

# Atherstone Town Council

## Cemetery Working Group Meeting

**Venue:** Boardroom, NWBC

**Date and Time:** Wednesday, 18th December 2024, 7pm

### Working Group Members:

- In attendance - Town Councillors Chambers (Chair), Barnett, Bishop, Braithwaite.
- Cllr Jones ([apologies](#))

### Supported by:

- Deputy Clerk: Sally Oldham

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## AGENDA with Discussion Notes

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### 1. 2024-25 Budget Position for Cemetery

To consider spending to date and the remaining budget until 31st March 2025.

#### Supporting documents:

- Current Financial papers

[This was noted and referred to as part of the following discussions.](#)

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### 2. Review of Cemetery Regulations - last reviewed 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021

- Review and agree next review date

[The Cemetery Regulations were noted and agreed with a suggested review date of every 3 years or as required. There was a discussion regarding cost and provision of benches in the cemetery \(P32 Item 13\) but it was considered this wording was still applicable.](#)

#### Supporting documents:

- Copy of Current Regulations 2021-2023

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### 3. Review of Memorial Regulations – last reviewed 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021

- Review and agree next review date

[The Memorial Regulations were noted and agreed with a suggested review date of every 3 years or as required.](#)

#### Supporting documents:

- Copy of Current Regulations 2021-2023
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#### **4. Law Commission's Consultation Paper on Burial and Cremation (deadline 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025).**

- Agree who will work on responses – delegated to working group from Full Council October 2024. 66 questions in total and we do not have to answer all of them.

It was agreed that not all of the questions applied to ATC but the most relevant ones would be addressed.

Cllr Braithwaite offered to draft responses where possible for:

- Chapter 2 Approaches to regulating burial grounds.
- Chapter 3 maintenance and burial specifications
- Chapter 6 Grave re-use and reclamation
- Chapter 13 The treatment of ashes after collection from crematoria.

The Deputy Clerk offered to draft responses where possible for:

- About You
- Chapter 4 Burial rights and memorials
- Chapter 5 Record Keeping
- Chapter 7 Closure and re-opening of burial grounds
- Chapter 8 Exhumation and building on disused burial grounds
- Chapter 9 Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Deputy Clerk would collate a full response document and circulate it prior to submitting

#### **Supporting Documents:**

- Download information here [Burial and Cremation - Law Commission](#)
- ICCM Law Commission Webinar – attended by the Deputy Clerk, Cllr Bishop and Cllr Chambers – see feedback to questions.
- [Law Commission consultation on burial and cremation - Ministry of Justice - Citizen Space](#) Consultation Questions.

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#### **5. HR Goulds – update on tree planting project (4 trees) at Cemetery**

Four locations were identified following a visit by Goulds to the cemetery. The group were happy to recommend this advice to full council.

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#### **6. Feedback from Cemetery Training Courses attended by the Deputy Clerk;**

- **SLCC: 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024** – Cemetery Matters: Looking to the Future.

**Supporting Document:** Course presentation

- **SLCC: 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024** – Cemetery and Churchyard Safety and Memorialisation.

**Supporting Document:** Course presentation

These were noted.

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#### **7. Update from Cemetery Extension Consultants – DJOGS.**

**Supporting Document:** Email report due from Consultant.

Cllr Bishop, as chair of Full Council, agreed to call an Extraordinary Meeting as early as possible in the New Year to progress the planning application and points raised by DJOGS with associated costings. (Meeting called for 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025)

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## 8. 2025-26 Draft Budget for Cemetery

To consider proposed draft budget for Cemetery for the next financial year April 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 and any financial implications arising from this discussion process.

- Cemetery Fees Review for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025
- Consider treatment of mixed in / out of parish - on one deed - fee.
- “Buying back” plots discussion

The fee structure was assessed line by line and a draft is to be produced for recommending to Full Council.

Discussions considered several points when arriving at the proposed new fees:

- 1) Alignment of fees charged with other local authorities.
- 2) Ensuring cost of staff time was adequately reflected in the fee.
- 3) Also to reduce administration costs the pricing structure was simplified.
- 4) Balance of sustainable v maintenance costs – not to be subsidised from the precept.

The Deputy Clerk was asked to estimate what the supply, maintenance and administration costs would be for a single memorial bench for 10 years in order to check the figure against the proposed £1200.

### Estimate:

Supply of bench and delivery – 2025 Price quoted 6.1.25 =	total £375*
First Installation costs including plaque and initial treatment =	total £75
Estimate £30 per bench average every two years for 10 years =	total £150
Administration cost for 10 years @ 30 mins every 2 years=	total £50
<u>Total</u>	<u>total £650</u>

Proposed In Parish Fee for one family – (out of parish x3 fee)                      total £1200

\*Note: Life expectancy of bench is 15years+

### **Supporting documents:**

- Forecasted Finance papers
- Other Authorities fees for comparison – Tamworth, Nuneaton, Coleshill, Mancetter
- Spreadsheet Comparing ATC fees to other authorities

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## 9. Summary of all recommendations from this working group to go to January 2025 Full Council.

- a) To approve the current Cemetery Regulations and review every 3 years or as required.
- b) To approve the current Memorial Regulations and review every 3 years or as required.
- c) To note the submission to the Law Commission’s Consultation Paper on Burial and Cremation - as delegated to the Working Group
- d) To approve the recommended locations for planting the four trees at the cemetery.
- e) To note the Extraordinary Council Meeting called for 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025 to address agenda item 7- Cemetery Extension.
- f) To approve the revised Cemetery Fees for April 2025 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

- g) To investigate the use of S106 money towards the Cemetery Extension
  - h) To request at budget setting that consideration should be given to setting aside or building up considerable reserves for the Cemetery extension.
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