

PADSTOW TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Leisure, Tourism and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on Tuesday 4 April 2023 at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Station House, Padstow at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors A P Flide (Chairman), A N Rees (Vice Chairman), Mrs J Dawe and M Rickard

In Attendance: Mrs K Pemberton (Town Clerk) and Mrs S Daly (Support Officer and Minute Taker) and 2 members of the public.

LTOS2022/58 Apologies and Announcements: i) Apologies: Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs J Colwill and Mrs T Walter.
ii) Announcements: There were no announcements

LTOS2022/59 Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest.

LTOS2022/60 Public Participation: 2 members of the public addressed the meeting in relation to agenda item 4, Padstow Cemetery Regulations: Children's Graves. Comments included:

- Wished to reiterate comments from last meeting and information set out in daughter's letter [confidential papers];
- A lot of the information in the agenda papers had been provided by them, having been forwarded to them from SANDS. Glad to see the research had been used in the agenda papers.
- The research referred to in paragraph 2.4 of the agenda papers [p2] describes how they feel as a family, and in particular how their daughter feels;
- Understand that distinguishing children's graves could cause controversy. Although as a family what they do for their granddaughter's grave is very different to what they do for the graves of other relatives;
- Next week would have been granddaughter's 4th birthday, wish to be able to take a present and a card. Grief for the loss of a child is different because with each missed milestone the loss gets harder;
- Understand that in respect of the older cremation area it would be difficult to distinguish specific grave spaces but in new cremation area where granddaughter is buried, this is not difficult because of the kerbing [stone chippings and edges];
- Appreciative of Committee's consideration of the matter, have noticed that children's graves are scattered around the cemetery and realise that changes may cause issues.

LTOS2022/61 Padstow Cemetery Regulations: Children's Graves: Members began by giving consideration to introducing regulations specific to children's graves. As at the last meeting, concern was expressed at differentiating between grief. It was also felt that determining the age of a child would be difficult. Theoretically the grave of a person aged 18 and a few days would be treated differently to that of a person aged just under 18 years but both could be considered children by the family.

Members were unanimous in wishing to see all graves treated in the same way.

RESOLVED Not to recommend the introduction of regulations specific to children's graves and that children's graves and adult graves continue to be treated in the same way.

Members recognised the academic research in the agenda papers and the advice of the ICCM as well as the contributions from members of the public at this and the previous meeting. Members were unanimous in wishing to see changes to the permitted items on graves but were all mindful of the need to manage the cemetery effectively for the benefit of all.

There was discussion around setting greater clarification in respect of regulation 51 and being more specific about what items could be permitted and that this might be more helpful and positive. However, it was noted that it would still be necessary to include some specific preclusions e.g glass to ensure there is no ambiguity. It was also suggested that if making changes it would be a good opportunity to consider being "greener" in the cemetery, perhaps avoiding plastic flowers and cellophane.

There was support for the suggestion of a defined area within a grave space for mementoes, one member thought this could be defined by fencing. It was felt this would allow people to personalise graves whilst ensuring ease of cemetery maintenance. There was discussion as to whether the number of permitted items should be limited to a specified number. However, it was felt this would provide additional issues, such as team members having to determine which item should be removed if there were more than the set amount and potentially removing the most sentimental.

It was suggested that should any changes be made to the regulations regarding mementoes then it would be prudent that at the same time, defined policies and procedures for the Council's management of the same be set and communicated to grave owners. In particular, the regularity of checking graves and the process for removal of items which are either broken, perceived to be dangerous, or not permitted.

There was discussion of potential items that could be permitted such as solar lights and discussion of whether it would be appropriate to restrict the height of such items. However, it was felt this level of detail would be better considered at a future meeting subject to Full Council agreeing to Committee's recommendations for change. Members were in agreement that a good way forward would be to introduce a defined memorial area in front of the headstone for earthen grave spaces and on the cremation tablet for cremation plots, and to revise regulations 51-53 to reflect this.

It was noted there would be no enforcement action in respect of paragraphs 51-53 whilst they were being revised.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL that i) paragraphs 51-53 of the Padstow Cemetery regulations be revised and that any revision be prescriptive about permitted mementoes rather than solely prohibitive; and ii) to accommodate these revisions, regulations be introduced setting a defined memorial area immediately in front of a headstone for mementoes not exceeding a specified area or height; iii) in respect of cremation areas, the defined memorial area be limited to the cremation tablet; and iv) that the Leisure, Tourism and Open Spaces Committee work up the detail of these recommendations at a future meeting.

Having reached a decision regarding this item it was no longer necessary to move to agenda items 5 and 6 and the Chairman closed the meeting, thanking members of the public for attending.

Meeting closed 6.36 pm