

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BURIAL GROUNDS AND PROPERTIES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 29<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2019

PRESENT: Cllr. Clifford (in the Chair), Cllrs. Fairweather (in part), Fermor (in part), and Fletcher.

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Bunyan and Gilbert.

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.

Cllr. Clifford advised that he would amend the order of the agenda due to some Members being unable to attend for the entire meeting.

### **14/19: Amendments to current Burial Grounds Rules and Regulations:**

The Clerk had devised an amended version of the rules and regulations to show that no glass receptacles would be permitted around graves for health and safety reasons. Rev. Pollington had produced a report containing positive guidelines for undertakers that could be included in the rules and regulations. Cllr. Clifford would forward a copy to the Clerk so she could incorporate them in a revised version, ready for approval at the next meeting.

### **15/19: Cranbrook & Sissinghurst War Memorials:**

The Silent Silhouettes had been erected ready for Remembrance Day. Cllr. Clifford had been given permission by the owner of the property adjacent to the Cranbrook War Memorial for his water supply to be used for the cleaning of the Memorial if necessary. It was hoped both memorials could be cleaned as usual prior to Remembrance Day.

It was noted that the hedge behind the Cranbrook Memorial required some additional pruning. Cllr. Clifford would arrange to meet Ben Hatcher on site to discuss a cost for undertaking this. The Committee delegated authorisation to the Chairman to agree this expenditure.

Cllr. Clifford advised the Committee that he had given permission to a member of an East Sussex branch of the Royal British Legion, to take a copy of our Silent Silhouette Airman as they are no longer available to purchase. This would be undertaken early next year.

It was agreed that Cllr. Clifford would lay the wreath at the Sissinghurst Remembrance Service and Cllr. Fletcher would lay the wreath in Cranbrook.

### **16/19: Angley Cottage:**

The Chairman advised that the necessary repair work agreed at a recent Tomlin Murton Playing Fields Trust meeting had been scheduled, along with an electrical installation report on the cottage.

### **17/19: Vestry Hall:**

a) Hire of projector and screen:

Members discussed whether or not the equipment belonging to the Council should be available to hire for events in the Vestry Hall. It was agreed that as both pieces of equipment can be sensitive it should remain for Council use only.

b) Sound system:

The Caretakers had suggested new equipment be considered, as the present system was old and not as effective as it once was. Cllr. Clifford said he would meet with the Caretakers for a demonstration of the current system before he asked the Committee to consider a replacement.

c) Amendments to current T & C's of hire.

The Clerk advised that following a recent theatrical event in the hall, the fire alarm had been activated by a smoke/haze machine. The Caretakers had raised concern that if this were to happen when they are not on the premises no one would be available to reset the alarm. It was proposed by Cllr. Clifford, seconded by Cllr. Fletcher and agreed, the terms and conditions of hire needed to be amended to prohibit the use of smoke/haze machines. Hirers are provided with the Caretakers mobile number, should any problems arise during the booking. If the fire alarm is activated in error and the Caretakers alerted but unable to respond, the Caretakers will be asked to contact a member of the Burials and Properties Committee to attend and reset the alarm. The Clerk will provide an instruction guide on how to do this; the Caretakers will be provided with contact details for members of the Committee.

d) Masonry repair to internal window frame:

The Clerk had received a quote from a reputable stone mason to supply, sculpt to shape and fit a new piece of sandstone to repair the broken window frame at a total cost of £425. Cllr. Clifford proposed the quote be accepted; this was seconded by Cllr. Fairweather and agreed.

**18/19: Vestry Hall Cottage:**

Cllr. Clifford advised that Cllr. Gilbert had taken responsibility for the cottage. The annual inspection would be undertaken shortly.

**19/19: Information Centre:**

Change to building name:

Cllr. Clifford stated that at the recent Policy & Resources meeting he had been asked to come up with proposals for development of the space for further discussion which he would take to Policy & Resources for consideration. It was agreed that with the addition of another member of staff and possibly a Project Manager for the Community Centre that the Parish Council would require more space than is currently available to the Clerks. It was suggested that estate agents be approached to ask what needed to be done to any remaining space to make it rentable. It was also agreed to obtain a quote for signage to replace the current name The Weald Information Centre with the correct building name of The Old Fire Station, which could be put in place after April 1<sup>st</sup>.

**20/19: Noticeboards and Shelters:**

There was nothing to report.

**21/19: Benches & Cycle Racks:**

Cllr. Clifford reported that two new benches for the Ball Field and were now in situ. The Clerk agreed to write formally to thank the person who had donated them.

Cllr. Fletcher raised concerns regarding the condition of a wooden bench in memory of Mr. & Mrs. Russell situated the Crane Valley. It had been subjected to damage and appeared to be beyond repair. The Clerk agreed to liaise with the Parish Warden to see if he knew of any family that remain in the area that we could discuss its condition with. If no family are located, consideration could be given to replacing the bench with a metal equivalent.

**22/19: Red Telephone Kiosks:**

As no ideas for how the phone boxes could be used had been forthcoming, it was agreed that the Clerk would approach Linda Page to see if Cranbrook in Bloom could make any suggestions.

### **23/19: Five Year Plan & Budget:**

The Five Year Plan was discussed at length. The Clerk had already made several additions to the notes over the previous year. It was agreed to include a heading of 'redesign of the Information Centre'.

Cllr. Clifford highlighted the key expenditure for next year's budget, which would include an increase in the Info Centre costs following the withdrawal of services by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. There were also funds allocated to the repair of the tarmac area directly in front of Golford Chapel. It was noted that £1000 had been allocated to interior decoration of Vestry Hall. Cllr. Fletcher remarked on the ceiling lining paper that was coming away in the Vestry Hall. It was agreed to seek quotes for this to be resolved before it deteriorates further.

Burial fees and hire costs for the Vestry Hall and Council Chamber were reviewed. It was proposed by Cllr. Fletcher, seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed to increase the session fees for the hire of the hall by £2 per session from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. It was agreed that there would be no increase in fees for burials or for the hire of the Council Chamber.

At a recent Policy & Resources meeting, permission had been granted for the hall to be hired on a Sunday for Cranbrook Music Festival in 2020. It was agreed this should be at a cost of £175 for the whole day. Any future requests would be subject to securing someone to undertake the role of caretaker for the day and would be delegated to Policy & Resources to discuss. At the present time applications for hire on Sundays would only be considered in exceptional circumstances and on a case by case basis.

Cllr. Fletcher felt that the Parish as a whole was missing out on possible S106 opportunities, which could for example be used for projects such as refurbishment of Vestry Hall. It was agreed that it would be beneficial for Policy & Resources to instruct all committees to generate proposals for S106 monies.

After a full discussion Cllr. Clifford proposed adoption of the budget figures as presented, a copy of which is filed with these minutes, this was seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed. Cllr. Clifford thanked Brian Swann for his advice and help in preparing the figures.

### **24/19: Golford Cemetery:**

#### **a) Tree request:**

The Clerk advised that we had received a request for permission to plant a small cherry tree in the Cemetery as a memorial to family members. Cllr. Fermor volunteered to meet the parishioner who had made the request to discuss the most suitable location for the tree. It was also agreed that our current list of acceptable trees required updating. Cllr. Fermor was happy to devise a new list and suggest a programme of planting.

#### **b) Turning circle, tarmac repairs and edging.**

The Parish Warden had reported that the tarmac area in front of the Chapel was breaking up, he also raised concern that some visitors had driven on the paths which had destroyed the edges. It had already been agreed that money would be set aside from the budget for repairs. Cllr. Clifford stated he would meet the contractor who had undertaken the previous repairs to a high standard and ask him to quote. It was also agreed to seek a quote for oak bollards to prevent vehicles being able to drive on the paths.

#### **c) Chapel storage:**

The Parish Warden had requested some additional storage for in the Chapel for burial paperwork. It was proposed by Cllr. Clifford seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed to authorise up to £60 for storage which the Parish Warden would purchase himself and add to his monthly contract price.

Members also agreed to authorise the purchase of a new seat for the Chapel toilet which the Parish Warden would fit.

**25/19: St. Dunstan's Churchyard:**

Wildflower area proposal

Cllr. Fermor reported that she was in discussion with Rev. Pollington on a choice of planting for the wild flower area, which would be undertaken at the appropriate time of year. Visitors to the Churchyard would be advised of the area with signage and a mown path to distinguish the area.

**26/19: Sissinghurst Cemetery:**

North Side Hedge / tree planting update:

The Parish Warden and grounds contractors were working together to remove the dead wood from the north hedge which would make the most of the amazing views. The hedges on the east side which had been encroaching on the path had also been cut back. On the south side of the Cemetery where the trees had been felled, it was agreed to seek a quote for clearing the area to allow for replanting.

**27/19: Items for Information:**

There were no items raised.