

## OVINGHAM JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

(WYLAM, HORSLEY, OVINGHAM AND OVINGTON PARISH COUNCILS)

### MINUTES OF MEETING OF OVINGHAM JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE HELD ON 5<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 7pm at Wylam Institute

**Councillors present:** Mr. T. Martin (Wylam PC) (Chairman); Mr. K. Trobe (Wylam PC); Mrs. D. Jordon (Ovingham PC); Mr. I Campbell (Ovingham PC); Mr. M. Senior (Horsley PC)(Vice-Chairman); Mrs. P. Bailey (Ovington PC).  
**Also present:** Mrs. D. Carney (Clerk to the Committee); Mrs. J. Hornsby (Cemetery Superintendent).

**1. QUORUM.**

There being one representative from four constituent Parish Council present, the meeting was declared quorate.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Received from Mr. P. Pescod (Ovington PC).

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

No interests were declared.

**4. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

No members of the public were present and no questions were put.

**5. CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OVINGHAM JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE HELD ON 6<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2017.**

Having been circulated to members prior to the meeting, the Minutes were **agreed** to be a true record of proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

**6. To receive the Clerk's report.**

**Any items not reported on here are covered elsewhere on the Agenda.**

6.1 Signature of agreed final version of Ovingham Joint Burial Committee Constitution. The Clerk would send a copy of this to Horsley Parish Council for signature.

6.2 Cemetery Ledger and other records. See J. Hornsby's report at Item 7.

6.3 Cemetery Grounds Maintenance Contract 2017-20. The South East corner of the cemetery had been cleared. A resident had asked about tree safety in the South East

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corner and had been informed that the trees in the cemetery are subject to regular safety checks. It was **noted** that it would be wise to review this inspection schedule.

6.4 Cemetery Lodge Repairs and painting. This work had now been completed. See **Item 8** for a report on the annual Landlord's inspection of the Cemetery Lodge.

6.5 Cemetery Insurance. The Clerk met with Richard Matthews, Came & Company's local representative on 24<sup>th</sup> August to review insurance cover and asset register. Mr. Matthews visited the cemetery with the Clerk and was most impressed with the North Chapel as a building. The Clerk would collate information from the meeting and produce a draft asset register and report to a future meeting of the Committee.

6.6 Banking Arrangements at Lloyds Bank. A new account had been opened and operational since 1 August 2017. All Direct Debits and Standing Orders had been transferred to the new account. See **Item 10**.

6.7 Ovingham Joint Burial Committee Accounts for 2016/17. The accounts were sent to BDO LLP with Wylam Parish Council's accounting information in time for the deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017. VAT of £2,295.28 has been reclaimed and received, paid into Wylam Parish Council's bank account. This amount would be reimbursed to the Committee's account after Wylam Parish Council's meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

## 7. Superintendent's Report (J. Hornsby).

J. Hornsby explained her role as Cemetery Superintendent for the benefit of new members of the Committee. She had brought the Ledger with entries dating from 1929 to date. She also has a leaflet on how to fill in the Ledger and a Purchased Deeds Book. The following actions were **agreed**:

- that a good copy of the original map of the cemetery was needed and the Clerk would investigate whether Woodhorn Archive could produce this. It was **noted** that there is no map for the old part of the Cemetery.
- Woodhorn would also be asked to quote for making a copy of the Ledger.
- J. Hornsby would bring the map up to date and that she would be reimbursed for any expenses involved in this work.
- J. Hornsby would look at the Superintendent's Role and Duties document and notify the Committee should any amendments be necessary;
- There was currently no *Notice of Interment* for Ovingham Cemetery and the Clerk would produce a sample for approval by the Committee;
- An area of the Cemetery should be designated for cremated remains.

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- J. Hornsby to notify the Committee as to the number of sites still available for cremated remains. It was noted that there is very little space on the north side of the Cemetery except for cremated remains.

T. Martin thanked J. Hornsby for attending the meeting and for her informative presentation.

**8. Report on the annual Landlord's Inspection of the Cemetery Lodge. (D. Jordon; D. Carney)**

D. Jordon reported that the Lodge had been found to be in good order, except for staining on the bathroom vinyl flooring and some damage to kitchen paintwork caused by condensation. Where possible repairs had been carried out and extra tiling put in in the kitchen to solve the condensation problem. The cause of staining on the vinyl flooring had been due to a leak from the shower screen. The vinyl had been taken up and the chipboard underneath had been found to be sound. A quotation for new vinyl flooring would be sought.

**9. Review information received from Northumberland County Council (NCC) regarding gravestone topple-testing.**

A copy of an email from NCC had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. Topple-testing has last been carried out 5 years ago. It was noted that NCC would need a plan of the cemetery. It was **agreed** that the Clerk would ask NCC what sort of plan was required and whether NCC could produce one, and would consult M. Gillis to see if a plan had been used in the past. It was noted that J. Hornsby's map of the cemetery would be a starting point but it was noted that J. Hornsby had indicated that there was no map for the older part of the cemetery. It was **agreed** that P. Bailey would look to see if Google Earth had any suitable map of the cemetery. It was noted that J. Hornsby had indicated that there was no map for the older part of the cemetery. A spreadsheet to record data would also be necessary.

**10. Consideration as to whether to open a new Savings Account for OJBC at Lloyds Bank.**

The rationale for opening a Savings Account is to earn interest. The current Bank of England interest rate is 0.05%. There are three types of savings accounts available at Lloyds: Instant Access (interest rate 0.05%) ; 32 Days' Notice Savings Account (interest rate 0.32%) and a Fixed Term Savings Account (interest rate varies according to length of term: 12 months 0.65%; 9 months 0.44%; 6 months 0.36%). The minimum deposit in the latter two types of account is £10,000. There is no minimum deposit for the Instant Access Account. Committee members reviewed this information and it was agreed not to open a savings account, but to review this decision should interest rates improve in future.

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**11. Review of information regarding charges for storage at Cemetery Chapels and to agree a rate for use of South Chapel as storage by A and J Jackson.**

It was **agreed** that:

- A lease agreement would be necessary;
- That the Clerk would contact a solicitor to investigate possible lease agreements;
- That the Clerk would contact the Cemetery's insurer, Came & Company, regarding insurance implications of storage;
- That the matter would be further considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

**12. Consideration of Ovingham Reading Room( ORR) Committee's request for storage at the North Chapel.**

P. Pescod, although not present at the meeting, had asked that his interest in this item be recorded. The Ovingham Drama Group (ODG) are applying for funding for a new stage. Should the application be successful the old stage would be donated to the village for use at the Goose Fair, but a storage facility would be needed. The Drama Group had asked whether the staging could be stored in the outhouse attached to the North Chapel. It was **agreed**:

- to allow the ORR storage facilities as requested;
- to send a letter to the ORR explaining that the items would be stored at the ORR's own risk and should be covered by the ORR's insurance. The Committee would not be responsible for any loss or damage to the items stored;
- that D. Jordon had agreed to hold a key for Ovingham Reading Room.

**FINANCE.**

**13. Report on income received since the last meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2017.**

The following income has been received:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>
02/05/17	Housing Benefit	£170.44
02/05/17	Lodge rent	£30.00
08/05/17	Lodge rent	£25.00
25/05/17	Lodge rent	£200.00
30/05/17	Housing Benefit	£170.44
31/05/17	Horsley PC	£900.00
02/06/17	Ovington PC	£1,215.00
02/06/17	Ovingham PC	£2,565.00
09/06/17	Burial fees	£765.00
09/06/17	Burial fees	£940.00
26/06/17	Housing Benefit	£170.44
30/06/17	Lodge rent	£200.00
	No statement for July	

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01/08/17	Housing Benefit	£42.61
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D. Jordon reported that Lodge rent was still in arrears but that progress was being made.

**14. Report on payments made and authorisation of payments to be made at the meeting (05/09/17).**

Inv. Date	Payee	Supply details	Cheque No.	Amount
15/05/17	NCC	Business rates	DD	£55.00
16/05/17	NWL	Annual water rates	4393016	£352.94
17/05/17	Came & Co	Insurance	439317	£1,051.49
19/05/17	D. Jordon	Expenses	493313	£6.00
22/05/17	J Hornsby	Salary	SO	£121.00
22/05/17	G. Sloan	Maintenance Contract	SO	£629.50
26/05/17	A Jackson	Extra work 2016/17	439314	£550.00
13/06/17	Best Electricians	Bathroom fan	439315	£288.00
16/06/17	J Hornsby	Expenses	439319	£48.25
20/06/17	G Sloan	Maintenance Contract	SO	£629.50
21/06/17	A Brown	Gas safety inspection	439320	£100.00
		No statement for July		
20/06/17	Mark Best	Lodge repairs/painting	439321	£1,000.00
20/06/17	Mark Best	Lodge repairs	439322	£300.00
		New account cheque book		
17/08/17	R. Loughead	Lodge repairs	000001	£290.00
14/08/17	Duncan Sewell	Lodge repairs	000002	£70.80

No further invoices had been received to date.

**15. Confidential Item: To agree the Ovingham Joint Burial Committee Clerk's Salary to be backdated to 01 April 2017.**

**The Committee passed a Resolution excluding the press and public from the meeting in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (personal information).**

A suggested salary schedule had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The Clerk's *ex gratia* payment for work January to March 2017 and monthly salary from 1 April 2017 were agreed and a Confidential Minute was made.

**16. Ovingham Joint Burial Committee Budget 2018/19.**

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It was **agreed** that a draft Budget would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

**17. Urgent Items and Items for a Future Agenda.**

a. Grounds Maintenance Contract.

It was **agreed** that this would be a standing item on future agendas. It was noted that only one meeting had been held in the North Chapel, but it was **agreed** that, as the North Chapel was an unsuitable venue for a formal meeting (no electricity) no further meetings would be held there. It was **agreed** that a further inspection tour of the Cemetery was needed. Concern was expressed about lack of weed control on some graves, with Mare's Tail being particularly intractable and needing more radical treatment. D. Jordon suggested that if the Mare's Tail could not be killed with weed killer, it should be dug out. D. Jordon expressed concern that the interval between cuts to hedges was too long, and that the soil heap had grown in size and was unsightly. The question arose as to whether the soil heap is the responsibility of NCC grave diggers. It was **agreed** that the Maintenance Contract Schedule would be examined to see whether it included reference to the soil heap. It was **agreed** that the Schedule might need revising going forward.

b. Site Visit to the Cemetery.

It was agreed that this was desirable and it was arranged for 26<sup>th</sup> September at 10am. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Geoff Sloan so that he could arrange to meet Committee members at 11am that day.

c. Condition of larger trees at the cemetery.

T. Martin indicated that some maintenance work would be necessary. It was **agreed** that he and Wylam Parish Council's Tree Warden would inspect the trees and make recommendations. It was further **agreed** that a job specification would be drawn up and quotations would be obtained.

d. Damage to a grave by conifer tree.

T. Martin advised that this tree had been trimmed but was damaging a grave, was unsightly and should be removed. It was **agreed** that this would be reviewed during the site visit (**Item 17b**).

e. Weed control.

T. Martin advised that Mare's Tail in graves should be dug out and the soil and gravel removed. It was agreed that the extent of this problem would be examined during the site visit and that Geoff Sloan would be asked to do the work.

**18. Date of the next meeting of the Committee.**

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018 at 7pm. at Wylam Institute.

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