

DEREHAM TOWN COUNCIL

25th March 2025

At a meeting of the **Social & Welfare Committee** held at the Memorial Hall on **Tuesday 25th March 2025** upon the rising of the Planning Committee meeting.

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

Also present: Councillors P Duigan, Z Flint, P Morton and R Jamieson, Town Clerk A Needham and Deputy Town Clerk J Barron.

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor H Clarke.

2. **Declaration of Interest.**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **To consider charges for Saturday Burial.**

The fees charged for Saturday interments relate back to when Council staff dug graves and there was a need for a member of staff to be on site to collect the paperwork from the undertakers. The grave digging and filling in is now arranged by the undertakers and since Covid the paperwork no longer needs to be handed over in person. The Council needs to register an interment within 96 hours of taking place. Where there is a Saturday burial of a body, officers do like to log-in and register immediately after the burial, just for of peace of mind.

The current fee for Saturday interment is the normal fee plus 50%.

The committee recommended that the additional fee of 50% for Saturday and bank holiday burials be removed and replaced by an additional admin fee of £50.

Times interments can take place.

Similar to the above, times of interments were restricted to give time for graves to be dug and filled in in daylight and within the normal working day. With the undertakers arranging the grave digging and filling in, there is no longer a need to restrict the time of interments.

The committee recommended that the only limitation should be that the filling in of a grave should be completed before darkness falls.
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Interments on public holidays.

The current rules do not permit interments on public holidays. There are certain religions that require interments to take place within 24 hours of a death or as soon as possible after a death. Having rules preventing interment on particular days, without good reason, may be considered discriminatory against certain religions. Clearly if somebody dies on a Friday evening nothing can be arranged until Monday morning, but that is

normal office arrangements. For any other occasion, there is no reason why an interment could not take on a public holiday or a Sunday provided arrangements are made prior to that.

The committee recommended that interments be allowed to take place on bank holidays with the exception of Christmas day.

The committee recommended that when conducting a funeral undertakers should always be mindful of others and be sensitive and respectful. If funerals are not sensitive and respectful to others, then the Council reserves the right to exclude those undertakers from conducting future funerals in Dereham.

Chairman