

**MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE GODALMING JOINT BURIAL
COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2020**

- * Councillor Martin
- * Councillor Neill
- * Councillor Purvis – Vice Chair
- * Councillor PS Rivers
- * Councillor Steel – Chair
- * Councillor Stubbs
- * Councillor Bond (Busbridge Parish Council)
- * Councillor Westwood (Busbridge Parish Council)

* Present # Absent & No Apology Received 0 Apology L Late ^ Council Duties

17. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 14 May 2020, having been previously circulated, were signed by the Chair as a true record.

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and recorded as above.

The Chair welcomed a new representative from Busbridge Parish Council, Cllr Clive Bond, to the Joint Burial Committee and expressed his and the Committee's gratitude to Maxine Long (formerly of Busbridge Parish Council) for her long service to Committee. The Chair requested that the Committee's thanks be formally recorded.

19. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor Rivers declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 9 on the grounds that Skillway was a charity supported by his spouse as Mayor of Godalming and stayed in the Chamber.

20. PETITIONS/STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No petitions/statements/questions had been received from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order No 5.

21. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

There were no questions from Councillors in accordance with GTC Standing Order 6.

22. ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE LAST MEETING

Godalming Joint Burial Committee	
Accounts paid since the 15 May 2020	£74,541.13
Receipts received since the 15 May 2020	£85,629.74
Balance held in Current Account	
Balance at 12 November 2020	£9,973.64
Balance held in the Business Deposit Account	
Balance at 12 November 2020	£66,484.12
Balance held in the CCLA Deposit Account	

Balance at 12 November 2020

£150,000.00

A schedule of the accounts paid was tabled for the information of Members and a copy is attached to record minutes. 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 Chair should sign the schedule of accounts paid.

23. SIGNING OF BANK RECONCILIATIONS

The Committee considered the tabled monthly bank reconciliations since the last meeting of the Committee and authorise the Chair to sign them.

24. INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT

Members considered the report from the Committee's Internal Auditor, Mulberry & Co, on an interim audit conducted on 22 September 2020 for the 2020/21 financial year and noted that no items were raised requiring attention.

25. BUDGET MONITORING

Members considered a budget monitoring report to 31 October and noted a current variance of £34,187 underspend against budget.

Members were requested to consider waiving the rent to Skillway for the 2020/21 year in light of the difficulties COVID-19 has imposed upon this charity.

On the proposal of Councillor Martin (seconded by Councillor Westwood) it was requested that the financial accounts of Skillway be obtained to ascertain the need for waiving the rent. The decision to be delegated to the Chair of this Committee after viewing the financial accounts.

The amended proposal was passed unanimously.

26. WILDFLOWER TRIAL

Members received a report (attached to record minutes) concerning trials undertaken to evaluate different methods for establishing wildflower areas at Eashing Cemetery as a precursor to undertaking a large scale rewilding of the swards indicated at Minute 48-19. Members noted that the larger rewilding is planned as a partnership undertaking and that within the intent of the scheme was a proposal to record and monitor the gradual transformation of these wildflower meadows. However, at that time, as stated in the original proposal, the detail of that aspect of the initiative had not been worked out.

Members noted that it had been hoped that an organisation had been identified to undertake the recording and monitoring aspect of the initiative. However, at present the arrangements that had been proposed have not come to fruition. It is hoped that post COVID-19 this element may progress. In the meantime Members expressed a desire to retain the record and monitoring element of the initiative and that Members and Officers seek to identify suitable alternatives to take this forward.

In taking forward the decisions expressed at Minute 48-19 for the larger scheme, Members proposed a site visit be arranged in January to consider the options available. The Clerk was requested to make appropriate arrangements.

In considering the trials that have been undertaken, the Clerk informed Members of the favourable response from visitors to the cemetery and Members expressed their thanks to the Grounds Maintenance Operative for his work on the trial.

Having considered the report and observations contained therein, Members agreed that the JBC continue trials of differing installation methods with the aim of establishing a system for increasing the area of wildflowers within the cemeteries. In doing so, Members agreed that an important aim is, where practicable, to avoid the use of Glyphosate, additionally Members considered that any further trials should commence in late summer 2021 to reduce the need to water during seed establishment.

In order to support the continuation of the trial, Members resolved to agree that:

1. a larger trial area is established using the installation method as in section 1D to monitor grass ingress over a larger area;
2. a larger trial area is established using the installation method as in section 2A;
3. section 2B is monitored to determine the extent of regrowth of perennials and grass ingress;
4. an additional 400m² area is divided into two sections to trial alternative herbicide and grass removal methods; both areas to be sown using the seed infused growing medium; and
5. a budget of £4,000 is allocated to continue the trial.

27. EASHING CEMETERY HEDGEROW

Members resolved to agree the allocation of £5,000 within the 2021/22 budget to engage suitably qualified and experienced hedge layers to undertake work on 300m of the existing boundary, and provide an allowance to infill plant any gaps that become apparent during the process.

28. RE-ALIGNMENT OF HIGH VOLTAGE CABLE

Members noted that an easement and wayleave was granted in 2008 for a high voltage power cable to run underground along the south-eastern boundary of Eashing Cemetery. The power cable serves the Ockford Ridge area. Due to the development of Ockford Ridge estate, there is a requirement to slightly modify the point of exit of the cable from the cemetery. The re-alignment of the cable does not affect the operation of the cemetery or the number of available plots. However, a grant of easement is still required. As such the utility company, on behalf of Waverley Borough Council (WBC) has applied to modify the existing easement and wayleave to ensure that proper and correct records are maintained. Godalming Town Council's solicitors are acting on the Committee's behalf, with all fees and disbursements being met by WBC.

29. REVISED ESTIMATES FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2021 AND THE BUDGET FOR 2021/22

Members considered the budget papers (attached to record minutes).

Members noted that the sum to be recharged to the constituent authorities is currently £37,690 to Godalming Town Council and £2,310 to Busbridge Parish Council but is only provisional. The allocation can only be confirmed once Waverley Borough Council releases the Band D equivalent figures for each parish.

Members agreed the Revised Estimates for 2020/21 showing a surplus of £9,980 and the Budget for 2021/22 showing a surplus of £270. Both amounts to be charged to the Revenue reserve.

30. BURIAL STATISTICS

The Committee noted the burial statistics for the twelve months ending 31 March 2020 and for year to date to 31 September 2020, which had previously been circulated (copy attached to record minutes).

31. COMMUNICATIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

Members identified the following items from this meeting to be publicised and the type of publicity required:

- Letter to Councillor Long to thank her for her service.

32. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Godalming Joint Burial Committee is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 21 January 2021 at 6.00pm, venue to be confirmed.

33. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE GODALMING JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE