

DEREHAM TOWN COUNCIL

23rd July 2024

At a meeting of the **Social & Welfare Committee** held at the Assembly Rooms on **Tuesday 23rd July 2024** upon the rising of the Markets & Buildings Committee.

Present: Councillors H King (Chairman), S Green, H Clarke, L Monument and R O'Callaghan.

Also present: Councillors P Duigan and Z Flint, Town Clerk A Needham and Town Council Officer

1. **To receive apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Coleman.

2. **Declaration of Interest.**

Councillor Z Flint declared an interest in point 8 of the Agenda.

3. **To consider new bench at old cemetery.**

The Committee recommended that a powder coated galvanized steel bench with three arm rests be purchased and installed in Plot 14 at the old cemetery.

4. **To consider further wilding measures in Old Cemetery.**

A Needham, Town Clerk, provided an update to the Committee advising that seeding some areas in the old cemetery with wild flowers took place last year and has, to date, been mostly well received. As well as being aesthetically pleasing for much of the year, there has been a noticeable number of bumble bees working the flowers. This can continue to expand this year, still in the old part of the cemetery.

A Needham went on to say that within the old cemetery there are many old kerbed graves with gravel infill. Currently these are sprayed off once or twice a year so that they do not become 'unsightly'. In the same way as the areas around the headstones were seeded, that would normally be sprayed off, he said it might be possible to do the something similar within some kerbed graves. The gravelled kerbed graves might be a good habitat for sedums to grow. If a dense stand of sedums can be established, it might be possible that they will be sufficiently dense to prevent other plants getting established and looking 'unsightly'

While some people may not think of sedum as being as visually interesting as other plants, they are flowering plants so provide some interest to pollinators, and would be more beneficial than plain gravel.

The Committee recommended that the Council expand on the wilding measures already taken within the old cemetery by purchasing sedum to cover two old kerbed graves which have a gravel infill, with a view to transplanting to other old & unvisited kerbed graves once established. This should prevent weeds from growing within these kerbed areas and

therefore the need to spray off with weed killer. The cost of the sedum would be around £50.

5. To review communications following a burial.

The Committee recommended making the below amendments to the letter template that is currently sent out following a burial:

- To reword the first paragraph which introduces the rules & regulations booklet, to make it clear it is to ensure the good condition of the cemetery, rather than focussing on the word rules, which can seem negative.
- In the second paragraph, second sentence, remove 'Firstly' and start the sentence with 'Please note that in order to keep the cemetery looking pleasant, and for ease of mowing...'
- In the third paragraph, add 's' after 'occasion', and change 'excavate' to 'prepare a new'
- In the fourth paragraph, start with 'Please note that'. At the end of the second sentence, add 'and therefore advise that memorial stones are not installed until after this period.'

6. Updates on Council Workstreams.

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update on the following:

- Refurbishment of Cemetery Lodge
- New ashes area in the old cemetery

7. Exclusion of Press and public.

Proposed by Councillor H King it was agreed to pass a resolution to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting on the grounds that the Business to be transacted is confidential and publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.

8. To discuss artificial grass on graves.

The Clerk made the Committee aware that one grave owner with artificial grass has been contacted they were happy to remove the artificial grass. This grave has now been successfully reseeded to grass. Councillors were happy for the owners of the final grave with artificial grass to be contacted and gently and sympathetically encouraged to remove the artificial grass so that grass seed can be sown.

Chairman