

# Public Document Pack

## Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments

### Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council



**Monday, 11th September, 2023 at 6.00 pm**

To members of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee - R Crouch, D Enright, O Collins, J Aitman, D Edwards-Hughes, D Newcombe, J Treloar and R Smith (and all other Town Councillors for information).

You are hereby summonsed to the above meeting to be held in the **Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney** for the transaction of the business stated in the agenda below.

#### **Admission to Meetings**

All Council meetings are open to the public and press unless otherwise stated.

Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting and speak on a particular item should contact the Committee Clerk ([derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto:derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk)) in advance.

#### **Recording of Meetings**

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 the council's public meetings may be recorded, which includes filming, audio-recording as well as photography.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Deputy Town Clerk or Committee Clerk know before the start of the meeting.

#### **Agenda**

##### **1. Apologies for Absence**

To consider apologies and reasons for absence.

Committee Members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Committee Clerk [derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto:derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk) **prior to the meeting**, stating the reason for absence.

**Standing Order 30(a)(v)** permits the appointment of substitute Councillors to a Committee whose role is to replace ordinary Councillors at a meeting of a Committee if ordinary Councillors of the Committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer **before** the meeting that they are unable to attend.

##### **2. Declarations of Interest**

Members are reminded to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in any of the items under consideration at this meeting in accordance with the Town Council's code of conduct.

##### **3. Minutes (Pages 3 - 6)**

a) To receive and consider the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments Minutes held on 10 July 2023;

b) Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda (Questions on the progress of any item).

##### **4. Public Participation**

The meeting will adjourn for this item

Members of the public may speak for a maximum of **five minutes** each during the period of public

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participation, in line with Standing Order 42. Matters raised shall relate to the following items on t agenda.

5. **Finance Report** (Pages 7 - 20)

To receive the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (R.F.O).

**Public Halls**

6. **Public Halls Report**

To receive the report of the Venue & Events Officer (to follow).

7. **Public Hall Events Report**

To receive the report of the Venue & Events Officer (to follow).

**Cemeteries & Closed Churchyards**

8. **Cemetery Feedback** (Pages 21 - 24)

To receive the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

9. **Exclusion of Press & Public**

To consider and if appropriate, to pass the following resolution:

That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

10. **Property & Legal Matters**

To receive the confidential report of the Town Clerk/C.E.O (to follow).



Town Clerk

# Agenda Item 3

## HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday, 10 July 2023

At 6.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

### Present:

Councillor R Crouch (Chair)

Councillors:	D Enright O Collins J Aitman	D Edwards-Hughes J Treloar R Smith
Officers:	Adam Clapton Sharon Groth Mark Lewis Derek Mackenzie	Deputy Town Clerk Town Clerk Head of Estates & Operations Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	2 members of the public.	

### H377 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D Newcombe.

### H378 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

### H379 MINUTES

The minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 10 July 2023 were received.

H275 - The Operations Manager was due to speak with the Diocese of Oxford regarding the possibility of installing cycle racks in St Mary's Churchyard.

H282 – It was confirmed there was a war grave at Holy Trinity Church and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission would be providing a sign for the entrance.

H283 – The Head of Estates had yet to speak with the Probation Service concerning how they might be able to assist in Council projects, however he would do so and report back to this committee at the next meeting on 11 September 2023.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 10 July 2023 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

H380 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*The Committee adjourned for this item.*

The committee received representations from a resident of Burwell Meadow concerning Agenda Item 6 who spoke passionately about the poor state of Burwell Hall and the surrounding area.

*The Committee reconvened.*

H381 **FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the financial report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Members thanked the RFO for such an explanatory report and had no further questions.

**Resolved:**

That, the report be noted.

H382 **PUBLIC HALLS REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Venue & Events Officer.

Members welcomed the proposed Cool Spaces initiative which would provide residents a space to stop in the heat and have access to water at the Corn Exchange. The Committee was also in favour of purchasing a floor fan as opposed to an air conditioning unit due to the practicalities of use.

Members were pleased to see an extensive programme of events in the Main Hall and looked forward to seeing this continue.

The Head of Estates & Operations (HOE&O) gave a verbal update on Burwell Hall, including responses to the points raised by the resident earlier in the meeting. A programme of repairs would take place at the end of August, new blinds would be installed, the hot water boiler would be fixed, and general maintenance of the hall would take place. This would complement the weeding of the area around the Hall which was taking place that week. He also mentioned that improvements in the changing rooms for sports users were in the pipeline for implementation.

The HOE&O also advised a report would be produced to illustrate the success of events in the Corn Exchange, this would include attendance and financial details and would be shared at the next meeting of the Committee on 11 September 2023.

**Resolved:**

That, the report and verbal update be noted.

H383 **LAKESIDE ALLOTMENT GATE REQUEST**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations Manager regarding a request for a new gate at Lakeside allotments.

A Member had visited the site prior to the meeting and was confused to find no issues were present with the operation of the gate. Members were concerned the gate request was very expensive and potentially an unnecessary expense.

The Committee agreed to defer any decision on the issue to allow the Operations Manager to review further.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the replacement gate request is investigated further by the Operations Manager.

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The meeting closed at: 6.27 pm

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Chair

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## HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

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**Date:** Monday, 11 September 2023  
**Title:** Finance Report  
**Contact Officer:** Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

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***Should Members have any queries about this report advance notice would be appreciated, in writing, by 12noon on Friday 8 September to allow for a full response at the meeting.***

### BACKGROUND

Detailed income and expenditure statements for budgets which are the responsibility of this committee are enclosed; these are the management accounts for this committee. The period to which this report relates is 1 April 2023 to 31 July 2023.

For the Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments Committee the following cost centres are in place.

Cost centre	Service
102	Langdale Hall
103	Bars
104	Corn Exchange
105	Burwell Hall
106	Madley Park Community Centre
301	Tower Hill Cemetery
302	Windrush Cemetery
303	Closed churchyards – St Mary's/ Holy Trinity
305	Allotments

Cost centres comprise three digits and typically represent a discrete service entity, to which income and expenditure is allocated against previously agreed revenue budgets.

Within each cost centre income and expenditure is then allocated to a four-digit nominal ledger code; these codes are common across the cost centres. Nominal ledger codes further analyse the costs associated with the cost centre and correspond to a specific type of account, such as materials or staffing costs. Codes commencing with "1" are income codes; codes commencing with "4" are expenditure codes.

A report is submitted to every ordinary meeting of the standing committees and previous reports are available on the relevant committee section of the website.

### CURRENT SITUATION

The Council financial year runs from 1 April to 31 March following. Consequently the management accounts to 31 July represent the first four months of the 2023/24 year.

Members may wish to note the following matters in relation to the management accounts:

1. Salaries, Employer's National Insurance Contributions and Employer's Superannuation. These are shown against code 4001 and have been processed for the period 1 April to 30 June.
2. Recharges. The following recharges have been processed for the period 1 April to 30 June:
  - (i) 4896 – Maintenance staff;
  - (ii) 4897 – Maintenance staff overhead;
  - (iii) 4892 – Central support staff;
  - (iv) 4893 – Central support overhead.
3. No recharges have been processed in relation to 4894 – grounds staff, 4895 – grounds staff overhead and 4899 Depot reallocation. It is anticipated that these will be included in the report to the meeting due to take place on 6 November 2023.
4. Income. Invoices are due to be raised in September 2023 for annual rentals/fees/charges in relation to codes 1052/102, 1060/102, 1060/106 and 1060/301. These will therefore be reflected in the report to the meeting due to take place on 6 November 2023.
5. Insurance – nominal ledger codes 4025. The Council's insurance premium was paid in April 2023 and allocations have been made to cost centres for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, with recharges between 4% and 11% over original budget due to increases in premiums.
6. Energy costs – nominal ledger codes 4014 – electricity and 4015 – gas. Energy costs are running below budget. Although the costs in the summer months are lower than the winter months, the unit costs are also lower than the Council budgeted for and a significant saving will be shown when revised estimates for the year are calculated.
7. Bar/café: cost centre 103. Income for the year of £42,372 compares favourably with annual budget of £88,400, being 48% of the budget in one-third of the year. At this stage last year income was £19,801 so the year-on-year increase is 214%.
8. However bar/café cost of sales is at 55%; this is likely to be higher than one might expect due to stock held. Note that the Council has an independent stock take each quarter, the last one being at 30 June 2023. This showed a deficit on the quarter of 0.36% (retail £57, cost £20), which is within acceptable limits.
9. Indirect bar costs are 27% of budget but this will be understated as the month 4 salary journals have yet to be processed.
10. Corn Exchange income, cost centre 104. The income to 31 July amounted to £19,035, representing 43% of the annual budget of £44,500. This compares to £18,134 in the first four months of the last financial year, an increase of 5%.
11. Corn Exchange other maintenance 4036/104. The year to date spend of £8,206 exceeds the budget of £4,000. This is because a replacement pigeon deterrent system was installed at a cost of £7,778. This has been funded from the earmarked reserve for public halls, reducing the in-year/ funded from precept spend to £428 and the earmarked reserve to £24,515.
12. Burwell Hall cost centre 105. Income of £8,251 represents 37% of the annual budget of £22,500. Last year's actual income included bar income which, as previously reported, is now shown, together with matching expenditure, against cost centre 103. If these items are set aside then the lettings income for the year to 31 July 2023, £8,285 compares favourably with the position at 31 July 2022, which showed lettings income of £7,644.



13. Cemetery income is lower than might be expected.

- (i) For cost centre 301 – Tower Hill. If rent received and insurance recharges in relation to the Lodge are removed, the amount from burial/ memorial/chapel fees, interments and grant of rights totals £5,633, representing 31% of the £18,044 annual budget for these lines in 33% of the year, a relatively small variance.
- (ii) For cost centre 302 – Windrush Cemetery, the variance is higher, the income of £7,418 for the period to 31 July 2023 representing 16% of the annual budget of £46,500, roughly half of what might be expected on a straight-line basis. It should be noted that cemetery income can significantly vary year-on-year for many reasons including death rates, the balance between burials and ashes and whether out-of-parish fees are charged. Your officers will consider further when the estimates are drafted.

Note also the following comments relating to the management accounts across the Council:

1. There will always be an inevitable “lag” between expenditure being incurred and being shown in the accounts. However the introduction of the computerised purchase order from later this month will mean that committed expenditure will be shown on future reports, improving the timeliness of financial information.
2. Expenditure is not necessarily incurred evenly over the course of the year. As noted above most expenditure in relation to nominal ledger code 4025 (insurance) is incurred when the annual premium is paid in April. There will also be similar patterns on income with some rents/fees/charges invoiced on an annual or quarterly basis.
3. Fixed assets. Members will recall that the Council has moved away from the previous method of accounting for fixed assets so that they now reflect the requirements of the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners’ Guide (2023) for the size of the Town Council (income 2022/23 £2.3mi; expenditure £2.1mi) rather than the requirements for larger authorities with an annual turnover in excess of £6.5mi. This means that the end of year financial accounts will more clearly reflect the management accounting information received by Members during the course of the year and that codes 5198 – deferred grant released and 5199 – depreciation charge to service, both of which do not feature in the budget or in-year management accounts, will no longer appear on the month 12 management accounts. Appropriate adjustments have been made in the 2022/23 accounts.
4. Members will likewise recall that the Council is now accounting for earmarked reserve movements differently. The previous system, used by this and other councils, was to represent in-year funding from earmarked reserves as negative expenditure (4995 – transfer from earmarked reserves) and transfers to earmarked reserves as expenditure (code 4991). These fund movements will in future be shown in the final accounting column “Transfer to/from EMR” so they do not impact on expenditure but are correctly shown as funding. Appropriate adjustments have been made in the 2022/23 accounts.

The summary is as follows:

	Actual April to July 2023	Budget for 2023-24	% of budget incurred April to July 2023		<i>Actual April to July 2022</i>	<i>% of budget incurred April to July 2023</i>
Income	£99,462	£255,381	39%		<i>£94,157</i>	<i>44%</i>
Expenditure	£180,578	£899,770	20%		<i>£156,366</i>	<i>21%</i>
Net expenditure	£81,116	£644,389	13%		<i>£62,210</i>	<i>12%</i>

Subject to the items detailed above there are no matters of significant variance which I would draw to the attention of Members and the position is as one would expect at this stage in the financial year.

#### REVENUE BUDGET 2024-25 AND CAPITAL & SPECIAL REVENUE PROJECTS 2024-25 AND BEYOND

In line with normal Council procedures, the RFO will shortly be commencing the annual review of all the Committees to prepare the revenue budget for 2024-25.

Draft budgets are prepared based upon current activities and patterns of income and expenditure. Any additional revenue expenditure is considered separately as Revenue Growth Items.

It is also normal practice that during the budget cycle the Council considers the Capital and Special Revenue budget to identify which projects or schemes are to be implemented and undertaken during the next financial year.

Therefore Members are requested to consider items to be included in next year's budget so that Officers can obtain costings accordingly. This will then enable the RFO to draft as accurate budget estimates as possible.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Council declared a Climate Change Emergency at its meeting on 26 June 2019; with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make regarding the facilities and services it operates.

Officers are continually assessing the environmental impact of services and assets to ensure that where possible measures are taken to support the Council's climate declaration of carbon neutrality by 2028. This extends to the procurement of goods and services.

#### RISK

In decision making Councillors should consider any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Members are reminded that collectively they are custodians of the public purse with most of the funding coming from the taxpayers of Witney. Therefore, Officers ensure they get best value, value for money, and comply with the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, and Procurement Policy.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This report forms part of the Council's due diligence and a process in line with its Financial Regulations. The financial implications are detailed above and in the attached appendices.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Members are invited to note the report and approve the Committee's management accounts for the period 1 April to 31 July 2023.

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## Detailed Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/07/2023

Month No: 4

Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments Committee 11 September 2023

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<b>Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments</b>								
<b>102 LANGDALE HALL</b>								
1050 RENT RECEIVED	20,302	10,151	20,302	10,151			50.0%	
1052 EXPENSES RECOVERED	203	0	200	200			0.0%	
1060 INSURANCE RECOVERED	607	0	650	650			0.0%	
LANGDALE HALL :- Income	<b>21,113</b>	<b>10,151</b>	<b>21,152</b>	<b>11,001</b>			<b>48.0%</b>	<b>0</b>
4012 WATER RATES	(29)	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4021 TELEPHONE/FAX	203	40	200	160		160	19.9%	
4025 INSURANCE	696	818	750	(68)		(68)	109.0%	
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4038 OTHER MAINTENANCE	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VARIABLE)	325	345	450	105		105	76.6%	
4059 OTHER PROF FEES	450	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RCHG (TO 30/09/23)	70	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RCHG (TO 30/09/22)	(7)	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4892 C/S STAFF RCHG	3,464	935	4,492	3,557		3,557	20.8%	
4893 C/S O'HEAD RCHG	1,133	551	1,294	743		743	42.5%	
4896 MTCE STAFF RECHARGE	198	0	1,057	1,057		1,057	0.0%	
4897 MTCE O'HEAD RECHARGE	30	0	103	103		103	0.0%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	0	0	110	110		110	0.0%	
LANGDALE HALL :- Indirect Expenditure	<b>6,533</b>	<b>2,687</b>	<b>11,456</b>	<b>8,769</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8,769</b>	<b>23.5%</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>14,579</b>	<b>7,464</b>	<b>9,696</b>	<b>2,232</b>				
<b>103 BAR/ CAFE</b>								
1000 C/EX. 1863 BAR SALES - DRINK	24,555	12,557	22,500	9,943			55.8%	
1001 C/EX. 1863 SALES - FOOD	20,717	6,919	20,000	13,081			34.6%	
1002 C/EX. 1863 BAR HIRE CHARGE	1,208	433	750	317			57.8%	
1009 CORN EX.1863 CAFE- HOT DRINKS	53,858	20,442	39,000	18,558			52.4%	
1090 BURWELL HALL BAR - DRINKS	0	2,070	6,000	3,930			34.5%	
1091 BURWELL HALL BAR HIRE CHARGE	0	(50)	150	200			(33.3%)	
BAR/ CAFE :- Income	<b>100,339</b>	<b>42,372</b>	<b>88,400</b>	<b>46,028</b>			<b>47.9%</b>	<b>0</b>
3000 BAR PURCHASES - DRINK	16,373	8,320	11,500	3,180		3,180	72.3%	
3001 BAR PURCHASES - FOOD	19,111	6,013	10,000	3,987		3,987	60.1%	
3009 CAFE PURCHASES - HOT BEVERAGES	14,105	5,241	14,000	8,759		8,759	37.4%	
BAR/ CAFE :- Direct Expenditure	<b>49,588</b>	<b>19,575</b>	<b>35,500</b>	<b>15,925</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15,925</b>	<b>55.1%</b>	<b>0</b>
4001 SALARIES	65,823	19,649	66,953	47,304		47,304	29.3%	
4002 ER'S NIC	2,823	917	7,356	6,439		6,439	12.5%	

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## Detailed Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/07/2023

Month No: 4

Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments Committee 11 September 2023

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4003 ER'S SUPERANN	2,676	786	3,459	2,673		2,673	22.7%	
4007 PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	743	0	750	750		750	0.0%	
4016 CLEANING MATERIALS	15	15	300	286		286	4.8%	
4038 OTHER MAINTENANCE	220	0	750	750		750	0.0%	
4042 EQUIPMENT	6,432	1,591	5,000	3,409		3,409	31.8%	
4059 OTHER PROF FEES	600	300	700	400		400	42.9%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	982	367	1,000	633		633	36.7%	
4892 C/S STAFF RCHG	8,661	2,336	11,229	8,893		8,893	20.8%	
4893 C/S O'HEAD RCHG	2,833	1,376	3,235	1,859		1,859	42.5%	
BAR/ CAFE :- Indirect Expenditure	<b>91,807</b>	<b>27,337</b>	<b>100,732</b>	<b>73,395</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73,395</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>(41,056)</b>	<b>(4,540)</b>	<b>(47,832)</b>	<b>(43,292)</b>				
<u>104 CORN EXCHANGE</u>								
1007 CORN EXCHNGE LETTING	40,490	15,129	38,500	23,371			39.3%	
1014 EVENTS INCOME	3,635	2,674	4,000	1,326			66.8%	
1015 TEA DANCE INCOME	1,083	824	1,500	676			54.9%	
1017 CORN EXCHANGE WEDDING LETTING	485	409	500	91			81.8%	
CORN EXCHANGE :- Income	<b>45,693</b>	<b>19,035</b>	<b>44,500</b>	<b>25,465</b>			<b>42.8%</b>	<b>0</b>
4001 SALARIES	44,686	12,546	61,962	49,416		49,416	20.2%	
4002 ER'S NIC	3,140	932	4,395	3,463		3,463	21.2%	
4003 ER'S SUPERANN	7,630	2,245	9,387	7,142		7,142	23.9%	
4007 PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	88	205	300	95		95	68.5%	
4008 TRAINING	440	596	1,000	404		404	59.6%	
4011 RATES	2,221	464	4,500	4,036		4,036	10.3%	
4012 WATER RATES	1,317	1,265	1,100	(165)		(165)	115.0%	
4014 ELECTRICITY	10,768	2,400	36,000	33,600		33,600	6.7%	
4015 GAS	6,761	1,390	26,250	24,860		24,860	5.3%	
4016 CLEANING MATERIALS	1,921	749	3,000	2,251		2,251	25.0%	
4017 CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	3,305	120	3,500	3,380		3,380	3.4%	
4018 PHOTOCOPIER COSTS	45	25	50	25		25	49.8%	
4021 TELEPHONE/FAX	944	277	900	623		623	30.8%	
4025 INSURANCE	795	937	850	(87)		(87)	110.2%	
4028 I.T.	1,181	286	1,400	1,114		1,114	20.4%	
4030 RECRUITMENT ADVT'G	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4032 PUBLICITY	591	610	3,000	2,391		2,391	20.3%	
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	4,793	5,219	8,000	2,781		2,781	65.2%	
4038 OTHER MAINTENANCE	2,739	8,206	4,000	(4,206)		(4,206)	205.2%	7,778
4042 EQUIPMENT	1,138	829	2,000	1,171		1,171	41.4%	
4043 SMALL TOOLS & EQUIPT	91	14	150	136		136	9.1%	

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## Detailed Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/07/2023

Month No: 4

Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments Committee 11 September 2023

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4045 LICENCES	555	2,505	4,000	1,495		1,495	62.6%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VARIABLE)	318	337	350	13		13	96.3%	
4064 HEALTH & SAFETY	128	0	100	100		100	0.0%	
4141 EVENTS	3,855	2,461	10,000	7,539		7,539	24.6%	
4142 TEA DANCE COSTS	4,940	1,053	6,000	4,948		4,948	17.5%	
4888 O/S STAFF RCHG (TO 30/09/23)	3,396	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RCHG (TO 30/09/22)	947	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4892 C/S STAFF RCHG	17,322	4,673	22,459	17,786		17,786	20.8%	
4893 C/S O'HEAD RCHG	5,665	2,753	6,470	3,717		3,717	42.5%	
4896 MTCE STAFF RECHARGE	5,645	195	3,922	3,727		3,727	5.0%	
4897 MTCE O'HEAD RECHARGE	1,003	22	384	362		362	5.6%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	0	0	410	410		410	0.0%	
<b>CORN EXCHANGE :- Indirect Expenditure</b>	<b>138,371</b>	<b>53,312</b>	<b>226,839</b>	<b>173,527</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>173,527</b>	<b>23.5%</b>	<b>7,778</b>
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>(92,678)</b>	<b>(34,277)</b>	<b>(182,339)</b>	<b>(148,062)</b>				
6000 plus Transfer from EMR	0	7,778						
<b>Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve</b>	<b>(92,678)</b>	<b>(26,499)</b>						
<b>105 BURWELL HALL</b>								
1000 C/EX. 1863 BAR SALES - DRINK	5,714	0	0	0			0.0%	
1002 C/EX. 1863 BAR HIRE CHARGE	0	(50)	0	50			0.0%	
1005 BURWELL HALL LETTING	25,373	8,285	22,500	14,215			36.8%	
1014 EVENTS INCOME	0	17	0	(17)			0.0%	
<b>BURWELL HALL :- Income</b>	<b>31,087</b>	<b>8,251</b>	<b>22,500</b>	<b>14,249</b>			<b>36.7%</b>	<b>0</b>
4001 SALARIES	36,269	12,093	41,308	29,215		29,215	29.3%	
4002 ER'S NIC	2,526	809	2,930	2,121		2,121	27.6%	
4003 ER'S SUPERANN	5,972	1,648	6,258	4,610		4,610	26.3%	
4007 PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	0	7	300	293		293	2.2%	
4008 TRAINING	0	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
4011 RATES	1,497	312	3,000	2,688		2,688	10.4%	
4012 WATER RATES	204	161	1,200	1,039		1,039	13.4%	
4014 ELECTRICITY	2,339	509	11,920	11,411		11,411	4.3%	
4015 GAS	6,445	1,508	15,000	13,492		13,492	10.1%	
4016 CLEANING MATERIALS	1,802	682	2,000	1,318		1,318	34.1%	
4017 CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	807	181	2,200	2,019		2,019	8.2%	
4021 TELEPHONE/FAX	222	45	300	255		255	15.2%	
4025 INSURANCE	516	585	550	(35)		(35)	106.4%	
4028 I.T.	601	171	1,000	829		829	17.1%	
4032 PUBLICITY	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	884	2,297	5,000	2,704		2,704	45.9%	

Continued over page

## Detailed Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/07/2023

Month No: 4

Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments Committee 11 September 2023

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4038 OTHER MAINTENANCE	1,771	58	2,100	2,042		2,042	2.7%	
4042 EQUIPMENT	0	175	1,500	1,325		1,325	11.7%	
4045 LICENCES	61	447	750	303		303	59.7%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VARIABLE)	300	319	325	6		6	98.0%	
4059 OTHER PROF FEES	450	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RCHG (TO 30/09/23)	778	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RCHG (TO 30/09/22)	(135)	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4892 C/S STAFF RCHG	3,464	935	4,492	3,557		3,557	20.8%	
4893 C/S O'HEAD RCHG	1,133	551	1,294	743		743	42.5%	
4896 MTCE STAFF RECHARGE	93	62	19,654	19,592		19,592	0.3%	
4897 MTCE O'HEAD RECHARGE	14	9	1,924	1,915		1,915	0.5%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	0	0	2,054	2,054		2,054	0.0%	
<b>BURWELL HALL :- Indirect Expenditure</b>	<b>68,013</b>	<b>23,564</b>	<b>128,559</b>	<b>104,995</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>104,995</b>	<b>18.3%</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>(36,926)</b>	<b>(15,312)</b>	<b>(106,059)</b>	<b>(90,747)</b>				
<b>106 MADLEY PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE</b>								
1060 INSURANCE RECOVERED	412	0	440	440			0.0%	
<b>MADLEY PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE :- Income</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>440</b>			<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b>
4025 INSURANCE	412	494	440	(54)		(54)	112.4%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VARIABLE)	0	0	700	700		700	0.0%	
4059 OTHER PROF FEES	0	0	1,500	1,500		1,500	0.0%	
4164 MADLEY PARK TRUST GRANT	5,000	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RCHG (TO 30/09/23)	49	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RCHG (TO 30/09/22)	14	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4892 C/S STAFF RCHG	693	187	898	711		711	20.8%	
4893 C/S O'HEAD RCHG	227	110	259	149		149	42.5%	
4896 MTCE STAFF RECHARGE	0	0	15	15		15	0.0%	
4897 MTCE O'HEAD RECHARGE	0	0	1	1		1	0.0%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	0	0	2	2		2	0.0%	
<b>MADLEY PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE :- Indirect Expenditure</b>	<b>6,395</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>3,815</b>	<b>3,024</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,024</b>	<b>20.7%</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>(5,983)</b>	<b>(791)</b>	<b>(3,375)</b>	<b>(2,584)</b>				
<b>301 TOWER HILL CEMETERY</b>								
1050 RENT RECEIVED	13,620	6,810	13,620	6,810			50.0%	
1060 INSURANCE RECOVERED	208	(208)	225	433			(92.4%)	
1100 BURIAL FEES	8,447	1,092	4,000	2,908			27.3%	
1101 GRANT OF RIGHTS	2,407	502	1,000	499			50.1%	
1102 INTERMENT OF ASHES	11,933	2,725	9,000	6,276			30.3%	



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## Detailed Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/07/2023

Month No: 4

## Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments Committee 11 September 2023

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
1105 MEMORIAL FEES	4,622	1,083	3,500	2,417			30.9%	
1106 MEMORIAL PLAQUES	505	110	330	220			33.3%	
1108 CHAPEL FEES	217	121	214	93			56.5%	
1171 DONATIONS RECEIVED	443	0	0	0			0.0%	
<b>TOWER HILL CEMETERY :- Income</b>	<b>42,402</b>	<b>12,234</b>	<b>31,889</b>	<b>19,655</b>			<b>38.4%</b>	<b>0</b>
4001 SALARIES	12,227	1,862	12,541	10,679		10,679	14.8%	
4002 ER'S NIC	1,018	152	1,103	951		951	13.8%	
4003 ER'S SUPERANN	2,653	404	2,722	2,318		2,318	14.8%	
4007 PROTECTIVE CLOTHING	32	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4011 RATES	3,892	1,518	4,250	2,732		2,732	35.7%	
4012 WATER RATES	187	171	250	79		79	68.5%	
4014 ELECTRICITY	717	233	1,000	767		767	23.3%	
4016 CLEANING MATERIALS	0	0	30	30		30	0.0%	
4017 CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	860	225	1,000	775		775	22.5%	
4025 INSURANCE	208	249	225	(24)		(24)	110.8%	
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	3,289	0	6,000	6,000		6,000	0.0%	
4038 OTHER MAINTENANCE	50	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4041 EQUIPMENT HIRE	0	125	0	(125)		(125)	0.0%	
4042 EQUIPMENT	305	0	100	100		100	0.0%	
4064 HEALTH & SAFETY	18	0	100	100		100	0.0%	
4110 SUBSIDIZED LETTINGS	0	0	200	200		200	0.0%	
4350 PLAQUES PURCHASED	354	228	300	72		72	76.0%	
4355 MEMORIAL MAINTENANCE	350	205	2,500	2,295		2,295	8.2%	
4888 O/S STAFF RCHG (TO 30/09/23)	19,561	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RCHG (TO 30/09/22)	4,210	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4891 AGENCY R/C (TO 30/09/22)	18,288	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4892 C/S STAFF RCHG	10,393	2,804	13,475	10,671		10,671	20.8%	
4893 C/S O'HEAD RCHG	3,399	1,652	3,882	2,230		2,230	42.5%	
4894 GROUNDS STAFF RECHARGE	1,993	0	8,416	8,416		8,416	0.0%	
4895 GROUNDS O'HEAD RECHARGE	1,037	0	3,108	3,108		3,108	0.0%	
4896 MTCE STAFF RECHARGE	22,293	15,739	73,017	57,278		57,278	21.6%	
4897 MTCE O'HEAD RECHARGE	3,380	1,613	7,146	5,533		5,533	22.6%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	0	0	7,630	7,630		7,630	0.0%	
<b>TOWER HILL CEMETERY :- Indirect Expenditure</b>	<b>110,716</b>	<b>27,181</b>	<b>148,995</b>	<b>121,814</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>121,814</b>	<b>18.2%</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>(68,314)</b>	<b>(14,947)</b>	<b>(117,106)</b>	<b>(102,159)</b>				
<b>302 WINDRUSH CEMETERY</b>								
1100 BURIAL FEES	25,644	1,484	15,000	13,516			9.9%	
1101 GRANT OF RIGHTS	27,806	3,067	20,000	16,933			15.3%	

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## Detailed Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/07/2023

Month No: 4

Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments Committee 11 September 2023

