

HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Cllr M S Kennedy**

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Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

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23rd August 2019

To: Members of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee

Cllrs: S Thorne (Chair), J Carroll, Y Farrell, M S Kennedy, R Morgan, and T Welch.

(Copies to other Councillors for information)

Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to a Meeting of the **New Cemetery Sub-Committee** to be held at the Council Offices, Peel Street on **2nd September 2019** at **6.00pm**.

Clare Evans
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

2. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

In accordance with approved Standing Orders 1(e)-1(l) Members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

The total period of time designated for public participation at a meeting shall not exceed 15 minutes and an individual member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

3. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Under the Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4) and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Members are required to declare any interests which are not currently entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of any such interest.

Members are invited to submit any requests for Dispensations for consideration.

3. MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th July 2019.

Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th July 2019.

4. COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON NEW CEMETERY PROVISION

At the previous meeting it was requested to issue a press release to explain to residents the current situation and ask for any suggestions and ideas. This was duly completed. One social media comment was received which suggested that CCTV should be installed in the existing cemetery and in car parks to help prevent anti-social behaviour.

Members are requested to note that CBC have been approached again regarding new cemetery provision by a ward councillor. As a result the Assets Department have confirmed again that CBC have no suitable land available and Leisure Services have confirmed that a new cemetery is included in the Open Space Strategy as a need but that no land has been identified for this provision.

Recommendation: To note the report.

5. GOING FORWARDS

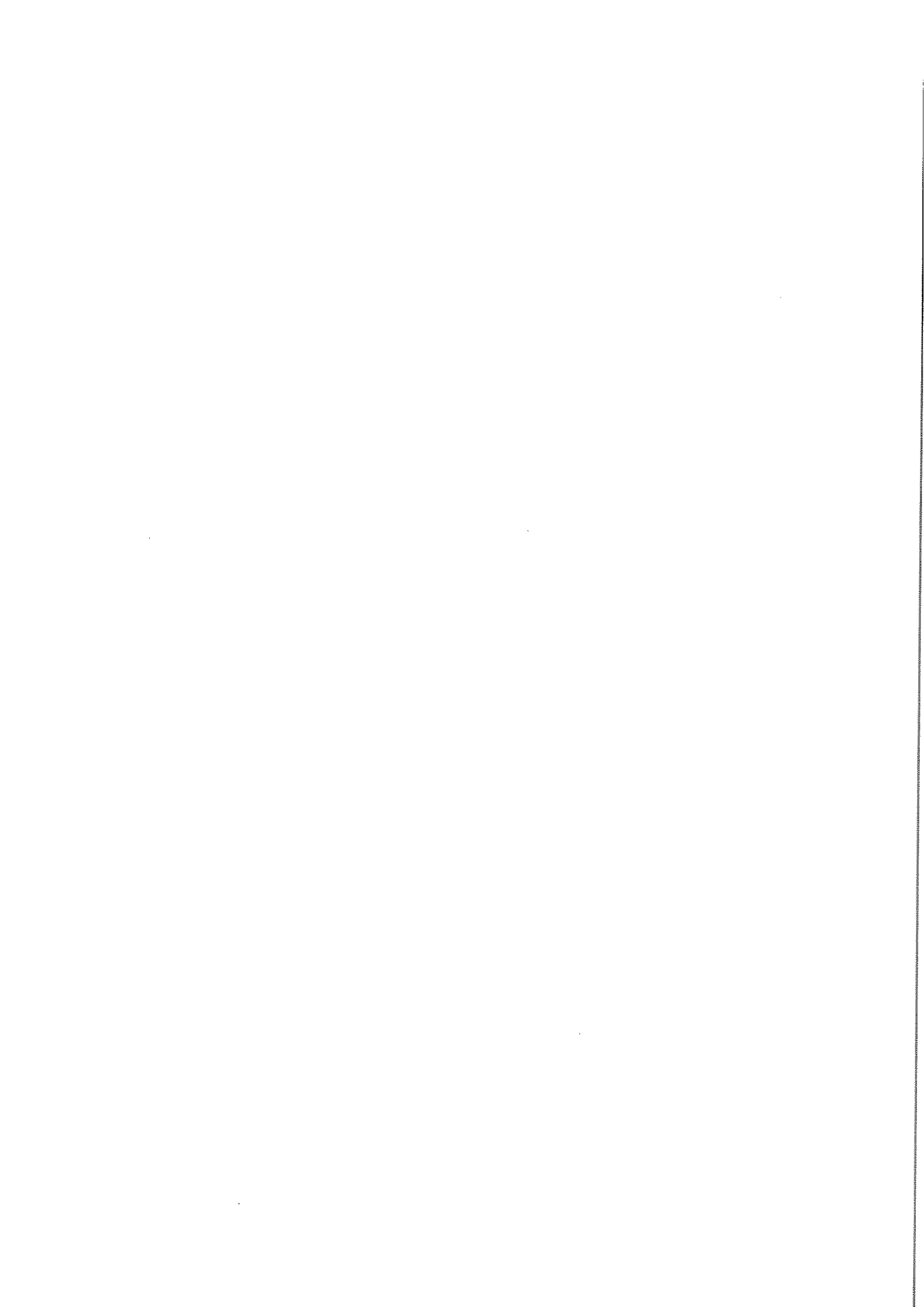
Members are invited to consider options going forwards. The following points are made:

- The current space within the existing cemetery off Cemetery Road continues to reduce, it is estimated that 9 body burial spaces remain and around 20 ashes spaces remain;
- In relation to continued burial provision, the work of the council over the last 3 years or so especially has been following 2 strands:

The first being the design and development of the remaining space within the current cemetery. Infrastructure work on the new area within the existing cemetery is due to commence on 19th August 2019 and should complete late September / early October. Memorialisation features are in the process of being considered. It is estimated that this area will be available for use December / January.

The second strand relates to the ongoing search for new cemetery land. The New Cemetery Sub Committee have considered a variety of sites but for various reasons, largely geological and ownership reasons, these have proved unsuitable.

- HRTC has pressed for cemetery provision during the local plan development process, through the consideration of major planning applications, through the review of the Open Space Strategy and through the Neighbourhood Plan process.
- Land has not been allocated for a new cemetery within the strategic development sites;
- Land outside of the strategic development sites has a 'hope' value attached to it;



**Houghton Regis Town Council
New Cemetery Sub-Committee
8th July 2019 at 6.00pm**

Present:	Cllrs:	S Thorne J Carroll Y Farrell M S Kennedy T Welch K Wattingham	Chair Substitution
	Officers:	Clare Evans Louise Senior	Town Clerk Head of Democratic Services
	Public:	0	
Apologies:	Cllrs:	R Morgan	

NC106 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Morgan (Cllr Wattingham substituted).

NC107 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

NC108 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

NC109 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the New Cemetery Sub-committee meeting held on the 28th May 2019.

Resolved: To confirm the Minutes of the New Cemetery Sub-committee meeting held on the 28th May 2019 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

NC110 CEMETERY REQUIREMENTS

At the New Cemetery Sub Committee meeting on 23rd April 2019 the following resolution was passed:

That no further speculative enquiries were to be undertaken until officers have determined the likely size and type of facility required, using data regarding expected mortality rates for the town and types of funerals expected for a period of up to 50 years. And that this data information be reported at the July meeting.

Members were provided with the following advice:

Size

The current electorate of Houghton Regis was approximately 12,500, this equated to a population of approximately 18,700.

By 2030/35 it was anticipated that the population may have doubled.

Ideal cemetery duration

It was requested by the Sub-committee that it was desirable for a new cemetery to offer interment options for at least a 50-year period.

Facilities within a cemetery

These should include: ashes plots, burial plots, internal circulation infrastructure, car parking, water and refuse area.

Ashes / burial ratio

Based on a population of 18,700 there were approximately 50 interments per year. This was broken down into new body grave burials, grave re-openers for a second interment, new ashes and ashes re-openers. Taken as an average over the last 3 years, there were 64 ashes interments and 86 burials. This gave an interment ratio of 2 ashes to 3 burials (approx). Considering the population growth, it was estimated that by 2030/35 there would be the demand for approximately 100 interments per year in Houghton Regis. This would equate to 33 ashes interments and 66 burial interments.

Area

Generally, the geology of Houghton Regis was more favourable in the north of the parish. However, it was likely that any area within the parish would be required to provide environmental mitigation measures due to the geology of the area and the stringent requirements of the Environment Agency.

Land requirements

The first acre of a cemetery could typically offer 700 interment spaces as ancillary facilities also needed to be provided. Subsequent acres could offer approximately 800 interment spaces per acre. Based on a 50-year requirement the council would be looking ideally for a 2.5-acre site. This equated to around 2 full size football pitches or a bit larger than the size of the current cemetery including the old section.

Development costs were approximately £120,000 per acre plus land costs. Development costs could be phased to an extent over the lifespan of the cemetery.

Land costs started at around £26,000 / acre for paddock land with the likelihood of non-commercial development. Land costs increased from this figure depending of the development value of the land.

Members discussed alternative choices the residents of Houghton Regis were choosing, as based on a population of 18700 and a death rate of 1% it would be expected that 187 people passed away in HR, however HRTC were only interring 50 per annum, therefore families were either scattering ashes, keeping ashes in their homes, or interring out of town.

A query was raised regarding the required size of land. The Town Clerk was to clarify and feedback to members.

Members were advised that minor repurposing of a small area within the current cemetery would release space giving several more plots, but this was outside of the remit of this sub-committee.

Members suggested that a press release be made to explain to residents the current situation and ask for any suggestions and ideas.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.40pm

Dated this 2nd day of September 2019

Chairman

DRAFT

