

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE	21 NOVEMBER 2019	AGENDA ITEM: 6
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Report prepared by Angie Price – Town Clerk

CEMETERIES

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee with an update on matters pertaining to the cemetery.

Detailed Information

1. Memorial Safety

Members will recall previously discussing the issue of Memorial Safety within the cemetery, and also those who attended the Site Visit on 19 September will be aware of the need to undertake a Memorial Safety programme.

The Memorial Safety programme is due to start the week commencing 25 November 2019 and ahead of this, to ensure the council meets its statutory requirements, signs have been located around the cemetery to advise that this will be taking place. Also a press release has been sent to all the local papers and placed on all of the Council's social media platforms.

On completion of the first phase a report will be provided to the committee notifying them of the results, and efforts will be made via letters and press releases etc. to contact family members where memorials are found to be unsafe.

The law does not allow for councils to make repairs to Memorials unless they are owned by the council. When a memorial is purchased and placed onto a grave it is the property of the purchaser and therefore their responsibility to maintain and ensure it is kept in a good and safe condition. Notices will be placed on any headstones deemed to be of a serious nature, the laying down of memorial stones will be as a last resort and will only happen if no-one comes forward to undertake the repairs or if the memorial is deemed to be so unsafe it is a hazard to life and limb.

2. Benches

The Cemetery Groundsman has been asked to prepare a report on the condition of all the benches in the cemetery using a "Traffic Light" system to identify which are in a good state of repair, need repairing or need replacing. The Deputy Clerk has been asked to contact the owners of benches where

possible to ask them to carry out maintenance to their benches or alternatively provide permission to the Council to carry out maintenance on their behalf.

Following the site visit to the cemetery on 19 September it was agreed that the Council should, in future, purchase benches for installation in the cemetery, which will provide for more people to have plaques on benches without saturating the cemetery with too many benches. It was agreed that benches made from recycled material would be purchased, the cost of such benches is in the region of £260-£300 per bench, dependent on how many are purchased and this will be discussed later in the agenda item "Items for consideration in the 2020/21 budget".

3. Outcome of Parish Meeting

At the meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee held on 19 September 2019 it was agreed that the following items would be discussed at the Parish Meeting in October.

- i. Dogs being permitted in the cemetery – This was raised with the two members of public present in the room and was agreed that dogs should be permitted in the cemetery so long as they are kept on a lead. It was also agreed that the Council would arrange for Dog Poo Bags to be available at the cemetery and potentially a Dog Poo Bin.
- ii. Cemetery Fees and Charges – The Town Clerk had prepared a draft fees and charges (yet to be considered by the committee and Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee) for the 2020/21 financial year. Those present were advised that the Clerk was suggesting that the Council give consideration to introducing an "out-of-parish" fee for those wishing to be buried in Ledbury but not living in Ledbury at the time of their passing. Ledbury residents pay towards the upkeep of the cemetery via their council tax, however someone who lives outside of Ledbury does not, but currently pays the same to be buried in the cemetery as those living in Ledbury and paying Council Tax. Therefore, it was proposed that the "out-of-parish" fee would be introduced as a suggestion in the forthcoming budget.

iii. Introduction of a Scatter Garden

The Town Clerk put forward a suggestion that a scatter garden be introduced into Ledbury Cemetery and showed a picture of a possible design for this. It was suggested that when considering the new fees and charges for 2020/21 an additional sum could be added to the cost of the Exclusive Right of Burial which could be used for cemetery improvements and that the scatter garden could be progressed via this route.

Recommendation

1. That Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee receive and note the above report, noting that the Memorial Safety programme will commence in late November.
2. That Members approve dogs being permitted into the cemetery in the future, provided that they are kept on a lead at all times and that owners clean up after them.
3. That Dog Poo bags and bin are provided for use in the cemetery.
4. That the draft fees and charges be considered as part of the 2020/21 budget setting process, taking into account the introduction of an "out-of-parish" fee and the inclusion of an additional one-off cost when purchasing the Exclusive Right of Burial to a plot in the cemetery and that this cost be ring-fenced as income for cemetery improvements such as the introduction of a scatter garden.

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE	21 NOVEMBER 2019	AGENDA ITEM: 6.5
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Report prepared by Tracey Smith – Deputy Clerk

USE OF CHAPEL

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to pass on to Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee a request received by Mrs Hillary Jones at Ledbury Funeral Services.

Detailed Information

As detailed in Mrs Jones' email attached, this was requested a few years ago and agreed although during my five years here at Ledbury Town Council, the Chapel has not been used for this purpose since Mrs Jones' original request.

The Chapel is unfortunately not used often for services and the Groundsman does not open it the public during the winter months.

(For Members' information: Please note that the Cemetery Mortuary is currently rented and used exclusively by The Co-operative Group Funeral Services.)

Recommendation

1. That Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee receive and note the above and email attached from Mrs Jones.
2. That Members consider allowing Ledbury Funeral Services to use our Chapel facility when available (all appointments to be made in advance as is usual practice for all Cemetery services).

Tracey Smith

From: LedburyTC Admin2
Sent: 14 November 2019 14:07
To: Tracey Smith
Subject: FW: Use of Cemetery Chapel

For the Attention of Tracey Smith- Deputy Town Clerk, Ledbury Town Council

Dear Tracey

Following on from discussions we have had during the last few months, I now would like to formally request that Town Council consider use of the Cemetery Chapel by Ledbury Funeral Services.

The purpose of its use would be a facility to enable visits by bereaved families to come and pay their respects to a loved one prior to a funeral.

This was agreed some years ago with the then Town Clerk but I'm afraid no paperwork has yet come to light. At that time, and I would envisage this still to be the case, there would be no deceased persons kept overnight in the chapel.

Family visits would be conducted during convenient daytime appointments with prior arrangements with the Town Council office. Most visits are usually no more than half an hour, but of course there is time allowed for the coffin to be taken to the chapel and then returned to our mortuary facility.

We would of course be expecting a charge for use of the facility.

Please let me know if you require any further information at this stage to process the request further.

Yours sincerely

Hilary Jones
for Ledbury Funeral Services

This email has been scanned for spam & viruses. If you believe this email should have been stopped by our filters, to report it.

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE	21 NOVEMBER 2019	AGENDA ITEM: 6.4
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Report prepared by Tracey Smith – Deputy Clerk

DAMAGE TO MEMORIAL

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee with information regarding a damaged memorial in the Cemetery which was reported to us by a relative.

Detailed Information

I met with the relative, Groundsman and Jon Dawson (Stonemason) at the grave side to discuss the damage to the memorial.

Report received from Terry Dold (attached).

Photographs of the damage (attached)

Correspondence received from relative (attached).

The relative's correspondence was requested following our meeting at the Cemetery and is an accurate overview of the circumstances.

The memorial has definite scratches which was more than likely caused by machinery used at the Cemetery; this damage would have caused the memorial to weaken.

Recommendation

1. That Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee receive and note the above.
2. That Members consider all documents and the request made by the relative within the correspondence attached.

Grave Report

The First time I became aware that the said grave was damaged was back in May of this year when i was mowing near by the mower picked up some green stones that were in the grass next to it so i picked up the stones and put them back in the grave and tryed to Fix it best i could unfortunately it was bumped again some time after but this time the there was a ~~bit~~ of the grave stone had broken OFF and there was not much i could do other than try to make it look good as best posible the grave is in an area that sees a lot of Foot trafic and i think was bumped while Someone was walking Possed i have had to straighten this grave up a Few times since and now it is in need of replaceng or repairing it now.

Report from: Terry Dald, Groundsman





132



134



134



135



136



137

Dear Sirs,

My brother visited my sisters grave at Leebury Cometary to put flowers and saw it had considerable damage and was partly off the plinth and had broken pieces of the gravestone. I went and saw for myself & informed Leebury Town Council of my findings.

After a meeting at the Council Offices & subsequent meeting at my sisters grave with Tracy (Town Council) the grave maintenance gentleman & Mr John Dawson (stonemason) it was confirmed by Jon Dawson that the grave had definitely been hit by a mechanical item, due to an impact point and various other factors which had caused this damage.

My sisters grave is small, she was only 4 months old and has 4 solid edges on a plinth & has been there since 1966 when my parents chose the stone for her.

My brother & I would appreciate a response and wish to have our sisters grave totally back in one piece & feel this should be actioned totally by Leebury Town Council.

Yours sincerely