



PEASEDOWN ST JOHN PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Burial Committee Meeting held Remotely via MS Teams on Tuesday 23rd June 2020 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillors: Audrey Gillard-Sprake; Samantha Heathcote; Andrew Larcombe; Conor Ogilvie-Davidson; Les Sprake.

Cllrs. Jonathan Rich and Kathy Thomas were also present at the meeting, in their capacity as Vice-Chair and Chair of Full Council respectively providing them with full voting rights.

In attendance:

Tanya West – Parish Clerk & RFO

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

Minute Ref.	Agenda Item	Action
BC015 – 23/06/2020	Attendance Roll Call and Declarations of Interest The attendance roll call was undertaken (those present are detailed above). For the sake of openness, Cllr. Kathy Thomas declared that she was in ownership of an Exclusive Right of Burial/Memorial for a plot at Ashgrove Cemetery. No further interests, to those already disclosed to the Monitoring Officer, were declared.	
BC016 – 23/06/2020	Apologies for Absence Cllr. Jonathan Rich reported that he had received apologies from Cllr. Claire Parfitt who was unable to attend at the last minute. Cllr. Rich therefore chaired the meeting in her absence. This apology was duly noted.	
BC017 – 23/06/2020	Minutes & Actions i. The minutes of the Burial Committee meeting held on 25 th June 2019 had been circulated after that meeting. It was resolved they be accepted as a true and correct record of that meeting. ii. The minutes of the Burial Committee meeting held on 25 th June 2019 were unable to be signed as the copy for signing had been provided to the Chair and not the Vice-Chair. The Clerk to arrange for a copy to be delivered to the Vice-Chair after the meeting. iii. The actions register was reviewed and updated on Planner.	Clerk
BC018 – 23/06/2020	Items for Urgent Report There were no items for urgent report.	
BC019 – 23/06/2020	Advisory Panel The Burial Committee Advisory Panel Terms of Reference was reviewed and it was resolved that they continued to be fit for purpose and as such were accepted. It was resolved to schedule an Advisory Panel meeting for Tuesday 28 th July 2020 to be held remotely via MS Teams.	Clerk
BC020 – 23/06/2020	Burial Related Policies & Procedures The list of polices that have been allocated to the Burial Committee as detailed on	

	<p>the Strategic Documentation Register was reviewed at the meeting. It was noted that they will be reviewed at the Advisory Panel meeting next month. The Clerk to make copies of these policies available, ready for councillors to read and make comments in preparation for the meeting. The Clerk was also requested to include copies of the national policies and regulations relating to cemeteries so councillors can remind themselves of their responsibilities.</p>	<p>Clerk Clerk</p>
<p>BC021 – 23/06/2020</p>	<p>Cemetery Related Risks Councillors reviewed the cemetery-related risks and associated actions generated from the Parish Council’s Risk Register and considered whether any changes were required and whether any associated decisions needed to be made. Working through the circulated Risk Register, councillors were largely happy with the proposed scoring and suggested actions. However, the following were discussed in more detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Topple-testing of headstones and kerbstones had received a risk score of 4. This has not formally been carried out at the cemetery and, although the Clerk and Caretaker had now completed topple-test training, the testing needed to be carried out as a priority – ideally by the end of the year. The Clerk mentioned that there was a process that needed to be completed, which included issuing notices and writing letters in advance to anyone with exclusive rights of burial, to advise them of the forthcoming test and its possible implications. It was suggested that an appropriate sequence of events would be for the Clerk to research the timescales involved, publish the notice, carry out the testing, publish the results and then schedule the next test in the annual governance cycle. An action plan for this work could be considered at the next Advisory Panel meeting in July. ➤ Loss of Burial Records. This had been given a risk score of 3. However, as the current records are not stored in a fireproof safe, it was thought that the transition to a computerised system should be carried out as soon as possible. The risk of records being lost from computer-based cloud storage would be considerably less. Ideally, an appropriate time limit should be put on any proposed action (and, where possible, time-limits should be applied to any action from the risk register). ➤ Dog Fouling. This was given a low-risk rating, as it was not thought to be a problem at the Cemetery. However, although councillors thought there should be no change to the existing rule where dogs are allowed at the cemetery if kept on a lead, it was felt that it might be viewed as unfair if staff were exempt from this rule. The Clerk was therefore requested to ask the Caretaker to keep his dogs on a lead when at the Cemetery. ➤ Staff safety. Following a recent incident where a member of the public had behaved aggressively towards a member of staff at the Cemetery, it was suggested that staff safety could be included on the risk register. However, as the risks associated with lone working will be discussed by the Personnel Sub-Committee, it was not thought necessary to include it. ➤ Grass Cutting. This had been allocated a high-risk score, but would be discussed later on the agenda. 	
<p>BC022 – 23/06/2020</p>	<p>Review of Finances 2019/20 & 2020/21 Councillors reviewed the income and expenditure report for the 2019/20 financial year for those budgets specifically linked to the Burial Committee. It was noted that the income generated by the Cemetery was £1,700 more than was expected for this year. However, the expenditure for the Garden of Remembrance maintenance was almost £1,000 less than expected due to the steam weeding not being undertaken.</p>	

	<p>Councillors reviewed the income and expenditure report for the 2020/21 financial year for those budgets specifically linked to the Burial Committee. It was noted that the income is significantly more than budgeted, there being four interments undertaken already so far this financial year.</p> <p>Cllr. Larcombe commented that the budgets were set based on the average income from the previous three years, consequently, the budgets for the next financial year would increase to reflect this additional income.</p>	
BC023 – 23/06/2020	<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 along with a comparison table which included the fees of four other cemeteries. It was agreed that due to the complexity of the matter it would be more appropriate to reviewing the fees at the Advisory Panel meeting and to make recommendations to the Burial Committee/Full Council for adoption, and probable implementation from the next financial year.</p>	Clerk
BC024 – 23/06/2020	<p>Update & Decision – Interments and Memorials</p> <p>i. To receive update on process for requests for new memorials. Any enquiries or applications for new memorials are now being logged on Planner [under the Full Council general planner board – memorials have their own allocated bucket]. Each task will be updated as the application progresses and will not be closed until the memorial is installed, all the necessary checks have been undertaken and the invoice raised.</p> <p>ii. To receive update on the installation of temporary plot markers. It was reported that the temporary plot markers have been installed in Section F and Section J and are working well, ensuring that all new graves are positioned in line. The Caretaker removes the plot markers as and when a memorial is installed, and they are retained and will be reinstalled as a new entire row in due course.</p> <p>iii. To receive update on the photographing and documenting of the plots and memorials. The aerial photography of the cemetery is complete. Cllr Claire Parfitt is continuing to photograph the memorials (those on the right-hand side of the cemetery are complete). The Clerk is working with Cllr Parfitt with regards to archiving these photographs along with the burial/memorial records.</p> <p>iv. To receive update on the digitisation of the burial records. The burial records are continuing to be transferred to digital records. All new interments are logged on a spreadsheet and have all the relevant documents scanned and saved to the Cloud. To assist with the progression of the older records, items are being updated as and when queries are raised. Progress has slowed due to Coronavirus.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>CP & Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
BC025 – 23/06/2020	<p>Update & Decision – Garden of Remembrance Updates on the Garden of Remembrance were received and decisions were made as follows:</p> <p>i. Issues with the scattering area at the Garden of Remembrance and to consider suggested options for improvements. Councillors discussed the issues with the scattering meadow at the cemetery and the fact that it has not been seeded this year, partly due to the COVID-19 lockdown. It was thought that something needed to be done as a matter of</p>	

	<p>urgency, because the scattering meadow area was looking very barren and unappealing, especially when compared with the Memorial Garden. It was suggested that using mainly shrubs and herbaceous perennials would provide an area that would be considerably lower maintenance. Specific ideas were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting to include an outer border of different coloured heathers; • Grass paths to be wide enough for the ride-on mower; • Four quarter beds, in seasonal colours, to include bulbs, shrubs and herbaceous perennials, but no annual plants because they are very high-maintenance. It was suggested that perennial poppies could be included. • Once the new planting was established, volunteers could be recruited to help with maintenance. <p>The proposal outlined in the pre-reading was unanimously agreed, with a budget of up to £1,000.</p> <p>ii. The next phase of cremated remains interments. It was noted that at present levels of use there is enough space in the current format for cremated remains plots for the next five years. There were further options that would allow several additional areas to be added, but this was not thought to be needed at the present time. It was therefore agreed to defer this item for the time being, but to add it to the Annual Governance Cycle to review on an annual basis.</p> <p>iii. Pergolas and planting around them and to consider extending further along the pathway. Councillors discussed the possibility of extending the pergolas at the cemetery with two additional bays. The preferred layout would be to add two additional short bays on either side of the gazebo, so that the pergolas would form a cross shape when viewed from above. The Clerk voiced concerns regarding access for machinery for mowing/grave digging purposes, and said that she would need to check whether the cross-shaped arrangement would allow sufficient access.</p> <p>Subject to there being sufficient space to allow access for machinery, it was agreed to proceed with two additional sections of pergola on either side of the existing, together with a bench, up to a budget of £1,500.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>BC026 – 23/06/2020</p>	<p>Update & Decision – Cemetery Maintenance & Improvements Councillors received updates and considered suggestions and estimates for future works/improvements to the cemetery site as follows:</p> <p>i. The ‘sink hole’ at the cemetery. There has been no movement on this sink hole since the hole was topped up with gravel in 2018. It has continued to be monitored by the Caretaker and so as there has been no further movement it is agreed this action can now be closed.</p> <p>ii. Planning for additional resource for weeding of beds and mowing/strimming of grass during the month of May. To receive an update on this for 2020 and to consider approval for making this ‘business as usual’ going forward. Following resource issues in 2019, additional casual labour was used during May 2020 and has been of significant help during this period. It was therefore agreed that this arrangement becomes ‘business as usual’ and that the operational budget for the Cemetery is amended to incorporate the expenditure in relation to this and so can be budgeted accordingly for 2021 and beyond.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

	<p>iii. To discuss and determine the way forward for the feasibility study required for the project to upgrade the pathways at Ashgrove Cemetery. The following was discussed and agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Survey of the existing pathways highlighting worst areas; those areas whether the resurfacing of the tarmac is actually required; if the pathway is actually required. Notes of a meeting held between Cllr Parfitt, the Caretaker and Clerk can be used as a starting point for discussions. ➤ Specification document prepared for the Recreation Ground pathways could also be utilised and transferred for the cemetery if needing to go to tender. ➤ Full discussion could be allocated to a future Advisory Panel meeting. 	Clerk Clerk Clerk
BC027 – 23/06/2020	Review of New Actions Councillors reviewed that the actions generated from the meeting had been correctly captured on 'Planner'.	
BC028 – 23/06/2020	Date and Time of Next Meeting & Future Agenda Items The date of the next meeting of the Burial Committee is to be determined.	

Meeting closed at 9.22pm

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