

GODALMING JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

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21 March 2014

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU to attend the **JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE** meeting to be held in Godalming Council Chamber on THURSDAY, 27 MARCH 2014 at 5.30 pm.

Louise P Goodfellow
Clerk to the Committee

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

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

The Chairman to sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 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

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.

5. INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW, AUDIT WORKPLAN AND LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT

The interim Internal Audit, was conducted on 25 November 2013, by Mark Mulberry (copy attached for the information of Members). In addition to this, the Internal Audit Work-plan for

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

the year 2014/15 was submitted by the Internal Auditor for approval for the financial year 2014/15 (copy attached for the information of Members).

Members to receive and consider the Interim Audit report, Audit Work-plan and note that the Chairman of Godalming Town Council will sign the Letter of Engagement for the ensuing year from Mulberry and Co. Members are asked to acknowledge that because the final systems of the Godalming Joint Council are those of Godalming Town Council in this matter the JBC is subordinate to the requirements of Godalming Town Council. This Committee is asked to endorse the Audit Committee's recommendation to Godalming Town Council that Mulberry & Co be appointed as the Internal Auditor for Godalming Town Council and Godalming Joint Burial Committee for the ensuing year 2014-15 (copy letter attached for the information of Members).

6. REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

Members to receive the following report from Godalming Town Council's Audit Committee.

"Audit Committee

Members reviewed the work programme and updated it accordingly. These included business continuity, environment, legal, reputation, stationery suppliers, major risk finance, insurance, assets, schedule of financial responsibilities, payroll, superannuation administration scheme, health and safety, financial regulations and festivals administrative procedure (copy attached for the information of Members).

The following recommendation of relevance to the Joint Burial Committee was made:

- Progress the electronic payments as soon as the guidelines are received from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) with a view to updating the financial regulations to reflect changes and bank mandates where appropriate.

It was also agreed to ask Sagepay to provide a service to enable receipts to be taken by telephone or virtual terminal. However, it was decided that it should first be established, whether there would be a penalty for leaving the system early. The RFO agreed to report back to the Chairman of the Audit Committee whether this was likely to be a problem. If this should be the case, councillors agreed that Godalming Town Council would approach Card Saver to supply this service."

7. REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AUDIT FOR GODALMING JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

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

The five areas that must be covered are:

- *Scope of Audit*
Has the scope of the internal audit been discussed with the Internal Auditor to ensure that all the relevant risks are covered?
- *Independence*
Is the Internal Auditor sufficiently independent, objective and unbiased?
- *Competence*
Does the Internal Auditor have sufficient knowledge to be able to carry out the audit?

- *Relationships*
Are the relevant responsibilities of Members, Clerk and RFO clearly defined?
- *Audit Planning & Reporting*
Is the body aware of a timetable of when the internal and external audits will take place and when the reports from these will be expected?

The following questions should also be addressed by the review:

Internal Audit Process

- Is the work of the Internal Audit reviewed regularly?
- Are the reports on the work of the Internal Auditor presented to the committee?
- Are the reviews and risk assessments undertaken from the Work Programme by the Godalming Town Council's Audit Committee on behalf of the Joint Burial Committee reported to the committee?
- Are the annual reports from the Internal Auditor presented to the committee?

External Audit Process

- Are the annual reports from the External Auditor presented to the committee?
- Does the committee ensure that recommendations from the External Auditor are implemented?
- Does the Godalming Town Council's Audit Committee provide regular reports relating to its recommendations and the agreed Work Programme to the Joint Burial Committee?

Characteristics of the Review

- Can it be Seen as a Catalyst for Change?
- Does it Add Value?
- Is it Forward Looking?
- Is it Challenging?
- Are the right resources available for Internal audit to complete its work?

In order to assist with this process the Godalming Town Council's Audit Committee has addressed each of the questions above and its recommended answers are attached for the information of Members. Members are asked to consider the questions posed above, the recommended answers from the Audit Committee and to agree its own answers to the questions.

