



PEASEDOWN ST JOHN PARISH COUNCIL

Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, Bath BA2 8SN
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Minutes of the Cemetery Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 16th April 2024 at 7.00pm at Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John

Present:

Councillors: Fiona Carr; Audrey Gillard-Sprake (Chair); Howard Hartley (Vice-Chair); Les Sprake. Cllr. Jonathan Rich was also present at the meeting, in his capacity as Chair of Full Council. As the Committee was quorate, he did not utilise his voting rights.

In attendance:

Tanya West - Parish Clerk & RFO.

Public Session: There were two members of the public present at the meeting; a former resident of the village attended together with her brother. She explained the reasons why they had attended the meeting, in connection with her request to reserve the plot next to her father. She asked councillors to consider her request to have a particular plot, in view of her exceptional circumstances.

Minute Ref.	Agenda Item	Action
CC039 – 16/04/2024	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.	
CC040 – 16/04/2024	Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Mandy Clarke and Richard Clarke due to personal circumstances. These apologies were duly noted. Cllr Conor Ogilvie-Davidson was absent from the meeting without apology (although not summonsed).	
CC041 – 16/04/2024	Minutes & Actions i. The minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on 13 th February 2024 had been circulated in advance of the meeting; it was resolved that they be accepted as a true and correct record of that meeting and were signed by the Chair accordingly. ii. The Clerk provided a verbal report on updates to the Actions Register on Planner. Many of the tasks were ongoing and would be covered off later in the agenda.	Clerk
CC042 – 16/04/2024	Items for Urgent Report Councillors considered items which, in the opinion of the Chair, needed to be reported on as a matter of urgency. i. Complaints had been received regarding several people who were regularly attending the cemetery and letting their dogs off the lead. Some temporary signage had been erected on the cemetery gate to remind users that dogs must be kept on a lead and some further temporary notices would be put at the bottom of the car park area. Councillors and staff to speak to the offenders if seen on site. If the matter is not resolved by these temporary signs, then more permanent signage will need to be put up or the cemetery rules changed. ii. A suggestion had been put forward regarding a sunflower memorial either in the garden of remembrance or in the children's section of the cemetery for stillborn or miscarried babies. This would provide the opportunity for residents to purchase a	Clerk Cllrs & Staff

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	petal with the baby's name on it as a memorial. It was suggested that the Clerk should get some costings and further information and include this on the agenda for a future meeting.	Clerk
CC043 – 16/04/2024	<p>Cemetery Related Policies & Procedures</p> <p>Councillors received an update on the amendments to the Interment and Memorial Policy and related procedures with a view to making any associated decisions. In addition, councillors considered a request in relation to specific burial plots with a link to the aforementioned policy.</p> <p>A request had been received to reserve a plot in advance by purchasing the exclusive right of burial, which goes against the current policy. When this was first raised, the council was under the impression that the person requesting it was terminally ill. However, as their health had now improved, it was likely that the plot would not be required in the short-term and might in fact remain vacant for 30 years or more.</p> <p>It was the view of some councillors that however sad the situation, there was a need to think of the practicalities of the situation and the fact that it would not only set a precedent but would impose too much responsibility on a future council to manage the situation. The situation would have to be very well documented to ensure that it was clear why this particular plot had been left vacant. There might also be difficulties with access, but it was noted that permission had been given to remove the headstone from an adjoining family member's plot if required.</p> <p>Although it was resolved that this request should be granted, it would have to be with necessary caveats prepared by the Clerk.</p>	Clerk
CC044 – 16/04/2024	<p>Review of Finances</p> <p>Councillors reviewed income and expenditure reports for the 2023/24 and the 2024/25 financial years for those budgets specifically linked to the Cemetery Committee. The following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Income there has been two cremated remains interments for April 2024, the invoices for which are due to be raised by the end of the week. ➤ 605003 Cemetery Waste Disposal: The invoice for the last waste collection from the bottom car park is still to be received for 2023/24. Further collections will be arranged for April/May 2024. 	Clerk Clerk
CC045 – 16/04/2024	<p>Interments and Memorials</p> <p>Councillors received updates, and decisions were made as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Interments and memorials since the last meeting. It was resolved to ratify the decision to apply the rates for residents of the parish for the interment of the late John Whittock, in recognition of his many years as Clerk to the Parish Council. ii. Photographing and documenting of the plots and memorials. The aerial images of the cemetery are still required to be actioned; Cllr Rich and the Clerk are planning to undertake this when the weather improves. The Clerk to notify residents of neighbouring properties beforehand as a drone will be used. iii. Digitisation of the burial records. Apart from the inclusion of recent interments and memorials these are complete. Once finalised the reports will be uploaded to the website. iv. Topple Testing of the Memorials. The stone mason undertook the Topple Testing on 13th March 2024. There were four memorials that required minor attention which was undertaken the same day. The Clerk to obtain the necessary certification from the stone mason and update the Risk Register accordingly and including the date the test is due again within the Annual Governance Cycle. 	Clerk Clerk & JR Clerk Clerk Clerk
CC046 – 16/04/2024	<p>Garden of Remembrance</p> <p>Updates on the Garden of Remembrance were received, and decisions were made as follows:</p>	

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	<p>i. Removal of commemorative flowers/items/trinkets on graves. The Caretaker is monitoring this and reporting any issues to the Clerk for appropriate action.</p> <p>ii. Weeding and planting for the scattering area and memorial garden. It was noted that the lavender plants around the edge of the memorial garden had been removed as they had become old and leggy. Prices had been obtained for some upright Rosemary hedging plants as an alternative replacement. These were considered at the meeting, and it was agreed to purchase them from B&NES Council at a cost of £265+VAT for 100x two litre plants. Later in the year other plants will be purchased for the scattering area such as bulbs and Hellebores.</p> <p>iii. To receive an update on the works to replace and extend the pathways within the Garden of Remembrance and make any associated decisions. It was reported that Kingsmere Surfacing had now finished these works and they appear to have done a very good job. Some more topsoil and grass seed or turf is still needed to the edge of the pathway at the scattering area and the memorial bench seat that had to be relocated still requires refixing. The Caretakers to undertake these works as they were not included as part of the contract. The final invoice for the works is yet to be received.</p>	<p>Clerk & CC</p> <p>Clerk & HH</p> <p>Clerk, DP & CC</p>
<p>CC047 – 16/04/2024</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. To consider any items that may require funding outside of operational budgets and to formulate a plan for such works e.g. irrigation, community compost bins, gates to the bottom car park for security and screening etc. Councillors considered the above and it was noted that there had been some recent complaints regarding the storage area in the lower car park from nearby residents, and requests to screen the area from view. It was thought that the area is a lot tidier than it had been in previous years, but there were further things that could be done to improve matters. Putting gates across the open side was not thought to be the best solution, because even with gates in place it would still be possible to see the storage area from a first-floor window. A better solution might be to install wooden frames/bays to enclose the grass cuttings, waste soil, etc. This would tidy the area up and make it look more orderly. The Clerk would obtain some prices and report back at a future meeting.</p> <p>ii. Waste removal. The invoice for the last collection of waste from the bottom car park was still to be received. Further waste removal will be arranged for late April/early May.</p> <p>iii. Trees, tree nursery and Trees for Climate Hedgerow Planting. Since the last meeting, the <i>Trees for Climate Hedgerow Planting project</i> had been completed by the Forest of Avon Trust. They had planted approximately 700 hedgerow whips along the south and west boundary walls of the cemetery. They had been planted with canes and protectors and mulch mats to help suppress the weeds. The volunteer group will monitor and weed the area as and when required.</p> <p>iv. Update on the wildlife survey. Cllr Hartley advised that he would work with the volunteers on making bird and bat boxes once the floral beds are up together. It was noted that the grass is now being mowed at the cemetery and the Caretakers and contractors were reminded to collect up the grass clippings whenever possible in accordance with the recommendations in the survey report</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>HH</p> <p>HH</p> <p>Clerk</p>

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	<p>from Avon Wildlife Trust.</p> <p>v. Update on the volunteer group to assist with works at the Cemetery. Cllr Howard Hartley reported that the volunteer group is getting on very well and making good progress. There are three or four volunteers that attend regularly plus Cllrs Howard Hartley, Audrey Gillard-Sprake and Les Sprake. Any new volunteers are always welcome, the group will continue to meet every Thursday from 10am until 1.30pm.</p>	
CC048 – 16/04/2024	Date and Time of Next Meeting & Future Agenda Items The date of the next Cemetery Committee meeting is to be determined.	

Meeting closed at 8.20pm

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

DRAFT