

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CEMETERY COMMITTEE, HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, KING'S HOUSE, THETFORD, ON
TUESDAY, 11TH OCTOBER 2011, STARTING AT 3 P.M.

Present:

Councillor R G Kybird, Chairman
The Mayor, Councillor D G Mortimer

Councillors:

M G Spencer

D W R Sully

283/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

284/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs P P Quadling and B J Skull.

285/11 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 24th August 2011, as received by the Council on 27th September 2011 under minute 242/11(b), be confirmed as a true record and signed/initialled by the Chairman.

286/11 CEMETERY EXTENSION: LANDSCAPING AND LAYOUT

Provisional conclusions reached in the course of the Committee's previous discussion at its last meeting were now departed from, given the degree of urgency now arising from space shortage.

At the last meeting, the first point of agreement had been to have the first burials on the new site occupy the area from the London Road boundary end of the site up to the start of the hedge marking the boundary with the existing site.

The Committee was now in agreement that there should be a reversion to the proposal set out in the approved initial planning application, with the first burials to occupy the area at the top end of the new area, close to said hedge. As a (then-unenvisaged) further step, the Committee was now minded to remove the top one-third of the hedge's length without delay, thereby seeking to integrate the top area of the new site into the existing. In several decades' time (assuming no change to established burial practice during that period and a continued demand for new spaces) the then Town Council might contemplate removing a further section of hedge, thereby integrating an additional section in response to that demand.

The Committee did not want to delay the commissioning of hedge removal by a contractor, wanting any commission to include the planting of one hedge to run along the common boundary with the Sweyn Close Redevelopment and

another to cross the entire site at a point to be agreed. The point of the latter would be to provide mourners with a well-defined area and not an open expanse of unoccupied land all the way down to London Road.

The Council would be urged to support this approach at its meeting the following week.

The immediate road surfacing requirement would now be different to that contemplated at the last meeting. Whilst the need for a spine road running the entire length of the Extension Site was now looked upon as less of an immediate priority, there had to be a route provided for hearses to gain access to the new site from the top end of the existing spine road. What the Committee envisaged was surfacing the ribbon of land at the foot of 'P' Plot (this provided currently a ready means of pedestrian/works vehicle access onto the new site) and continue surfacing in a straight line to the midpoint of the new site, then - taking a 90-degree right turn - continue surfacing to an agreed point part-way down the site, ending in a surfaced hammerhead for hearses to turn around on.

RECOMMENDED that the Council support this changed approach, now agreed by the Committee, and approve the commissioning of the hedge-related and surfacing work, as set out above, subject to competitive prices being obtained by officers.

Whilst the focus of the discussion had been on the need to provide an area without delay for non-denominational burials, the Committee was mindful of the need to have priority areas identified within an overall plan for the new site for the following: children's burials, Muslim burials (the Town Clerk was awaiting a response from the Muslim Council of Britain to his recent letter, seeking guidance regarding space provision) and cremated remains.

RECOMMENDED that the Council authorise the Committee to commission an overall site plan, meeting the requirements of the planning authority (Breckland Council).

287/11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Not yet agreed.

Chairman