

A MEETING OF THE CEMETERY COMMITTEE,
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KINGS HOUSE, THETFORD
ON THURSDAY 18th JULY 2019, STARTING AT 10.000 A.M.

Present:

The Mayor – Councillor B J Canham

Councillors:

D M Crawford

D Hodgkinson

J Hollis

Officers in attendance:

Roz Barnett

Deputy Town Clerk

Nick Thompson

Cemetery Officer

Chris Crimmen

Committee Secretary

Minutes

190/19 DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY/NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None.

191/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

192/19 MINUTES

- **RESOLVED: The minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 18th April 2019, to be received by the Council on 29th April 2019 to be confirmed as a true record and signed/initialled by the Committee Chairman.**
- **RESOLVED: The minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 8th July 2019, to be received by the Council on 30th July 2019 be confirmed as a true record and signed/initialled by the Committee Chairman.**

193/19 ARCHITECTS QUOTES FOR IMPROVEMENTS

It was agreed that this item should be taken below the line due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed

194/19 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS CEMETERY

The Cemetery Officer reported on completed tasks:

- Barrels installed and planted.
- Due to an extra donation of plants new flower beds have been completed.
- Wildlife log piles and habitats created.
- Bird baths and feeders installed - this has received good feedback from visitors.
- The Chapel has had new brassware and flowers donated and this has improved the chapel.

Ongoing tasks:

- Previously failed memorials are being re-staked.
- Gravel is being placed around the bases of the avenue of cherry trees.
- Remove and re-site conifers and replace with rambling roses.
- Dig new pond for wildlife site surrounded with a fence.

Councillors had a site meeting to discuss proposals for wildlife improvements and the Countryside Officer had produced plans based on the discussions. In

addition the Cemetery Officer, the Works Team Manager and Lee Barber from the British Trust for Ornithology had a meeting on site and had produced an ideas sheet for developments at the cemetery.

It was noted that there could be controversy about the reduction in mowing. It was agreed that the message needed to be very clear that the proposals are about improving biodiversity. The committee discussed site signage and a launch event to collect ideas from the public.

After a discussion Councillor D Crawford proposed and Councillor D Hodgkinson seconded:

RESOLVED:

That the Committee agreed the outline plans and ideas for development in Appendix A and that the Countryside Officer, Cllr Hodgkinson, and Cllr Crawford work on implementing the detail of the plans ensuring that this will be cost neutral as far as possible.

That the proposals be launched at the Wild About Thetford Event on the 16th of August.

Councillors also agreed to remove and re-site conifers and replace with rambling roses at the entrance to the chapel.

195/19 OPTIONS FOR MEMORIAL WALL AND PLAQUES

Councillors J Hollis and B Canham had investigated options for the memorial wall and plaques talking to neighbouring Council on schemes they are operation. It was agreed that the cemetery team and councillors would visit West Suffolk and prepare a business plan for full council to request funding from the capital reserves.

196/19 BURIAL MONITORING

The Civic Officer had issued a report stating that burials since the last meeting the cumulative total each month has been just under 70 internments. This was noted by the Committee.

197/19 CEMETERY POLICY RULES AND REGULATIONS

The committee were asked to consider a complete review of the cemetery rules and regulations and it was agreed that the committee would form a Task and Finish group. This group will meet by the end of August to agree a draft of the revised Cemetery Rules and Regulations to present to the next Cemetery Committee meeting.

198/19 MEMORIAL MANAGEMENT

As previously reported in this meeting Memorial testing will continue on P plot.

199/19 CEMETERY BUDGET

The Deputy Town Clerk had tabled the up to date budget which was noted by the Committee.

200/19 CORRESPONDENCE & COMPLAINTS

The correspondence below was noted by Councillors.

CORRESPONDENCE TO THE COUNCIL – TO BE NOTED AND CONSIDERED			
RESIDENTS/CUSTOMERS			
1.	01/07/2019	Email from a member of the public to ask the Council to allow a non-parishioner burial to take place in London Road Cemetery	Cemetery meeting held on 08/07/2019 to discuss the matter
2.	24/6/2019	BTO have asked for a key to the cemetery so they can ring birds early in the morning	Committee agreed to access
3.	12/07/2019	Letter from resident asking about wildlife provisions and revisions to the cemetery rules and regulation	Deputy Clerk responded.

None.

Chairman.

ACTION POINT	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
A Task & Finish group to discuss and recommend a way forward to update the Cemetery Rules & Regulations.	Members of Committee and Officer	Next Cemetery meeting
To take the Environmental Improvement to the Cemetery to a public consultation.	Deputy Town Clerk and Countryside Officer	ASAP
To find out more detail on options for the memorial wall and plaques	Councillors B Canham & J Hollis	ASAP

Appendix A

Proposals for Wildlife friendly management of the Cemetery

- Nest boxes to be installed 3 metres up on any of the larger trees. Mainly with a 32mm hole (for most small birds) but some could also have some 45mm for starlings. Metal reinforcement of holes would help protect against squirrel predation.
- A mix of different grass lengths would improve the habitats for birds, butterflies and other wildlife: e.g. starlings and blackbirds like short grass, finches prefer areas of longer grass. New wildflower meadows will therefore be established by reduced mowing frequency in the areas shown on the **map on the next page**. These will be allowed to flower and set seed, with the Works Team and Countryside & Planning Officer monitoring when to resume mowing. Pathways and edges will remain mown in these areas. Signage will explain to the public the reasons for the changes.
- A pond to be installed which will be extremely beneficial for insect-eating birds, amphibians, dragonflies and other wildlife.
- A flower bed of plants providing seeds, such as teasels and sunflowers, to be included near the pond as part of a memorial garden.
- Planting more fruit trees around the site would be useful (nectar, pollen). Species (to be planted during autumn-winter) to include crab apple, wild pear and rowan.
- A hedge to be planted inside the metal railing fence bordering Fulmerstone Close. Species could include hawthorn and blackthorn (helpful for site security too). Other borders with only fences could also have hedges planted along them.
- Climbers such as ivy and honeysuckle to be planted on small frames of trellises, to provide dense areas for bird nesting (which the site is currently short of).
- Owl pellets (feeding remains) have already been found in the cemetery. A Tawny Owl box to go up near the chapel / large lime tree. Areas of long grass nearby will provide them with suitable hunting grounds.
- One or more swift boxes to be installed on the chapel.

- Log piles under the existing hedges to be installed as a good resource for insect-eating birds.

Please see overleaf for map of wildflower meadow areas.

