

**Minutes of a meeting of the Bures Joint Cemetery Authority held virtually via Zoom on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 7.30pm**

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

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

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

**1/09/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received.

**2/09/22 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.

**3/09/22 MINUTES**

Minutes of the previous meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022 (previously circulated) were duly approved and signed as a correct record.

**4/09/22 PUBLIC FORUM – 15 minutes maximum public participation**

3 minutes for individual contributions unless agreed by the Chairman

No members of the public present.

**5/09/22 INSPECTOR'S ASSET & RISK ASSESSMENT REPORTS**

Cllr Koeck had circulated his reports prior to the meeting.

**a) Risk Assessment Checklist:** Overall the cemetery was in an extremely good condition. Some weeds visible on paths. St Edmunds Lane steps to be cleared of leaves. Some boundary walls need repointing. Bramble clearance in hand. Further supply of pea shingle needed on some paths and the parking bay. Lots of pine needles on drives. Paint spillage cleared from various locations. Clerk to follow up on matters raised.

**b) Memorial Stability Checklist:** Memorials checked for stability. Warning signs marked memorials as necessary. Some memorials leaning but stable. No memorials deemed dangerous.

**Next Inspector: Cllr McCrory.**

**6/09/22 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**a) Tree monitoring:**

**1) Recommendation for removal of Sequoia and Cedar:** A meeting was held on site with George Blake, the Parish Tree Warden, Cllr Aries, Cllr Koeck and the Clerk to discuss options for partial retention of the two trees as an alternative to a complete removal. It was agreed to remove all higher tree limbs and retain the trunks. Work has commenced and hopefully the agreed partial retention may extend the length of the life of the two trees. Blake Tree Care has adjusted its quotation accordingly

**2) Insurance claim:** A claim has been submitted to the insurance company who has agreed to pay £1,000 towards the costs.

**3) Tree Survey:** The tree survey of all trees in the cemetery has been completed by Haydens contracted by Suffolk Tree Services. Points raised in the survey – remove lime tree suckers, Red Oak requires a crown lift within 12 months, a picus test advised to be undertaken on one lime tree within 6 months. Blake Tree Care to be asked to assess the lime tree before a decision is agreed. The Red Oak crown lift to be followed up at a later date.

**4) Tree Safety Policy:** Members agreed not to draw up a Tree Safety Policy but to hold an annual inspection of all trees via the Member Inspector's Risk Assessment Report. Clerk to request Blake Tree Care to take on a rolling 3 year inspection of all trees from 2024/25.

**5) Leylandii:** Removal of the Leylandii scheduled for October. R Fordham Tree Surgeons aware that following the removal of the trees the bank may become unstable. It is also noted that graves are buried in the bank. Members discussed options for a temporary boundary fence to be installed until the new saplings take hold. Chair and Clerk following up.

**6) The Woodland Trust saplings:** The Woodland Trust has agreed to provide a supply of native hedging free of charge in the autumn when conditions are suitable. These will be used to fill the gaps around the boundary and to secure the exposed section following the removal of the Leylandii. Mulch to be supplied by R Fordham Tree Surgeons for bedding in around the saplings.

**b) Commonwealth War Grave entrance signs:** One small sign ordered for both front and rear entrances. Waiting on signs to be installed.

**c) Bat box project:** Scouts to build 6 bat boxes this autumn. 3 bat boxes per tree are recommended by Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Those trees with a bird or bat box to be marked for reference and entered on the Inspector's Asset Checklist for members to monitor. One bat box on the Cedar tree is damaged and will be repaired when the new bat boxes are installed.

**d) Bulb planting:** Members agreed not to continue with further bulb planting this autumn as a number of the spring planted bulbs have been dug up either by a muntjac, squirrels or badgers. Cllr Baker suggested installing planters at various locations in the cemetery. It is agreed to encourage bereaved families to purchase a planter in memory of a loved one. Clerk to follow up.

**e) Ivy removal:** Some ivy removal has been done particularly from memorials but still quite an amount on the trees. Clerk to gain advice from Blake Tree Care.

**f) Bank adjacent Apple Tree Mews:** Following the planned removal of the Leylandii along the oldest boundary section it is agreed to consider installing fencing or warning signs further along the boundary of the bottom exposed section. Clerk to follow up.

**g) Contractor works:** Works as per works list completed (see attached). NewWay weedspray being trialled in the village and at the cemetery. Bush at top of main drive cut back. To be monitored to see if it survives or not. Digging out and clearing of graves all completed. Spoil heap still needs clearing. At the request of a member of the public BSMPC to install a dog waste bin at the steps leading to the cemetery from Cuckoo Hill.

The Chair expressed her thanks to Emily Fuller who has been assisting with the waste bin collections as part of her D of E Silver Award. Her voluntary 6 months has now ended.

The Chair advised that she regularly clears memorials of grass cuttings and suggested to members to do the same when in the cemetery.

Members discussed a proposal from the Chair for the oldest right hand grave section to become a Wild Flower Meadow. The scheme to be trialled for a couple of years and the area marked to alert visitors as to why the area is being cut. Members fully agreed with the suggestion. Clerk to follow up with the contractor.

## **7/09/22 TURNING AND PARKING BAY AREAS**

### **a) Turning area:**

**1) Additional gate entrance:** Although the path has been widened, the funeral cortege still has difficulties in manoeuvring its vehicles in the turning area. Therefore it is agreed that the cortege should not enter but remain at the entrance into the new section. However the contractor vehicles do require access. The Clerk has obtained costs to install a gate at the very top of the cemetery where the Warden memorial bench currently stands. The family has been contacted and is very happy for the bench to be relocated if needed. Gravedigger also happy to enter his vehicle at this point.

Concerns raised by members that grave deed holders dictate the need for a further layout design. Clerk agreed to follow up with the gravedigger and to look at other options to solve the vehicle issues. Clerk to investigate disclaimers for including in the Cemetery Conditions.

**2) Boundary fence:** The rear boundary fence is severely dilapidated. However members agreed that this matter should be left on the table until finances improved.

**b) Corner parking splay:** Agreed not to follow up on creating a splay at the parking bay to protect graves.

**c) Pea shingle:** The Clerk agreed to obtain costs from the contractor to lay extra pea shingle on the parking bay and the top paths in the extension area.

**d) Future layout of extension area:** Following discussions with Bevills Estate members agreed that future graves should be set on the east side of the extension area and leave the west side for vehicle access.

## **8/09/22 MANAGEMENT OF MEMORIALS**

**a) Application to erect a memorial:** Revised form agreed.

**b) Follow up with grave deed holders:** The Clerk has managed to obtain consent from a number of grave deed holders to meet the costs of repair of their loved ones unstable memorials. These have been referred to Luxton Memorials who undertook the memorial stability testing for the Cemetery Authority. Unstable memorials now marked with a warning sign or laid flat. Follow up with deed holders now exhausted.

**c) Grave surround of the late Doggett family:** The contractor has levelled the grave, relaid the inscribed plaques and bedded in the surrounds. All satisfactory.

**cd Ashes memorial of the late Steventon:** The ashes memorial remains unstable. Clerk advised that Nigel Norton has work in hand.

## **9/09/22 FINANCE**

Business Access A/C balance: £19,678.49

Community A/C balance: £6,725.09 (when all cheques paid).

**a) Finance & Budget Monitoring Report** – circulated, noted and attached.

**b) Bank Reconciliation** dated 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 circulated, noted and attached.

Corresponding bank statements circulated, noted and attached and duly signed by the Chairman and a non-signatory member.

**c) Second half year precepts** to BHPC & BSMPC presented – noted.

**d) Outsourcing** of HMRC payroll completed and satisfactory.

**e) Mid year VAT claim** for 2022/23 submitted to HMRC – noted.

**f) Assest Register** updated – noted.

### **10/09/22 BUDGET**

It is noted that future boundary wall maintenance reserves currently stand at £6,000.

Cllr Koeck offered to investigate quotations to complete the repointing of the main driveway walls.

Precept requests to Bures Hamlet and Bures St Mary Parish Councils to remain as per previous year - £6,500 from each parish council. If the parish councils considered this request should be reduced owing to the current financial climate then members will need to review at the January meeting.

The proposed budget was agreed by all members present.

### **11/09/22 AUDIT MATTERS**

a) Still awaiting the External Auditors report for 2021/22 Accounting Statements – noted.

b) Internal audit review provisionally booked for 10<sup>th</sup> October – noted.

### **12/09/22 CORRESPONDENCE**

The Clerk had followed up on a request for an interment in the grave of the late Hubby Pilgrim 1937 A88. The Chair noted that maps and old burial entries do not always match thus creating a difficulty with accuracy. Family happy with the Clerk's findings and a future interment in the grave will be accepted.

Pensions Regulator acknowledgement of redeclaration of compliance – noted.

Bures NHP Business Survey – Clerk completed.

Gravedigger's insurance certificate received and held on file.

### **13/09/22 INTERMENTS/ASHES INTERMENTS/MEMORIAL APPLICATIONS**

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

Ashes interment of the late Selwyn Prior.

### **14/09/22 BRIEF INFORMATION & EXCHANGE**

None.

### **15/09/22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Committee meeting: Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023 to be held at the Garrad Room, Bures Community Centre, Nayland Road at 7.30pm.

Future dates agreed 2023: Site meeting 10<sup>th</sup> June

Committee meetings: 13<sup>th</sup> March, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 11<sup>th</sup> September

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed:

Authority Chair:

Date: