

UPPER BEEDING PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk: Steve Coberman Cemetery Clerk: Colette Harber

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT PARISHES CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Date: Monday 2 October 2017 Time: 7.00pm Place: Beeding & Bramber Village Hall

Present:	Cllrs R Potter & N Stubbs (Bramber Parish Council); Cllr P Bowell (Steyning Parish Council); Cllrs R Harber & C Warren (Upper Beeding Parish Council). There were five members of the Public present until the end of item J:1017:06 when four members of the public left the meeting.
In Attendance	Steve Coberman, Clerk to UBPC. Colette Harber, Cemetery Clerk
J:1017:01 <i>Apologies</i>	Cllr M Willett and the Rev'd Stephanie Gardner
J:1017:02 <i>To receive questions from the Public</i>	None of this occasion
J:1017:03 <i>Declarations of interest</i>	None on this occasion
J:1017:04 <i>Minutes of the previous meeting</i>	The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 3 July 2017 were agreed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of Cllr N Stubbs who was in attendance. <i>Proposed Cllr Warren; Seconded Cllr Potter</i> Steve Coberman, apologised for not bringing the Minute Book to the meeting for signing. In response Cllr Bowell, Chairman, agreed to sign the Minute Book outside of the meeting.
J:1017:05 <i>Matters Arising</i>	None on this occasion

<p>J:1017:06</p> <p><i>Reconsider the Committee's position regarding the inclusion of representatives of religious organisations</i></p>	<p>In opening the discussion relating to the Committee's position regarding the inclusion of representatives of religious organisations, it was noted that no further correspondence had been received from the Churches regarding the matter.</p> <p>A paper detailing the legal stance of the Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee was provided by Steve Coberman.</p> <p>In clarifying the situation, Steve Coberman confirmed that non-councillors do not have voting rights if the local authority committee is a financial committee but they do have the right to speak on any matter.</p> <p>He also stated that it was his belief that the Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee was a finance committee.</p> <p>He also referred to the JPCC Standing Orders, which the Councillors had drawn up and had requested approval by each of the their Councils. It was noted that the Standing Orders did not allow for co-option.</p> <p>Councillors commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Botolphs Cemetery is a non-secular cemetery and that this position should be re-inforced, therefore there was no further need to include religious organisations - if local churchyards find themselves at total capacity, then it would fall to the local Parish Councils to maintain them and possibly, by default, to the Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee - representation from the Churches should be retained and there was a need to 'cluster' with local churches in the area for the benefit of all people - was not in favour of expanding the Local Authority Committee to non-councillors whilst recognising the knowledgeable and valuable input from the Rev'd Emma Stonham at the previous meeting. The need to progress with the work of the cemetery, including the management of the land, was paramount. <p>Steve Coberman re-stated that, at the outset of the setting up of the Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee, each Parish Council had agreed the Standing Orders relating to the numbers of Parish Councillors sitting on the Committee. The legal position relating to the constitution of the JPCC and its appointees is up to each of the three Parish Councils and not up to the Committee.</p> <p>He affirmed that whilst the JPCC is entitled to suggest amendments to the Standing Orders, it does not have the power to change the Standing Orders nor vote to change them. Any suggested amendments would have to be agreed by each of the Parish Councils. The parish council representatives will raise this matter at their respoective council meeting.</p> <p>He suggested that religious organisations should continue to be invited to each meeting.</p> <p>In the brief discussion that ensued, it was felt that clarification should be sought as to whether the Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee is actually a finance committee, or not. Steve Coberman to discuss the matter with the Sussex Association of Local Councils.</p>
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<p>J:1017:06 <i>Reconsider the Committee's position regarding the inclusion of representatives of religious organisations (cont)</i></p>	<p>Prior to the Chairman closing the discussions, the Cemetery Clerk commented that in the past she had sought occasional advice from the Rev'd John Challis. She requested that, should she need any liturgical advice, she consult with the Rev'd Emma Stonham who had taken an active interest in the workings of the JPCC.</p> <p>The Rev'd Emma Stonham and all Councillors agreed.</p>
<p>J:1017:07 <i>Update re Cemetery extension</i></p>	<p>The Cemetery Clerk reported that she and Steve Coberman had met with the landowners regarding the purchase of land but no outcome was reached.</p> <p>Whilst acknowledging that the purchase of land would not be an easy process, Steve Coberman advised the Committee that they should start seeking other options with immediate effect. He also suggested that, in time, it might be prudent to commission a firm of Chartered Surveyors to undertake a land search.</p> <p>In the discussion that ensued, assurances were given that people who had pre-purchased a grave or a cremation plot, for interment in Botolphs Cemetery, they would be accounted for in any calculation of available graves and plots.</p> <p>It was agreed to start looking explicitly for low value land in the local surrounding area.</p> <p>It was noted that some Councillors had also met, for a site meeting at Botolphs Cemetery on Sunday 1 October. Committee members present received a plan of the Cemetery detailing the current graves and cremation plots and the availability of further graves and cremation plots.</p> <p>It was felt that, despite the need to maximise the number of graves, adequate space should be allowed between the rows to allow proper access to wheelchair or pushchair users..</p> <p>At the cemetery, discussions also took place regarding the trees around the cemetery, the front gates and the water well.</p> <p>Councillors also discussed the notion of a Memorial Wall to be placed on the outer wall of the wooden shelter. Special plaques could be purchased by residents in memory of family members, whether, or not, that family member had been interred in Botolphs Cemetery.</p> <p>It was noted that Councillors would receive an updated plan of the Cemetery at each quarterly meeting.</p>
<p>J:1017:08 <i>Management Accounts</i></p>	<p>Management Accounts to the 26 June 2017 were received and noted.</p>
<p>J:1017:09 <i>Financial Report</i></p>	<p>Steve Coberman provided the Committee with a Cost Centre Report detailing receipts and payments by budget heading.</p>
<p>J:1017:10 <i>Recommending authorisation of cheques for payment</i></p>	<p>The Committee recommended the following invoices for payment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beeding & Bramber Village Hall meeting venue - £22.80 - Steyning Parish Council for Steyning Showcase - £20.00 - Organist for Memorial Service - £90.00 - The PCC of Beeding and Bramber with Botolphs for teas and refreshments at Memorial Service - £100.00

<p>J:1017:11 <i>Expenditure budget for the financial year 2018/19</i></p>	<p>The Committee received a draft expenditure budget for the financial year 2018/19.</p> <p>Whilst acknowledging that it was very difficult to gauge the level of yearly income for Botolphs Cemetery, it was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the headings ‘Clerk Salary’ and ‘Administration’ should be combined into one heading ‘Upper Beeding Staff Costs’ as the Cemetery Clerk was now paid from the payroll - any Professional Fees needed for the purchase of land would be taken from the earmarked reserves - the sum for any additional works including the renewal of the front gates should be increased to £9,000 - an unspecified capital expenditure contingency of £2,000 be included in the budget <p>The budget was recommended to be put forward to the Upper Beeding Parish Council budgeting process.</p> <p><i>Proposed Cllr Stubbs; Seconded Cllr Harber</i></p>
<p>J:1017:12 <i>Cemetery Clerk’s Appraisal and review of salary (taken at the end of the meeting)</i></p>	<p>The Cemetery Clerk was asked to leave the room for this item, and Mr S Coberman agreed to take the minute.</p> <p>This item was held under confidential session, and Cllr. Harber asked to be excused .</p> <p>Mr Coberman then tabled a discussion paper on the Cemetery Clerk's salary, together with the agreed notes of the annual appraisal meeting held with her in the summer.</p> <p>Following discussion, which included an explanation by Mr Coberman of the distinct roles and responsibilities of himself and the Cemetery Clerk, the meeting accepted Mr Coberman's recommendation that the Cemetery Clerk's salary be based on scale 27 of the NALC/SLCC agreed scales for 2017/18, and that her office allowance be increased from £45 to £50 per month, both backdated to take effect from 1st April 2017.</p> <p>In addition, Cllr P Howell suggested that an additional one-off gratuity of £250 be paid to the Cemetery Clerk in recognition of her service, and the fact that her salary had not been increased for several years; the meeting was in agreement with this.</p> <p>As regards ongoing policy, the meeting adopted Mr Coberman's recommendations as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The Cemetery Clerk's salary to be based on the NALC/SLCC scales, and adjusted annually at the first meeting of the committee following the council Annual Meetings; (2) The same terms to be applied to the Cemetery Clerk as already applied to the Clerk, namely: progression is automatically through the salary scale by annual increments, but that the Committee may withhold an increment if it is considered that performance fell below the level expected, following an annual review, or award an additional increment for exemplary performance if it chooses to do so; and (3) The fixed office allowance to be adjusted in accordance with the published consumer price index (CPI) in the preceding March, rounded to the nearest 25p. <p>The Committee resolved to adopt all the above proposals.</p> <p><i>Proposed by Cllr P Howell; seconded by Cllr R Potter.</i></p>

<p>J:1017:13 <i>On-going management of Botolphs Cemetery</i></p>	<p>The Cemetery Clerk reported on her discussions with Gary Stanbridge, the Botolphs Cemetery maintenance man, regarding the laying of new paths on the left hand-side of Botolphs Cemetery, (the area adjacent to St Botolphs Church); the need to raise the level of the ground to accommodate the graves, and the need to manage all the trees.</p> <p>In taking his views into consideration and to maximise the number of grave spaces, the plan for the new cemetery section had been drawn up without any paths (<i>refer to J:1017:07</i>).</p> <p>It was noted that the Cemetery Clerk had contacted Horsham District Council regarding the management of the trees. She was informed that the trees were not part of a conservation area, therefore work, such as raising the canopy of the trees, could be undertaken.</p> <p>The Cemetery Clerk was authorised to discuss the JPCC proposals with Gary Standbridge, requesting an estimated cost of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - soil to raise the level of the left hand side of the cemetery - maintenance to the trees - renewal of the front gates. <p>Cllr Bowell reported that Steyning Parish Council had engaged a firm to look at the well outside Springwells Hotel and he would request that the well at Botolphs Cemetery be checked at the same time.</p> <p>The Cemetery Clerk was also authorised to research the idea of a Memorial Wall and report back to the meeting.</p>
<p>J:1017:14 <i>Commonwealth War Graves</i></p>	<p>Cllr Bowell reported that the Commonwealth War Graves Commission had notified local churches that war graves now included the recent Wars in Syria and Iraq; therefore a plaque could be erected should any service personnel be interred in Botolphs Cemetery.</p> <p>It was noted that at the current time, no service personnel had been interred in Botolphs Cemetery.</p>
<p>J:1017:15 <i>Calendar of Meetings for 2018</i></p>	<p>The Committee agreed to move meeting dates to the last Monday of the month to avoid a clash of meeting dates for Councillors and to avoid meetings on consecutive evenings for Steve Coberman.</p> <p>The following meeting dates for 2018 were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monday 29 January - Monday 30 April - Monday 30 July - Monday 29 October <p>The Cemetery Clerk to email dates to JPCC councillors.</p>
<p>J:1017:16 <i>Correspondence</i></p>	<p>None on this occasion</p>

J:1017:17 <i>Matters for information and discussion at future meetings</i>	None on this occasion
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There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

The next meeting of the committee will be held at Beeding & Bramber Village Hall on Monday 29 January 2018 commencing at 7.00pm

Minutes signed by: **Date:**