

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL
ON MONDAY 16th JANUARY 2023 COMMENCING AT 7.59PM**

Present: Councillors Mr S Laycock (Chair), Mrs A Vale (Vice-Chair) Mrs G Gardner, Mr J Paxton, Mr W Rudd, Mrs B Thomas (ex-officio)

Attending: Mrs S Cowie (Assistant Clerk)

Minutes Taken by: Mrs S Cowie

22/389 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors Mikkelson and Widdowfield.

22/390 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None declared.

22/391 MATTERS ARISING

Following an inspection of the Churchyard by the Assistant Clerk, Offley Memorials (Stone Mason) were asked to check a memorial which appeared to be lifting. The Stone Mason confirmed that the memorial was loose at the base and could be at risk of falling and recommended that it should be laid down to make safe.

The Assistant Clerk provided an update on the actions taken so far. St Nicholas Church had been advised and advice was sought from St Albans Diocese. St Albans Diocese had confirmed that permission would need to be granted via a Faculty Application to refix or lay down the memorial before work is carried out. Members considered a quotation to refix the memorial with new foundation stone and following discussion, expressed a preference to lay down the memorial with inscription visible rather than refix it.

ACTION: Assistant Clerk to seek permission to lay the memorial down and seek a second quote to refix should the Diocese not agree to the memorial being laid down.

22/392 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 28th NOVEMBER 2022

There were no queries on the minutes. Councillor Laycock **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of the Burial Ground Committee meeting held on 28th November 2022 **SECONDED** by Councillor Vale and it was **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**. The minutes were approved.

22/393 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE BURIAL GROUND HEDGE WORK

The Assistant Clerk provided an update on the Parish Councils request to reduce the height of the hedge, running parallel to the Burial Ground to 6 feet. The relevant permissions had been received from the Land Agent and Tenant Farmer which allow the hedge cutting to take place at the Parish Councils cost. The contractor and cost had been approved at the Committee meeting held on 24th October, minute point 22/214. The contractor will be instructed to carry out the work.

22/394 TO REVIEW AND AGREE THE PARISH COUNCILS ACTION PLAN 2023/24 FOR THE BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Members reviewed and agreed the Committees Action Plan for 2023/2024. In addition to routine hedge and grass cutting, the projects agreed were as follows. To organise the annual Remembrance Sunday service at the War Memorial, quotation for topping up the gravel surface in the Burial Ground car park, review of the War Memorial Area and to agree the Burial Ground Strategy. Councillor Laycock **PROPOSED** approval of the Action Plan 2023/24 for the Burial Ground Committee which was **SECONDED** by Councillor Vale and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

22/395 TO REVIEW AND APPROVE THE BURIAL GROUND FEES 2023/2024

The fees for 2023/24 were reviewed. Contractor costs will see a further increase this year, with a 10% increase expected. Following discussion, Councillor Laycock **PROPOSED** approval of the Burial Ground Fees effective from 1st April 2023. Councillor Gardner **SECONDED** the proposal, and it was **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**. A copy of the Fees is attached to the minutes.

22/396 TO REVIEW AND APPROVE THE BURIAL GROUND REGULATIONS

The Regulations were reviewed, and amendments agreed. The policy on kerbing, below ground grave surrounds and stone chippings was also reviewed and amendments agreed, as follows:

Clause 1.12 soil must not be deposited in the litter bin

Clause 12.1 kerb sets are not permitted

Clause 12.2 permission must be granted by the Parish Council before any below ground surround is installed.

Clause 12.3 Stone chippings are not permitted

The new Consent Form was approved and will be sent out with a copy of the Regulations and Deed to all new grave owners and where a transfer of grave ownership has been made.

Councillor Laycock **PROPOSED** approval of the Burial Ground Regulations 2023 with amendments as agreed, and further **PROPOSED** approval of the Consent Form, **SECONDED** by Councillor Paxton and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

22/397 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA
Item for inclusion in the February Committee Agenda – review of the War Memorial area. Members were asked to bring any ideas for improvement to the meeting. The Assistant Clerk will speak to Central Bedfordshire Highways Officer regarding ownership and responsibility of the War Memorial area ahead of the Committee meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm