

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE PARISH OFFICE, 1 WINDSOR PARADE
ON MONDAY 25th NOVEMBER 2024 COMMENCING AT 7.30pm**

Present: Councillors S Laycock (Chair), W Rudd (Vice-chair), B Thomas, K Qureshi, A Vale, J Paxton (ex-officio), J Mikkelson (ex-officio)

Attending: S Cowie (Assistant Clerk), C Callen (Clerk)

Minutes Taken by: S Cowie

24/294 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillor G Gardner.

24/295 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None declared.

24/296 MATTERS ARISING

A complaint has been received regarding the opening mechanism of the gate at the Burial Ground. The groundsmen will be asked to investigate.

One of the new planters has been installed by the War Memorial. The second planter will be installed as soon as possible and both planted up.

Councillor Paxton joined the meeting at 7.36pm

24/297 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 16TH SEPTEMBER 2024

There were no queries on the minutes. Councillor Laycock **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of the Burial Grounds Committee meeting held on 16th September 2024 **SECONDED** by Councillor Vale with **6 in favour and 1 abstention**. The minutes were approved.

24/298 TO RECEIVE FEEDBACK FROM THE REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE

There were changes to the service this year and the feedback received was very positive. The number of attendees was higher than the previous year and additional copies of the order of service will need to be printed next year to ensure that there are sufficient numbers available for distribution. The road closure went ahead with no issues or complaints reported. Additional signs warning of the road closures had been displayed along the closure route and will be used in the future. The use of walkie talkies at the main closure points worked well. The committee will consider whether an additional handset should be purchased for use next year.

24/299 TO CONSIDER REQUEST REGARDING THE BURIAL FEE FOR A NON-RESIDENT

Members reviewed the information provided by the applicant on the residency in the village and the Burial Grounds Regulations criteria regarding non-residents fees.

Following debate Councillor Laycock **PROPOSED** that the request to waive the non-resident fees should regretfully be denied as the deceased does not meet any of the criteria regarding the period of time they moved out of the village. It was agreed that the Regulations must be followed in all cases. Councillor Qureshi **SECONDED** the proposal, with **6 in favour and 1 against**.

24/300 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE FOR 2024/25 AND TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE DRAFT BUDGETS FOR 2025/26

The expenditure for 2024/25 was reviewed. The cancellation of the refuse contract and installation of two new refuse/recycling bins in the Burial Ground has worked well and removed the need for ongoing refuse collection costs. Following further incidents of damage to the entrance gates, these have been replaced. The project to refurbish the War Memorial area is nearing completion, a second bench has been installed and two planters are to be installed soon. The project also included clearing and landscaping the area to the side of the War Memorial. The cost for topple testing of memorials in the Churchyard has been approved and the work will take place early 2024 once a Faculty from St Albans Diocese has been obtained.

The budgets for 2025/26 allow for a 5% increase in grounds maintenance cost however due to savings the overall draft precept is expected to be 2% less than 2024/25.

Councillor Laycock **PROPOSED** the approval of the draft 2025/26 Burial Grounds Income and Expenditure budgets, with a £1,070 committee precept, which is £20 less than last year. Councillor Vale **SECONDED** the proposal, and it was **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

24/301 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA

To consider the flower beds in the Garden of Rest, review the Burial Ground expansion project, and consider maintenance of the hedge between the Burial Ground and top field.

The meeting closed at 8.01pm