

**Minutes of a meeting of the Bures Joint Cemetery Authority held  
at Bures Community Centre on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7.30pm**

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

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

Bures Hamlet Parish Council: Cllr S Manning, Cllr K McAndrew

**1/09/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received from Cllr Baker (personal crisis). Apologies accepted by those members present.

**2/09/23 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.

**3/09/23 MINUTES**

Minutes of the previous meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023 (previously circulated) were duly approved and signed as a correct record.

**4/09/23 PUBLIC FORUM – 15 minutes maximum public participation**

3 minutes for individual contributions unless agreed by the Chairman

No members of the public present.

**5/09/23 INSPECTOR'S ASSET & RISK ASSESSMENT REPORTS**

Cllr Ellerbeck presented his reports to the meeting.

**a) Risk Assessment Checklist:** Checklist held on file. Some pointing needed on front entrance wall. Bench along on right of main top drive in need of attention.

**b) Memorial Stability Checklist:** Checklist held on file. All memorials checked for stability. Any memorials found to be seriously unstable are to be laid down for safety reasons. No further warning signs are being put on unstable memorials as per previously agreed. Some signage now faded and require removing.

**Next Inspector: Cllr Manning.**

**6/09/23 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**a) Tree monitoring:** .

- 1) Limes:** It was agreed that the Clerk should obtain 3 quotations to reduce the limes. Clerk to approach Blake Tree Care, Fordham Tree Surgeons and Guy Jones.
- 2) Sequoia and Cedar trunks:** The Clerk had discussed the option of removing the trunks with two local tree surgeons. Both considered that any monies made from the sale of the wood would be negligible against the costs to remove the stumps. Members agreed to leave the stumps in place and plant a wisteria or similar at the base of the Sequoia in the autumn.
- 3) Tree Inspections:** Blake Tree Care to do an annual visual check of all trees in the cemetery plus a full tree inspection on a 3-year rolling programme commencing in 2024. To be guided by Blake Tree Care as to when to carry out the visual annual check.
- 4) Laurel hedge:** 3 quotations to be obtained to cut back and tidy the laurels – as per Item 1, Limes.

**b) Boundary wall pointing:** Pointing along extension boundary wall satisfactorily completed.

**c) Grasscuttings:** Members raised concerns that grass cuttings were not being collected up in the lawn section. The contractor had previously advised that he would prefer not to purchase a collector machine owing to cost. Grass cuttings also cover the memorials when strimming around the graves. The Clerk pointed out to members that this was not unique to Bures Cemetery. She agreed to obtain a price from the contractor to collect the cuttings and to use a blower when strimming around the memorials. She would also investigate costs for the purchase of a leaf and grass cutting collector which could be used by volunteers or the contractor.

**d) Wild flower meadow:** Area in the oldest section of the cemetery on the St Edmunds Lane side of the path being trialled as a wild flower meadow. Meadow becoming established with several wildflowers emerging. Area to be scarified, seeded and then cut in the autumn.

**e) Benches:** The 'Cook' bench is showing signs of deterioration and in need of a further clean owing to its location. Agreed to monitor.

**f) Spoil heap:** The original spoil heap has been cleared from the bottom right of the old section. A new spoil heap is now established within the boundary of the teasel field.

**g) Cemetery map:** Updated copies have been placed in St Mary's Church vestry and in the cabinet located on the cemetery shed. The maps are too large to be laminated. Cllr Aries to liaise with Ron Wright to open the cabinet when the map requires updating.

**h) Contractor works:** (see attached) – all noted. Contractors are finding it difficult to contain the weed growth on the pathways. Current eco-friendly weed spray not as effective. Clerk checking if the team are willing to increase their grounds maintenance hours at peak weed growth times. Bushes at top of main drive to remain as now establishing themselves. Spoil heap in teasel field still to be cleared

#### **7/09/23 EXTENDED AREA & TURNING AREA**

**a) Boundary fence:** Volunteers led by Cllr Koeck had kindly installed angle iron supports along the dilapidated boundary fencing. The Chair expressed her grateful thanks to Cllr Koeck and his band of willing helpers.

**b) Teasel field:** Angle iron supports also installed along the teasel field boundary fencing. It was noted that this fence remains dilapidated and will require further attention.

**c) Parking area:** Clerk arranging with the contractor for gravel grids to be laid at the corner of the parking area to prevent vehicles intruding on the adjacent graves.

#### **8/09/23 BUDGET**

Precept requests to Bures Hamlet and Bures St Mary Parish Councils to remain as per previous year - £6,000 from each parish council. The proposed budget was agreed by all members present.

#### **9/09/23 AUDIT MATTERS**

**a)** External Auditors report for 2022/23 Accounting Statements received with no matters arising.

**b)** Quotations had been sought for an Internal Auditor for year endings 2023/24 and 2024/25. However there had been a poor response with only one serious interest for consideration. It was agreed to accept BB Business Associates. Clerk to discuss costs with them prior to signing the Letter of Engagement.

**c)** A suitable date for the Internal Review to be agreed – preferably in October. Clerk and Chair to liaise.

### **10/09/23 FINANCE MATTERS**

**Business Access A/C balance: £18,752.79**

**Community A/C balance: £2,952.81**

- a) Finance & Budget Monitoring Report – circulated, noted and attached.
- b) Bank Reconciliation dated 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023 circulated, noted and attached.  
Corresponding bank statements circulated, noted and attached and duly signed by the Chairman and a non-signatory member.
- c) The transfer of accounts to Lloyds from Barclays completed with signatories updated.  
Waiting on final closure of Barclays accounts. Bankers Automated Clearing System (BACS) working well.
- d) HMRC payroll and payment of Clerk's tax now outsourced. Working satisfactorily however one penalty notice appealed successfully.
- e) Mid year VAT claim submitted to HMRC.

### **11/09/23 CORRESPONDENCE**

Gravediggers updated insurance details received and held on file.

### **12/09/23 INTERMENTS/ASHES INTERMENTS/MEMORIAL APPLICATIONS**

The Clerk reported the following interments/memorial applications since the last meeting:  
Memorial of the late F & W Pilgrim  
Memorial of the late George Sargeant.

### **13/09/23 BRIEF INFORMATION & EXCHANGE**

Members discussed moving meeting dates to a different evening however it was agreed that Monday evenings were the most preferable for the majority of members present.  
Next agenda item: To discuss appointing PKF Littlejohn to hold an External Audit Review 2023/24.

**14/09/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at Bures Community Centre, Nayland Road at 7.30pm.  
Future dates agreed 2024: Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March, 17<sup>th</sup> June, 9<sup>th</sup> September.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed:

Authority Chair:

Date: