

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD VIA ZOOM
ON MONDAY 21st SEPTEMBER 2020 COMMENCING AT 8.36 PM**

Present: Councillors Mr A Channon (Chair), Mrs B Thomas (Vice-chair), Mrs G Gardner
Mr J Paxton, Mr S Laycock and Mr L Davison-Williams (ex-officio)

Attending: Mrs S Cowie (Assistant Clerk)

Minutes Taken by: Mrs S Cowie

20/203 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – None, all present

20/204 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – There were none.

20/205 MATTERS ARISING

The meeting with the Church Architect to discuss the soakaways project was rescheduled for Friday 25th September at 10am. Members were invited to attend.

A headstone has been installed in the new garden of rest prior to the appropriate approval being granted. The current regulations state that the memorial should not exceed 20” in height, the headstone exceeds this. The stone mason queried the height of other memorials within the new garden of rest which are reportedly higher than 20”. Members agreed that the regulations in force at the time the application/installation was received should be adhered to but on this occasion two options should be given to the stone mason. 1. Sink plinth to ground level or 2. Remove stone and reduce overall height to meet the current 20” regulation.

20/206 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 22ND JUNE 2020

Councillor Channon **PROPOSED** the approval of the minutes of the Burial Grounds meeting held on 22nd June 2020. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Thomas and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**. The minutes were approved.

20/207 TO CONSIDER REQUEST FROM A NON-RESIDENT FOR BURIAL IN BARTON BURIAL GROUND

The request for burial from a non-resident was considered by members. It was noted that there is no need for the grave space at the present and the Council has a policy that it does not pre-sell grave spaces. Councillor Channon therefore **PROPOSED** the request for burial from a non-resident be declined, **SECONDED** by Councillor Thomas and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

20/208 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE REQUEST FOR AN ADDITIONAL INSCRIPTION TO EXISTING MEMORIAL TO BE INSTALLED OUTSIDE THE NORMAL TIMESCALES AS STATED IN THE REGULATIONS

Members considered the request to erect a headstone before the 6 month waiting period stated in the Regulations. This applied to a full grave space where ashes have been interred in the centre of the grave space and the ground where the headstone sits is undisturbed. Councillor Channon **PROPOSED** that should the request arise with the individual concerned, approval to install the headstone within the usual 6 month wait period should be granted however note should be made that the Council accepts no responsibility for any subsidence which could arise. The proposal was **SECONDED** by Councillor Laycock and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

20/209 TO CONSIDER PURCHASE AND PLANTING OF ADDITIONAL STANDARD ROSE BUSHES IN THE GARDEN OF REST

Members considered planting further standard rose bushes in the Garden of Rest to complete the scheme. It was agreed that the planting should be extended and that up to date costs for the purchase and planting of seven standard rose bushes be brought to the October Full Council meeting. **ACTION: Quote for purchase of seven standard roses plus planting costs to be approved at the October Full Council meeting.**

20/210 TO CONSIDER PURCHASE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION TOMMY SOLDIER SILOUHETTES

Members were keen to purchase two Garden Tommy soldier statues/silouhettes as they had missed the opportunity to purchase the full statue which is no longer in production. It was suggested that two statues should be purchased the precise location to be agreed once the statues have been received. Councillor Channon **PROPOSED** the purchase of two Garden Tommys from the Royal British Legions Poppy Shop at a cost of £72.00 each (total £142.00) plus shipping. This was **SECONDED** by

Councillor Davison-Williams and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**. Members were concerned that stock could run low before the committee's actions are ratified at Full Council, **ACTION: Assistant Clerk to check stock levels and delivery dates, statues to be placed in time for Remembrance Sunday.**

20/211 TO CONSIDER/APPROVE QUOTATION TO RESET FALLEN HEADSTONE AND KERB SET IN ST NICHOLAS CHURCHYARD

The Church Warden reported that a headstone within the churchyard had fallen and he was initially concerned that it had been vandalised. A quotation to reset the headstone and kerb set was considered by members. The Church had expressed a wish for the stone to be reset as the deceased left a significant donation to the Church in his Will. The committee were concerned that the maintenance of all headstones should be treated in the same way and this should not take precedent as other stones have been laid down and not reset. With this in mind they agreed that the Church should be asked if they wish to contribute to the repair costs. Councillor Davison-Williams **PROPOSED** to respond to St Nicholas Church outlining the committees concerns regarding the spend to reset one headstone and to invite them to match fund the repair. Quotation for repair provided by Offley Memorials, £200.00 + VAT. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Thomas and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**. **ACTION: Approach to be made to the Church to match fund the resetting cost.**

20/212 TO CONSIDER RESPONSE TO ST ALBANS DIOCESE REGARDING THE PURCHASE OF GLEBE LAND FOR BURIAL GROUND EXTENSION AND AGREE THE WAY FORWARD

The land agent for St Albans Diocese confirmed that the Council's financial offer for glebe land had been refused and suggested a bid of between £25,000 - £30,000 plus costs would be in order.

The committee previously outlined a number of potential sites to be explored. This included the land west of the current site which is owned by the Parish Council. In a feasibility study it was found that this land would not gain permission for full burials due to the proximity of the watercourse. Councillor Davison-Williams advised that he has a copy of the report and would pass this to Councillor Channon for analysis. Another potential site to be considered is land on Sharpenhoe Road which is owned by a third party. Councillor Thomas advised that she had not be able to make an approach to the land owner as yet as all meetings have been postponed due to Coronavirus. Other land possibilities are subject to the outcome of Central Bedfordshire Council's Local Plan which has been delayed until 2021.

The land agent for the proposed development off Higham Road/land East of Barton approached the Council to ask whether there is a need for additional allotment provision on the proposed development. Should the development go ahead an additional 498 houses will be built, resulting in additional burial space being required as well as other facilities for the village. This additional need should be met by the Developer. Moving forward the following actions were agreed:

- Field to the west of the current burial ground – Councillor Davison-Williams to forward feasibility report to Councillor Channon for analysis
- Glebe land next to current burial ground - No revised offer as yet
- Third party land on Sharpenhoe Road – letter to be sent to the land owner enquiring whether the land would be available for purchase for burial space.
- The other sites identified, Central Bedfordshire Farm land between Luton Road and A6 and land west of the A6 are dependent on the Local Plan outcome.

Members agreed that a letter should be sent to Central Bedfordshire Council explaining the need for burial space within the village and to ask them to source land for this use. The Developer should also be approached and asked for land or financial assistance for a burial ground.

Subject to the outcomes it may be necessary for an ashes burial only policy to be adopted. A timeline of where we are at should be created.

Councillor Thomas left the meeting at 9.12 pm returned 9.13 pm

20/213 TO CONSIDER SUBMITTING REQUEST TO LAND AGENT FOR ADDITIONAL BURIAL GROUND LAND

Following on from item 20/213 members considered requesting land or financial assistance from the proposed housing development east of the village. The Council has not previously made an approach to the land agent, it was agreed that it is important to engage with them at this stage. Councillor Davison-Williams confirmed that he would pass his calculations on the current burial ground life span to Councillor Channon to enable a response to the land agent to be formulated.

ACTION: Councillor Davison-Williams to forward information to Councillor Channon, land agent to be approached.

Councillor Laycock left 9.31pm, returned 9.33pm

20/214 TO CONSIDER AND AGREE ARRANGEMENTS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

To date no official notification regarding Remembrance Sunday has been announced by HM Government or the Royal British Legion. In light of the Covid-19 pandemic members agreed that this year in would be inappropriate for the service to go ahead in it's usual format and alternative ideas should be explored. The office have applied for the full road closure however this will no longer be needed. It was agreed that that the item should be discussed further at the Policies and Resources meeting on 28th September. **ACTION: item to be included on the Policies & Resources agenda for 28th September.**

20/084 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA

Disabled access to the burial ground

The meeting closed at 9.43 pm