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CEMETERY & TOWN HALL COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Committee Meeting held on Thursday 6th May April 2021
at
19:00 hrs. Meeting held with remote attendance.

Present

Chairman: Councillor R. Dietrich

Committee Members: Councillors E. Andrews, J. Buczkowski (Ex-officio), I. Emmett, J. Johns,
L. Knight & M. Dale (part only of the meeting)

In Attendance

Officers: Maria Weston (Deputy Town Clerk)

Cllr. C. Snow

3 Members of the Public attended the meeting.

C&TH Chairman's Announcements

72. Note: The Vice-Chair opened the meeting as the Committee did not currently have a Chairman.

The Chairman advised that he had no announcements.

C&TH Apologies for Absence

73. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. K. Haslett (ex-officio)

C&TH Declarations of Interests

74. No Declarations of Interest were received from Councillors or Officers at this point in the meeting.

C&TH Public Participation

75. This agenda item allows members of the public present at the meeting to raise matters which are relevant to the work of the Committee.

Speaker 1/Councillor Snow:

- i) advised that he was in attendance as a member of the Council not as a member of the Committee and wished to speak on agenda item 16 Cemetery Pathways as he has some information which may prove beneficial to members. It was agreed that

Supporting Paper A

consideration of this request would be given at the relevant point of the meeting - when members consider a vote to move into Part II to consider this item. The resolution could incorporate permitting Councillor Snow to remain if the Committee are so minded.

- ii) mentioned a requirement to have Cemetery Maintenance Work Schedules but Councillor Emmett raised a 'point of order' that this should be raised either in Part II of the meeting or within the Members Questions segment (Agenda item 13). This query on procedure was acknowledged and upheld by the Chair.

Speaker 2:

- i) The recording facility has not been switched on - this should be automatic when the meeting starts.

Note: The Meeting Administrator changed the Zoom settings to allow individuals to record.

- ii) Certain documents that have been placed on the Town Council's website do not comply with the three clear days' notice for publication of Council documents. This is restrictive to members of the public who may wish to comment on or question these. Can this be rectified and can the speaker have a reason as to why the Council is continually following bad procedures in not giving members of the public ample time to read through agenda papers.

A response was given that: The Chairman will ask the Town Clerk to look into this matter and to report back.

C&TH Minutes

- 76. The draft minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2021 were considered (Supporting Paper A to the agenda) and it was:

RESOLVED:

That the draft minutes of the Cemetery and Town Hall Committee meeting held on 4th February 2021 are confirmed as a correct record.

C&TH Financial Monitoring

- 77. Consideration was given to the financial reports relating to the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee income, expenditure and commitments, compared to the 2020/21 budget estimates (Supporting Papers - B: Income & Expenditure, C: Financial Graphs – to the agenda)

NOTE:

- i) It was noted that there was a large gap between the last financial report (Income & Expenditure – I&E) as received by the Committee in February (Month 9 generated 28/01/21) and the one currently supplied (Month 12 generated 28/04/21).
- ii) The accompanying report to the I&E statement states the accounts will be 'closed off' on 30th April, month 12 but year end is 31st March and April is month 1.

RESOLVED: To defer approval of the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee's accounts until such time as any inaccuracies are corrected and an accurate financial picture is presented.

C&TH

78. Action List

The Cemetery and Town Hall Action lists (Supporting Paper D to the agenda) were noted.

RESOLVED: That the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee note its Action List as supplied with the following comments:

- Action List point no. 7 03/12/2020 – Cemetery Shed – This had been discussed at the February Committee meeting when it had been agreed that progress of this matter would be reviewed by the Committee at its April meeting which was subsequently cancelled. The Town Clerk has been given delegated authority to arrange for the removal of the shed - It is frustrating that this matter had not been dealt with and that the old shed had not been removed from the Cemetery as had been instructed by the Committee.
- Action List point no. 3 chapel & mortuary doors – What is the progress with the doors?. One set is part done and the other has not been started.

C&TH

79. Committee Work Plan

The Committee's 3 year Forward Work Plan (Supporting Paper E to the agenda) was considered and reviewed. It was agreed that this was a good framework of what the Committee needs to achieve and it was:

RESOLVED: To accept the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee's 3 year Forward Work Plan with the following points noted:

- i) That the Cemetery Soil Spill area is turfed and made presentable with a view to landscaping at a later date. This should be prioritised i.e. moved higher up the list (Year 1);
- ii) Include the removal of the old shed (near historic soil area) to year 1;
- iii) There are a number of troughs where soil has been displaced. Soil Spill area should be fenced appropriately to ensure it is health & safety compliant and presentable.

C&TH

80. Cemetery Update

The Cemetery Update Report (Supporting Paper F to the agenda) was noted and consideration given to the Committees work plan and timetable for remedial work needed within the cemetery.

Discussion ensued.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the cemetery pathways are brought forward on the Committee's 3 year Forward Work Plan, to the first quarter of year one (2021-22);
- ii) That the Committee request that the Policy, Finance & Personnel Committee give consideration to allocating the cemetery rates refund (from the Valuation Office Agency (Gov.Uk) i.e. approximately £16,000.00 as paid over the previous 4/5 years) back to the Cemetery and Town Hall Committee, specifically for its cemetery paths project.

C&TH

81. Memorial Sizes

As the report (Supporting Paper G to the agenda) in relation to memorial and plinth sizes within the cemetery had not be supplied, it was:

RESOLVED: To defer agenda item 10. and consideration of memorial and plinth sizes.

C&TH Fire Safety at the Cemetery

82. Whilst it was acknowledged that an update report (Supporting Paper H to the agenda) had not been supplied in relation to fire safety within the cemetery site, an external contractor had completed a fire risk assessment at the cemetery last year and this could have been presented to members. Concerns regarding fire safety at the cemetery site have been raised with the Town Clerk and this topic was due to be discussed at the April Committee meeting which was cancelled. It was:

RESOLVED: That an extraordinary meeting of the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee be convened to consider all aspects of fire safety concerns including fire risk assessments at the cemetery site and within the Town Hall.

Note:

- i) These concerns are that there is not a comprehensive fire risk assessment or management policy to mitigate any risks - the Council has a duty to do this (members are jointly and severable liable);
- ii) Any documentation relevant to fire safety should be compiled and presented to members for reference and consideration.

Committee Scheduled Meetings

The timetable of scheduled meetings for the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee for the civic year 2021-22 was noted and discussion ensued with regard to future Committee operation/consideration in light of the current government Covid-19 legislation and the way in which the Council will need to operate moving forward . It was:

C&TH 83.

RESOLVED: That a Cemetery & Town Hall Working Group comprised of members of the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee, be created to deal with the matters delegated to the Committee but not decision making. The Working Group is to meet at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee on the Zoom platform and in terms of the schedule of meetings, it is at the discretion of the Committee Chair as to whether meetings are Committee meetings or Working Group Meetings.

Members Questions:

Outdoor Team – Work: There are no work sheets completed either on a daily, weekly or monthly basis which means that Councillors have no way of quantifying what work has been done. This needs to be looked at by this Committee as well as a 'matching exercise' where materials purchased are ticked off against work completed. This will allow proper budgeting and the Committee will have a clearer picture of where money is going and perhaps where money can be saved.

C&TH 84.

A response was given that a new Maintenance Supervisor is due to start soon and as part of this, there will be maintenance schedules. It was further noted that there is only one member of staff employed in the cemetery and that this Committee has no remit for staff management. It is for this Committee to set a strategic position as an overall vision for the Council but how this is done is down to the Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk.

RESOLVED: To exclude the public and press during consideration of:

- agenda Item 15 ii and iii Listed Buildings – Chapel Structural Condition and;
- agenda item 16 Cemetery Pathways –

NB: With the exception of Councillor Snow for agenda 16 only - who shall be permitted to stay whilst this item is considered (to contribute but not vote)

C&TH 85.

on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of its confidential nature (financial, subject to negotiation). The documents relating to these items have been withheld from public circulation and deposit.

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RESOLVED: To suspend the meeting of the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee for a period of 5 minutes to allow for a comfort break.

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RESOLVED: To resume the meeting of the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee.

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RESOLVED: To bring agenda item 16. Cemetery Pathways forward to enable Councillor Snow to speak on this matter.

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RESOLVED: That the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee permit Councillor Snow to be apprised of confidential information relating to agenda item 16. Cemetery Pathways.

Cemetery Pathways

Consideration was given to the:

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- i) Cemetery Pathways update report containing information relating to the cemetery pathways (Supporting paper M to the agenda);
- ii) estimate of potential costs associated with various options for the pathways (Supporting Paper N to the agenda - Confidential for Committee Members only)

Discussion ensued.

RESOLVED: To extend the meeting of the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee for a period of fifteen minutes to enable the remaining agenda items to be considered.

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Discussion continued in relation to the Cemetery Pathways.

RESOLVED: That all information relating to the Cemetery Pathways is collated and that this project is added as an agenda item for the next meeting of the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee with a view to formally agreeing a tender process.

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Note: Councillor Snow left the meeting

Listed Buildings – Chapel Structural Condition

Consideration was given to the:

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- i) update report on the chapel structure (Supporting Paper J to the agenda);
- ii) quotation from a structural engineer to -
 - a) undertake a site visit and inspection of the building;
 - b) compile a subsequent report for the Council's consideration (Supporting Paper K to the agenda - Confidential for Committee Members only);
- iii) information relating to and a quotation for stone masonry, lead works and window repairs to the chapel and mortuary.

Discussion ensued and it was:

RESOLVED: That following consideration by the Cemetery & Town Hall Committee of the list of works required and estimates for the listed buildings (chapel and mortuary) within the cemetery and taking into account possible/further subsidence to the chapel, that:

- i) a letter of thanks should be sent to the Stonemason, lead worker and window expert to thank these parties for their attendance at the cemetery, assessment of the listed buildings and subsequent estimates as supplied. To include a note of advisement that these works will be held in abeyance due to the necessity of initially determining if there is any subsidence to the chapel;
- ii) approve the quotation from Simone Bastone Associates Ltd. (Structural & Civil Engineers) in relation to the chapel as follows:
 1. Site Visit –
Visit to the Chapel to make an inspection of the existing structure, record the form of construction, condition and extent of any structural defects.
 2. Appraisal and Report -
Provide written structural report on the chapel with -
 - a. Description of construction and any structural defects found.
 - b. Conclusions as to the probable causes of any cracking, movement or other defects found.
 - c. Recommendations for further investigations if necessary.
 - d. Recommendations for structural repairs or improvements as required.

At a cost for items 1 and 2 of £750.00 + VAT, inclusive of travelling expenses.

The Meeting closed at 9:15pm.