

Minutes of a meeting of the Bures Joint Cemetery Authority held virtually on Monday 11th January 2021 at 7.30pm

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

Bures St. Mary Parish Council: Cllr S Sills

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

Also present: Carolyn Holbrook (Internal Auditor)

1/01/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr J McCrory (Personal commitment).

Apologies accepted by those present. Cllr L Alston (Absent).

2/01/21 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.

3/01/21 MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting of 7th September 2020 (previously circulated) were approved as a correct record. To be duly signed following the virtual meeting.

4/01/21 PUBLIC FORUM – 15 minutes maximum public participation

3 minutes for individual contributions unless agreed by the Chairman

No members of the public present.

5/01/21 INSPECTOR'S ASSET & RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT

Cllr Baker had circulated her report prior to the meeting. Overall the cemetery is in an extremely good condition. Some twigs and leaf fall to be cleared. Ivy growing on several trees is of concern. Lime tree suckers needed cutting back. The memorial of the late Seaber was found to be unstable. Cllr Aries agreed to clearly mark all unstable memorials. Christmas wreaths to be removed in line with the Cemetery conditions. Clerk to follow up on all matters raised. **Next Inspector:** Cllr. Ellis.

6/01/21 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 Lane had been reported to UK Power Network. Ref No. 248601-Z. These works required a road closure and thus causing a delay in works being completed. Matter remained outstanding.

b) Commonwealth War Grave: The Clerk had signed and returned the Consent to Erection of Commemorative Marker and Confirmation of Non-disturbance to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Regional Manager in respect of a Gallipoli Marker for the grave of casualty K.P. Carr, Grave reference Division B. 14. Installation date still to be confirmed.

c) Chestnut tree in ashes section: The family of the late Maud and Stanley Ford had requested the tree branches to be cut back in an attempt to keep their parent's memorial clean from bird droppings. Contractor had removed the lower branches of the tree and Cllr Aries continuing to monitor and keep the memorial tidy.

d) Wild flower banks: The Clerk had purchased 5 packs of Native Wildflower Beebombs, small soil substance with seeds in requiring no digging or planting. These would be strewn along the grassed banks between the lime trees and hopefully will bloom within the next couple of years. The spring bulbs planted by the Cubs had been partially successful and Cllr McCrory would check if further bulbs needed planting.

e) Alternative use of glyphosate: Both parish councils had undertaken a review of action on Climate Change and in particular the use of glyphosate. The contractor had trialled 'New Way' as an alternative in other parishes and had investigated 'Foamstream' but the initial outlay was too costly. Pathways in the cemetery currently being raked along with hand pulling of weeds. All members agreed the contractor should continue with this method and the Clerk would monitor the grounds maintenance budget.

f) Winter maintenance: The Clerk had obtained 2 quotations to reduce the laurels along the St Edmunds Lane boundary. It was agreed to accept the quotation from Blake Tree Care to reduce the laurel hedge to approximately 8 foot in height, trim and tidy sides plus to chip brush and apply to base of hedge. £1,250 + VAT. It was noted that an electricity cable runs close to the hedge. Members agreed that all boundary hedge management should be monitored regularly.

g) Contractor's works: All works as per works list completed. (see attached)

Items raised from the works list: a) Rear gate needed re-painting in spring. b) Main gate to be washed down on a regular basis. c) Christmas wreaths to be cleared by the end of February. d) The spoil heap comprising of excess excavated grave soil and general cleared cemetery debris to be removed when sufficient for a truck load. e) To gain advice from the Tree Warden on how stringent to be in removing the ivy from the trees in the cemetery. All members to check the ivy at the site meeting in March. f) Splay at top of main drive still to be edged and gravel laid.

It was noted that one of the bird boxes appeared damaged. It was agreed to follow up with Cllr McCrory for the Scout Troop to take on another initiative to build new bird and bat boxes. Cllr Aries was keen to install a BDC brown bin for compostable items at a cost of £50 per annum. It was agreed to go ahead for an initial one year and Cllr Aries to monitor its use. Signage needed and Clerk to check if the current contractor would be willing to sponsor.

7/01/21 STORAGE AREA/PARKING BAY/TURNING CIRCLE

a) Storage area/parking bay: The Clerk had managed to obtain 2 quotations for the work agreed at the last meeting. As there were differences in the quotations regarding materials, area size and excavation depths it was agreed that the Clerk should request clarification from both contractors on these.

b) Creation of turning circle: The Clerk had managed to obtain 2 quotations for the work agreed at the last meeting. As there were differences in the quotations regarding materials, area size and excavation depths it was agreed that the Clerk should request clarification from both contractors on these.

It was noted that a 3rd contractor had been approached for a quotation but had declined. It was agreed to hold an Extraordinary Meeting of the Cemetery Authority once revised quotations had been received. Clerk to follow up.

8/01/21 MANAGEMENT OF MEMORIALS

a) Unstable memorial signs: The Clerk had arranged for a supply of warning signs to be made. As this work remained outstanding the Clerk agreed to source an alternative supplier. Temporary signs being placed on unstable memorials as and when necessary. The Clerk had been asked to locate 2 allegedly removed memorials. The 4 old memorials stacked in the hedge in the oldest section had been checked but were unrelated to the enquiry.

b) Memorial stability test: Luxton Stonemasons had begun the 5 year rolling programme of memorial stability testing using the spreadsheet entries provided by the Clerk. She would check on progress and report back to the next meeting.

c) Memorial map recording: The Clerk had recorded the entries on spreadsheets of all graves and memorials in the cemetery. The cemetery maps had been updated and spare copies available for use.

9/01/21 CORRESPONDENCE

A supply of topsoil had been made available from the recent excavations at the sportsground. The topsoil had been transferred to the cemetery at a cost of £74.00.

10/01/21 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS

The contracts held with JPB Landscapes Ltd were due to expire on the 31st March 2021.

It was agreed not to put the current contracts out to tender on this occasion.

It was unanimously agreed to continue with JPB Landscapes for a further 3 years at the current contract price with a review at each March meeting until the next expiry date.

11/01/21 FINANCE

Business Access A/C balance: £19,674.56

Community A/C balance: £11,615.64 (when all cheques paid).

- a) Finance & Budget Monitoring Report – circulated, noted and attached. It was noted that a Zoom licence had been applied for with a monthly charge of £11.99 to be met in place of hall hire charges.
- b) Bank Reconciliation dated 28th December 2020 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 continue waiving burial fees during the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions with a further review at the September 2021 meeting of the Cemetery Authority. Members considered waiving of ashes interment fees. It was agreed to waive these fees also with a further review at the September 2021 meeting of the Cemetery Authority. The members agreed that ashes interment fees paid since the 23rd March 2020 should be reimbursed as a gesture during these extremely difficult times for bereaved families. Clerk to follow up.
- d) It was confirmed that the Clerk's salary award had been implemented from 1st September 2020 in line with the salary award implemented by both Bures Hamlet and Bures St Mary Parish Councils.
- e) A Terms of Reference for the Joint Cemetery Authority was considered by the members. As the Authority adhered to Government Guidelines and ICCM Good Practice Guidance it was agreed not to implement a Terms of Reference.
- f) Contractor's insurance details updated and held on file.

12/01/21 AUDIT MATTERS

- a) External Auditors approval of 2019/20 Accounting Statements received with no matters arising.
- b) It was agreed that a similar External Audit Review should be undertaken for 2020/21.
- c) Internal Audit Review meeting held on 23rd November 2020 – Cllr McAndrew, Cllr McCrory, Clerk and Internal Auditor in attendance. Notes from the meeting circulated to all members and held on file.
- d) Letter to residents making pre-funeral arrangements had been reworded and agreed by those members present.
- e) It was agreed to defer amendment of the Conditions and Exclusive Rights letter to allow wording for parking and turning provision to be included.

13/01/21 INTERMENTS/ASHES INTERMENTS/MEMORIAL APPLICATIONS

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

Memorial for the late Maeve White

Interment of ashes of the late Julie Brice

Memorial for the late Elizabeth Pilgrim

Memorial for the late Anthony Pilkington

The Clerk noted to members that four ashes interments remained pending. Bereaved families were reluctant to proceed while Government Covid-19 guidelines continued.

14/01/21 BRIEF INFORMATION & EXCHANGE

It was noted that meetings will continue to be held virtually until further notice.

An Extraordinary Meeting to be arranged as soon as possible to discuss the quotations to install a parking bay and turning circle.

Items for site meeting: Painting of rear gate. Ivy on trees.

15/01/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Site meeting: Saturday 6th March 2021 at 10.00am - to be re-arranged if current Covid -19 restrictions remained in place.

Next Committee meeting: Monday 8th March 2021 to be held either virtually or at the Committee Room, Bures Community Centre, Nayland Road at 7.30pm.

Future dates agreed: 7th June, 6th September.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed:

Authority Chair:

Date: