

**MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE MEETING OF
GODALMING JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE
HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2012**

- * Councillor Wilson – Chairman
- * Councillor A Bott – Vice Chairman
- * Councillor Thomson
- * Councillor Lister
- * Councillor Wheatley
- * Councillor Noyce
- * Councillor Long (Busbridge Parish Council)
- * Councillor Westwood (Busbridge Parish Council)

* Present # Absent & No Apology Received 0 Apology for Absence L Late

64. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on the 8 December 2011, having been previously circulated, were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

65. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

66. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

Members declared no Personal or Prejudicial Interest in relation to any item on the agenda for this meeting, which are required to be disclosed by the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 No.1159.

67. ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE LAST MEETING

The Finance Officer reported payments totalling £23,588.21 since the last meeting.

Cash balances held at 31 December 2011

Current Account	£9,594.26
Business Premium Account	£76,044.39

A schedule of the accounts paid was tabled for the information of Members. The vouchers relating to these payments were also be tabled at the meeting for inspection. All payments made were in line with the agreed budget or other resolution of this Committee or Full Council.

Members agreed that the Chairman should sign the schedule of accounts paid.

68. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

Members Noted that the company selected for the Nightingale Cemetery grounds maintenance contract, Hardings Management Ltd, (Minute No. 61-11 refers), had declined to accept the contract, therefore, in accordance with Members' instructions (the contract was offered to The Landscape Group which has accepted the Nightingale Contract.

69. REVISED ESTIMATES FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2011/12 AND PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2012/13

Members agreed the Godalming Joint Burial Committee Revised Estimates for the Local Government Financial Year 2011/12 and the Committee's budget for the financial year 2012/13.

70. REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SYSTEMS OF AUDIT

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 all bodies were required to undertake a review of the effectiveness of the internal audit annually by 31 March each year.

Members discussed the review of the effectiveness of Council's audit arrangements over the past year and agreed the following, that:

- o the scope of the internal audit had been discussed with the Internal Auditor in order to ensure that all the relevant risks were covered and that Members had received a copy of the agreed Internal Audit Plan on 8 December 2011 (Minute 59-11 refers).
- o the Internal Auditor was sufficiently independent, objective and unbiased evidenced by the fact that Mulberry and Co is an external accountancy firm trading independently. Members noted that it was good practice to change the Internal Auditor every 3-5 years and that Mulberry and Co was about to start its fourth year as the Committee's Internal Auditor.
- o the Internal Auditor had sufficient knowledge to be able to carry out the audit as demonstrated by the fact that Mark Mulberry (the Internal Auditor) was a Chartered Certified Accountant and Registered Auditor.
- o the relevant responsibilities of Members, Clerk, RFO were clearly defined in the job descriptions for the Clerk and the RFO and the terms of reference of the Audit Sub Committee. However, Members agreed that this clarity might be improved by adopting Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for the Joint Burial Committee, which were separate from those for Godalming Town Council under which the JBC currently operated. Members resolved to consider draft Standing Orders and Financial Regulations at the next meeting of the Committee. Members noted that two Members of the Joint Burial Committee were also Members of the Audit Sub Committee but that this relationship would be strengthened if the terms of reference of the Audit Sub-Committee were altered specifically to include at least one Member of the Joint Burial Committee.

The Committee was made aware of a timetable of when the internal and external audits would take place and when the reports from these would be expected. The next Internal Audit was to be conducted in May 2012, and External Audit to be sent off by 1 July 2012. The next Audit Sub Committee will be on 1 March 2012 and will receive the responses of the Joint Burial Committee relating to the effectiveness of the systems of audit. The Committee noted that, with the demise of the Audit Commission, the external audit arrangements for the Committee's accounts for the year ending 31 March 2012 were unclear in that it was uncertain who the external auditor would be and how that auditor would be appointed. However, the timetable for external audit was prescribed under the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

Internal Audit Process

Members agreed that the work of the Internal Audit was reviewed regularly; initially by officers and then in detail by the Audit Sub Committee. Findings and recommendations of the Audit Sub-Committee were reported to the Committee.

Members agreed that the reports on the work of the Internal Auditor were presented to the Committee; the most recent having been received on 8 December 2011 (Minute 59-11 refers).

Members agreed that the reviews and risk assessments undertaken from the Work Programme by the Audit Sub Committee on behalf of the Joint Burial Committee were reported to the Committee and noted that they had received such reports on 23 June 2011 and 8 December 2011.

Members agreed that the Annual reports from the Internal Auditor were presented to the committee and noted that the last Annual Report was received on 23 June 2011.

External Audit Process

The Committee agreed that the Annual reports from the External Auditor were presented to the Committee, the most recent being received on 8 December 2011 (Minute 60-2011 refers).

The Committee agreed that if there were recommendations from the External Auditor then it would ensure that they were implemented. There were no such recommendations in 2011 but the recommendation in 2010 had been implemented (Minute 50-2010 refers).

Members agreed that since 2010 (Minute 50-2010 refers) the Committee did receive regular reports from the Audit Sub Committee and that if there had been recommendations from the External Auditor these would have been included in those reports.

Members noted that Mark Mulberry of Mulberry & Co was appointed as the Internal Auditor for the financial year 2010/2011 and had been reappointed for the current year.

BDO Stoy Hayward was the External Auditor for Godalming Town Council and Godalming Joint Burial Committee for the financial year 2010/2011. As noted above it was uncertain how an external auditor for 2011/12 would be appointed and who that auditor might be.

71. BURIAL STATISTICS

The Committee noted the burial statistics for the previous quarter and for the previous twelve months ended the 31 December 2011, which had previously been circulated (copy attached to record minutes).

72. NIGHTINGALE RAILINGS

Members recalled that the Cemeteries Manager had been authorised to obtain quotes for the re-painting of Nightingale Cemetery railings and deer gates (Minute No. 41-11 refers). To date only one quote had been received for £3,230. Members agreed that work should proceed as soon as a second quote had been obtained – the cost of £3,230, or less, to be contained within the 2012/13 budget for railing maintenance.

Additionally Members noted that the hinge on the left hand main cemetery gate had corroded to the point where the gate could not be shut; a local blacksmith had effected a repair and the gate had been rehung.

73. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Godalming Joint Burial Committee is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 12 April 2012 at 5.00 pm at Eashing Cemetery and thereafter in the Council Chamber.

74. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Brought forward by permission of the Chairman. Requests to be submitted prior to commencement of the meeting.

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE GODALMING JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE