

CREWKERNE AND WEST CREWKERNE
JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Joint Burial Committee held on Tuesday 3rd October 2023 at 18.45 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Crewkerne.

PRESENT:

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

Also in attendance: K. Sheehan (Clerk), P. Hewitt (Finance Officer), A. Cross (Operations Manager).

OPEN FORUM:

No members of the public were present.

20 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

23/24

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Draycott (work commitments).

21 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JUNE 2023

23/24

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2023 were APPROVED.

22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

23/24 in items on the agenda

No declarations of interest were made at this point.

23 CLERK'S PROGRESS REPORT

23/24

The Clerk reported that the curtains had now been removed from the chapel, sample replacement chairs sourced (which JBC members were able to view in the Chamber), and candles provided. A new cross had been made and kindly donated by The Shed, which was now in place.

24 FINANCIAL MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

23/24 a. To receive the financial update report

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

b. To consider a proposal from the Clerk that the cemetery fees for 2024/25 should remain unchanged

It was AGREED that the cemetery fees for 2024/25 would remain unchanged.

25 OPEN DAY 2023

23/24

The Chair thanked the three members of Town Council staff who had organised and supported the recent Cemetery open day. Thanks were also expressed to Tracey Warren of Stoodleys Funeral Directors for her interesting talk and tour of the notable graves in the

cemetery. A good number of residents had attended and the refreshments had been appreciated.

26 QUEEN ELIZABETH II MEMORIAL TREE

23/24 To consider a proposal from Crewkerne Town Council to plant a memorial tree at the cemetery and determine a species and location

Following discussion, it was AGREED to accept the offer from Crewkerne Town Council for a memorial tree, which would be located on the turning circle. It was delegated to the Clerk to seek advice from the Council's arborist on species, noting that it should not be a large tree, place the order and organise a plaque.

27 MAINTENANCE CONTRACT 2024-25

23/24 To consider quotes for the cemetery maintenance contract for 2024-25 and make a recommendation to Full Council for inclusion in the budget

The Clerk reported that the additional quote had not yet been received, therefore it was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

28 GATES AND RAILINGS

23/24 To consider quotes for sandblasting of the gates and railings

Councillors considered the quotes provided and decided not to progress these works at this time on cost grounds, noting that they would prefer to prioritise a toilet facility and replacement of guttering on the chapels.

29 LODGE GARDEN

23/24 To consider a plan for reinstatement of the Lodge garden

Councillors considered a plan from the Council's Grounds Team for the Lodge garden. After consideration it was decided to keep the area simple, with grass and paths and the Clerk was asked to seek advice from the Council's arborist on a species of evergreen hedge to plant along the A30 boundary.

30 ACTION PLAN 2023-27

23/24 To consider a draft action plan

Councillors reviewed a draft action plan, commenting that it was a useful reminder of outstanding projects. The plan was AGREED, subject to the removal of the woodland burial area and grey water recycling lines. The gazebo would be inspected at the next site visit and it was suggested that the leaflet design could be outsourced.

31 SPITFIRE MEMORIAL PLAQUE

23/24 To consider the installation of a memorial plaque as agreed in 2019

Councillors noted that this had previously been considered by the JBC in 2019 but never actioned (possibly due to the pandemic). It was AGREED to locate a plaque in the cemetery grounds on the site where the Spitfire crashed in WWII with the following wording:

On 12th March 1942, RAF Spitfire Vb (serial No. AD189) of 602 Squadron was abandoned over Crewkerne. The pilot, Flight Sergeant Frederick Schofield of the Royal Canadian Air Force, bailed out of the aircraft and returned to duty the next day.

The Spitfire had taken off that day from RAF Kenley in Surrey on a mission to patrol over a convoy sailing in the Channel. On completion of the patrol, Flight Sergeant Schofield became lost and, when low on fuel, he elected to bail out.

This plaque marks the area where the aircraft crashed.

In 2011, an excavation team found and lifted out the remains of the Spitfire.

It was suggested that efforts be made to contact the pilot's family to see if they would like to visit.

32 TREE REPORT

23/24 To note that the five yearly tree inspection has been carried out and to note budgetary implications

It was AGREED to implement regular 18 monthly checks as per the recommendation of the arborist and the Clerk was asked to factor this additional cost into the budget, and also to delegate recommended tree works to the Operations Manager to arrange with contractors. The anticipated cost of approximately £10,000 over the next five years was noted.

33 LAYOUT OF NEW SECTION

23/24 To approve draft layout and numbering of plots

The plan for the new ashes section was AGREED, and the Operations Manager was asked to liaise with the gravedigger over the layout and margins for the new burial section. Once the layout was determined it was agreed to seek quotes for pathways.

34 INSPECTIONS

23/24 a. To receive feedback from recent cemetery inspections

Councillors Broom and Samuel reported that they had recently inspected the grounds and found them to be generally tidy, but that grass had been growing on some graves. The paths had been mossy at times and it was noted that quotes were being sought for self-binding gravel for paths in the old section of the cemetery.

b. To make arrangements for cemetery inspections until December 2023

Councillors Freeman and Samuel agreed to conduct interim inspections ahead of the next meeting of the Joint Burial Committee in December.

35 TO APPROVE THE APPLICATIONS, MEMORIALS AND TRANSFERS RECEIVED

23/24 The applications, memorials and transfers received were APPROVED.

36 MATTERS OF REPORT

23/24 Cllr. Best queried whether it might be possible to clean the war graves in commemoration of the upcoming 80th anniversary of D-Day in 2024. The Clerk was asked to investigate.

Providing a map to help locate the graves was suggested. It was also noted that 2024 would be the 150th anniversary of the cemetery.

37 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

23/24

Tuesday 5 December 2023 at 18.45 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square.

The meeting closed at 19.37.

Signed.....

Dated.....

JBC03102023