

OVINGHAM JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE
(WYLAM, HORSLEY, OVINGHAM AND OVINGTON PARISH COUNCILS)

Minutes of meeting of Ovingham Joint Burial Committee
Held on 18th February 2020 at 7pm at Wylam Institute

Councillors present: Mr. I Campbell (Ovingham PC), Mrs A Francis (Wylam PC) Chair, Mrs S Glover (Horsley PC), Mrs. D. Jordon (Ovingham PC), L Marshall (Ovington PC), Mr. P. Pescod (Ovington PC) and Mr M Senior (Horsley PC)

Also present: Mrs M Moore (Clerk to the Committee)

1. Quorum

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

2. Apologies for Absence

Mr J Joures (Wylam, PC)

3. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda

None declared.

4. Minutes

Resolved that the meeting the Minutes held on 26th November 2019 be agreed as a true record of proceedings and signed by the Chairman subject to the addition of L Marshall (Ovington PC) to the attendance list.

5. Current Grounds Maintenance Issues

No issues of concern had been reported. Christmas wreaths were due to be removed by the end of February. Some graves still needed to be reseeded.

6. Stability Testing

The Clerk reported on the discussions that had taken place with the officer from Northumberland County Council who would be carrying out the stability testing.

Because no electronic records existed that identified those plots with memorials, he had suggested a way forward whereby as he was doing the testing, he would also record data that we could then build on to develop a comprehensive database. This approach would however bring with it an additional cost although this had not been specified. Further information had therefore been requested and details would be circulated to members for approval.

Resolved that:

- i. Members be requested to approve the cost of the stability testing by email subject to there being a consensus,
- ii. Further information be obtained on the timescales and frequency of testing.
- iii. Subject to i. and ii. Above the stability testing should proceed at the earliest possible opportunity.

Signed: Date:
Chairman of Meeting

7. Public Spaces Protection Order for the Control of Dogs

D Jordon reported that both the lodge tenant and grounds maintenance contractor had reported problems with dogs fouling in the Cemetery. Some dogs were allowed to roam free in the cemetery resulting in fouling.

The cemetery rules stated that all dogs should be kept on a lead, but this was not being adhered to.

Resolved that signage be looked at with advice on wording being requested from the County Council. Costs would also be obtained and reported back to Members in due course.

8. Children's Funeral Fund for England

The Clerk reported on information that had been received on this Fund which enabled burial authorities to claim the fees charged for the burial of a child.

Resolved that the information be noted.

9. Finance

Resolved that:

- a) The payment detailed in appendix B be approved
- b) The receipts detailed in appendix C be noted
- c) The bank reconciliation at appendix D be received
- d) The financial accounts to 11th February 2020 be approved subject to the Clerk identifying a way of also showing internal bank transfers i.e. Wylam Parish Council Maintenance Grant payment for 2019/20.

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 (sensitive information).

15. New Grounds Maintenance Tender Document for 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2023

The Clerk reported that in accordance with the timetable approved at the last meeting three tenders had been received by the deadline of 7th February 2020.

An analysis of these had been carried out and additional information requested where necessary.

In discussing each of the tenders Members considered a number of criteria including:

- Professional and qualified Company
- Understanding of the requirements to maintain the Cemetery to the highest standards
- Confidence in the quality of the work
- Assessment of current previous similar work undertaken
- Technical ability e.g. training and resources available
- Price

Having considered the tender documents and all relevant information it was

Signed: Date:
Chairman of Meeting

Resolved that:

- i. Tender H submitted by Adrian Jackson be approved and he be appointed as the Grounds Maintenance Contractor for Ovingham Cemetery for the period 2020 – 2023.
- ii. This decision be ratified at the meeting of Wylam Parish Council to be held on 9th March 2020.

16. Arrangements to Cover Superintendent Role

The Clerk reported that following the resignation of the Cemetery Superintendent she had recently left her post and the Clerk was therefore carrying out the duties until such time as the Committee made a decision on how best to fulfil the role.

The Clerk had met with the Clerks from both Prudhoe and Hexham Town Councils, both of whom carried out burial administration as part of their core roles. They had been extremely helpful in talking through their procedures and sharing appropriate documentation. Based on the information obtained the Clerk had prepared a report which outlined options for future service delivery either via the recruitment of a new Superintendent or by adding the duties to the existing duties of the Clerk. The cost implications of both options were detailed. Members were requested to discuss and agree the preferred option.

Members were also asked to consider the purchase of a new Register of Graves from Shaw & Son at a cost of £168.00 + VAT.

At this point the Clerk left the meeting and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Resolved that:

- i. Future burial administration for Ovingham Cemetery be carried out by the Clerk, with her job description being amended to reflect this and appropriate costs being recharged by Wylam Parish Council to the Ovingham Joint Burial Committee.
- ii. The situation to be reviewed at the next meeting of the Committee to determine whether any additional transitional work is required and to agree on the weekly time commitment going forward.
- iii. A new Register of Graves be purchased from Shaw & Son at a cost of £168.00 + VAT.

17. To consider any urgent items and items for a future agenda.

None reported.

18. To agree the date of the next meeting of the Committee

Tuesday 19th May 2020 at 7.00pm

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

Signed: Date:
Chairman of Meeting