

**Houghton Regis Town Council
New Cemetery Sub-Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
15th August 2022 at 6.00pm**

Present:	Cllrs:	S Thorne J Carroll Y Farrell M Kennedy D Jones A Slough	Chairman Substitute
	Officers:	Clare Evans Louise Senior	Town Clerk Head of Democratic Services
Apologies:	Cllr:	R Morgan	
Members of the Public:		2	
Also present:		P Burgess T McMahon C Slough S Goodchild	

NC149 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

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

Clarification was sought by the members of the sub-committee as what members were sat on the sub-committee as there had been a resignation at the last meeting. Members were advised that the resignation had been withdrawn shortly after the last meeting.

NC150 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

NC151 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of the public requested clarification to the commitment of the Town Council to keeping the cemetery in Houghton Regis as many of the other valued services in Houghton Regis had been withdrawn.

It was advised that a commitment of the stance of the council could not be confirmed.

Concerns were raised that different religious beliefs called for different processes upon death, the provision of burial plots would encourage inclusiveness for all.



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
5408 SOUTH DICKENS STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60637

Dear Sirs:

I have the pleasure to inform you that your application for admission to the Ph.D. program in Chemistry for the fall semester of 1968 has been approved. You will be admitted to the program on a full-time basis. Your advisor will be Professor [Name].

You should report to the Department of Chemistry at the University of Chicago on August 27, 1968. If you have any questions, please contact the Department Office at the above address.

Sincerely,
[Name]

Very truly yours,
[Name]

cc: [Name]
[Name]

NC152 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2022.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2022.

NC153 MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION

In accordance with approved Standing Orders the following motion had been submitted. Members received a report giving consideration to this motion.

"From Cllr T McMahon, Cllr P Burgess, Cllr Jimmy Carroll, Cllr A Slough, Cllr Chris Slough, Cllr C Copleston.

We the above councillors seek the reversal of the Resolution made on Monday 18th July 2022 at 6pm by the New Cemetery Sub-Committee.

The Resolution being;

- 1. To recognise the significant works that are required to enable Grendall Lane to be brought into use as a cemetery and to determine at this time, these works are financially inhibitive for the Council and such further into this sit cease.*
- 2. To notify Central Bedfordshire Council as land owner of this position.*
- 3. To continue to search for alternative sites and present any options to CDS for a preliminary assessment to enable initial consideration by the Council.*

This removal request is made by invoking Houghton Regis Town Councils standing order 15, 15(a) and 15 (b) that is:

15. Previous Resolutions.

15 (a). A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except by a special motion which requires written notice by at least 6 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 11, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.

15 (b). When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 15 (a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

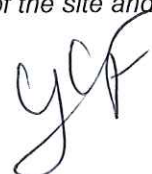
Also, by using standing order 11.

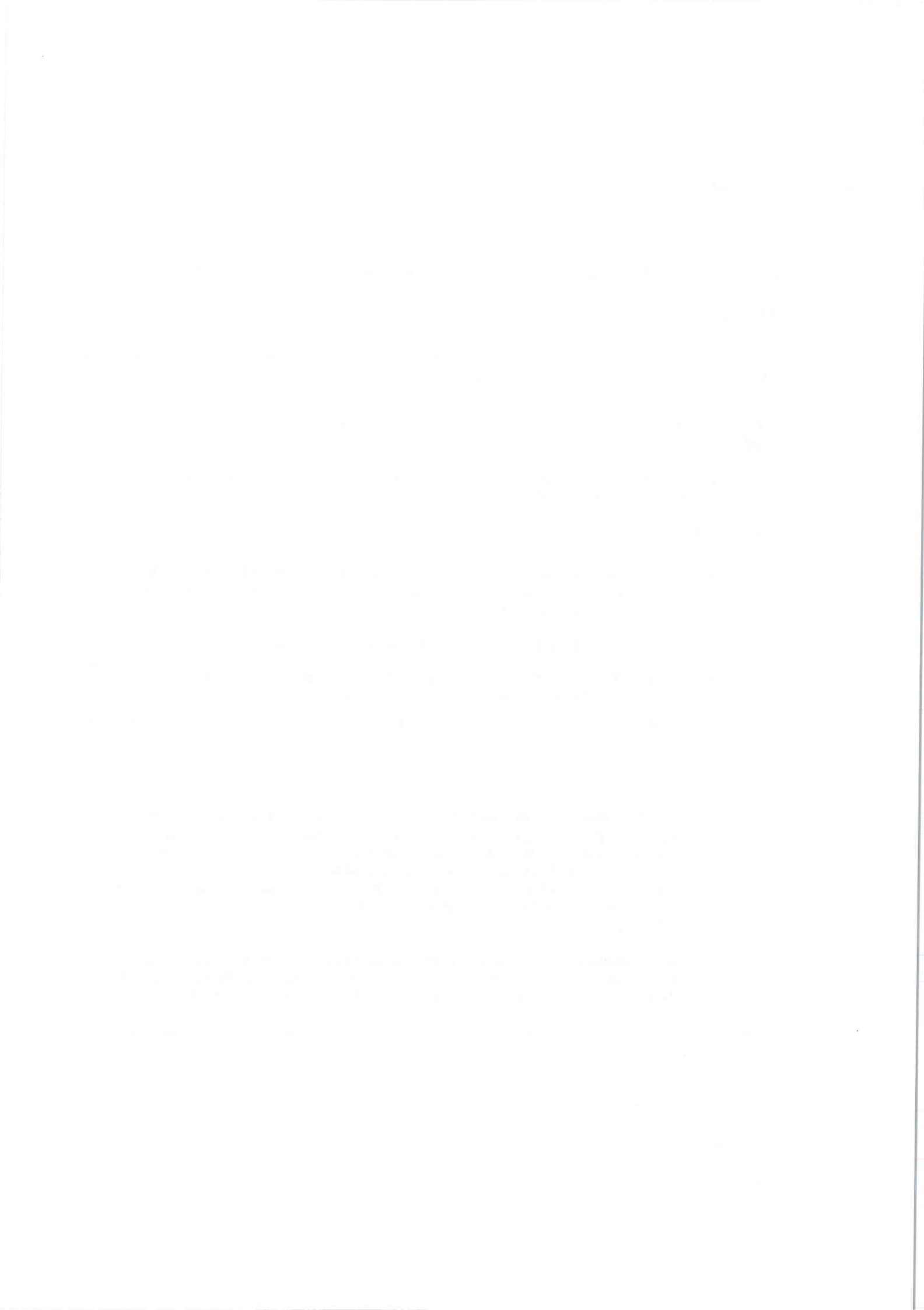
11(a). A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled, and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Councils statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affect the councils area or its residents.

Therefore, we move the following Special Motion to be placed on the Agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee.

Motion

*To continue to pursue the possible cemetery provision at Grendall Lane Houghton Regis.
To work with CDS and the Environment Agency, to continue with CDS investigation of the site and investigation to the T3 level of the site.
To allow CDS to investigate possible cemetery designs for the site."*





Mr Darryl Kelly, CDS, was in attendance at the meeting to respond to queries.

Clarification was sought as to whether there was a statutory obligation to provide cemetery sites. It was confirmed that there were no statutory obligations to provide such sites.

It was highlighted that some religions had their own burial sites dedicated to their religious beliefs to enable their customs and traditions to be fully met.

Members were advised that an average 80% of the population choose cremation over burials, albeit with regional differences.

Mr Kelly clarified the available options:

Altering the depth of the water table, which was sitting at 0.5m below ground level at the lowest point. For single depth burial the water table requirements would need to be 1.4m and for a double burial the requirement was 3m or lower, there were also Environmental Agency requirements, with stringent constraints, particularly on 'high risk' sites. Mr Kelly advised that with the prediction of 30 burials per annum due to the growing town, this would push Houghton Regis into the high-risk category.

Cllr Farrell arrived at 6.25pm

De-watering; this would require trenches to be dug to lower the water table to a lower depth, this would generally be accepted to the Environmental Agency however, this would involve 3m trenches located fairly close together, the trenches would need to have the water pumped away by an active pumping system on the site, much like a sewage water treatment plant, as the water would need to be treated as contaminated. This option would entail significant engineering with associated costs.

Land raising; using vertical retaining walls, the site would need to be raised by 1.5 – 2m depending on whether the site would hold single or double burials, which would equate to a significant land raise. The existing land drains on the site would require decommissioning and re-routing around the burial area. This option would have some complex design implications, if the land had been significantly raised by 2m at the lowest point, this could prove vehicular access difficult to engineer from Grendall Lane as this would create a steep incline accessing the site. Cost versus engineering benefits for the construction of the slope would need to be considered.

A further option was to consider the lower sections of the site to be used for car parking, road access and focussed on remembrance, memorial garden and ash interments with the higher parts of the site to be tiered for use as burials sites.

Mr Kelly acknowledged that other towns elsewhere in the country had extremely steep cemeteries, however modern-day Health & Safety regulations would prevent the same means of construction and maintenance, thus proving impossible to replicate.

Members enquired whether some rough designs could be presented with a guide to costings, as



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the development of the site maybe considered cost prohibitive, Members were advised that usually the Environmental Agency would give approval before such design work would be undertaken.

YRF

It was suggested that the topographical survey be carried out to provide an accurate overview of the site, which would enable a concept design of the site to be presented to the Environmental Agency.

Members were advised that to produce the evidence needed to present to the Environmental Agency would cost around £10,000. Members were advised that construction costs had risen significantly over the last few years, with the possibility of further increases.

Members discussed the recommendations as listed in detail, it was suggested that the sub-committee reconsider the alternative sites Central Bedfordshire Council had originally offered.

The motion of:

To follow advice of CDS to:

- *complete the update on the T3 assessment report, with the benefit of undertaking additional works, listed below, to provide a more meaningful assessment and remedial recommendations*
 - *Topographic survey of the site to provide detailed burial zonal plans and remedial measure assessment - £825.00*
 - *Remedial measure design work – concept designs to provide the EA with a greater understanding of the concept proposals - £2250.00*
- *provide a summary report of the works to date and provide greater detail of the proposed concept remedial solutions in a report to the EA for pre-app advice to gauge the EA's position and preference with regards to this site.*

Proposed by: Cllr Kennedy, seconded by: Cllr Carroll

A recorded vote was requested:

Members in favour: A Slough, J Carroll, M Kennedy.

Members against: D Jones, S Thorne, Y Farrell.

The Chair of the sub-committee used her casting vote against the motion.

The Chair requested that further consideration be given to the number of councillors who were sat on this sub-committee.

Members clarified that with the motion not carried, the resolution of the previous meeting remained as standing.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.12pm

Dated this

12th

day of

June 2023.


Chairman

