



Arnside Parish Council

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on Monday 28th July 2014 at 7.15pm in Arnside Cemetery Chapel
Present

Geoff Dracup (GD) – Vice Chair

Councillors

Michel Hartley (MH)

Peter Smillie (PS)

George Taylor (GT)

Also present: The Deputy Clerk Anne-Marie Cade (AMC), 22 members of the public

14-15/95	<p>Introduction In the absence of the Chair, Cllr Dracup Chaired the meeting. As introduction he asked that the meeting be carried out in an orderly and dignified fashion in respect for the people of Arnside and the sensitivity of the topic. He asked the Deputy Clerk to take the Council through the items on the agenda.</p>	ACTION
14-15/96	<p>Apologies for Absence The Deputy Clerk reported that absent members had indicated their intention to resign but that with four members attending, the Council was quorate and thus the meeting could continue legally.</p>	
14-15/97	<p>Declaration of interests There were no declarations of interest</p>	
14-15/98	<p>Resignation of the Cemetery Custodian It was RESOLVED that with regret the Council receive the resignation of David Brockbank the Cemetery Custodian and that as the Proper Officer of the Council the Deputy Clerk take up these duties until the post is filled</p>	
14-15/99	<p>Report from the Cemetery Custodian concerning public graves and infants It was RESOLVED that a report be received from the former Cemetery Custodian concerning the use of public graves for infants and the consequences of that practice and also that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unmarked public graves are not reused • a memorial to the children placed in unmarked graves be erected and arrangements made for a dedication service • a further review of the cemetery fees to allow a nominal charge for the Exclusive Right of Burial of children to enable parents to purchase a private grave and if they wish erect a memorial stone be carried out by the Deputy Clerk with advice from SLDC bereavement officer • an area of the cemetery be dedicated to the future interment of children at a reduced cost • literature be provided to ensure parents understand the consequences of choosing a free public grave 	<p>AMC</p> <p>AMC</p>
14-15/100	<p>Public statement concerning the Cemetery It was RESOLVED that the following statement be approved and issued by the Council</p>	

	<p>When the new cemetery custodian took up their post in February they began examining the burial records and found a number of anomalies. They informed Council Members and worked closely with the member responsible for the cemetery to undertake a lengthy and in-depth investigation. Members attended a briefing session and supported ongoing work to resolve the issues.</p> <p>The custodian and responsible member have worked closely and sensitively with the families involved and a report outlining progress on the issues was brought to the Council in June. This report was confidential and discussed outside the public part of the meeting as it was not appropriate to discuss individual cases in public. The decisions from this are recorded in the minutes of that meeting.</p> <p>More recently it has become apparent that Arnside Cemetery like many others has a history of using public graves for infants. This occurs when no fee is charged for a grave plot, however as a consequence no memorial can be raised and the space could be reused. A report concerning this issue at Arnside has been produced by the Custodian and brought to this meeting. The Council has decided to make a nominal charge for infant burial so that graves are “privately” owned, to raise a memorial to infants already buried and to set aside a new area for infant burials.</p> <p>Since the issues came to light the Council has sought professional advice and support from the Bereavement Services Officer at the South Lakeland District Council and joined the national Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management (ICCM). The Council has, and is continuing to following all professional recommendations to make sure that current and future processes and record keeping at the cemetery fully comply with regulations. It will continue to investigate any future matters that arise and to manage these sensitively with the families or individuals concerned.</p> <p>Any further enquiries should be made to the Deputy Clerk at arnsidepc@stjohnscross.plus.com</p>	
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The meeting closed at 7:25pm

Chair:

Date: