# MINUTES OF A SITE MEETING OF THE BURIAL GROUNDS AND PROPERTIES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 19TH JULY 2016

PRESENT: Cllr. Clifford (in the Chair), Cllrs. Bunyan, Fairweather, Goodchild and

Swann.

Also present were the Parish Warden and Kent Grassland Services – Simon & Lee Wheeler.

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Cook

Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations, predetermination or lobbying on items on this agenda. Members are reminded that changes to the Register of Interests should be notified to the Clerk.

01/16: Cllr. Clifford nominated Cllr. Bunyan to be Vice Chairman of this Committee. This was seconded by Cllr. Fairweather and agreed.

02/16: Allocated areas of responsibility were agreed as follows:-

Cllr. Clifford Golford Cemetery & Cranbrook War Memorial

Cllr. Bunyan Properties

Cllr. Fairweather Sissinghurst Cemetery & War Memorial

Cllr. Cook St. Dunstans Churchyard

Cllr. Goodchild Noticeboards, benches, bus shelters & kiosks

### 03/16: St. Dunstan's Churchyard:

The Chairman reminded Members that Cllr. Cook was still investigating a wild flower meadow in part of St. Dunstan's and was talking to the PCC. A discussion took place on the management of wildflower meadows. The gullies were overgrown and it was agreed that the contractors needed to re-establish these to enable rain water run-off. It was proposed by Cllr. Clifford, seconded by Cllr. Fairweather and agreed that the gullies needed to be cut out 6" wide and 2" deep and this was accepted by Kent Grassland Services. Members noted that the new bench in memory of Dr. John Hooper had been installed. The weeds in the path running alongside the Vestry Hall required spraying. There were also a lot of weeds within the tombs and memorials which required spraying. The cremation tablets were overgrown and the Contractors were reminded that these should be edged up once a month. The Contractors agreed to deal with the items raised. The lime trees round the perimeter were discussed and Members were reminded that we had consent from the TWBC Tree Officer to reduce overall by 30% and this was included in the Five Year Plan. The Chairman felt that a comprehensive report was required to move forward with any necessary tree works. The Clerk would contact a local company who could provide a report. Benjamin Hatcher had taken out some dead wood from the limes on the western boundary. The Parish Warden stated that since the dog signs had been put up that there was a great improvement with regard to dog fouling. The Contractors agreed with this statement. They asked whether the cages could be removed from two graves but Members felt this was unnecessary; the weeds could be sprayed. Generally there was an issue with weeds and ivy growing in the churchyard and more work needed to be undertaken by the Contractors to meet the terms of the grounds contract. The Clerk stated that there was a problem with litter around the benches and Cllr. Swann was asked whether St. Dunstan's could help with a rota for litter picking. Cllr. Veitch had spoken to the head teacher at Cranbrook School to make him aware of the problem.

## 04/16: Golford Cemetery:

The Chairman pointed out that the hedge at the entrance was in dire need of cutting back, vision is seriously impaired. The Contractors advised that this would be cut back shortly. Cllr. Clifford brought forward the idea of leaving the gates open which would mean that vehicles could be driven in and parked inside the Cemetery. The Parish Warden thought this a good idea as there are now times when there is no space to park outside. After a full discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Clifford, seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed that the gates be open for a trial period for the summer period i.e. 1st April – 31st October which is when the Chapel is open to the public on a Wednesday. The Clerk informed Members that a request had been made for a bench and the Parish Warden pointed out where the Smith family would like the bench. The bench would be sited on the perimeter of the turning circle looking back towards the burial plots in Row R3. This siting was agreed by all Members.

A plaque had been damaged and the Chairman had agreed to a replacement plaque for Jim Pratt at a cost of £142.10. This had been greatly appreciated by the family.

The Contractors made Members aware of two options with regard to mowing. They suggested either collecting the grass or mowing more frequently, both at extra cost. After a full discussion and taking into account that there were items outstanding which had not been undertaken within the existing contract, it was agreed that the Contractors needed to undertake the outstanding works before consideration could be given to extra cuts. However if the Parish Warden was of the opinion that an extra cut is required he will pass this onto the Clerk who will then contact the Contractors. Cllr. Clifford stated that it was important that the Contractors relayed to us any issues with the contract. The cremation tablets in the older section all needed edging. The grass was long and in need of a cut. The Clerk stated that the purchase of the container was proving to be a success and it now blended into the landscape.

The Chairman informed Members that some roof repairs to the Chapel had been carried out by Staplehurst Roofing in the sum of £480. The Parish Warden reported that there was some subsidence which Members needed to be aware of. After inspection by Members it was agreed that the Parish Warden monitor the situation.

There were a lot of brambles growing through the laurels by the disabled toilet and the Contractors suggested that the laurel bushes would be better removed. Again this would be an extra and the contract needs to be met before the extra work can be authorised. The paths were full of weeds and needed spraying as well as the weeds growing within the monuments.

# 05/16: Sissinghurst Cemetery:

The Cemetery was generally in very good order. The Chairman thought the standard of workmanship by the Contractors in this Cemetery was exceptional. There were two dead trees which needed to be removed, both in the new section. The Parish Warden agreed to undertake this work. It was also agreed to ask Benjamin Hatcher to carry out an inspection of the boundary trees, some of the leylandii trees needed topping and one other looked as though it may be dying back. It was agreed that the new boundary fence on the south side was an improvement. There had been an issue with the new cremation tablets but this had been resolved.

#### 06/16: War Memorials:

The Clerk informed Members that the Memorials are cleaned once a year just prior to Remembrance Day by Dave Howell, free of charge. No issues had been raised.

#### 07/16: Noticeboards:

The cost for the new Sissinghurst Village Sign which had been refurbished by Iden Signs was £365 + VAT. The Parish Warden stated that he would hopefully be able to put it back up this week. The old sign was still at Iden Signs and it was agreed that this would be stored at Golford for the time being.

## 08/16: Properties:

- a) Angley Cottage: The tenant had mentioned a random damp patch on the chimney breast. He would monitor.
- b) Vestry Hall: Either a paper towel dispenser or a new hand dryer is required in the ladies toilet. After discussion it was agreed to ask Hurstways to replace the handryer. A new clock is required for the Vestry Hall. It was agreed to purchase a new clock up to a cost of £40. The windows in the Council Chamber are in need of attention. The catches are bent and worn. The window in the meter room is missing a glazing bar. It was also agreed to ask Hurstways for advice.
- c) Vestry Hall Cottage: The Chairman informed Members that he had carried out an inspection and there was a great improvement in terms of "clutter" which was considered by the surveyor to be a fire hazard. He had agreed a timetable with the tenants for redecoration. However there were issues which he felt rested with the Parish Council and these included dampness, no dpc, blown plaster on the stairwell and the shared water service. The Clerk is arranging a meeting with Hurstways to obtain advice and costings.

#### 09/16 Bus Shelters, B.T. Kiosks and Cycle Racks:

The Clerk asked Members is they wished to take advantage of KCC match funding for a new bus shelter. They will match fund up to £2,000. The last one cost over £4,000 but we only have £700 set aside in the budget. After a full discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Clifford, seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed to take up the offer of the match funding and submit an application for a new shelter to be sited at Willesley Pound on the opposite side to the existing wooden shelter. The Clerk informed Members that Reflections had cleaned all the bus shelters free of charge. She informed Members that Cranbrook in Bloom did not take up our offer this year to put floral displays in the Kiosks as they are not entering the "In Bloom" competition this year.

10/16: Items for Information:

No items were raised.