

GODALMING JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

Tel: 01483 523575
Fax: 01483 523077
E-Mail: office@godalming-tc.gov.uk
Website: www.godalming-tc.gov.uk

Municipal Buildings
Bridge Street
Godalming
Surrey GU7 1HT

20 March 2015

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU to attend the **JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE** meeting to be held in Godalming Council Chamber on THURSDAY, 26 MARCH 2015 at 5.30 pm.

Louise P Goodfellow
Clerk to the Committee

Committee Members: Councillor A Bott – Chairman
Councillor Lister – Vice Chairman
Councillor Thomson
Councillor Wheatley
Councillor Wilson
Councillor Noyce
Councillor Long (Busbridge Parish Council)
Councillor Westwood (Busbridge Parish Council)

AGENDA

1. **MINUTES**

The Chairman to sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2014.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

3. **DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

To receive from Members any declarations of interests in relation to any items included on the Agenda for this meeting required to be disclosed by the Localism Act 2011 and the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.

4. **ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE LAST MEETING & SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS**

The Clerk to report on the accounts paid since the last meeting.

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

Members to agree that the Chairman should sign the schedule of accounts paid.

Members of the Public have the right to attend all meetings of the Godalming Joint Burial Committee and are welcome.

5. INTERNAL AUDIT

The interim Internal Audit, conducted by Mark Mulberry of Mulberry & Co took place on 19 November 2014. The Internal Auditor's report is attached for the consideration of Members.

6. REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE OF GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL

Members to receive the written report of the Godalming Town Council's Audit Committee (report attached for the information of Members).

7. REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL

Members to consider a report from the Clerk (report attached for the information of Members).

8. ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS FOR JOINT COMMITTEE FROM 2015/16 – GODALMING JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

Members to consider a letter from the Audit Commission about audit arrangements for the Godalming Joint Burial Committee effective from 2015/16 (letter attached for the information of Members).

9. BURIAL STATISTICS

Statistics for the previous quarter and for the twelve months ending 31 March 2015 are attached for the information of Members (any adjustments since publication of this agenda will be tabled at the meeting).

An average of 36 interments per annum have been recorded over the previous 15 years, the 45 interments recorded in 2014/15 is the highest number over that period. The average has been increasing year on year, however this year has seen a marked increase in plots for cremated remains sold at Nightingale Cemetery with 7 plots sold in the last quarter.

10. ROOF REPAIR – NIGHTINGALE CEMETERY CHAPEL BUILDINGS – BATS

The tenants of the Nightingale Chapel buildings reported water ingress into the building from the roof void above the cross passageway linking the two chapels. In discussion with the Chairman of this committee, the Godalming Town Council Surveyors were appointed to investigate the condition of the main chapel building roof (the roof on the old morgue building is a replacement roof and is in good sound condition therefore excluded from the survey).

Having begun the survey of the roof, it would appear that there has been water ingress into the roof void for quite some time with evidence of timber saturation leading to a requirement to replace/repair some of the roof timbers. Early investigations also show that the existing roof tiles are at the end of useful life and as such the chapels require re-roofing.

The requirement to re-roof the chapel buildings is predicated on two main issues. Firstly on safety grounds. The hanging lugs on the existing tiles are failing in ever increasing numbers, this failure results in tile slippage. Snow guards installed around the guttering of the building prevent tiles from falling to the ground, however this does not negate the need to re-roof to prevent the slippage from happening. Secondly, it is believed that much of the existing roof dates back to the original build of the chapels with alterations being conducted in the 1950's when the bell tower was removed. The age and design of the roof means that thermal insulation is virtually non-existent, the building is Grade II listed which adds further considerations in how to improve the thermal insulation of the building. The only effective and financially efficient method being achievable by the complete re-roofing of the building.

Based on this appraisal, the surveyors were instructed to work up a proposal for consideration by this committee in order that a tender process could be undertaken. However, whilst working in the roof void of the chapel building, evidence of the possibility of bats being present or roosting was discovered. Therefore, as prescribed by law, work in the roof void ceased and the Surrey Wildlife Trust, who are the appointed bat surveyors for this area, were appointed to conduct an initial survey which has confirmed that there is evidence of bats having made use of the roof space of the chapel. However, what is not known at this point is how the bats are using this area ie. as a breeding area or flight path stop over or whether they are indeed still using the space or whether the indications are of historic use.

In order to make a full determination, further surveys will be required and are scheduled for the 8 May and 11 June. If following these surveys it is determined that the evidence is of contemporary use then a report and mitigation statement to support the required works will have to be submitted to Natural England for approval, this can take up to 30 days to achieve. Once approved, the mitigation and work plan is valid for two years. If however, the surveys determine that the current evidence is of an historic nature and that bats are not using the roof space then works can continue in the normal manner.

In the meantime, arrangements are being made for work, under supervision, to be conducted in order to carryout temporary repairs to make the building water tight.

Due to the nature of the activities conducted by the current tenants, any major works on the chapel building can only safely be scheduled for the summer break period ie. 3rd week of July to 1st week of September. The potential delay in gaining approval for the works from Natural England means that it may not be possible to proceed with the required works during the 2015 summer break period. However, that said, it is planned that a schedule of works and tender report will be submitted for consideration by this committee on 18 June 2015.

If the bat survey is negative, then, based on the tender report, it would be possible to appoint a contractor to conduct the required works over the 2015 summer break period. However, if the report from Surrey Wildlife Trust is required to be submitted to Natural England then Officers would recommend that these works be postponed until the 2016 summer break period. If it proves necessary to delay the works until 2016, the contractors submitting the lowest quotes in 2015 would be asked to provide inflation adjusted quotes for consideration by this committee in the first quarter of 2016.

As such officers recommend that Members agree that the Surveyors continue to work with Surrey Wildlife Trust in order to achieve a working solution that will allow this committee to consider tender options for the required re-roofing of Nightingale Chapel. It is further recommended that the decision whether to proceed with the works either in 2015 or 2016 is confirmed at the next meeting of this committee.

11. EASHING LODGE HOUSE

Members will wish to note that, after a 5-year residency, the current tenant of Eashing Cemetery Lodge has given notice to quit. As such, arrangements have been put in place with our appointed letting agents to find new tenants and conduct the required checks and controls.

The Lodge House is in a good state of repair, like any home it has absorbed the fair wear and tear of daily life. As such, on advice from the Clerk, the Cemeteries Manager is seeking quotes from local decorators in order to prepare the property for re-letting. If the re-decoration can start immediately after vacant possession, and the letting agents are able to find a suitable tenant, the rental void period should be no more than 3 to 4 weeks.

In order to re-let the property as quickly as possible, authority is sought from this committee for the Clerk, having obtained the appropriate number of quotes, to appoint the contractor who submits the lowest price who is also able to conduct the work in the required timescale.

12. LETTER FROM THE CLERK TO BUSBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Members to consider a letter, addressed to the Committee, from the Clerk to Busbridge Parish Council and to consider whether the letter requires a reply and if so in what terms the reply should be drafted (letter attached for the information of Members).

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Godalming Joint Burial Committee is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 18 June 2015 at 5.00pm at Eashing Cemetery and thereafter in the Council Chamber.

14. 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

GODALMING JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

Disclosure by a Member¹ of a disclosable pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest in a matter under consideration at a meeting (S.31 (4) Localism Act 2011 and the Codes of Conduct adopted by Godalming Town Council & Busbridge Parish Council).

As required by the Localism Act 2011 and the adopted Codes of Conduct, **I HEREBY DISCLOSE**, for the information of the authority that I have [a disclosable pecuniary interest]² [a non-pecuniary interest]³ in the following matter:-

COMMITTEE:

DATE:

NAME OF COUNCILLOR: _____

Please use the form below to state in which agenda items you have an interest.

Agenda No.	Subject	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Non-Pecuniary Interest	Reason

Signed _____

Dated _____

¹ "Member" includes co-opted member, member of a committee, joint committee or sub-committee

² A disclosable pecuniary interest is defined by the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) regulations 2012/1464 and relate to employment, office, trade, profession or vocation, sponsorship, contracts, beneficial interests in land, licences to occupy land, corporate tenancies and securities

³ A non-pecuniary interest is defined by Section 5 (4) of the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.