



**Minutes for Wonthaggi and San Remo
Cemetery Trust Meeting
Wednesday, 27 March 2019
Bass Coast Shire Council
Council Chamber, Bass Coast Civic Centre,
Baillieu Street East, Wonthaggi
10.30am**

These minutes are due to be confirmed on 12 June 2019.

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Meeting commenced

The meeting commenced at 10.33am

A Present and Apologies

- Trust Members: Cr Brett Tessari, Bunurong Ward
 Cr Julian Brown, Bunurong Ward
 Cr Les Larke, Bunurong Ward
 Cr Stephen Fullarton, Island Ward
 Cr Pamela Rothfield, Island Ward
 Cr Michael Whelan, Island Ward
 Cr Geoff Ellis, Western Port Ward
 Cr Clare Le Serve, Western Port Ward
- Officers: Ms Ali Wastie, Chief Executive Officer
 Ms Annette Waters, Coordinator Governance and Business
 Systems
 Ms Debbie Adamson, Cemeteries and Committee Officer
- Guests: Wonthaggi Cemetery Friends Group
 Wonthaggi RSL Sub-Branch
- Apologies: Cr Bruce Kent, Western Port Ward

B Community Question Time

There were no Community Questions.

C Confirmation of Minutes

C.1 Cemetery Trust held on 14 November 2018

Decision

Moved: Cr. Clare Le Serve / Seconded: Cr. Geoff Ellis

That the minutes of the Cemetery Trust held on 14 November 2018 be confirmed.

CARRIED

D Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

There were no Matters Arising from Previous Minutes.

E Petitions and Deputations

There were no Petitions and Deputations.

F Wonthaggi and San Remo Trust

F.1 Cemetery interment figures year to date

File No: CM19/91
Division: Corporate & Community
Council Plan Strategic Objective: Governance

We are responsive, open, transparent
and financially sustainable

Declaration

The author has no direct or indirect interests in relation to this report.

Summary

The Trust is responsible for the governance of the cemeteries including the key roles of setting strategic direction, approving the annual budget, monitoring performance, ensuring compliance, developing policy, high level stakeholder management and ensuring that a risk management framework is in place. The Trusts delegate day-to-day management of the cemeteries within its control to Council Officers in order to provide administration and operational support.

The number of interments of burials and cremated remains are an important consideration in how the Trust plans its availability of plots and sets its fees for future years.

The purpose of this report is to;

- Note the cemeteries interment figures from 1 July 2018 to 6 March 2019.
- Note the reporting of Right of Interments and plaque purchases made from 1 July 2018 to 6 March 2019.

Cemetery interment figures year to date

Financial Year	Wonthaggi Cemetery				San Remo Cemetery			
	Interment Ashes	Interment Burials	Plaques	Right of Interment	Interment Ashes	Interment Burials	Plaques	Right of Interment
2012/13	5	43			0	18		
2013/14	5	42			1	12		
2014/15	7	47			4	6		
2015/16	10	43			2	5		
2016/17	8	43			3	5		
2017/18	13	52	93	48	4	6	7	9
2018/19 *	7	35	57	21	6	7	16	11

* Year to date figures

The San Remo Cemetery figures show an increase year to date across interments, right of interments and plaques. The memorial garden is proving popular and families are reserving plots next to prior interments.

Wonthaggi Cemetery figures are tracking to those of last year. We have found that customers are choosing to purchase one plot instead of two, with a double depth grave, which brings the number of right of interments down. As this has been identified we are reviewing our charges to capture this change for future earnings.

Recommendation

That the Trusts note the cemetery interment figures year to date.

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report

Decision

The Wonthaggi Cemetery Trust and San Remo Cemetery Trust interment figures year to date report was noted.

F.2 Works completed at the Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemeteries

File No: CM19/92
Division: Corporate & Community
Council Plan Strategic Objective: Governance

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Declaration

The author has no direct or indirect interests in relation to this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to note the works completed at the Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemeteries.

Works completed at the Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemeteries

The following works have been completed at the cemeteries from 18 August 2018 to March 2019.

Wonthaggi

- Stage 2 Drainage project – completed.
- Two lawn beams have been installed which completes the Tea Tree section of the cemetery.

In accordance with the Wonthaggi Cemetery Masterplan, a feature level survey is required to be undertaken which will set the scope for the next stages of drainage works required. This survey will provide information on the above surface and underground structures and contours which could impact on the delivery of the next stage of the drainage plan.

San Remo

The grant application of funding for the San Remo Masterplan was successful through the Department of Health and Human Services. The project has commenced with the first stage being Masterplan consultation with key stakeholders.

Recommendation

That the Trust note the works completed at the Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemeteries

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report

Decision

The works completed at the Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemeteries report was noted.

F.3 Cemetery Management Officer Report

File No: CM19/93
Division: Corporate & Community
Council Plan Strategic Objective: Governance

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Declaration

The author has no direct or indirect interests in relation to this report.

Summary

The Trust is responsible for the governance of the cemeteries including the key roles of setting strategic direction, approving the annual budget, monitoring performance, ensuring compliance, developing policy, high level stakeholder management and ensuring that a risk management framework is in place.

The Trusts delegate day-to-day management of the cemeteries within its control to Council Officers in order to provide administration and operational support.

This quarterly report is aimed at providing the Trust members with an update on the operational matters in relation to the Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemetery Trusts.

Wonthaggi Cemetery Masterplan progress

The Wonthaggi Masterplan provided a staging plan on actions to be completed. Current status of all the actions are outlined in the 1-5 years plan attached (AT-1).

Friends of Wonthaggi Cemetery Meeting actions

The table below provides an update of the actions occurring at the Wonthaggi Cemetery.

Action	Status
Garden Maintenance	Completed General contract requirements addressed with our contractor.
Tree Maintenance	Completed A few trees have been reported as dangerous or with dropped limbs. All have now been reported and actioned.
Weeding monumental graves	Completed Working with our Parks team and contractors to address long term issues under planned maintenance with specified weed control and safety measures.
Manual Burial Register	Carried over Further review required.

San Remo Cemetery Masterplan progress

An application to cover the costs of a masterplan was submitted to the Department of Human Services grants program in November 2018 and was successful.

A masterplan for San Remo Cemetery has commenced with initial stakeholder consultation. The purpose to explore opportunities to improve cemetery amenity for members of the public now and in the future. The masterplan will address key issues including the use of the land, existing facilities, infrastructure, marketability and the character and experience of the public.

A detailed Masterplan will involve discussion on the future of the southern end of the Cemetery (where the mound of dirt sits), future burial and cremated remains interment options, recognition of early burials and unmarked graves, and accessibility.

Friends of San Remo Cemetery Meeting actions

A meeting was held with the San Remo Friends group in January and February 2019. The table below provides an update of the actions occurring at the San Remo Cemetery.

Action	Status
Plaque height variance to be discussed with our contractor and corrected where possible.	Completed Discussion over good, better, best option for plaques in the memorial garden.
Officer to send brochure to Friends Group for final input.	Completed. Brochure now accessible at Funeral Directors and Council Offices.
Agreement to the use of different areas of the memorial garden beds (internal only) and pavers placed in the allocated locations.	Underway Pavers have not yet been placed into all the garden areas but this will occur in the next couple of months. Discussions regarding the numbering of paver locations for the purpose of identification for Council Officer, grave digger and public to purchase.
A memorial garden fact sheet (including layout map)	Completed This can be found with the brochure. Agreement for more than one interment is possible in any one location.
Respond to the Friends Group in regards to the financial figures outlined in the audit undertaken in 2013.	Completed The Friends Group have received a response with reference made to an audit of the Abstract of Accounts 2016/2017.
Discuss memorialisation for historical burials in the area.	Carried over until San Remo Masterplan recommendations are finalised.

