

**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Cllr Tracey McMahon**

Tel: 01582 708540

Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

E-mail: [info@houghtonregis.org.uk](mailto:info@houghtonregis.org.uk)

6<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**To: Members of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee**

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

(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 virtually on **16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 6.00pm.**

This meeting is being held virtually via Microsoft Teams. If members of the public would like to attend, please click on the meeting link below and follow the online instructions:

[MEETING LINK<sup>1</sup>](#)

[MEETING GUIDANCE](#)

To assist in the smooth running of the meeting please refer and adhere to the Council's Virtual Meeting Guidance. To view the Virtual Meeting Guidance please click on the link above.

**Clare Evans**  
**Town Clerk**

**THIS MEETING MAY BE  
RECORDED<sup>2</sup>**

### **AGENDA**

This meeting is being held virtually due to Covid-19. To assist in the smooth running of the meeting please refer and adhere to the Council's Virtual Meeting Guidance. Virtual Meeting Guidance can be found on the Houghton Regis Town Council website.

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<sup>1</sup> If you require a meeting link emailed to you, please contact the Head of Democratic Services at [louise.senior@houghtonregis.org.uk](mailto:louise.senior@houghtonregis.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Phones and other equipment may be used to film, audio record, tweet or blog from this meeting by an individual Council member or a member of the public. No part of the meeting room is exempt from public filming unless the meeting resolves to go into exempt session.

*The use of images or recordings arising from this is not under the Council's control.*



**Houghton Regis Town Council  
New Cemetery Sub-Committee  
14<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 6.00pm**

Present: HRTC S Thorne Chair  
Cllrs: J Carroll  
Y Farrell  
R Morgan

CBC Cllr: S Goodchild

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk  
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Also present: Cllr: D Jones

Absent: Cllr: M S Kennedy

**NC116 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS**

None.

**NC117 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

None.

**NC118 MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the New Cemetery Working Group meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019.

**Resolved: To confirm the Minutes of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019. and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

**NC119 CURRENT BURIAL PROVISION**

At the last mtg of the New Cemetery Sub Committee (2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019) it was requested that the next meeting be held when there were approximately 2 body burial spaces left and that CBC ward councillors be invited to attend.

At the time of preparing the agenda there were 3 body burial spaces left. On this basis this meeting had been called. It was confirmed that CBC ward councillors had been invited to this meeting.

The completion of body burial spaces would be advised through the council's website and social media and regular funeral directors would be directly contacted and advised.

Members raised concerns that residents of Houghton Regis would choose to be buried in their town, and not have to go to a neighbouring town, which would incur a higher cost.

Members discussed the areas and pieces of land that had been suggested and investigated and had proved to be unsuitable.

Members were advised no land provision had been made within HRN1 or HRN2 and were advised that Central Bedfordshire Council had advised Houghton Regis Town Council that there was no land available for cemetery use. The s106 agreements for HRN1 and HRN2 included, amongst other facilities, provision for funding for a new cemetery should there be an uplift in development values.

Members requested that Central Bedfordshire Council be approached again, formally by letter, in the hope that highlighting the number of available burial spaces remaining, and the possible ramifications of Covid 19, would demand a collective and more proactive approach.

Members requested that Councillor Hamill be contacted for his input, as was unable to attend this virtual meeting due to technical difficulties.

## **NC120 FUTURE MEETINGS**

At the meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019 the following was recorded:

*Members were requested to provide guidance / instruction on future agenda items.  
Members agreed a more prudent use of council resource to only convene further meetings of this Sub Committee should a piece of land come forwards or a situation or circumstance change which would assist in this project.*

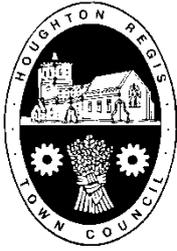
It was confirmed that officers would continue to bring forward any possibilities, as and when they occurred, for consideration and it was requested that members, especially those on the HRTC Planning Committee, highlight to officers any possibilities.

Members requested a meeting date be set for the end of September and Central Bedfordshire Council councillors be invited to co-opt onto the Sub-Committee.

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.38pm**

**Dated this     day of**

**Chairman**



**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Title:** NEW CEMETERY PROVISION

**Purpose of the Report:** To provide members with options for site investigations for land for a new cemetery.

**Contact Officer:** Clare Evans, Town Clerk

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## 1. RECOMMENDATION

1. To commission T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment for Land at the end of Grendall Lane and, provided this is supportive, to proceed with the monitoring work and an updated T3 report;
2. To fund the investigations from EMR 348, Cemetery provision

## 2. BACKGROUND

Following on from the meeting of the New Cemetery Sub Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020, the Clerk has been working with CBC officers on considering options and possibilities for new burial provision with Houghton Regis. This report updates members on this work and also present options for next steps.

## 3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

CBC have completed a desk top survey of the town and have identified 3 land possibilities:

1. Windsor Drive
2. Land off Woodside Link / Frogmore Rd
3. Land at end of Grendall Lane

CBC have sought preliminary advice from Cemetery Development Services (CDS) on these sites and this is summarised in Appendix A. This table has been expanded to include comments on other localised conditions i.e. access, visual amenity, neighbouring properties / land uses etc

As members can see the more favourable site is the Land at the end of Grendall Lane. Most significantly this site is less unsuitable in terms of ecology. Equally it has good access and a cemetery use would not be detrimental to neighbouring land uses.

CBC officers have sought on behalf of HRTC advice on this option from colleagues in Highways, Archaeology, Ecology and Planning, their comments are as follows:

#### *Planning*

*The site would form part of the Houghton Regis North allocation, so, once the Local Plan is adopted, the site would be removed from the Green Belt. As such, the principle would likely be acceptable in the future.*

*There is a water treatment facility neighbouring the site, so there may be odour concerns. If this is pursued, then discussions should be held with Anglian Water to establish their position. Would this present an appropriate character/feel for a cemetery site?*

*A recent application (20/00511) for a modular extension to an office block, directly adjoining the site to the north, didn't identify any significant issues from consultees.*

#### *Highways*

*An acceptable access could be achieved via the existing road connecting to Thorn Road. Any access from Watling Street would be heavily discouraged.*

The feedback was caveated somewhat by officers advising that without a scheme to comment on there is limited advice that could be provided, and that the above was an informal view only.

## **4. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

To progress to next steps the Council need to commission a Tier 2 survey for Grendall Lane and, subject to this being favourable, to commission a Tier 3 survey. The costs are as follows:

T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment with flux model	£4,900
Installation of groundwater monitoring wells (cost dependent on depth to groundwater)	£5,000 - £10,000
Baseline groundwater sampling visit	£1,350
12 months of groundwater monitoring at £350 per visit	£4,200
Production of updated T3 report	£1,200
	Total £16,650-£21,650

This is a considerable amount of budget to spend should members decide not to proceed with this site due to reasons outside of matters which may be highlighted by the T2 and T3 reports, such as:

- Localised conditions i.e. access, visual amenity, neighbouring properties / land uses etc

- Located out of central town area
- Compatibility with surrounding land uses namely CBC Highways Depot and Household Tidy Tip
- Unknown access by public transport

Members should be confident of this site in relation to the above matters before commissioning the T2 and T3 reports.

Should members decide not to proceed with Grendall Lane, 2 other options have been presented and members may like to consider these as alternatives.

These options are the result of a considerable amount of investigation. Should members decide not to proceed with any option, it is felt unlikely that any other land would come forward for consideration.

## 5. COUNCIL VISION

### Aspirations

- A1 To develop and enhance **partnerships** between HRTC, stakeholders, partners, community groups and residents
- A2 To effectively and proactively **represent** our community
- A4 To develop a new **cemetery**
- A5 To ensure the **council** is fit for purpose and efficient in its delivery of services

### Objective 4: Our community

- 4.1 To create or enhance community facilities which support community development and cohesion

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

### Corporate Implications

- There are no corporate implications arising from the recommendations.

### Legal Implications

- There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations

### Financial Implications

- Budget \_ EMR 348 Cemetery provision, total available £78,908

### Risk Implications

- Reputation – this is a considerable amount of budget to spend should members decide not to proceed with this site due to reasons outside of matters which may be highlighted by the T2 and T3 reports

### Equalities Implications

Houghton Regis Town Council has a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine

protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This project / issue does not discriminate.

**Press Contact**

The decision relating to this agenda item will be communicated to the press, via the website and social media.

**7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

The support of CBC in this matter has been greatly appreciated and has enabled more detailed consideration of sites such that this report presents a land option to members to consider. Although the land is considered a high risk due to its ecology, on balance it is felt that it is a possibility. Members are encouraged to consider this site as a whole in terms of its location, accessibility, and surrounding land uses before commissioning further investigations into this site.

**8. APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: Summary of Key Issues from CDS Initial Site Assessment**

**Summary of Key Issues from CDS Initial Site Assessment**

NB see CDS report for all detailed findings

High Risk Findings	Detail and other Issues	Investigations	Costs
<b>Land at Windsor Drive: High Risk</b>			
		<p>T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment</p> <p>G/water Monitoring &amp; Sampling</p> <p>Subsequent sampling</p> <p>T3 Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment with flux model - £4900.00</li> <li>•Installation of groundwater monitoring wells - £5000.00 - £10000.00 (depending on depth to groundwater)</li> <li>•Baseline groundwater sampling visit - £1350.00</li> <li>•12 months of groundwater monitoring - £350.00 per visit – 12*350 = £4200.00</li> <li>•Production of updated T3 report- £1200.00 exc VAT</li> </ul> <p>Total Min. £16,650 Total Max. £21,650</p>
Geology	Chalk bedrock, lack of superficial deposits		
Groundwater	Poss shallow as 1.5m bgl		
River adj to site	30m non burial buffer required on northern edge		

bedrock aquafer	Underlying Principle aquafer		
Burial numbers	4.2ha site - 30-40/year Moderate Risk		
<p>Localised conditions i.e. access, visual amenity, neighbouring properties / land uses etc  Sited in amongst a residential area  Land locally used for informal recreation  Good road network  Vehicular access required  A cemetery use would only form part of the site and would need to be well integrated into the site as a whole  Anticipated local opposition due to residential nature of area and long-standing use for informal recreation.</p>			
<b>Land at The Woodside Link Houghton Regis: High Risk</b>			
	T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment	•T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment with flux model - £4900.00	
	G/water Monitoring & Sampling	•Installation of groundwater monitoring wells - £5000.00 - £10000.00 (depending on depth to groundwater)	
	Subsequent sampling	•Baseline groundwater sampling visit - £1350.00 •12 months of groundwater monitoring - £350.00 per visit – 12*350 = £4200.00	
	T3 Report	•Production of updated T3 report- £1200.00 exc VAT	

Geology	Zig Zag chalk bedrock - no mapped superficial deposits on the site. This is considered a high risk as burial contaminants can freely migrate down into the underlying aquifer.		Total Min. £16,650 Total Max. £21,650
Groundwater	Historic borehole data suggests that groundwater could potentially be as shallow as 1.5m bgl.		
Stream	A stream runs through the site north of the Woodside Link to the east into the River Lea. A balancing pond and drain are located in the eastern portion of the site south of the Link.		
bedrock aquifer	Site mapped on principle aquifer bedrock		
Burial numbers	6ha site - 30-40/year Low Risk		
<p>Localised conditions i.e. access, visual amenity, neighbouring properties / land uses etc  Split site - adjacent to residential areas and straddles a major road  Land locally used for some informal recreation  Good road network  Vehicular access required  Suggested that the site doesn't naturally lend it self in a visual way to use as a cemetery</p>			
<b>Land at Grendall Lane: High Risk</b>			



T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment	•T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment with flux model - £4900.00
G/water Monitoring & Sampling	•Installation of groundwater monitoring wells - £5000.00 - £10000.00 (depending on depth to groundwater)
Subsequent sampling	•Baseline groundwater sampling visit - £1350.00 •12 months of groundwater monitoring - £350.00 per visit – 12*350 = £4200.00
T3 Report	•Production of updated T3 report- £1200.00 exc VAT
<p>Total Min. £16,650 Total Max. £21,650</p>	

Geology	West Melbury Marly Chalk - no mapped superficial deposits on the site. This is considered a high risk as burial contaminants can freely migrate down into the underlying aquifer.
Groundwater	Historic borehole data suggests that groundwater could potentially be as shallow as 1.5m bgl.
Sewage works	Work discharge into stream mapped further to north of the site
Bedrock aquafer	Site mapped on principle aquafer bedrock
Burial numbers	2.7ha site - 30-40/year – Low risk
Topography – Low Risk	The site slopes down from the south to the north, with an elevation change of approximately 10. The

	<p>hummocky and uneven nature of the site would make it difficult to be developed.</p>		
<p>Localised conditions i.e. access, visual amenity, neighbouring properties / land uses etc  Sited away from residential areas  Surrounding land uses include CBC Highways Depot and Household Tidy Tip. It should be highlighting that should this site proceed there may be concerns over a funeral procession having to pass these facilities  Land is not developed and has limited, if any, current use  Good road network but is out of central town area  Vehicular access readily available</p>			