

**MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE CEMETERIES, OPEN SPACES & SUSTAINABILITY
COMMITTEE
HELD ON 27 AUGUST 2026**

0	Councillor	PS Rivers
*	Councillor	Adam
*	Councillor	Crooks
*	Councillor	Duce
*	Councillor	Martin

Substitutes Councillor Heagin for Councillor PS Rivers

* Present # Absent & No Apology Received 0 Apology for Absence L Late

201.270826

MINUTES

The minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 25 June were signed by the Chair, Cllr Duce, as a correct record.

202.270826

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and recorded as above. Members agreed substitutes.

203.270826

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.

204.270826

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.

205.270826

QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

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

206.270826

WORK PROGRAMME

Members noted the Committee's Work Programme and progress on the items therein. The current work programme is attached to record minutes.

207.270826

BUDGET MONITORING

Members received the budget monitoring report and noted the current budget position.

Members noted the report from the Responsible Finance Officer on the financial performance of the committee's cost centres 204 and 301 to 7 August 2026.

208.270826

SERVICE VEHICLE UPDATE

Members noted that following approval by this committee, as per Minute 120.250626, the replacement EV van for the ABTe VW Transporter and additional utility support vehicle are now in service with the maintenance team.

Members noted that officers have submitted a buy back claim for the ABTe VW Transporter, the outcome of which will be reported at a future meeting.

209.270826

PROJECTS

Members noted the following updates on projects:

Grave provision in Nightingale Cemetery:

Having completed the digitisation of Cemetery records for Nightingale Cemetery to identify potential graves for future re-use, GTC has engaged with the Godalming Minister who have indicated their support. Therefore, the next stage in the process will be to undertake an application to the Diocese of Guildford for the necessary faculty. This process will include an appropriate communication and media plan.

In addition to the above, Officers have identified space for an additional 15 to 20 graves, which it is hoped will meet demand whilst the faculty process moves forward. Members will wish to note that due to the limited availability for Inhumation Graves in Nightingale Cemetery, only residents of Farncombe, Godalming and the former Parish of Busbridge are able to apply for burial in the cemetery.

Nightingale Cemetery Railings

As indicated at agenda item Minute 163/24, work was approved for the refurbishment of the historic Grade II listed railings that front Nightingale Cemetery in June 2024. Following scoping and quality testing of suitable specialist companies, work started on this project over the summer of 2025, resuming after easter 2026. The long and prolonged dry weather has allowed this project to move forward, and it is anticipated that the refurbishment of the entire length of railings will be completed by the end of this year. To date, the cost of this project is £18,315 of the allocated £30,000

Nightingale WWI Memorial Garden

Whilst not a current project, Members are advised that it is likely that within the next 12 to 18 months, significant refurbishment will be required to ensure the continued structural integrity of the WWI Memorial Garden. It is hoped that a detailed report will be brought to the February 2027 meeting.

210.270826

JULIUS CAESAR MEMORIAL HEADSTONE – NIGHTINGALE CEMETERY

Members considered the condition of the memorial headstone on the grave of Julius Caesar at Nightingale Cemetery.

Members:

- a. Noted the current condition of the Julius Caesar memorial headstone at Nightingale Cemetery;
- b. Considered the quotation for replacement; and
- c. Resolved to commission a replacement memorial headstone, at a cost of £1,360.

211.270826

UK IN BLOOM

Members noted that Godalming was one of four UK national finalists in the Town and City Centre category of Britain in Bloom 2026 and that the Mayor, together with members of the grounds team, Community Officer and Chief Executive Officer, will attend the awards ceremony.

Members expressed their thanks to all involved, and wished for this thanks to be extended to the officers at Waverley Borough Council who supported GTC.

212.270826

STAFFING CAPACITY

Members noted that following a review of staffing capacity to feed into budget discussions, no changes to the current staffing complement are required at this time.

213.270826

PLAYGROUND MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP PROCEDURES

Members reviewed the draft Playground Maintenance and Upkeep Procedures and recommended their adoption by Full Council.

214.270826

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE ACTION PLAN

Members were presented with the draft Community Resilience Action Plan, seeking approval for the action plan to be submitted to Surrey County Council for grant funding.

Members:

- a. reviewed the draft Community Resilience Plan and provided comment and feedback;
- b. approved the aims of the projects identified within the plan; and
- c. agreed that Project 7 – Resident Information Campaign – be submitted as the project most likely to meet the funding criteria and delivery timetable.

215.260826

CEMETERY FEES

Members considered the proposed cemetery fees and charges, and resolved to approve them for implementation from 1 April 2027. The approved cemetery fees and charges are attached to record minutes.

216.260826

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Cemeteries, Open Spaces & Sustainability Committee is scheduled to be held in the Oglethorpe Room on Thursday, 22 October 2026 at 7.00pm or at the conclusion of the preceding Planning Committee, whichever is later.

217.260826

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

IN PURSUANCE OF THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 S.1(2), THE COMMITTEE RESOLVED TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FROM THE MEETING AT THIS POINT PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM(S) 15, 16 AND

17 BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE
TRANSACTIONED I.E COMMERCIAL-IN-CONFIDENCE / IDENTIFIABLE PERSONAL DATA

218.260826

LODGE HOUSES

Members considered the confidential report and its recommendations in relation to the rent review arrangements for the Council's former Cemetery Lodge properties.

CEMETERIES, OPEN SPACES & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME

TASK	When	COMMENT
Budget Monitoring	Each Meeting	Action – RFO – ACTIONED
Budget Setting	Annually – Meeting Three (October)	Proposed budget requirements to be considered by Management Committee in November – Action - RFO
Review of staffing capacity	Annually – Meeting Two (August)	Report any proposed amendments to Staffing Committee for September Review – Action CEO/DCEO – ACTIONED
Review of future equipment requirements and replacement plan	Annually – Meeting Four (February 2027)	Operations and Compliance Officer/ Maintenance Supervisor
Playground maintenance and upkeep procedures	Procedures to be established before completion of transfer of 1 st playground area from WBC	Target date for consideration by committee September 2026 – DCEO – ACTIONED
Future Playground improvement strategy	On completion of all proposed CAT transfers and review of each play areas needs	Action DCEO
Carbon Audit	Annually – Meeting One (June)	Action CEO
Review of Burial Statistics	Annually – Meeting One (June)	Action CEO
Pesticide and Herbicide Use Policy	Policy & procedures to be presented by Meeting Four – February – 2027	Action DCEO
Future projects plan 2028 - 2031	Draft plan to be considered Meeting One 2027/28	Action CEO/DCEO
Strategic Risk Assessment	Annually – Meeting Four	Chair/CEO assessment against corporate plan objectives

CEMETERY FEES AND CHARGES EFFECTIVE FROM 1 APRIL 2027

EASHING CEMETERY			
EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF BURIAL IN EARTHEN GRAVES (Including the Deed of Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB) for a period of 50 years)	Cemetery Fees (Non- Residents)		Resident & Excepted Category Fees
In an earthen grave 9 feet by 4 feet*	£3025		£1010
In an earthen grave 6 feet by 3 feet (for children under 12)*	£1150*		£405*
Cremated remains in an earthen grave 2 feet by 2 feet Within main cemetery (limited plots to complete existing rows)	£1150		£405
Cremated remains in an earthen grave 6 feet by 3 feet within main cemetery (plot to accept 4 sets of cremated remains)	£2135		£715
INTERMENTS For the interment into a purchased grave. (The fees exclude the digging of the grave)			
Of the body of a child not exceeding 18 years*	£1355		£450*
Of the body of a person exceeding 18 years	£1355		£450
Of an urn or casket containing the cremated into an existing purchased grave space	£405		£405
A surcharge will be applied for Weekend and Bank Holiday interments. Notification of cost upon application.			
INTERMENTS IN A COMMON GRAVE – ALL COMMON GRAVES ARE OWNED BY THE CEMETERY AND HAVE OTHER INTERMENTS IN THE GRAVE (Fees indicated exclude the digging of the grave).	Residents of Other Areas		Resident & Excepted Category
Of the body of a person exceeding 18 years	£1500		£500
CHAPEL GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE – CREMATED REMAINS (Ashes)	Resident of Other Areas	Resident within 5 Miles of GU7 1AQ	Resident & Excepted Category
First interment of an urn of casket containing cremated remains, 50-year exclusive right of burial, grave digging fee and memorial headstone permit. (Memorial headstone to be no bigger than 450mm (H) x 450mm (W) x 300mm (D))	£1875	£780	£625
Second Interment	£405		
Additional inscription or other change to tablet	£100		
NATURAL BURIAL AREA (Including the Deed of Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial for a period of 50 years)			
Earthen grave 9 feet by 4 feet single depth graves only	£3440		£1145
Tree to be purchased or planted	POA		POA
N.B. interment costs as above			
USE OF EASHING CEMETERY CHAPEL	All Categories		
Eashing Cemetery Chapel for Funeral Service	£110		

* Fees are not payable by the person arranging the funeral of a child under the age of 18 where the fees are recoverable via the Government's Children's Funeral Fund.

NIGHTINGALE CEMETERY

<u>EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF BURIAL IN EARTHEN GRAVES</u> (Including the Deed of Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial for a period of 50 years)	Cemetery Fees (Non-Residents)	Resident & Excepted Category Fees
In an earthen grave 9 feet by 4 feet*	N/A	£2460
Cremated remains in an earthen grave 2 feet by 2 feet within main Cemetery	£2373	£790

N.B. interment costs as indicated for Eashing.

MEMORIALS – ALL CEMETERIES

For the right (for 30 years or until the expiry of burial rights, whichever is the earlier) to erect or place on a grave in respect of which the exclusive right of burial has been granted	All Categories
A headstone or footstone (including kerbstone & Chippings) not exceeding 5ft in height	£195
A freestanding vase or additional tablet not exceeding 12 inches in height	£110
Additional inscription or other change to a tablet or headstone	£110
Garden Wall of Remembrance: Permission to erect standard Memorial Tablets in York Stone, White Marble and Nabresina 15 inches wide by 9 inches High	£110
NB: Memorials and kerb sets in Nightingale Cemetery shall be constructed of York Stone, Portland Stone, Serena Sandstone, Nabresina, Purbeck, Dark Grey Eggshell Granite, or Karin Grey Eggshell Granite only	

OTHER CEMETERY FEES

	Residents of Other Areas	Resident & Excepted Category
Purchase of additional 10 years of Exclusive Rights of Burial (may only be purchased after expiry of first 10 years and total period of outstanding Exclusive Rights shall not exceed 50 years)	£810	£275
Transfer of Ownership (other than as part of funeral arrangements)	£65	
Permission to build a brick vault grave	POA	
Fee for the 'buy back' of pre-purchased graves and Exclusive Rights = 15% of current purchase price + VAT)		
Additional fees may be applicable for additional requirements not listed above, all additional fees are to be agreed in writing and paid in advance of burial		

Resident & Excepted Category Fees apply when:

- (a) At the time of death the deceased resided within the Godalming or Tusesley & Munstead civic parish boundaries.
- (b) The original owners of Exclusive Rights of Burial purchased prior to 1 January 2019.
- (c) The Exclusive Right of Burial is owned by the surviving spouse/civil partner who is a resident of Godalming or Tusesley & Munstead (if the grave is owned by anyone other than a surviving spouse/civil partner, the appropriate non-resident fee is payable).
- (d) The deceased was originally a long standing (20years +) Godalming or Tusesley & Munstead parish resident and moved out of the area to live in a nursing/care home outside of those areas (proof of prior residency may be required and the final decision is made at Godalming Town Council's discretion).

Residents of Other Areas Fees apply to:

- (e) All others not meeting the criteria a-d.

Pre-Purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burial:

- (f) Pre-purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burial is only available for residents of Godalming. Excepting (d) above, interment, and other fees payable at the time of use are based on residency of the deceased at time of death.

* Fees are not payable by the person arranging the funeral of a child under the age of 18 where the fees are recoverable via the Government's Children's Funeral Fund.