

**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