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
1102 INTERMENT OF ASHES	5,319	1,162	5,500	4,339			21.1%	
1105 MEMORIAL FEES	5,162	1,706	6,000	4,295			28.4%	
WINDRUSH CEMETERY :- Income	<b>63,930</b>	<b>7,418</b>	<b>46,500</b>	<b>39,082</b>			<b>16.0%</b>	<b>0</b>
4001 SALARIES	12,227	1,862	12,541	10,679		10,679	14.8%	
4002 ER'S NIC	1,018	152	1,103	951		951	13.8%	
4003 ER'S SUPERANN	2,653	404	2,721	2,317		2,317	14.9%	
4011 RATES	5,489	3,196	6,050	2,854		2,854	52.8%	
4012 WATER RATES	78	111	300	189		189	37.1%	
4014 ELECTRICITY	2,224	544	4,000	3,456		3,456	13.6%	
4016 CLEANING MATERIALS	0	0	30	30		30	0.0%	
4017 CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	660	182	1,000	818		818	18.2%	
4021 TELEPHONE/FAX	222	21	300	279		279	7.0%	
4025 INSURANCE	112	125	120	(5)		(5)	104.3%	
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	508	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%	
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	692	151	500	349		349	30.1%	
4038 OTHER MAINTENANCE	1,031	25	1,500	1,475		1,475	1.6%	
4042 EQUIPMENT	864	0	1,500	1,500		1,500	0.0%	
4046 SPORTS EQUIPMENT	29	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4059 OTHER PROF FEES	1,650	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4064 HEALTH & SAFETY	18	0	100	100		100	0.0%	
4350 PLAQUES PURCHASED	25	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
4355 MEMORIAL MAINTENANCE	0	205	2,000	1,795		1,795	10.3%	
4888 O/S STAFF RCHG (TO 30/09/23)	29,283	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RCHG (TO 30/09/22)	6,718	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4891 AGENCY R/C (TO 30/09/22)	6,456	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4892 C/S STAFF RCHG	10,393	2,804	13,475	10,671		10,671	20.8%	
4893 C/S O'HEAD RCHG	3,399	1,652	3,882	2,230		2,230	42.5%	
4894 GROUNDS STAFF RECHARGE	1,993	0	8,416	8,416		8,416	0.0%	
4895 GROUNDS O'HEAD RECHARGE	1,037	0	3,108	3,108		3,108	0.0%	
4896 MTCE STAFF RECHARGE	20,695	11,894	131,269	119,375		119,375	9.1%	
4897 MTCE O'HEAD RECHARGE	3,080	1,316	12,848	11,532		11,532	10.2%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	0	0	13,718	13,718		13,718	0.0%	
WINDRUSH CEMETERY :- Indirect Expenditure	<b>112,554</b>	<b>24,643</b>	<b>223,981</b>	<b>199,338</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>199,338</b>	<b>11.0%</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>(48,625)</b>	<b>(17,225)</b>	<b>(177,481)</b>	<b>(160,256)</b>				
<u>303 CLOSED CH'YARDS ST MARYS/HOLY</u>								
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	7	0	11,000	11,000		11,000	0.0%	
4040 ARBORICULTURE	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4059 OTHER PROF FEES	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	

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## Detailed Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/07/2023

Month No: 4

Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments Committee 11 September 2023

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4355 MEMORIAL MAINTENANCE	3,326	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
CLOSED CH'YARDS ST MARYS/HOLY :- Indirect Expenditure	<b>3,333</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>(3,333)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(13,000)</b>	<b>(13,000)</b>				
<b>305 ALLOTMENTS</b>								
4013 RENT PAID	0	0	125	125		125	0.0%	
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	363	374	500	126		126	74.8%	
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	0	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RCHG (TO 30/09/23)	3,976	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RCHG (TO 30/09/22)	887	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4891 AGENCY R/C (TO 30/09/22)	1,486	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4892 C/S STAFF RCHG	2,598	701	3,369	2,668		2,668	20.8%	
4893 C/S O'HEAD RCHG	850	413	971	558		558	42.5%	
4896 MTCE STAFF RECHARGE	554	0	1,188	1,188		1,188	0.0%	
4897 MTCE O'HEAD RECHARGE	85	0	116	116		116	0.0%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	0	0	124	124		124	0.0%	
ALLOTMENTS :- Indirect Expenditure	<b>10,799</b>	<b>1,488</b>	<b>6,893</b>	<b>5,405</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,405</b>	<b>21.6%</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>(10,799)</b>	<b>(1,488)</b>	<b>(6,893)</b>	<b>(5,405)</b>				
Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments :- Income	<b>304,974</b>	<b>99,462</b>	<b>255,381</b>	<b>155,919</b>			<b>38.9%</b>	
Expenditure	<b>598,109</b>	<b>180,578</b>	<b>899,770</b>	<b>719,192</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>719,192</b>	<b>20.1%</b>	
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>(293,135)</b>	<b>(81,116)</b>	<b>(644,389)</b>	<b>(563,273)</b>				
plus Transfer from EMR	<b>0</b>	<b>7,778</b>						
<b>Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve</b>	<b>(293,135)</b>	<b>(73,338)</b>						
Grand Totals:- Income	<b>304,974</b>	<b>99,462</b>	<b>255,381</b>	<b>155,919</b>			<b>38.9%</b>	
Expenditure	<b>598,109</b>	<b>180,578</b>	<b>899,770</b>	<b>719,192</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>719,192</b>	<b>20.1%</b>	
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>(293,135)</b>	<b>(81,116)</b>	<b>(644,389)</b>	<b>(563,273)</b>				
plus Transfer from EMR	<b>0</b>	<b>7,778</b>						
<b>Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve</b>	<b>(293,135)</b>	<b>(73,338)</b>						

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## HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

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**Date:** Monday, 11 September 2023

**Title:** Cemetery Feedback

**Contact Officer:** Deputy Town Clerk

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### Background

The Council strives to ensure the best service possible for residents at both Tower Hill and Windrush Cemeteries.

The Council facilitates meetings of the 'Friends of the Cemeteries' focus group and since 2022, has entered Windrush Cemetery into the 'Cemetery of the Year' awards to help inform the Council and officers on achieving this aim.

### Current Situation

#### Friends of the Cemeteries

A meeting of the group was held on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023. The notes from the meeting are attached as **Appendix A**.

Members are asked to note the minutes and the information contained therein and consider any further recommendations as a result. Officers will undertake actions agreed at the meeting.

#### Cemetery of the Year Awards

This year the score received by the Town Council was 453 out of 700. In 2022, the score was 455 and the average score of comparable to other Council-run burial grounds (as advised by the organisers) was 466 so Windrush Cemetery is within the average range for the services it provides.

In 2022, 26 questions were scored less than the average mark, of these WTC received 14 'zero' marks which was generally repeated in 2023. 27 questions scored a greater higher than the average mark.

The questions where the Cemetery was marked down with zero points were related to:

- Not having a gate
- Not having a map of sections
- Not having individual grave search facilities available on the website
- Not having downloadable burial & memorial forms available on the website
- Having a small width of memorials (up to 2'6")
- Not allowing kerb sets/kerbs on cremation plots
- Not allowing porcelain photo plaques
- The cost of burying cremated remains.
- Burial times
- Facilitation of short notice burials (i.e., 24 hours)
- Providing rain protection at a burial (i.e., grave canopy)

Although the feedback is useful and can lead to improvement, some cannot be due to logistics and resources.

The Council may like to consider the benefit of entering the competition as it is a desk-top exercise which does not take into account the aesthetics of the facility and the other things an offer such as woodland and meadow burials, which are not readily available in other Council-owned burial grounds. The scoring system is also particularly complex, with no published criteria and weighted scoring.

The awards were entered to inform of best practice and to benchmark against other Councils. The Council's senior management team will review the feedback and feed into the developing strategic plan.

### **Environmental impact**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

### **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

### **Financial implications**

- Implications will be judged on individual future actions emanating from the feedback.

### **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report.

## **Notes from the Friends of the Cemeteries Meeting**

**Held on Tuesday 29 August 2023**

**In the Gallery Room, Corn Exchange**

**At 11am**

**Present:** Cllr Ruth Smith  
Cllr Duncan Enright  
2 x members of the public (including Chair, Mel Jones)

Adam Clapton                      Witney Town Council, Deputy Town Clerk  
Angus Whitburn                      Witney Town Council, Operations Manager  
Zoe Henstridge                      Witney Town Council, Admin Support Assistant – Halls &  
Green Spaces

### **1. Windrush Cemetery – Waterlogged Routes (raised by member)**

A regular visitor to the cemetery had advised that when wet, the ground at the cemetery was waterlogged and walking to graves was slippery and dangerous as there were no proper pathways.

Officers advised that by its nature as a lawn cemetery, the cemetery would be slippery when wet and there was little which could be done other than erecting signage. There was a long-term plan to install paths to sections F,G & H but there were currently no funds for this and the EMR the Council held was to facilitate future internal road improvements, not pathways.

It was agreed it be entered into these notes as a continuing issue which would be presented to the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee. Officers would also enquire as to whether there was any Section 106 developer funding available for cemetery enhancements.

### **2. Windrush Cemetery – Children’s Memorial Garden (raised by member)**

Officers advised the project had been delayed due to the lead officer leaving the Council. There was still work to do and this would be reviewed by the Operations office.

### **3. Windrush Cemetery – Nationality Funerals (raised by a member)**

Officers advised the current regulations did not allow 24-hour burials for religious denominations as it would be impossible to turn the graves around in that time with too many variables which could go wrong, i.e., weather etc. The terms did allow requests to be made for weekend interments and most requests could be met within 3 days. If 24 hours was a requirement, enquiries were directed to Oxford City who were able to facilitate. Only one request had been received in the current year and officers were keeping the number received under review.

### **4. Tower Hill Cemetery - Pedestrian Gate (raised by a member)**

A request was made for a self-closing hinge on the gate to ensure it was closed as it was often left open by those using it.

Officers agreed to consider the request and raised that there had been several instances of ASB in the area. It had considerably increased foot traffic in the cemetery and was seen as a space to

gather – several benches had historically been removed in the cemetery due to this. It was queried whether there was a community order in place which officers advised they would investigate further.

**5. Tower Hill Cemetery - Memorial Wall Clearing (raised by a member)**

Officers advised this had gone well and it was looking much better. There had been clear communications and the Council had received no complaints. The Friends had received some queries and advised items had only been relocated, not taken away completely.

**6. Tower Hill Cemetery – Map & Information Board (raised by officers)**

Officers advised a map showing cemetery sections, points of interest and DDI issues was being created to go in the car park area of the cemetery. It was an action arising from the 2021 DDI audit of the site. It would also contain a short history of the cemetery.

**7. Both Cemeteries – Noticeboards & Communications (raised by officers)**

Officers advised an audit of the information on the noticeboards had been carried out. The information was being reviewed and condensed and new information would be more welcoming and contain information highlighting to visitors what can/can't be put on graves, when grave topping occurs, and other items regularly queried or complained about. The Friends of the Cemeteries poster was also being refreshed.

In response to the last query, members asked if officers looked at what was permitted in other cemeteries, and it was confirmed they did.

**8. Grief Café (raised by member)**

The café was seeking help to advertise its services more. Small cards had already been put out in the Council's premises and if further assistance was wanted from the Council it would need a written request outlining how.

It was agreed that the Chair contacts local undertakers to also advertise the service with bereaved relatives.

**9. Post boxes to Heaven (raised by member)**

Everyone agreed this had been a successful, positively received Town Council project which would make a real difference to grieving families. The second box had been installed in Tower Hill Cemetery and it was confirmed they were checked and emptied regularly, and the contents shredded to ensure confidentiality.

Overall, Members were happy with the way things were proceeding. It had been an exceptionally wet summer and weeds vegetation had been problematic at the start of the summer, but this was now under control- it was worth noting that one whole grass cut at Tower Hill takes 4 days. The Council were hopeful of beginning an audit of incorrect graves/items on them at the cemeteries which did not confirm to the rules so this might generate queries ahead of the next Friends meeting. Officers agreed to keep members up to date with any further planned work.

The meeting closed at 12pm.