

CREWKERNE AND WEST CREWKERNE
JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Joint Burial Committee held on Tuesday 6th December 2022 at 18.45 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square Crewkerne.

PRESENT:

Cllrs. S. Ashton, M. Best (Chair), J. Borland, C. Broom, N. Draycott, F. Freeman, A. Samuel and A. Stuart.

Also in attendance: K. Sheehan (Clerk) and P. Hewitt (Finance Officer).

OPEN FORUM:

A member of the public raised the following issues:

- Money had been set aside for the Lodge but not yet spent. She was concerned that the empty building was a drain on council funds.
- She felt that the Lodge should be sold and the proceeds of the sale be used to reduce the council tax burden on Crewkerne residents.

Cllr. Best responded that capital receipts from the sale of capital assets could not lawfully be used to reduce the precept nor offset running costs, and would have to be ringfenced for a capital project. He noted that the Burial Committee had agreed to retain ownership of the Lodge to protect the entrance and access arrangements to the Cemetery, and maintain control of the building, which is in a sensitive location.

32 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

22/23

None.

33 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2022

22/23

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2022 were AGREED.

The Clerk was asked to circulate the report prepared by Cllr. Ashton regarding the chapel drain pipes and gullies.

34 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

22/23 in items on the agenda

No declarations of interest were made at this point.

35 CLERK'S PROGRESS REPORT

22/23

The Clerk noted that all items would be covered on the agenda.

36 FINANCIAL MATTERS

22/23 a. To receive the financial update report

The financial update report was noted, no questions were raised.

b. To consider the second draft of the income and expenditure estimate for 2023/24

The second draft was received, noting that a quote for the five yearly tree inspection was now included in the estimate.

The calculation reflected the arrangement with West Crewkerne Parish Council for Crewkerne Town Council to bear the full cost of the Lodge and Chapel works, to compensate for their use for CTC purposes, reducing the contribution required from WCPC.

The estimate of £32,443 was AGREED without change.

37 CEMETERY LODGE

22/23 To receive a report on the Lodge and Chapel and agree a way forward

Councillors considered a report regarding a proposal to use the Lodge for council offices. Professional VAT advice had confirmed that this use would enable VAT to be reclaimed on non-business activities, including the cost of refurbishing the building for this purpose. The advice of the District Council's Conservation Officer had also been sought.

Cllr. Stuart noted that the sale of the Lodge had been considered but the separation of the access rights as well as the joint water supply with the cemetery would be problematic. A project plan had been put together of works required and this would be progressed via fortnightly meetings of the project board, comprising of Cllrs. Best, Borland, the Town Clerk, Finance Officer and Operations Manager.

It was unanimously AGREED to move forward with the planned refurbishment of Lodge and Chapel for the purposes and reasons outlined in the report, delegating authority to the Town Clerk in conjunction with the Chair of the Joint Burial Committee (Vice Chair in his absence) to proceed with the relevant planning applications, obtain quotations, and place orders for the work to move this project forward.

38 UNUSED CHAPEL

22/23 To consider quotes for specialist works to external walls

Two quotes were considered for specialist works to the external walls of the chapel. A quote for £10,875.00 + VAT from Gales Building Conservation was AGREED (£10,375 discounted for all phases being instructed at the same time). A dispensation to proceed on the basis of two quotes was agreed due to the highly specialised nature of the work required meaning there were very few suitably experienced masons available.

39 INSPECTIONS

22/23 To receive a verbal report from recent inspections and make arrangements for cemetery inspections until April 2023

Cllr. Broom reported that the cemetery was tidy and looking well kept. Thanks were expressed to John Davies and Crewkerne in Bloom for their efforts. It was noted that new notices had been displayed, asking that glass vases are not used on graves. Cllrs. Stuart and Samuel agreed to carry out inspections ahead of the next meeting of the Committee.

40 TO APPROVE THE APPLICATIONS, MEMORIALS AND TRANSFERS RECEIVED

22/23

The applications, memorials and transfers received were APPROVED.

41 MATTERS OF REPORT

22/23

None.

42 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

22/23

The date of the next meeting was set for Tuesday 4 April 2023 at 18.45 in the Council Chamber, Market Square, Crewkerne.

The meeting closed at 7.25 p.m.

Signed.....

Dated.....

JBC06122022