



DEEPING ST JAMES PARISH COUNCIL

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Parish Clerk: Julie Fortnum

Minutes of the meeting of the Cemetery Committee which was held on Tuesday 30th May 2023 at 7.00pm initially in the Cemetery then at the Institute.

Present: Councillors Halls, Hosking, Shinkins-Hoppe, Stevens, Councillor Gilbert (ex-officio) and one member of the public (Les Green)

24.1 To elect a chairperson.

Councillor Stevens was elected at the annual Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 16 May 2023. This decision was re-considered at this meeting where it was proposed seconded and **RESOLVED** that Councillor Hosking should be Chairperson on this committee.

24.2 To receive apologies of absence.

Apologies had been received from Councillor Bowell

24.3 To receive any declarations of interest.

None declared

24.4 To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 6 February 2023.

These were agreed by Councillors Halls and Shinkins-Hoppe being the only two Parish Councillors present at the meeting and signed by Councillor Halls

24.5 Clerks report.

- Since the last committee meeting on 6 February 2023 there have been 2 burials and 1 burial plot reservation.
 - The maintenance team have started the agreed work on the Cemetery paths commencing with those in the old Cemetery and will continue to make progress.
 - The maintenance team have left two visible areas uncut within the extended Cemetery for re-wilding purposes.
 - The work to remove / replace the railings near the London Plane tree has not as yet started as grass cutting season has taken priority.
 - The Parish Clerk and one of the Maintenance Workers met with the member of public wishing to donate a memorial bench to agree a suitable location. The member of the public will get back to the Parish Clerk if/when they wish to pursue this.
 - The secure storage unit is now in place at the rear of the Old Cemetery.
- Comments continue to be received about the removal of planters, vases and ornaments which are placed on the grave-beds and the office staff refer the individuals to the Cemetery regulations.

24.6 To consider memorial safety following the attendance of one of the Maintenance Workers on the Management of Memorials training offered by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management and held at Littleport Town Council and Cemetery.

As the committee had met at the cemetery, they took the opportunity to walk round and assess the safety of memorials, by completing push tests, concentrating mainly

on the older and taller headstones some of which the Clerk was asked to note, check records for contact details of owners and bring to the attention of the maintenance team to monitor.

At this point (7.20pm) the committee re-located to the Institute where Councillor Stevens and a member of the public, Les Green, joined the meeting

Continuing discussions about memorial management, it was agreed that the maintenance team should continue with daily/weekly visual checks and that on a 3 monthly basis perform push tests and report the findings to the parish council office for the Clerk to attempt to make contact with memorial owners to get them to arrange corrective work. If this was not successful the maintenance team should make memorials safe by laying them down.

Regarding the cracks in some of the grave beds in the old Cemetery it was agreed that where possible and practical these should be filled with soil.

In view of the fact that some of the corrective work involved lifting it was also suggested that the current maintenance team, although all from backgrounds where health and safety and risk management had been paramount, should be sent on a safe lifting course.

24.7 To further consider (following on from minute 23.29 of 11 April 2023) establishing and managing a Garden of Remembrance after receiving advice from the Institute of Cemetery and Crematoria Management.

The Clerk had obtained information from the ICCM which had been shared with the members of this committee.

After some discussion it was agreed that rather than commit an area of the newly extended Cemetery the use of the following areas for the scattering of ashes should be considered

Millennium Wood – The Clerk pointed out that this land was owned by South Kesteven District Council currently leased to Deeping St James Parish Council until 15 January 2049. The Clerk was asked to contact SKDC to see if they would be prepared to transfer the ownership of this land to DSJPC.

The land at the rear of Millennium Wood – This land was privately owned and the Clerk was asked to contact the owner to see if they would be interested in selling the land to the Parish Council

An area at the rear of the Priory Church Deeping St James – Councillor Stevens volunteered to speak to the Vicar and Diocese to investigate if the use of this area was an option

To clear for re-use an area in the old Cemetery – The Clerk advised that this may not be possible as some of the exclusive rights of burial that had been granted for these graves read in perpetuity. It was acknowledged that if this was possible it was a huge undertaking. The Clerk was asked to investigate this further.

24.8 To note the date of the next meeting
7pm on Tuesday 5 September 2023.