8. BURIAL STATISTICS

Members to note the statistics for the previous quarter and for the twelve months ending 31 December 2013 which are attached for the information of Members. In addition the burial statistics up to 21 March 2014 are shown for information. Members also to note that as of

21 March, 39 interments have been conducted and 28 new burial plots have been sold; this is in line with expectations.

9. NIGHTINGALE CEMETERY INHUMATION PLOTS

Members to note the report below from the Cemetery Manager.

Of the original 78 inhumation burial plots created in 2009 by the removal of the old carriageway, 48 have now been purchased leaving 30 plots available. Thirteen of the purchased plots (27%) have been acquired by non-parishioners, if future purchases were to follow the same pattern that would mean that 8 of the remaining plots were likely to be purchased by non-parishioners. Again, if the rate of purchase experienced in 2012/13 and 2013/14 were to continue then all existing available plots in Nightingale Cemetery would be sold within the next 24 to 30 months. In order that the parishioners of the constituent bodies of the Joint Burial Committee are able to enjoy the benefits of Nightingale Cemetery, Members are asked to consider the following recommendations from the Cemetery Manager:

- i. As of 1 April 2014, future purchases of inhumation plots at Nightingale Cemetery are restricted to the parishioners of Busbridge and Godalming.
- ii. Exploration work is undertaken to identify whether additional inhumation plots can be established within Nightingale Cemetery.

10. EASHING CEMETERY CHAPEL

Members are asked to note that having conducted extensive refurbishment works of Eashing Cemetery Chapel, following the extreme wet weather conditions experienced during late December 2013 and January & February 2014, it has become apparent that the stone of the window mullions of the south west facing windows have become porous thus allowing the passage of water through the mullions into the chapel. This has caused damage to the internal decoration of the south west wall of the chapel. The Cemetery Manager has asked the stone mason to investigate potential solutions to this problem in order to prevent future damage to the internal decoration and will report once further details are known.

11. MEMORIAL SAFETY AT NIGHTINGALE CEMETERY

Members are asked to note that during an inspection of memorials at Nightingale Cemetery in December 2013, 81 memorials were found to require work to make them safe. In consultation with the Chairman of the Committee the Clerk used delegated authority to ensure that, where necessary, the identified memorials were temporarily made safe to prevent risk of injury to the public or further damage to the memorials. Subsequently, 40 of these memorials have been made permanently safe with another 20 due to be made permanently safe before the end of this financial year; the final batch being repaired over the summer period. Of note will be the removal of a collapsed brick vault located towards the front and centre of the cemetery.

12. FALLEN TREES

Members are asked to note that during the recent gales five trees were toppled or become dangerously unstable in Eashing Cemetery, all of which have now been removed. One of the trees in Nightingale Cemetery has had damage caused to one of its boughs and another tree has fallen from the Shadyhanger bank into the cemetery. The damaged bough will be removed during routine gardening maintenance, however, the large birch fallen from Shadyhanger bank will take some time to remove (the ground needs to be firm enough to bring in the appropriate equipment). The ownership of this tree is subject to investigation and will be reported on orally.

13. MUSEUM EXHIBITION

Members are asked to note that the Joint Burial Committee's sponsored exhibition will run from the 15 April to 24 May 2014 with the official reception from Joint Burial Committee Members and guests to be held on 22 April 2014 at 6.00pm.

14. BURIAL RECORDS

Members will be aware that the Joint Burial Committee has maintained its burial records in manuscript form since 1857 and continues to do so. However in 2007 the West Surrey Family History Society created a digital record of the burial registers for Nightingale Cemetery from 1857 to 1998 and Eashing Cemetery from 1900 to 2003. By doing so resilience was provided to the business continuity of the Joint Burial Committee by allowing these digital records to be held offsite as part of Godalming Town Council's computer back-up system. Members are asked to note that as part of risk audit and management, the digital records for both cemeteries have now been updated by the Cemeteries Manager to 31 December 2013. Digital updates will now be conducted each quarter as part of the established system for managing the burial records.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Godalming Joint Burial Committee is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 26 June 2014 at 5.00pm at Eashing Cemetery and thereafter in the Council Chamber.

16. 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.