

# UPPER BEEDING PARISH COUNCIL

r/o 3 Hyde Square ~ Upper Beeding ~ West Sussex ~ BN44 3JE

Tel: 01903 810316

e-mail: [upper.beeding@btconnect.com](mailto:upper.beeding@btconnect.com)

[www.upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk](http://www.upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk)

Clerk: Steve Coberman; Cemetery Clerk: Colette Harber

## MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE JOINT PARISHES CEMETERY COMMITTEE

**Date: Monday 19 December 2016    Time: 7.00pm    Place: Beeding & Bramber Village Hall**

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| <b>Present:</b>   | Cllrs R Potter & N Stubbs (Bramber Parish Council); Cllrs P Bowell (from Minute J:1216:04 onwards) & M Willett (Steyning Parish Council); Cllrs S Birnstingl, R Harber & C Warren (Upper Beeding Parish Council)<br>Plus 11 (initially 10) members of the Public  |
| <b>J:1216:01</b><br><i>Welcome</i>                      | Cllr Birnstingl, in his role as Chairman of Upper Beeding Parish Council, welcomed all councillors and members of the public to the inaugural meeting of the Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee  |
| <b>J:1216:02</b><br><i>Appointment of Chairman</i>      | Cllr Birnstingl called for nominations for the role of Chairman to the Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee (JPCC).<br>Cllr Warren was proposed and duly elected as Chairman of the Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee for the current Council year.<br><i>Proposed by R Harber; Seconded by R Potter</i>   |
| <b>J:1216:03</b><br><i>Appointment of Vice-Chairman</i> | Cllr Warren called for nominations for the role of Vice-Chairman to the JPCC<br>Cllr Willett was proposed as Vice-Chairman of the JPCC for the current Council year; however, whilst honoured to be considered, declined due to other council commitments.<br>Cllr Stubbs was proposed and duly elected as Vice-Chairman of the JPCC for the current Council year.<br><i>Proposed by R Harber; Seconded by R Potter</i> |
| <b>J:1216:04</b><br><i>Apologies</i>                    | Cllr Bowell gave his apologies for late arrival.<br>Apologies for non-attendance were received from UBPC Clerk, Steve Coberman  |
| <b>J:1216:05</b><br><i>Questions from the public</i>    | On enquiring as to the nature of questions from members of the Public present at the meeting, the Chairman, following discussion with all the Councillors present, agreed that all questions relating to the possible appointment of non-councillors to the JPCC would be taken under that agenda item, later in the meeting.   |

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| <p><b>J:1216:05</b><br/><i>Questions from the public cont'd</i></p>     | <p>However, following one or two comments received, it was felt important that at this stage of the meeting everyone should understand that Botolphs Cemetery was a non-consecrated, non-denominational cemetery.</p> <p>And, as there was confusion regarding the difference between a consecrated cemetery as opposed to a non-consecrated cemetery, it was stated that under Church of England Canon Law only a Bishop can consecrate a cemetery.</p> <p>Therefore residents of the three Parishes, of any denomination or no denomination, may be interred in Botolphs Cemetery, if they so wish.</p> <p>Additionally, if it is the wish of the family of the deceased, or the known wish of the deceased, any burial plot and cremation plot may be <i>dedicated and blessed</i> by the attending Minister at the time-of-need.</p> <p>A member of the Friends of Botolphs Church reported that although St Botolphs Church is now under the guardianship of the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT), the church itself is still a holy place and open for everyone for quiet contemplation throughout each day.</p> |
| <p><b>J:1216:06</b><br/><i>Declarations of interest</i></p>             | <p>Cllr Harber declared that he and his wife, the Cemetery Clerk, had pre-purchased a double depth burial plot in Botolphs Cemetery.</p> <p>Cllr Bowell declared that he had pre-purchased a double-depth cremation plot in Botolphs Cemetery.</p>  |
| <p><b>J:1216:07</b><br/><i>Ratification of the Notes of meeting</i></p> | <p>All decisions recorded in the notes of the informal JPCC meeting held on 17 October 2016 were ratified, by all present and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p>Particular mention was made of the funding mechanism whereby each Parish Council would be required to provide funds for Botolphs Cemetery, if, and when, requested.</p> <p>It was agreed that contributions from each Parish would be proportionate to the numbers of Band D properties in each Parish, as this mechanism is already in use for other services, and is updated annually by Horsham District Council.</p> <p><i>Proposed by M Willett; Seconded by R Harber.</i></p>  |
| <p><b>J:1216:08</b><br/><i>Matters arising</i></p>                      | <p>None on this occasion</p>  |
| <p><b>J:1216:09</b><br/><i>Financial Forecast and Budget</i></p>        | <p>Cllr Harber presented a draft financial forecast for the next ten years.</p> <p>In the discussion that ensued, it was agreed it was very difficult to forecast yearly income for Botolphs Cemetery; however, it was felt that the budget should be treated on an 'on-going' basis but without any notion of the income, and monitored under an agenda item at each meeting.</p> <p>It was also suggested that a project fund of £35,000 for the purchase of land and the associated costs to extend the cemetery should be set aside. A working budget of £10,000 per annum being considered.</p> <p><i>Proposed by P Bowell; Seconded by N Stubbs</i></p>   |
| <p><b>J:1216:10</b><br/><i>Accounts to 30- Nov-16</i></p>               | <p>Draft accounts to 30 November 2016 were presented and noted.</p> <p><i>Proposed: R Potter; Seconded P Bowell</i></p>   |

