

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 20 March 2017 Time: 7.00pm Place: Beeding & Bramber Village Hall

Present:	Cllr R Potter (Bramber Parish Council); Cllr P Bowell (Steyning Parish Council); Cllrs R Harber & C Warren (Upper Beeding Parish Council). There were no members of the Public present.
In Attendance	Steve Coberman, Clerk to UBPC. Colette Harber, Cemetery Clerk
J:0317:01 Welcome	Cllr Warren welcomed all councillors to the meeting of the Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee
J:0317:02 Questions from the public	None on this occasion
J:0317:03 Declarations of interest	None on this occasion
J:0317:04 Apologies	Apologies for non-attendance were received from Cllrs N Stubbs, delayed due to traffic problems in London and M Willett, in attendance at Steyning Annual Parish Meeting Apologies were also received from Rev'd Stephanie Gardner for non-attendance
J:0317:05 Minutes of the previous meeting	The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 19 December 2016 were agreed and signed by the Chairman. <i>Proposed R Potter; Seconded R Harber</i>
J:0317:06 Matters Arising	Minute J:1216:13 Concern was strongly expressed re the content and tone of the letter sent to the faith communities. It was felt that all committee members should have been in receipt of a copy of the letter prior to it being sent out to the local Clergy. In the discussion that ensued, it was agreed that, in future, any formal letters would be circulated to committee members for comment prior to being sent out.

<p>J:0317:07 Financial Report from the Clerk of UBPC</p>	<p>Councillors received a written report from Steve Coberman, Clerk of UBPC which provided an update on the position of the new bank account for the JPCC.</p> <p>It was noted that whilst the Clerk of UBPC would have preferred to have been able to have opened a separate account for the cemetery, the perceived inefficiency and ineptitude of the Co-operative Bank since October 2016, caused him to withdraw the application after discussing the matter with the Cemetery Clerk, Colette Harber.</p> <p>Instead, income and expenditure from Botolphs Cemetery would be wholly incorporated into the main UBPC accounts under a dedicated Cost Account solely for the purpose of the cemetery.</p> <p>In future, any cheques requiring signature for the JPCC would be signed in the usual manner during the full Council meetings of UBPC.</p> <p>Given the above, it was noted that the Cemetery Clerk, would no longer be a signatory for the JPCC; she fully accepted the new arrangements.</p> <p>Funds of £50,000 had been transferred to the UBPC account and recorded as income to the Cemetery Cost Account, with an expected further sum of approximately £7,000 being transferred on the closure of the former Joint Parishes Burial Board accounts with HSBC.</p> <p>It was noted that £35,000 had been specifically recorded as an Earmarked Reserve and set aside for the purchase of land as had been discussed at the JPCC meeting held on 19 December 2016.</p> <p>It was further noted that UBPC had been paying the Cemetery Clerk's salary since 1 October 2016 which would be noted in the accounts as an expenditure relevant to the Cemetery Cost Account.</p> <p>In the discussion that ensued it was suggested that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Heads of Agreement, signed by each of the Parish Councils, and the JPCC Standing Orders should be checked to ensure that they reflect the new banking arrangements - there would be no further need for members of JPCC to receive the bank statements - the managements accounts be maintained and presented in a similar way as to those provided for the former JPBB - the Committee members should set a budget for the cemetery at the same time as local authorities have its budgeting process each year, ie during the September 2017 meeting.
<p>J:0317:08 Management Accounts to 6 March 2017</p>	<p>Draft management accounts to 6 March 2017 were presented and noted.</p>
<p>J:0317:09 Bank Account statements</p>	<p>Bank statements for the Community Account and the Business Money Manager accounts to 13 February 2017 were received and noted.</p>

<p>J:0317:10 Pathways to left-hand side of Cemetery</p>	<p>Councillors received a written report seeking permission to obtain an estimate for new paths on the left-hand side of the cemetery with a view to having the work undertaken later in 2017. Councillors were also provided with a document detailing the number of 'at-need' graves and cremation plots purchased since 2010/11.</p> <p>In the discussion that ensued, it was noted that within the last financial year, there had been an increase in the number of 'at-need' graves requested by Funeral Directors. And should, during the next financial year, the number of graves required be similar to that of the current year, then, the right-hand side of the cemetery (the current side of the cemetery being used) would be full.</p> <p>Councillors felt that whilst the groundsman should be asked to provide an estimate for the pathways in time for the June meeting, a site inspection would be held prior to the meeting.</p> <p>It was suggested that plans for the paths on the left-hand side of the cemetery be drawn up so as to maximise the number of burials contained within that area. It was also suggested that the paths be of a quality able to withstand heavy plant machinery.</p>
<p>J:0317:11 Update re proposed extension</p>	<p>Given the absence of Cllr N Stubbs the update of the proposed extension was carried forward to the next meeting.</p> <p>In the discussion that briefly ensued regarding the land, it was felt that, given the changes made by the Environmental Authority regarding the placing of graves ten metres away from a water course, the piece of land the Committee had in mind to purchase might no longer be large enough for future use.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Cemetery Clerk and the Clerk, UBPC should seek a meeting with the owners of the land.</p>
<p>J:0317:12 Scale of Fees and Charges</p>	<p>Councillors considered a paper detailing the current scale of fees charge for services at Botolphs Cemetery together with a second paper indicating a 5% increase on the charges.</p> <p>In the discussion that ensued the committee agreed that a five percentage increase, appropriately rounded, would come into effect from 1 April 2017</p> <p><i>Proposed: R Harber Seconded: P Bowell</i></p> <p>Cllr Harber reported that Co-operative Funeralcare, the UK's largest funeral provider, had announced that whilst funerals undertaken with them for all children under of age of 16 were free, the option of a free funeral had been extended to all children under the age of 18.</p> <p>Given that many children now stay at school until the age of 18, it was agreed that in line with the announcement, charges for graves or cremation plots at Botolphs Cemetery for children under the age of 16 would continue to be free and extended to children under the age of 18.</p> <p>It was also agreed that all fees and charges for Botolphs Cemetery would be reviewed annually during the budgeting process, as previously discussed under agenda item J:0317:07 and commence from 1 April the following year.</p> <p><i>Proposed: R Harber Seconded: R Potter</i></p>

<p>J:0317:13 Interment of Non-Residents</p>	<p>Councillors received a paper suggesting that a policy relating to the ability of non-residents to pre-purchase a grave or cremation plot in Botolphs Cemetery be agreed:</p> <p><i>'To accept up to six applications, each year for the next three years, from non-residents to pre-purchase a grave or cremation plot in Botolphs Cemetery'.</i></p> <p>The Cemetery Clerk explained her concerns re the levels of intense financial pressures all local councils were facing and which were likely to continue for some while.</p> <p>She also felt that it was incumbent upon the JPCC to ensure that sufficient monetary reserves were rebuilt for future maintenance of two cemeteries following the proposed extension.</p> <p>In the discussion that ensued, Councillors recommended that the current situation regarding the pre-purchase of graves or cremation plots by non-residents remain in place and that the matter be reviewed annually.</p> <p>It was also noted that should the Cemetery Clerk be unsure as to whether a non-resident qualified to pre-purchase a grave or cremation plot, she would, in the first instance, refer the matter to Steve Coberman, as her line-manager, before consulting with the JPCC.</p>
<p>J:0317:14 Correspondence</p>	<p>The Cemetery Clerk received correspondence, which were duly noted during the meeting from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rev'd Stephanie Gardner, the Three Bs - Sister Mary Patrick, the Towers Convent
<p>J:0317:15 Matters for information and future agendas</p>	<p>Agenda item J:0317:11 to receive an update re the proposed extension at the next meeting.</p>

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm.

The next meeting of the committee will be held at Beeding & Bramber Village Hall on Monday 19 June 2017 commencing at 7.00pm

Minutes signed by: **Date:**