



**Minutes of the Cemetery Committee**  
**held on a remote basis in accordance with the provisions of**  
**The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020**  
**at 6.30pm on Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021**

Present: Committee Members – Cllrs S Evans (Chair), J Collins, S McMenamin, H Morgan, M Powell and J Roberts  
Non-member Councillors – Cllrs S Knoyle, D Morgan  
Residents x 5

Officers: Ms J van Tonder (RFO)  
Miss J Fisher (Town Clerk)

***The Chair reminded members of the public that recording, photographing, broadcasting or transmitting part or all of the meeting was prohibited. Non-member councillors were reminded their participation in the meeting would be at the discretion of the Chair.***

**1. Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence; all members present.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr S Evans Personal, Treasurer to Glynneath RFC  
Cllr J Roberts Personal, Trustee of Glynneath Silver Band  
Cllr H Morgan Personal, Treasurer to Friends of Glynneath Library

**3. Committee Finance Report**

Members were advised that, from the start of the new financial year, the RFO would provide a finance report at each committee meeting showing YTD expenditure against budget.

**4. Governance**

**a) Site survey and Cemetery map**

The RFO outlined the need, under legislation, for an accurate map of the cemetery site showing the positions of the existing grave plots as well as the space available for future use. Members discussed the benefits of having a clear plan that could be used to ensure efficient use of the site and assist in scheduling the annual memorial inspections.

It was noted that the estimate obtained for the purposes of budget setting exceeded £3,000 and therefore, under the Council's Financial Regulations, three quotes would need to be obtained.

SE proposed, JC seconded and it was

**Resolved:** to obtain three quotations for the surveying and mapping of the Cemetery site for the purposes of acquiring both a digital and hard copy map; to include the definitive routes of the Public Rights of Way that pass through the site.

***The meeting was temporarily suspended to allow members of the public having difficulty accessing the meeting, an opportunity to join. When the meeting resumed, the Chair gave a brief overview of what had already been discussed.***

#### **b) Site inspections**

Members were advised that memorial testing needed to be undertaken by "suitably qualified" persons and that this could include councillors, grounds staff and officers. The inspection testing schedule would be undertaken on a rolling 3-year cycle.

It was agreed to defer the scheduling of the testing until after the site map had been produced and the necessary training completed.

#### **c) Cemetery Regulations**

Members were advised the RFO had adapted the most recent set of Neath Port Talbot CBC's Cemetery Regulations, draft circulated with the agenda.

As the Council was not yet in a position to implement the draft Regulations, the RFO suggested a review of current practice be conducted to highlight where action was required in order to bring practice in line with the Regulations.

SE proposed, MP seconded and it was

**Resolved:** to defer recommending the draft Regulations until such time as the RFO had been able to carry out this piece of work.

#### **d) Cemetery Schedule of Fees**

The Chair reported a recent informal comparison of fees he had undertaken showed that the Council's fee structure compared well with those of other local facilities. SE agreed to circulate the results with members for interest.

Following discussion, it was

**Resolved:** to retain the current fee structure and review at the end of the year as part of the budget setting preparations.

#### **e) Statutory Registers**

Members noted the status report of the Council's Registers that are required to be kept, contained within the agenda report.

The RFO was asked about specialist software available for the management of Cemetery data. It was agreed the Council could manage with a series of spreadsheets as the volume of entries was relatively small.

### **5. Health & Safety**

#### **a) Footpaths**

Members discussed the slippery and steep slope to the footpath at the upper end of the Cemetery. The inclusion of some visually sensitive warning signs were considered.

It was agreed the true line of the Public Right of Way in that location was unclear. Members asked that the mapping survey should include a determination of the definitive routes of any PRow's.

**Action:** SE to arrange site visit with available committee members and groundsmen to consider options for improving the safety in that area.

## **6. Maintenance and Equipment**

### **a) Grant funding for equipment**

Members noted the RFO would be working with the Finance Committee on a future grant funding application for equipment.

It was agreed that an audit of all Council-owned maintenance equipment across both the Cemetery and Welfare Park was imperative in order to ascertain the true need.

**Action:** SE to arrange audit with groundsmen

### **b) Cemetery Drive drainage works**

The Chair confirmed the recent works had improved drainage. There were still a couple of small blockages further up that were being rectified.

Cllr Simon Knoyle would be asked to complete a final snag list.

### **c) Lane alongside Cemetery Drive**

Members were advised that the potholes along the unadopted lane running alongside Cemetery Drive were as a result of water flowing down the lane and not from the drainage works.

Members were advised that water was seeping from the Cemetery on to the lane. SE suggested a pipe could be installed to divert the water into the nearest drain. As a resident directly affected by this, **Cllr S Evans declared an interest** and left the room to enable members to discuss this suggestion further.

***7:33pm – Cllr S Evans left the meeting and Cllr H Morgan took over the Chair.***

The RFO asked that further consideration of this item be deferred to allow her to seek professional advice.

***7:35pm – Cllr S Evans returned to the meeting and took back the Chair.***

### **d) Other maintenance items**

#### Mole hills

Members discussed the increased prevalence of mole hills on and around grave plots, and the distress this was causing visitors to the Cemetery. The Council had been advised to knock the soil off the top of the protrusions in order to identify the areas most badly affected.

Following discussion it was

**Resolved:** to commission Europest to undertake the removal of the moles at an estimated cost of between £250 and £300 and at the earliest opportunity. RFO to obtain the necessary authorisations.

The Council had been advised that the groundsmen could be trained to perform the mole removal works and thus save the Council further expenditure of this nature in the future.

**Action:** RFO to look into options for the delivery of this specialist training

### Cemetery Toilets

The Chair confirmed the toilets were open to the public on the days and during the hours that there was a staff presence at the site.

The general condition of the toilets was discussed and it was agreed there was room for improvement.

## **7. Other matters for recommendation to Full Council**

### **a) Staff and Councillor training schedule**

Members agreed the urgent need for appropriate training for those responsible for the management of the Cemetery.

SE proposed, SM seconded and it was

**Resolved:** to accept the training schedule as contained within the agenda report and begin the training process.

## **8. Date of next meeting**

Following discussion, it was agreed to schedule monthly meetings for the next three months and review frequency thereafter.

Dates of next meetings: 7 April, 5 May and 2 June 2021

***The Chairman thanked members of the public for attending the meeting and reiterated the Council's commitment to remedying long-standing issues at the Cemetery.***

The meeting concluded 7:45pm.