

GODALMING JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

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16 November 2012

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU to attend the **JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE** meeting to be held in Godalming Council Chamber on THURSDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2012 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)
Councillor Westwood (Busbridge Parish Council)

AGENDA

1. **MINUTES**

The Chairman to sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2012.

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.

Members of the Public have the right to attend all meetings of the Town Council and its Committees and are welcome.

5. EXTERNAL AUDIT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2011/12

Members to receive the Annual Return and the External Auditor's (BDO Stoy Hayward) report relating to Godalming Joint Burial Committee accounts for the year 2011/12 (copies attached for the information of Members).

6. REVISED ESTIMATES FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2012 AND DRAFT BUDGET FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2012/13

Members to consider the Joint Burial Committee's Revised Estimates for the Local Government Financial Year 2012/13 and to consider the Committee's draft budget for the financial year 2013/14 and the Committee's Reserves.

Revised Estimates

Members to note that based on the draft revised estimates there is an anticipated overspend of £25,907 against the budget.

Income

The number of interments and purchases of memorial rights have been maintained at a similar level to last year. Income from the purchase of burial rights at Nightingale Cemetery and Natural Burials has increased this year at a greater pace than last, so there is an additional amount of £21,000 to add into the revenue so far this year. The tenancies at both cemetery lodges have continued and therefore that income has remained constant.

Expenditure

Expenditure has been in line with the budget for the financial year 2012/13. However, the committee has agreed that the work amounting to £60,000 be undertaken on the chapel in this financial year taking advantage of the additional income received. The current estimated overspend (£25,907) to be taken from the general reserve.

Budget 2013/14

The draft budget for next year has been calculated incrementally at a rate of 0%. However, where there are known factors a higher inflationary figure has been used to provide a more realistic assessment of anticipated expenditure. This is very early in the budgeting process and not all the necessary information is currently available, including the National Non Domestic Rates, which will not be announced until December.

At this time in the calendar Godalming Joint Burial Committee's Fees and Charges for 2013 are still to be agreed, however, for this purpose it has been assumed that they have been maintained at the figures agreed by the Committee last year (Minute 36-10 refers). Income for 2012/13 has been calculated based on these charges and anticipated demand for next year. A conservative estimate of demand has been made reflecting the fact that activity in the current year has been exceptional and that there are limited Nightingale plots to sell in the future.

Nonetheless it has been possible to produce a draft budget (copy attached for the information of Members) where the Joint Burial Committee's precept requirement does not increase - i.e. a requirement of £64,572 against £64,572 last year; this is an increase of 0% over last year's budget. Pro rata (to the number of Band D Equivalent properties in each parish) this requirement represents a charge of £62,088 to Godalming Town Council Budget and £2,484 to Busbridge Parish Council. This calculation is based on last year's Band D figure, and will be revised when more up to date information becomes available, though it is not anticipated that a significant change will result. A copy of the draft Estimates

and Projection of Anticipated Reserves for the years 2012/13 and 2013/14 are attached for the information of Members.

Reserves 2013/14

Members will see from the Movement in Balances that over the current year the anticipated reserves will have decreased to £69,611 as at 31 March 2013. However, it must be noted that the general reserve is now on the low side as it should be 50% of the precept. This still reflects a healthy financial position overall as there are sufficient earmarked reserves to compensate.

All agreed projects and transfers through the year have been accounted for. Due to the chapel project this year, the earmarked reserves for 2012/13 will decrease to provide an estimated overall reserve of £69,611 as at 31 March 2013, however, in the draft budget for 2013/14 transfers amounting to £13,500 are proposed, which will provide a balance of £83,111 at 31 March 2014. It must be noted these figures are conservative based on no further sales for purchase rights in either Nightingale Cemetery or Natural Burials in Eashing Cemetery for the remainder of this year or next.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members agree Joint Burial Committee Revised Estimates for the Local Government Financial Year 2012/13.

It is further recommended that Members agree a 0% increase in the base budget requirement giving the Constituent Authorities clarity about the JBC's requirement for 2013/14; being £62,088 from Godalming Town Council and £2,484 from Busbridge Parish Council.

