

PRESTON UNDER SCAR PARISH COUNCIL

27 FEBRUARY 2023 – AGENDA ITEM 7

REPORT OF THE CLERK

VILLAGE CEMETERY

1. Introduction

This report deals with 3 issues relating to the Cemetery on which the Parish Council needs to make decisions, namely:

- (1) Grant Offer from North Yorkshire County Council towards cost of the Cemetery Extension works
- (2) Quotes received for Phase 1 of the Cemetery works
- (3) Current Cemetery capacity

2. Grant Offer from North Yorkshire County Council to fund the cost of the Cemetery Extension Works

Following enquiries about the possible availability of grant aid towards the cost of the works required to extend the current cemetery, a grant offer of £1,371.96 has been received from North Yorkshire County Council, to be funded from County Councillor Sedgwick's Locality Budget.

The grant is towards the cost of removing the hedge which divides the current cemetery area and the area for the extension, pasture topping and rabbit proofing the cemetery (ie Phase 1 and 2 of the works). It is subject to a number of conditions, set out in the grant offer letter attached as Appendix A to this report.

Councillors are requested to consider the grant offer and related conditions and, if satisfied, authorise the Clerk and the Chairman to formally accept the grant.

3. Quotes received for Phase One of the extension works

Three contractors were approached to provide quotes for phase 1 of the works ie

- The removal and chipping of the current hedge line which divides the current area of the cemetery from the area for the extension.
- The grinding and of the hedgerow stumps down below ground level (*note: although it was initially intended to dig out the hedge roots, one of the two initial quotes received did not provide for this but for grinding down the stumps. In order to ensure quotes were submitted on a like for like basis both contractors were contacted and have now both submitted quotes on the basis of grinding down the hedge stumps. There is a concern that digging out the hedge roots could risk compromising the roots of the memorial tree (silver birch) planted close to the hedge, potentially undermine the*

stability of the wall surrounding the cemetery and risk disturbing the graves situated closest to the hedge.)

- Removal of what remains of the fence line
- Levelling of the ground and reseeding as necessary
- Pasture Topping the area of the extension

One contractor did not respond to the initial telephone enquiry to establish whether they would be able to supply a quote, but quotations were received from 2 other local contractors.

Copies of the two quotes received are attached in full for Councillors at Appendix B and the total amounts of their respective quotes are set out below. In order to respect commercial confidentiality, the contractors concerned are referred to below as Contractor A and Contractor B.

Contractor	Value of Quote
A	£1780.00p (subject to amount of topsoil needed) excl VAT (ie £2,136.00 incl VAT)
B	£1359.96p (subject to amount of topsoil needed) excl VAT

Councillors are invited to consider the quotes received for the work and determine which quote should be accepted.

4. Current Cemetery Capacity

The current remaining capacity (ie unused and unreserved burial plots) in the Cemetery is as follows:

Consecrated ground – 3 individual plots available (ie no adjoining plots available)
Unconsecrated ground – 12 plots available, most of which are adjoining plots

The Cemetery database indicates that there are a further 14 burial plots which have been reserved. Of these:

- 5 (plots 64, 88, 91, 145 and 161) appear to be reservations, for which the Council has no record that any fee was paid.
- 2 (plots 216 and 218) appear to be draft reservations by named individuals. There is no record of the date of reservation or of any fee being paid. One of these is adjacent to the grave of someone bearing the same surname.
- 1 (plot 4) appears to have been reserved by a named individual but no date of reservation or fee paid has been recorded
- 1 (plot 109) has no name recorded, no date of the reservation recorded or of any fee being paid.

Unfortunately, no paper or electronic records exist which shed any further light on these reservations or provide any means or lines of enquiry for contacting the individuals concerned. A check against the current register of electors indicates that none of the individuals concerned are currently registered electors.

Given the current, very limited, available capacity in the Cemetery, it is suggested that, as time permits, the Clerk investigates further the status of the above reservations and, in particular, appropriate ways of dealing with the “draft” reservations and reports back to the Parish Council as necessary.