



PEASEDOWN ST JOHN PARISH COUNCIL

Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, Bath BA2 8SN
Tel: 01761 433686 E-mail: clerk@peasedownstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk
www.peasedownstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of the Cemetery Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 18th July 2023 at 7.00pm at Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John

Present:

Councillors: Fiona Carr; Mandy Clarke; Richard Clarke; Audrey Gillard-Sprake (Chair); Howard Hartley (Vice-Chair); Les Sprake.

Cllrs Conor Ogilvie-Davidson and Jonathan Rich were also present at the meeting, in their capacity as Vice-Chair and Chair of Full Council respectively. As the Committee was quorate, they did not utilise their voting rights.

In attendance:

Tanya West - Parish Clerk & RFO.

Public Session: There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

Minute Ref.	Agenda Item	Action
CC001 – 18/07/2023	Attendance Roll Call and Declarations of Interest The attendance roll call was undertaken (those present are detailed above). No further interests to those already disclosed to the Monitoring Officer were declared.	
CC002 – 18/07/2023	Apologies for Absence With all committee members present at the meeting, there were no apologies for absence.	
CC003 – 18/07/2023	Election of Vice-Chair It was resolved to elect Cllr Howard Hartley as the Vice-Chair.	
CC004 – 18/07/2023	Minutes & Actions i. The minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on 11 th April 2023 had been circulated as pre-reading to provide new councillors with some background to ongoing matters. It was noted that these minutes had already been approved and were supplied for information only. ii. Some of tasks on the Actions Register on Planner had been updated, although further updates were required. The majority of the outstanding actions were items for discussion on the agenda. The Clerk to update all the actions on the Cemetery Committee Planner board by 31 st July 2023.	Clerk
CC005 – 18/07/2023	Items for Urgent Report There were no items for urgent report.	
CC006 – 18/07/2023	Cemetery Sub-Committee It was resolved to appoint a Cemetery Sub-Committee to work in line with the agreed Terms of Reference and Delegations (which consists of all members of the Personnel Committee and ex-officio members of the Chair and Vice-Chair of Full Council).	
CC007 –	Advisory Panel	

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18/07/2023	<p>The Cemetery Committee Advisory Panel Terms of Reference had been circulated as pre-reading and were reviewed at the meeting. It was suggested that some of the Advisory Panel meetings may benefit from being able to invite outside professionals and all councillors. It was therefore resolved that the membership of the Advisory Panel, as listed in the Terms of Reference, be amended to: <i>All members of the Cemetery Committee, along with Ex-Officio members of the Chair and Vice-Chair of Full Council, and all other parish councillors and/or any other outside professional at the discretion of the Chair.</i> <i>Depending on the topic under discussion, and resource availability, the Advisory Panel may or may not be supported by Parish Council staff. N.B. support can include the preparation of information for a meeting, but not necessarily include attendance at the meeting.</i></p> <p>It was further resolved to appoint a Cemetery Committee Advisory Panel to investigate specific projects/ matters and make recommendations in accordance with the agreed revised Terms of Reference.</p>	
CC008 – 18/07/2023	<p>Cemetery Related Policies & Procedures</p> <p>It was noted that the Interment and Memorial Policy is the only policy allocated to the Cemetery Committee on the Council's Strategic Documentation Register. The Clerk advised that following her recent attendance to an ICCM training session on granting, exercising, and transferring the Exclusive Rights of Burial, further amendments and appendices are required to be added to this policy and provided a brief summary of the additions required.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Clerk make the proposed necessary changes and upload the amended document to Teams for councillors to review and make comment prior to it being adopted at a future meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk to create a folder specifically relating to policies on the Cemetery Committee channel on Teams.</p>	<p>Clerk & Cllrs.</p> <p>Clerk</p>
CC009 – 18/07/2023	<p>Risk Register</p> <p>The sections of the Risk Register associated with Ashgrove Cemetery were noted, together with updates on items that have been amended. Arrangements for the review of this document and associated risk assessments throughout the forthcoming council year were also considered.</p> <p>In addition to the risks already identified, the following additional points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There has been an increase in dog fouling at the cemetery, which was causing issues for the Caretaker when strimming/mowing. It was suggested that additional signage could be put up at the cemetery together with a dog-waste bag dispenser, and a post put on the Parish Council Facebook page. If the situation does not improve, then it may be necessary to ban dogs from the cemetery. ➤ A full weeding/planting/maintenance programme has been created, which is being reviewed alongside the list of tasks for the Caretaking staff to ensure all areas of the cemetery are sufficiently maintained. ➤ Mowing presents a potential risk to visitors, and it was suggested that signs should be put up at the entrance to the cemetery to advise visitors when mowing was taking place. ➤ There was a risk to staff if they have not been properly trained for the tasks they perform at the cemetery, and it was suggested that this could be covered off by linking to the staff training matrix and reported on at the next meeting. ➤ Any alcohol found at the cemetery should be disposed of. 	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>All</p>
CC010 – 18/07/2023	<p>Review of Finances 2023/24</p> <p>Councillors reviewed the income and expenditure report for the 2023/24 financial year for those budgets specifically linked to the Cemetery Committee. It was noted there will soon be expenditure for signage and waste removal.</p>	

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	It was suggested that a report could be produced that tracks dates/types of interments and memorials year on year to help identify if the income is on target.	Clerk
CC011 – 18/07/2023	<p>Review of Fees In accordance with Financial Regulation 9.3 the fees for Ashgrove Cemetery should be reviewed annually. The fees/charges for Ashgrove Cemetery had been circulated as pre-reading. Due to rising expenditure on utility bills, fuel for the mowers, staff costs, etc. it was resolved to increase the cemetery fees and charges by 10% to help cover the increasing running costs of the Cemetery. The Clerk to publish the revised fees and issue to the relevant funeral directors. The Clerk to diarise that an annual comparison of Ashgrove Cemetery fees against other cemeteries is actioned for the meeting this time next year.</p>	Clerk Clerk Clerk
CC012 – 18/07/2023	<p>Interments and Memorials Councillors received updates and decisions were made as follows:</p> <p>i. Interments and memorials since the last meeting. Any interments to be undertaken at the cemetery to be posted on the Cemetery Committee channel on Teams to keep councillors updated. It was reported that some of the memorials installed in the newer sections of the cemetery are not being kept inline; the Clerk to follow up with the stone masons accordingly.</p> <p>ii. Photographing and documenting of the plots and memorials. A time to be arranged between Cllr Rich and the Clerk take some aerial images at the cemetery when he has spare time and when the weather is suitable.</p> <p>iii. Digitisation of the burial records. This is almost complete; the anomaly wording on a few of the memorials is still to be checked and will be actioned during August. The anomalies on the older records regarding the exclusive rights purchaser can also now be tackled following the training course referred to under minute CC008 – 18/07/2023. Update to be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p>iv. Topple Testing of the Memorials. The stone mason had to amend the dates to undertake the topple testing, so it is now being actioned week commencing 25th September 2023. Notices are being arranged accordingly. Any gaps/holes within the kerb set gravestones will be assessed as part of this process.</p>	Clerk Clerk JR & Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk
CC013 – 18/07/2023	<p>Garden of Remembrance Updates on the Garden of Remembrance were received, and decisions were made as follows:</p> <p>i. Weeding of beds. It was noted that some work had been carried out to weed the beds at the cemetery and the Clerk had booked-in contractors to carry out some further weeding to get the situation under control. In future, once the beds are in a manageable condition, Cllr Howard Hartley planned to organise a group of volunteers to help with weeding for 1-2 hours each week, in conjunction with the Clerk/Caretakers.</p> <p>ii. Removal of commemorative flowers/items/trinkets on graves and installation of signs. In the most part, grave holders continue to be keeping to the regulations. The wording ‘toppers’ to the trinket sign stands would be ordered and all signs to be installed by mid-August. The Clerk to advise councillors once they are in situ.</p>	Clerk Clerk

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	<p>iii. Planting at the scattering area at the Garden of Remembrance. The perennial planting earlier in the year has suffered due to the hot and dry weather experienced in May and June. Some of the plants have survived but many have died and unfortunately weeds have flourished. Before any additional planting is undertaken in this area a solution for watering of the site needs to be established (see minute CC014 – 18/07/2023 item i for a possible solution). In the meantime, rainwater butt collection was suggested, the Clerk was asked to investigate into this with the insurance broker as other parish councils have been denied cover with installing stored water in public places due to the risk of legionella if the water is used for purposes other than what is recommended.</p> <p>iv. Upgrading and extending the pathways within the Garden of Remembrance – Update on the tender process. The revised tender specification document, as agreed at the last meeting, has been uploaded to the Government procurement website, Contracts Finder in draft format. The document has been amended so the deadline date for tenders is early September (to avoid the holiday season) and for works to take place during October 2023 (to avoid the worst of the bad weather). The Clerk to advise councillors once the contract notice is ‘live’. An Advisory Panel meeting will need to be arranged after the submission deadline to review any tenders received in order to make recommendations to Full Council to release the ear marked reserves.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>CC014 – 18/07/2023</p>	<p>Cemetery Maintenance & Improvements Councillors received updates and made associated decisions on the general maintenance of Ashgrove Cemetery and considered any works to be undertaken, as follows:</p> <p>i. Installation of a new water pipe and irrigation standpipe as an alternative option to the proposed new bib tap. Pre-reading provided a quotation for the installation of a new water pipe from the main building to run along the boundary wall to the Garden of Remembrance to a standpipe, as an alternative to the proposed new bib-tap previously discussed. This was considered to be a better option and the Clerk to obtain two additional quotations and a recommendation to be made to Full Council for funding of up to £4,000 to enable these works to take place.</p> <p>ii. Waste removal. The contractor is due to remove the waste from the bottom car park within the next two weeks.</p> <p>iii. Tree nursery. The saplings are still growing; although the area is covered in bind weed again. The Assistant Caretaker to remove the bind weed this area later in the week. Once established, it is hoped the volunteer group will be able to keep this area weed free.</p> <p>iv. Entrance gates. Since the last meeting the cemetery gates have been cleaned, repaired, and repainted and were reinstalled by the contractor on 21st April 2023. Councillors confirmed they were happy with the work completed on them. It was suggested that ivy growing up the entrance post should be cleared.</p> <p>v. Wildlife Survey.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>

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	Cllr Howard Hartley advised that Avon Wildlife Trust would carry out a free survey of wildlife at the cemetery and would recommend ways in which the Parish Council could improve conditions for wildlife. There were no objections to this suggestion and Cllr Hartley was asked to liaise with Avon Wildlife Trust to arrange this.	HH & Clerk
CC015 – 18/07/2023	Review of New Actions The Clerk provided a summary of the new actions generated from the meeting and advised they would be captured on the Actions Register in Planner after the meeting.	Clerk
CC016 – 18/07/2023	Date and Time of Next Meeting & Future Agenda Items The date of the next Cemetery Committee meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 17 th October 2023 at 7.00pm at Beacon Hall. It was noted that an Advisory Panel meeting, incorporating a cemetery site visit, will be arranged by the Clerk within the next couple of months.	Clerk

Meeting closed at 8.32pm

Signed..... Date.....