withdrawal from the transaction.

Members discussed other options available to the Council and the Clerk was asked to contact RCTCBC with a view to identifying suitable plots of land.

7. Matters pertaining to Cemetery Maintenance

a) Update on installation of new gates

The Clerk reported that the posts for the new gates had been installed that morning and that the gates would be hung in the near future. It was noted the old wrought iron gates would be removed.

b) Update on remedial works to pillar

The Clerk advised that the contractor was having trouble fitting the work into their schedule as the job required specialist labour and equipment.

It was agreed to make enquiries with other building contractors in an effort to have the works completed.

When asked, the Clerk confirmed that the pillar had been deemed safe and was not at risk of falling.

8. Matters pertaining to Memorial Management

a) Update on cleaning of war memorial

Members were advised that the angel atop the memorial, as well as the memorial stones themselves, had been thoroughly cleaned the previous week. The contractor had advised that regular maintenance of the memorial every one to two years would improve the lustre of the surface.

The Clerk advised that the contractor was still in the process of sourcing a specialist contractor to complete the re-lettering.

9. Matters pertaining to Burial Activities

a) Change of supplier for digger and dumper hire

Members considered the Clerk's report on the proposed switch to a new supplier for the hire of the burial team's mini excavator and dumper.

It was noted that a saving of £253 per month could be achieved on a four-year contract.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To terminate the existing contract for both pieces of machinery with one month's notice.

Resolved: To accept the terms of Pritchard's and enter into a four-year contract for the supply of a 1.8t mini excavator and a 1t dumper on hire at a cost of £1,085 per month.

b) Upcoming exhumations

Members noted there were two exhumations due to take place over the next two months. The first was a full exhumation at the request of the family, the second, a double exhumation of ashes to facilitate further interments.

c) Depth issues

Members were taken through the Clerk's report, highlighting issues that had arisen since the start of the year with regards to a selection of past interments having been dug to the wrong depth.

The Clerk went on to explain how the available space within a grave plot could be utilised for full burial interments and cremated remains.

She reported that, to date this year, eight plots had been found to be incorrectly dug during the period 1995 to 2010 that had required remedial action at a cost to the Council.

Members noted the possible repercussions of this.

The Clerk advised that measures had been put in place to mitigate the risks including providing a longer lead time when booking an interment to allow for digging to begin earlier. Re-openings of full burial plots would initially be hand dug to avoid disturbance of any possible shallow interment.

Members discussed the matter and it was suggested a survey of the ground could help to identify affected plots. The Clerk was asked to look into ground penetrating radar.

10. Date of the next Cemetery inspection

The next Cemetery inspection would take place on 22nd October 2024 at 10:00.

11. Date of the next Committee meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will be on 28th November 2024 at 6:30pm.

Meeting concluded at 7:18 pm.