7. RE-PURCHASE OF TWO BURIAL PLOTS AT EASHING CEMETERY

Members to agree to the re-purchase of two Eashing Cemetery burial plots brought in 1997. The wishes of the owner's late spouse regarding her funeral arrangements altered and the owner wishes to alter his arrangements, therefore, the two plots purchased at Eashing Cemetery are no longer required. These plots were originally purchased for £100 each. Precedence has been set for this situation in as much that burial plots have been re-purchased at the same price at which they were originally bought less a charge for administration. It is RECOMMENDED that if Members are minded to approve the re-purchasing of this burial plot an administration fee of £50 is levied and the plots are re-purchased for a total cost of £150.

8. BURIAL STATISTICS

Statistics for the previous quarter and for the twelve months ending 30 September 2012 are attached for the information of Members.

9. REPORT FROM CEMETERIES MANAGER

Jubilee Tree – The Mayor of Godalming and the Chairman of this committee unveiled a plaque dedicating a Liquidamber (Worplesdon) to Her Majesty on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee, with the assistance of children from Green Oaks School.

Remembrance Day – The 9 November saw a change from the Remembrance Day ceremony that has been conducted in previous years. Five classes from Green Oaks School each adopted a specific war grave and held a service of remembrance at that grave. The Cemeteries Manager laid poppy crosses at the war graves not attended by the school children and Reverend Hunt conducted a service to commemorate them.

Media and Marketing – An advertisement has been placed in the Surrey Royal British Legion diary at a cost of £600, which so far has resulted in the purchase of two plots at Nightingale Cemetery. The cemeteries were also featured in the Godalming Town Council's pages of Round & About Magazine at no cost to the Joint Burial Committee, which has generated sales of 3 Nightingale Plots and 2 enquiries relating to the Natural Burials area. The Joint Burial Committee website has had 711 unique visitors since its launch with 605 of those being from the UK. The USA, Canada and Australia being the other significant countries, which is probably related to genealogy research. Within the UK the highest number of views has been from London, followed by Guildford and then Godalming.

Chapel Restoration – A pre-contract meeting was held on 25 September and having agreed the final contractual arrangements work commenced on 8 October. The committee Chairman and other members, on request, have visited the site to inspect work in progress and were briefed on arising issues. To date alterations to contract have increased the base cost by £10,983, which keeps the overall costs within budget set by this committee.

On commencement of the works it quickly became apparent that a larger proportion of the lime plaster inside the chapel needed chopping out and replacing than had originally been allowed for and that the rear elevation wall was absorbing moisture. Scaffold was erected to the rear elevation and an inspection by the surveyors, contractors and Cemeteries Manager found that previous re-pointing repairs to the external lime mortar had been carried out incorrectly.

As a stone clad building it is important that the mortar is a type that allows the passage of moisture from the stonework to atmosphere. The stone absorbs moisture and as the weather dries the moisture leeches into the mortar which then allows the water to evaporate. Failure to use mortar that allows for this process results in the degrading of the stone. When the correct mortar is used this process will over time also degrade the mortar, hence the need for re-pointing. In the case of the Eashing chapel the situation is such that there is a need to both re-point large areas of the original correct lime mortar as well as to remove the incorrect cement mortar used on previous repairs and replace with the correct mortar. Additionally, the ivy that has been allowed to cover the building has damaged areas of lead work and the roofline soakers have also failed. Repairs to these areas have commenced; failure to rectify them now would quickly result in damage to the internal re-decoration. Members should also be aware that even if this work could have been delayed by a few months the cost of doing it separately would have been significantly greater as a large part of the cost is the scaffolding, which is already on site. Members should note that this re-pointing work has been limited to the east chapel building and that at some future stage the west chapel will also have to be looked at.

It is anticipated that the chapel work will be complete in the next 4 weeks. The Rector of Godalming has been requested to seek a date towards the end of February when the Bishop of Guildford is available to re-dedicate the chapel.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Godalming Joint Burial Committee is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 21 March 2013 at 5.30 pm in the Council Chamber.

11. 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.