



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL



Notes Cemeteries and Appeals Working Group

Time and date

9.30 am on Thursday 24th September, 2020

Place

Held remotely by Zoom

Attendees:

Members: Councillors Carole Cockburn (Lead Member), David Attfield, Alan Earwaker, John "Scotty" Fraser, Kika Mirylees and John Neale

Officers: Iain McCready, Iain Lynch, Adrienne Owen

1. Apologies for Absence

POINTS	ACTION
Apologies were received from Cllr Evans (ex officio).	

2. Declarations of Interest

POINTS	ACTION
None received.	

3. Notes of the previous meeting.

POINTS	ACTION
The notes of the meeting held on the 11 th June 2020 were agreed.	

4. Cemetery Regulations

POINTS	ACTION
The Working Group noted the progress the Officers have made implementing the current regulations	

5. Maintenance and Interments within the Cemeteries

POINTS	ACTION
<p>The Working Group were informed of the current grounds maintenance program and noted the hard work of the Outside Workforce in keeping the Cemeteries looking good throughout the year.</p> <p>Officers showed the Working Group two designs (wooden and metal) for the proposed perimeter fence situated between West Street Cemetery and the Allotment site. The Working group thought that the wooden fence would look better and agreed to progress.</p> <p>The Working Group noted that the interments for the year had been steady.</p> <p>Officers spoke to the Working Group about the fees for the memorial tablet in the Garden of Reflection. The Working Group asked for a review of Fees and Charges at the next Meeting.</p>	<p>Recommendation - Officers to progress the installation of a wooden fence at West Street Cemetery.</p> <p>Officers to prepare a financial report to be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting.</p>

6. Recent Appeals

POINTS	ACTION
<p>The Working Group discussed the appeal and were minded to refuse the application/appeal in view of the fact that the request had previously been made and turned down and that as circumstances had not changed there was no reason to change the Regulations or decision. However, the Working Group would offer the family the opportunity to make the appeal in person to the Working Group at the next meeting.</p>	<p>Cllr Cockburn to write to the family and explain the decision.</p>

7. Hale Chapels

POINTS	ACTION
<p>The Working Group discussed the future of the chapels after reviewing the report from Officers on the history of proposed works over the last few years. The Working Group noted the options considered :</p> <p>A series of options were pursued in conjunction with the Hale Chapels Trust (created by the Town Council with the Hale History Project and local community). These included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Conversion into residential. A scheme was prepared but the use was not permitted as within 400m of the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area. 2) Conversion into a Hall that could be used by Hale School as extra classrooms. The School Governors decided this was not an option for them 3) Conversion into workshops for the University for the Creative Arts. This would not work financially for them and the scheme did not proceed. 4) Creation of a community hall. This scheme was progressed to the design and planning application stage and funding sought. The initial estimates (excluding the provision of services to the site) had been 	<p>Recommendation-</p>

<p>in the region of £300,000. However, when the detailed design was prepared the costs were in the region of £650,000 - £700,000. The costs are likely to have increased since then.</p> <p>A series of applications were made for funding to local trusts, landfill schemes and the Heritage Lottery but all were unsuccessful. The feedback on the two applications to the Heritage lottery was that the community and cost-benefit threshold was not met.</p> <p>The Working Group noted that huge efforts had been made to engage the local community over the past eight years and to find a solution to save the buildings but the original view of the Buildings Preservation Trust (in 2012) that the buildings are too far gone to save seems to be correct given the high costs needed.</p> <p>The Working Group discussed the final options noting that whilst the lower walls were sound the tops of the buildings were unsound which was why the unsightly fencing around the chapels had to be retained. There was a general view of the Working Group that the only solution was to demolish both buildings. Consideration was given to retaining part of the walls of the left chapel and creating a landscaped garden for the enjoyment of visitors.</p> <p>It was agreed to hold a discussion with John Ely, Geoff Wallis and other members of the Hale Chapels Trust on the way forward and invite designs for the area.</p>	
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8. Items for future meetings

POINTS	ACTION
Officers informed the Working Group that they had met with the Columbaria company and were waiting for drawings showing designs of Columbaria set adjacent to the Garden of Reflection in West Street Cemetery. Officers to present the quotation and drawings at the next meeting.	Officers to progress.

9. Date of the next meeting

POINTS	ACTION
The next scheduled meeting will be on the 19 th November 2020.	

The meeting ended at 11.30 am

Notes written by Iain.McCready@farnham.gov.uk