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| <p><b>J:1216:11</b><br/><i>Bank Account statements</i></p>                         | <p>Bank statements for the Community Account and the Business Money Manager accounts to 13 November 2016 were received and noted.</p> <p>It was also noted that Steve Coberman, Clerk to Upper Beeding Parish Council hoped that the new current account being opened with the Co-operative Bank would be available soon.</p>   |
| <p><b>J:1216:12</b><br/><i>JPCC Standing Orders</i></p>                            | <p>A draft copy of the Standing Orders for the JPCC was received and noted.</p> <p>In the discussion that ensued, the following changes were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>4 Meetings a)</b> – change the words ‘the Committee will’: for ‘the Committee shall’:</li> <li>- <b>4 Meetings c)</b> – delete word ‘voting’ so the sentence reads ‘All matters shall be decided by a simple majority of the members of the Committee’</li> </ul> <p>The Cemetery Clerk to make the relevant changes and forward to each Parish Council.</p> <p><i>Proposed: M Willett; Seconded: R Potter.</i></p>  |
| <p><b>J:1216:13</b><br/><i>Appointment of non-councillors to the Committee</i></p> | <p>In opening the discussion, the Chairman invited each Councillor to give their view regarding the appointment of non-councillors to the Committee. Varying views were received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Committee membership should be returned to the status quo ante of the former Joint Parishes Burial Board; thus providing openness and transparency and valuing the community. It was felt that this would be similar to the arrangements for the Joint Parishes Youth Service</li> <li>- the Churches play a significant role in the Cemetery</li> <li>- advice may be relevant to the Committee once the new piece of land had been purchased</li> <li>- the issue of financial responsibility for unelected members of the Committee was of concern, together with the fact that church representatives would have more permanence on the Committee than the elected members</li> <li>- Councillors have a responsibility to their Parish Councils for financial matters, whilst Churches have never contributed to the cemetery funds</li> <li>- an alternative view that advisors could be invited to speak to the Committee as and when specialist advice was needed</li> <li>- if liturgical advice was required, one representative could be appointed from all the Churches</li> </ul> <p>In response, members of the Public representing Steyning Parochial Church Council and the Parish of Beeding and Bramber with Botolphs Churches responded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there was very strong feeling that there might be issues relevant to the Churches</li> </ul> |

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| <p><b>J:1216:13</b><br/> <b><i>Appointment of non-councillors to the Committee cont'd</i></b></p>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- all financial matters could go to the Council members only</li> <li>- there was a realisation that there would be significant difficulties with the financial matters, however, if a member of the faith community was not present at the meetings, how would the Committee know that there might be a problem?</li> <li>- when Botolphs Cemetery and the Joint Parishes Burial Board was first set up, the Priest was always present at the meetings and always had the last word as to the inscription on the headstones, which were discussed at meetings</li> <li>- one-way to overcome the problem would be for one faith member representing the Churches to sit on the Committee</li> </ul> <p>Having listened to the concerns of the Church representation, Cllr Harber suggested that the JPCC should have a policy regarding the invitation of members of the faith communities to advise the Committee on a regular basis</p> <p>Cllr Harber proposed that:</p> <p><i>'Initially, faith communities to be invited to attend the committee meetings but not to preclude co-opting faith members from later becoming full committee members'</i></p> <p>Cllr Bowell put forward a counter proposal in that:</p> <p><i>'The Churches nominate a maximum of three members of the faith communities to sit on the Committee'</i></p> <p>After further discussion in which clarification was sought on a number of points, including the future arrangements for faith communities to be invited to nominate a representative, Cllr Bowell withdrew his counter proposal.</p> <p>The Chairman called for a vote:<br/> For the proposal: 5 votes Against the proposal: 1 vote</p> <p>Following the vote Cllr Bowell asked for the vote with names to be recorded.<br/> For the proposal: Cllrs Harber, Warren, Potter, Stubbs and Willett<br/> Against the proposal: Cllr Bowell..</p> |
| <p><b>J:1216:14</b><br/> <b><i>Policy for the interment of non-parishioners in Botolphs Cemetery</i></b></p> | <p>Due to time constraints, this matter was deferred until the next meeting</p>   |

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| <p><b>J:1216:15</b><br/><i>Revision of Cemetery brochure</i></p>              | <p>Given the change of status of JPCC and its governance arrangements, Councillors received and noted a revised copy of Botolphs Cemetery brochure.</p> <p>The brochure was agreed subject to changing the correspondence address to that of r/o 3 Hyde Square, Upper Beeding, BN44 3JE.</p> <p>Following a question regarding the printing of the brochure, it was noted that the Cemetery Clerk had the ability to print the brochures. Therefore a relatively small number of brochures would be printed, as needed, in case of any further changes.</p> <p><i>Proposed: M Willett; Seconded: R Potter</i></p> |
| <p><b>J:1216:16</b><br/><i>Schedule of Meeting dates for 2017</i></p>         | <p>The Committee agreed the schedule of meeting dates for 2017 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monday 20 March</li> <li>- Monday 19 June – Annual Meeting of JPCC</li> <li>- Sunday 10 September – Memorial Service</li> <li>- Monday 18 September</li> <li>- Monday 18 December</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>J:1216:17</b><br/><i>Correspondence</i></p>                             | <p>The correspondence received by Cllr Birstingl from Steyning Parish Church and the Parish of Beeding and Bramber with Botolphs was duly recorded as received</p>  |
| <p><b>J:1216:18</b><br/><i>Matters for information and future agendas</i></p> | <p>Agenda item <b>J:1216:14</b> to consider a policy regarding interment of non-parishioners in Botolphs Cemetery to be discussed at the next meeting.</p>  |

No further questions from the public were received and the meeting closed at 9.40pm.

The next meeting of the committee will be held at Beeding & Bramber Village Hall on Monday 20 March 2017 commencing at 7.00pm

**Minutes signed by:** ..... **Date:** .....