

MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE GODALMING JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 NOVEMBER 2022

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

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

36. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2022, having been previously circulated, were signed by the Chair as a true record.

37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and recorded as above.

38. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER REGISTERABLE INTERESTS

Members made no declarations of interest in relation to any item on the agenda for this meeting, which is required to be disclosed by the Localism Act 2011 and the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.

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

There were no representations or questions from the public in respect of the business on the agenda or other matters not on the agenda.

40. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

No questions from Councillors were submitted in accordance with GTC Standing Order 6.

41. ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE LAST MEETING

Carried over from meeting held on 8 September 2022:

Godalming Joint Burial Committee	
Accounts paid between 10 June and 31 August 2022	£37,930.18
Receipts received between 10 June and 31 August 2022	£42,325.02
Balance held in Current Account	
Balance at 31 August 2022	£5,845.08
Balance held in the Business Deposit Account	
Balance at 31 August 2022	£121,515.82
Balance held in the CCLA Deposit Account	
Balance at 31 August 2022	£150,000.00

For the current meeting:

Godalming Joint Burial Committee	
Accounts paid between 1 September to 3 November 2022	£74,029.68
Receipts received between 1 September to 3 November 2022	£63,271.92
Balance held in Current Account	
Balance at 3 November 2022	£10,083.01
Balance held in the Business Deposit Account	
Balance at 3 November 2022	£106,597.08
Balance held in the CCLA Deposit Account	
Balance at 3 November 2022	£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.

42. SIGNING OF BANK RECONCILIATIONS

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

43. BUDGET MONITORING

Members considered the budget monitoring report to 30 September 2022 and noted a current variance of £5,810 underspend against budget. Members further noted explanations for significant variances as follows:

- Eashing Cemetery – £11k above budget revenue and £6k Small Business rates relief.
- Eashing Chapel - £7.6k water and sewerage works; £4.6k pigeon prevention works; £7.5k workshop internal repairs & decoration; £7.4k chapel internal decoration; £5.5k staff facilities upgrade.
- Eashing Lodge - £2k concrete slab for garage as previous garage rotted.
- Nightingale Cemetery – due to limited space, no revenue is budgeted. To date, there have been 6 interments, 3 memorials and 7 grave purchases at Nightingale resulting in £10.6k revenue.
- Nightingale Chapel – timing difference only as Skillway rent invoiced in October but budgeted in September.

44. INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT

Members considered the report from the Committee's Internal Auditor, Mulberry & Co, on an interim audit conducted on 20 September 2022 for the 2022/23 financial year and noted no actions were required.

Members noted that the wording of Section E was not correct. Whilst the Joint Burial Committee do not charge VAT on its income as it is Exempt, the Committee is registered for VAT. It reclaims VAT paid on expenditure each quarter.

Members thanked the Responsible Finance Officer for her work, which consistently results in clean audit reports.

45. JBC ADMINISTRATION AND STAFFING RESOURCE

Members resolved to approve the increase in the Godalming Joint Burial Committee administration charge for 2023/2024 payable to Godalming Town Council from £39,756 to £43,960.

46. REVISED ESTIMATES FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2023 AND THE BUDGET FOR 2023/24

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

Members noted that the sum to be recharged to the constituent authorities is currently £18,872 to Godalming Town Council and £1,128 to Busbridge Parish Council but that these figures are only provisional. The allocation to be confirmed once Waverley Borough Council releases the Band D equivalent figures for each parish.

Members resolved to agree the Revised Estimates for 2022/23 showing a surplus of £1,320 and the Budget for 2023/24 showing a loss of £136. Both amounts to be charged to the Revenue reserve.

47. BURIAL STATISTICS

The Committee noted the burial statistics for the previous quarter and for the previous twelve months ended the 31 October 2022, which had previously been circulated (copy attached to record minutes).

48. TREE SURVEYS

Members noted that considerable effort has been made to ensure that most of the recommendations from the previous inspection have been conducted, resulting in a significant reduction in the amount of work now recommended.

Members further noted that costs for tree work is provided within the JBC revenue budget. As the works identified in the Tree Survey report are critical safety work, should costs exceed revenue funds Members approved for the Clerk, in consultation with Committee Chair and RFO, to use delegated authority to ensure the work is conducted in accordance with the report's recommendations.

Members also authorised the Clerk to establish a comprehensive replacement scheme for Eashing and Nightingale Cemeteries to, as a minimum maintain, but ideally improve the net biodiversity of the cemeteries. Members approved up to £4,000 to be allocated from the cemeteries ear marked reserve, which currently stands at £55,643, to complete this work.

49. UPDATE ON FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

Members received an update on discussions surrounding options for future arrangements regarding the management of bereavement services for Eashing and Nightingale cemeteries.

50. COMMUNICATIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

No items were identified for additional publicity.

51. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Godalming Joint Burial Committee is scheduled to take place in the Council Chamber on Thursday, 23 February 2023 at 5.30pm.

52. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members were informed that Godalming Town Council has appointed a new Grounds Maintenance Supervisor.