

COMMITTEE: BURIALS & PROPERTIES
DATE: 13TH SEPTEMBER 2010
PURPOSE: TO RE-CONSIDER THE PREVIOUS RESOLUTION TO ALLOW THE
PRE-PURCHASE OF GRAVES AT HAILSHAM CEMETERY

RECOMMENDATION:

Resolve to recommend that pre-purchasing of graves at Hailsham Cemetery other than at the time of death not be permitted.

1. Background:

Until 2002 it had been possible to pre-purchase grave plots for future use in Hailsham Cemetery. The Council then resolved that "acquisition of pre-purchase burial plots be permitted to family members of the deceased at the time of interment only" (*minute BP/02/1/28 refers*).

At the meeting of the Burial and Properties Committee held on 14th September 2009 the following resolution was agreed:

RESOLVED to recommend that the Committee Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Town Clerk are delegated to produce plans to revise the pre-purchase scheme in a designated area of the Cemetery, with two sections; one consecrated and one non-consecrated for 20 and 5 people respectively. This trial to be for a two-year period. Purchase of a grave space would be at the fee applicable at the time of purchase with the difference between that and the purchase fee applicable at the time of the first interment being paid at the time of interment. (*Minute BP/09/2/104 refers*).

This resolution was ratified without amendment at the Council meeting on 5th October 2009.

Since this policy to allow pre-purchasing of graves was permitted in 2009, only three tentative enquires in respect of pre-purchasing have been made; two of these have been from outside the parish.

The Chairman of the Burial and Properties Committee has requested that in light of this poor response the matter be placed on the agenda for this meeting with a view to continue with the pre 14th September 2009.

2. Financial Implications

The loss of any possible income from the small number of potential pre-purchases in the short-term will be more than compensated for by the fact that it will lengthen the lifetime of the Cemetery.

At some time in the near future additional land will need to be purchased to meet the needs of an expanding town and surrounding areas when the Cemetery is at full capacity.

3. Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications.

4. Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications.

5. Health and Safety Implications

There are no health and safety implications.

6. Conclusions

Members are asked to consider the following:

1. Is the low number of enquiries in respect of pre-purchasing of grave spaces indicative that the take up would be minimal?

2. Does the benefit of a small amount of potential income in the short-term outweigh the disadvantage of the shortening of the timescale for purchasing additional land for burials?

By setting aside a small dedicated area of the Cemetery go against relatives' wishes to be buried near their deceased?

3. Is the policy of allowing pre-purchasing of grave space at the time of a relative's death the correct one?

4. If they wish to proceed with a pre-purchase scheme, do they want it open to non-parishioners?

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