Shed leaking from the inside.	Completed A solution has been agreed with the Friends group with minimal cost.
Memorial garden maintenance	Completed Assistance provided to remove heavier rooted plants and removal of garden waste.
Garden maintenance issues	Completed Addressed with our contractor regarding mowing and slashing large grassed area

Correspondence from the Wonthaggi RSL

At the 14 November 2018 Trust Meeting the Trust agreed to provide a letter of support for the memorial wall to the Wonthaggi RSL when/if requested to do so.

The letter was requested and has been provided.

Recommendation

That the Trust notes the Cemetery Management Officer report

Attachments

AT-1 Wonthaggi Cemetery- masterplan progress | Page

Decision

The Cemetery Management Officers report was noted.

F.4 Cemeteries Financial report

File No: CM19/94
Division: Corporate & Community
Council Plan Strategic Objective: Governance

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Declaration

The author has no direct or indirect interests in relation to this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Trust with the Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemeteries 2018/19 financial position, the 2019/20 budget and to ensure the appropriate fee structure is in place for the long term sustainability of the cemeteries.

Wonthaggi Cemetery 2019/2020 Budget

The current year actual spend, current year forecast and next year's budget figures are represented in the table below.

	2018/19 Current Year Actual	2018/19 Current Year Forecast	2019/20 Budget
INCOME	\$118,000	\$154,000	\$155,000
EXPENSES	\$94,234	\$138,000	\$126,500

Expenditure throughout the year has been focused on undertaking works outlined in the masterplan including roads rehabilitation, signage, installation of bollards and tree maintenance. Also, a further two lawn beams have been poured at a cost of \$14,000 which will ensure requirements are met for at least the next two years.

San Remo Cemetery 2019/2020 Budget

	2018/19 Current Year Actual	2018/19 Current Year Forecast	2019/20 Budget
INCOME	\$33,472	\$43,000	\$45,000
EXPENSES	\$20,161	\$28,088	\$30,000

There have been a number of reservations for the memorial garden and niche wall areas in this year.

With the introduction of a monthly ground maintenance contract, expenses have been higher than previous years.

San Remo Cemetery seems to be tracking to achieve a small profit for the year which will be allocated to the perpetual maintenance fund, attributed to a high number of memorial garden interments and reservations compared to previous years.

Cemetery fee structure

Cemetery Trusts are best placed to determine appropriate level of fees for the services provided by the Cemeteries. The role of the Department of Health and Human Services in approving fees for cemetery services is to review applications for fee increases from a Cemetery Trust to ensure there are no anomalies in a Trust's application and to seek justification for increases outside the annual consumer price index (CPI) process.

Revenue raised by a Cemetery Trust through approved fees and charges is expected to:

- encompass current cemetery operational costs
- cover repairs or replacement costs associated with cemetery facilities and equipment.
- ensure adequate financial reserves for future operation.

Section 12(2)(a) and section 12A (2)(a) of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003* (the Act) requires a Trust in exercising its functions under the Act to have regard to its obligations in relation to funding the perpetual maintenance of the public cemetery for which it is responsible, but does not obligate it to do so. Council as a perpetual organisation has historically 'had regard' to its perpetual maintenance obligations by providing funds for maintenance as required.

Incidentally, the *Cemeteries Act 1958* contains no reference to perpetual maintenance and accordingly there was no legally binding obligation on a cemetery trust to set aside funds for perpetual maintenance.

The Trust has historically increased fees in line with CPI. Fees increased by CPI are effective from 1 July each year. The Trust should ensure that an appropriate percentage of all fees charged for interment are set aside for perpetual maintenance in the reserve bank accounts.

Bass Coast Shire Council currently subsidises the operation of the Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemeteries with administration support and general maintenance in the order of \$90,000 per year.

