

Minutes of a meeting of the Bures Joint Cemetery Authority held virtually via Zoom on Monday 10th January 2022 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr J Aries (Chair), Mrs J Wright (Clerk)

Bures St. Mary Parish Council: Cllr J McCrory, Cllr S Sills

Bures Hamlet Parish Council: Cllr M Baker, Cllr C Ellis, Cllr K McAndrew

It had been agreed to hold this meeting virtually owing to Covid-19 related issues for several of the members and the Clerk.

1/01/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None. Cllr L Alston absent.

2/01/22 REGISTER OF INTERESTS & DISPENSATION REQUESTS

To declare any 'Pecuniary' or 'Non Pecuniary' interests and dispensation requests.

No Register of Interests declared and no Dispensation requests put forward.

3/01/22 MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting of 6th September 2021 (previously circulated) were approved as a correct record. To be duly signed following the virtual meeting.

4/01/22 PUBLIC FORUM – 15 minutes maximum public participation

3 minutes for individual contributions unless agreed by the Chairman

No members of the public present.

5/01/22 INSPECTOR'S ASSET & RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT

Cllr Sills had circulated her report prior to the meeting. Overall the cemetery was in an extremely good condition. Weeds visible on some paths. Large amount of leaf-fall. No visible litter. Christmas wreaths to be removed. Random memorial stability check highlighted the following: Anderson in old area unstable, Weavers wooden cross unstable. Sulfrian wooden memorial unstable. Some memorials leaning but stable. Full memorial stability check scheduled for the site meeting on 5th March. Clerk to follow up on all matters raised.

Next Inspector: Cllr. M Baker.

6/01/22 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Utility pole: The clearance of the overgrowth around and over the pole at the top of the cemetery boundary leading onto St Edmunds reported to UK Power Network. Ref No. 248601-Z. BTS currently scheduling works into its programme and had liaised with the Clerk regarding access into the cemetery. Works continue to remain outstanding.

b) Commonwealth War Grave:

i) The rededication service for casualty K. P. Carr, Grave reference Division B.14 was held at the cemetery on Saturday 18th September at 1.30pm. Members from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Royal British Legion, Bures St Mary Parish Council, Cemetery Authority and relatives of the late Katherine Carr attended the short service with laying of wreaths.

ii) An application to the CWGC for signage indicating war graves in the cemetery has been submitted. One small sign ordered for both front and rear entrances.

c) Online map: Members discussed a request for the cemetery maps to be made available online. The maps are available on the parish council website to read but not best quality. Copies of the maps are also mounted on the shed. Mapping services are available to purchase, however the costs are high. Therefore it is agreed not to proceed.

d) Tree monitoring:

i) Picus tree tests: The detailed Suffolk Tree Services report highlighted the need for Picus Tests at height to be carried out on the Cedar and the Sequoia. It was agreed to accept the following quotations for this work: a) £400 + VAT to carry out a Picus Test at height using a Cherry Picker for access on the Cedar b) £200 + VAT to carry out a climbing inspection and remove the stub on the Sequoia.

ii) Tree survey: The Clerk had obtained 2 quotations for a survey of all trees in the cemetery with the exception of the Cedar and the Sequoia, 35 in total. It was agreed to accept the quotation from Suffolk Tree Services - £690.75 for site visit and inspection of trees, £239.50 for preparation of report and plan plus schedule of trees and required tree works. Costs to be met from Reserves.

e) Signs and benches:

i) Advisory limited visitor parking sign installed at front entrance.

ii) Bench in memory of the late Patricia Thomson installed as requested by the family. The Cemetery Authority have met the installation costs only. The family have placed a protective cover over the bench for the winter months.

iii) It was agreed to ask Bures Scout Troop to clean the 4 benches. A donation of £10 per bench suggested and the Clerk to follow up with the Scout Leader.

f) Bird and bat box project: Cllr McCrory advised that the Scout Troup are happy to build 6 bird boxes as part of a badge project. The materials have been purchased and costs to be met by the Cemetery Authority. Cllr McCrory to ask if 6 bat boxes could also be built. 3 bat boxes per tree are recommended by Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

g) Bulb planting and ivy removal: A selection of narcissi, aconites, anemone and crocus bulbs had been purchased and planted by members – cost £78.94. £200 allocated to this project kindly donated by the family of the late Maeve White. It was agreed to use the remainder of funds to purchase snowdrops in green and English bluebells, if legally available to buy. Some ivy removal has been done but this is a seasonal project. The contractor to be asked to remove the ivy growing at height on the trees.

h) Contractor works:

i) All works as per works list completed (see attached). Weeds continue to be an issue and the contractor has 'burnt off' weeds to improve the situation. A one off weed spray completed and contractor has since reverted back to raking and clearing of weeds as agreed. Some persistent sinking of graves, contractor to infill in the spring. Spoil heap cleared. Steventon ashes tablet laid flat but needs to be secured. Good winter prune completed on bushes along main driveway. Some self-grown shrubs removed from graves. St Edmunds Lane bank strimmed.

ii) Quotation received from JBP Landscapes to block edge paths – it was agreed to leave on hold for the time being owing to funds being required for more pressing works.

iii) Members suggested options for maintenance of the Leylandii along the left boundary in the older section of the cemetery. It was agreed to gain quotations to either prune back or remove down to root base. Issues with removing Leylandii being – bank slippage and visibility. Replanting with laurel is an option. To be discussed at site meeting on 5th March.

7/01/22 TURNING AREA

The turning area at the northern end of the cemetery has not proved to be a sufficiently adequate provision to manoeuvre some of the long-axled funeral vehicles. Since the interment of the late Patricia Thomson the Clerk has dealt with a number of issues in consultation with the bereaved family. The grave is situated on the corner of the top section and has unfortunately been clipped by vehicle wheels. Following the first incident boulders were placed on the corners of the two top graves but this did not improve the situation. A further incident arose with the Funeral Director subsequently giving a written apology to the family. Members discussed options to ease the issues.

To extend one or both sides of the turning drive at a cost of £1,739.00 + VAT.

To widen the extension area centre path to improve access for contractor vehicles.

To install wooden/white posts with chain link along the grass edging of the two corner graves.

Relocate the Warden memorial bench to allow a larger turning area.

Members agreed that action was urgently needed to protect the end graves from further disturbance. Therefore the following is agreed:

i) Install 4 wooden posts and chain link to both end graves.

ii) Widen path by 6" on both sides.

iii) Until suitable protection is in place, only service vehicles to be permitted in the extension area.

iv) Clerk to ensure all Funeral Directors risk assess vehicle access in the cemetery prior to a burial.

8/01/22 PARKING BAY AREA

a) Storage shed: New storage shed installed with concrete base. Padlock and guttering fixed on shed.

b) Relocation of storage/map/waste facilities: The brick wall which encased the black general waste bin has been removed to allow the bin to be visible. Visitors are encouraged to use both the general waste bin and the green waste bin located side by side near the new shed. Map and surround relocated to the side of the storage shed. Lead covering installed to protect the map surround.

c) Water standpipe: Water standpipe moved to wall and boxed in. Watering cans relocated along the wall.

9/01/22 MANAGEMENT OF MEMORIALS

a) Memorial stability test: Luxstone Memorials had completed the 5 year memorial stability test and the Clerk was in receipt of the written report. Members agreed that some memorials could continue to be monitored only. Those memorials under a 10 year guarantee have been made good by the respective stonemasons. Advisory warning signs have been placed on agreed unstable memorials. The Clerk has followed up with some traceable deed holders of unstable memorials and referred to Luxstone Memorials to agree the required work. Deed holders to be responsible for the costs to make good. All memorials to be monitored by members for stability at the site meeting on the 5th March.

b) Grave surround of the late Doggett family: The Clerk has followed up on the disposal notice for the grave surround. A quotation of £250 received from Hanchets Memorials to remove. This was not accepted. Members agreed the grave surround and the inscribed plaques should be temporarily removed by the cemetery contractor and the grave infilled before relaying in a safe manner.

10/01/22 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS

The contracts for grounds maintenance and grass cutting currently held with JPB Landscapes until 31st March 2024 were reviewed. All members are extremely happy with the work undertaken by JPB Landscapes Ltd.

11/01/22 CORRESPONDENCE

- a) The Defra consultation on amendments to the Environmental Permitting Regulations had been circulated to all members. A response has been submitted to question 3a strongly disagreeing with the proposals to make General Binding Rules available for small-scale cemetery developments in low-environmental risk settings.
- b) 2021-22 JPB Landscapes Ltd insurance certificates received and duly held on file.
- c) Following a request, the Chair has provided a detailed search of all burial entries listed in the name of Deaves. 20 entries listed between 1872 and 2022.

12/01/22 FINANCE

Business Access A/C balance: £19,676.52

Community A/C balance: £7,368.97 (when all cheques paid).

- a) Finance & Budget Monitoring Report – circulated, noted and attached.
- b) Bank Reconciliation dated 28th December 2021 circulated, noted and attached. Corresponding bank statements circulated, noted and attached and duly signed by the Chairman and a non-signatory member.
- c) It was agreed to review cemetery fees and conditions at the June meeting.

13/01/22 AUDIT MATTERS

- a) The External Auditor's report for 2020/21 Accounting Statement has been received with no matters arising.
- b) It was agreed to request a similar review to be undertaken for financial year ending 31st March 2022.
- c) Internal Audit Review meeting held on 4th October 2021 with Cllr McAndrew, Cllr McCrory, Clerk and Internal Auditor in attendance. Notes from the meeting circulated to all members and held on file. Carolyn Holbrook, Internal Auditor advised that she would attempt to attend regular meetings of the parish council and to keep updated of legal briefings.

14/01/22 INTERMENTS/ASHES INTERMENTS/MEMORIAL APPLICATIONS

The Clerk reported that the following interments had taken place and memorial applications approved:

Purchase of Ashes grave space No. 11 Row A3 – M & C Heath

Purchase of Ashes grave space No. 13 Row P8 – E Griffiths

Purchase of Ashes grave space No. 14 Row P8 – S Whyllie

Memorial additional inscription for the late Ivan Goddard

Memorial repair and clean of the late Leonard & Elizabeth Garrod

Interment of the late Sheila Carter

Additional inscription of the late George Austin

Interment of the late Janet Thornton

Interment of the late Derek Davy

15/01/22 BRIEF INFORMATION & EXCHANGE

Members to compare current cemetery fees with other local cemetery fees for review at the next meeting.

Following issues with bird droppings soiling the memorial of the late Maud and Bert Ford, the family have now made their own arrangements to ensure all 3 tablets are regularly cleaned.

Members noted that the annual site meeting would be held at 10am on Saturday 5th March.

16/01/22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Site meeting: Saturday 5th March 2022 at 10.00am

Committee meeting: Monday 7th March 2022 to be held at the Garrad Room, Bures Community Centre, Nayland Road at 7.30pm.

Future dates agreed 2022: 6th June, 12th September

The meeting closed at 9.35pm

Signed:

Authority Chair:

Date: