



North Hykeham Town Council

Minutes of the Town Council extra ordinary meeting 03/26
held on Thursday 30th July 2026 at 7pm



Councillors Present: C Nnamdi (Chair), K Byrne, K Harrison, J Holt, G Killingsworth, M Lofts, D Lovejoy, T Ogden, SP Roe, KG Sampson, B Samways, E Smith, H Stewart, R Sylvester, P Wray

In Attendance: Mrs M Parker – Town Clerk
Mrs E Williams – Assistant Clerk
20+ members of the public

Public Session:

Two members of the public gave statements to the Council, asking them to have considered the findings of the CDS report as to the conditions at the Mill Lane Cemetery and the prospect of burials therein. Within their statements, it was asked that if the Council decided it could not re-open for full coffin burials that the Council gives details of its reasoning.

- 03-26.1 Apologies for absence and acceptance of reasons given to the Clerk prior to the meeting.**
Apologies for absence and the reasons given were presented for Cllr Cruickshanks.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies of absence and reasons given from Cllr Cruickshanks.

- 03-26.2 Receipt of any Declaration of Members' Interest under the Localism Act 2011**
No declarations of interest were made.

- 03-26.3 Minutes of the Town Council meetings held on 9th July 2026 to be approved**
It was **RESOLVED** to accept the draft minutes of the Town Council meeting held on the 9th of July 2026, as a true record of that meeting and were signed as the Minutes of that Meeting accordingly.

- 03-26.4 As the Burial Authority, to consider the future operations and service provisions at Mill Lane Cemetery**
Cllr Nnamdi reminded the meeting that a public meeting to discuss the findings of the CDS report had been held on the 24th of June. She confirmed that there were 142 Exclusive Rights of Burial (EroB) deeds which were currently affected by the ceasing of full coffin burials; 101 were for double depth graves where one interment had already taken place, 3 were double depth graves with no interment, and 38 were single depth graves.

Councillors' previous discussions were not based on groundwater alone but also considered how groundwater conditions affected every stage of delivering a coffin burial, including grave excavation, groundwater management, spoil handling, health and safety, contractor requirements, funeral arrangements, remaining cemetery capacity and the long-term operation of the cemetery. It was these wider operational implications that showed that reopening the cemetery for coffin burials in ground which has not previously been disturbed would not be considered safe, whilst recognising the unique circumstances of existing double-depth graves. Councillors had considered the following prior to the meeting:

- Independent professional advice (CDS)
- Environment Agency comments
- Public representations
- Operational requirements
- Health and safety
- Groundwater management

- Waste handling
- Remaining capacity
- Fairness to deed holders
- Long-term management

The meeting was reminded that at the public meeting it was suggested by a show of hands of those present at that meeting that any additional costs associated with a full coffin burial should be added to the Council Tax billing for North Hykeham residents. Cllr Nnamdi explained that operational requirements extend far beyond the excavation of a grave. Depending on the circumstances, these could include specialist excavation, groundwater and soil testing, management of excavated material, specialist disposal arrangements and enhanced health and safety measures. It was confirmed that these additional costs could not be funded by the Council or Council Tax billing, as the Town Council is not a principal authority and therefore had no legal power to use public monies to cover the costs of funerals. These costs would instead need to be met by those arranging the funeral.

Cllr Roe stated that reopening the cemetery to full coffin burials in ground which had not been previously disturbed could not be delivered safely, reliably and consistently over the long term. It was added that even if this had not been the case, the number of available plots for single burials was insufficient to meet the needs of those with current held a deed and that it would be impossible for the council to manage who did and did not receive those graves. Members were also concerned that if groundwater conditions could prevent a grave from being safely prepared on the day of a funeral, and in consideration that to bury a coffin in water was illegal, this still created the possibility that a funeral may be unable to take place as planned and at very short notice.

Members were clear that the Council had a duty of care to all those involved in a funeral, be that Council staff, Funeral Directors, grave diggers, or mourners.

A proposal to re-open the cemetery to full coffin burials both single and double depth was made but as there was no Seconded the motion failed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the cemetery would remain closed to new coffin burials, including those who have a deed for a single burial plot, but that second interments in existing double-depth graves where a burial has already taken place will continue to be permitted, subject to all operational, environmental and health and safety requirements being met. The additional costs associated with these requirements will be met by those arranging the burial. Interment of cremation ashes will continue to be permitted across the cemetery.

The meeting closed at 7.36pm.

Actions from this meeting:

Item No:	Action	Allocated to	Date to be Completed by
3-26.4	Draw up the full operational requirements for the cemetery for information to be shared with the public and Funeral Directors	E&O committee	13 th August 2026
3-26.4	Letters to deedholders and updating of the council's website when the full operational requirements are devised	Town Clerk	After E&O August meeting