The cemetery fee structure allows the Trust to:

- Cover operational costs and set aside perpetual maintenance and capital works funding.
- Cover the contract cost associated with running and maintaining the cemeteries.
- Cover the costs incurred by the Trust when we sell plaques to the public.
- Supply an appropriate level of service for ground maintenance.

The fee structure for the coming three years for both Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemeteries is attached. The proposed fees are communicated to the public through the Council website, and the Cemetery Trust report.

The Department of Health and Human Services has provided input into the proposed fees.

Changes recommended are as follows:

An increase of fee for second and third interment due to the grave digging costs being the same for first, second and third interment.

Added fee for dual Right of Interments (two people in one plot) as the current figures are showing customers deciding on one plot instead of separate plots. The administration time is doubled but we are currently not covering this in our fee structure.

Separation of ash interment fees from our plaque fee costs to provide clarification for customers and funeral directors.

The Department of Human Services has given their approval to the attached fee structure. Adoption of the fees will lead to implementation in July 2019.

The fee structures approved by the Department of Health and Human Services for Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemetery are presented for adoption.

Australian Tax Office (ATO)

The ATO have requested that the Cemetery Trusts give authority to named individuals so that Business Activity Statements can be lodged online and also make queries regarding GST over the phone when needed.

The following require this authority:

Manager Governance – Sharon Fowles

Manager Finance – Dave Filmalter

Coordinator Finance – Tess Dowthwaite

Coordinator Governance and Business Systems – Annette Waters

Recommendation

The Trust:

- 1. Note the financial reports for Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemetery.**
- 2. Note and adopt the increase in fees for Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemetery.**
- 3. Gives authority to the following staff to act on behalf of the Cemetery Trust for the purpose of liaising with the Australian Tax Office.**
 - Manager Governance – Sharon Fowles**
 - Manager Finance – Dave Filmalter**
 - Coordinator Finance – Tess Dowthwaite**
 - Coordinator Governance and Business Systems – Annette Waters**

Attachments

AT-1 Wonthaggi Cemetery Fee Structure 2019 | Page

AT-2 San Remo Cemetery Fee Structure 2019 | Page

Decision

Moved: Cr. Stephen Fullarton / Seconded: Cr. Geoff Ellis

The recommendation was adopted.

CARRIED

F.5 Updates from the Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemeteries Friends Groups

File No: CMI7/819
Division: Corporate & Community
Council Plan Strategic Objective: Governance

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Declaration

The author has no direct or indirect interests in relation to this report.

Summary

Council is the appointed Trusts for the San Remo and Wonthaggi Cemeteries.

The Trusts delegate day-to-day management of the cemeteries within its control to Council Officers in order to provide administration support. Officers work with volunteer groups which are named the Wonthaggi Cemetery Friends Group and San Remo Cemetery Friends Group. Having community involvement helps to enhance local awareness of and pride in the cemetery.

The purpose of this report is to cover the following business;

- Notes the updates from the Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemeteries Friends Groups

Updates from the Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemeteries Friends Groups

San Remo Cemetery Friends Group update

Update to be presented/provided by the Friends Group.

Wonthaggi Cemetery Friends group update

Update to be presented/provided by the Friends Group.

Recommendation

That the Trusts respectively note the updates from the Wonthaggi and San Remo Cemeteries Friends Groups

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report

Decision

Moved: Cr. Geoff Ellis / Seconded: Cr. Clare Le Serve

- 1. Request the Wonthaggi Friends Group cease the use of wooden grave markers at the Wonthaggi Cemetery.**
- 2. Bass Coast Shire Council CEO Ali Wastie, extended an offer for Trust Administration to work with the Wonthaggi Friends Group on an alternative option to the current wooden grave markers.**
- 3. The Chair Cr Pamela Rothfield extended an offer to meet separately with the Wonthaggi Friends Group to discuss the marking of graves.**
- 4. The San Remo Cemetery Friends report was noted.**

CARRIED

G General Business

There were no General Business.

Meeting closed

The meeting closed at 11.13am