



## BOX PARISH COUNCIL

### **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CEMETERY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD BY ON 6<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023**

- 1. Present:** Councillors: H. Parker (Chair); A. Barton; B. Walton; T. Walton  
Mrs Carey (Clerk)
- 2. Apologies:** Cllrs M. Tye; S. Parker  
The apologies were accepted. In the absence of Cllr Tye the chair was taken by Cllr H. Parker
- 3. Absent:** Cllr J. Clifford
- 4. Public Question Time:** There were four members of the public present.

Janet Newsome and other members of the Jenks family spoke about the article in the Parish Magazine which states that the Council would be enforcing the Cemetery rules regarding flowers, mementos etc. She believed that these were new rules. She explained that hers was a large family with generations of relatives buried in Box Cemetery and asked how the Council expected all the floral tributes that they would like to bring on anniversaries could be put on the graves. The family also uses artificial tributes as these would not get eaten.

It was also stated that the family had an agreement with the Cemetery Contractors not to maintain the graves – the family are doing this.

Cllr Parker stated that whilst the Council wishes to be sensitive the rules had been in force for a long time and items were removed to prevent plastic and litter from blowing over the Cemetery. Cllr Barton commented that the Council has to have rules and to enforce them.

The family was asked to send details of the graves affected to the Clerk

- 5. Declaration of Interest relating to items on the Agenda:** Nil
- 6. Minutes:** The Minutes of the Meeting held 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were taken as read and were signed as being a true record
- 7. Matters Arising from the Minutes.**
  - a. Lodge Maintenance:**  
Replacement windows: To be considered with the budget
  - b. Chapel and Lodge roof:** Continue to monitor
  - c. Survey of top field:** No contact had been made with Geosphere. Cllr Tye had approached two other companies to carry out the ERT profiles but no replies had been received.
  - d. Establishment of Friends of Box Cemetery Group:** This is being pursued and Cllr Tye will speak to Alan Payne about prospective members
  - e. Online History of the Cemetery:** Alan Payne is liaising with Cllr Tye and the Clerk re the online history of the Cemetery. An article had been put into the Parish Magazine.
  - f. Stone trefoils on Chapel:** It had been agreed to discuss these further quotations with the budget setting.

- g. **Article in the Parish Magazine to explain some of the new rules; dogs on lead, removal of plastic wrapping on flowers and not using plastic flowers etc:** An article had been put into the Parish Magazine
- h. **Safety of headstones:** The Clerk and Cllr H. Parker had met with representatives from James Long to discuss the safety of some of the headstones. Quotations for the work had been received from James Long. It was agreed that the work to refix some of the headstones at a price of £15 + vat each should be carried out from this year's budget. The Committee will look at the headstones where there is an option to lay these down rather than repair to assess the impact this would have on the Cemetery if this option is chosen for a number of graves.  
One of the graves in memory of Arthur Stewart is of significant historic significance with a large bronze plaque and the cost to repair this would be £980 (option 1) or £720 (option 2) + vat  
A further £2000 will be put into the budget for next year.

**8. Cemetery Maintenance:**  
**Issues raised on the walk round:**

- a. **Front gates:** These need a coat of metal protective paint. This will be added to the Groundsmen's list of additional jobs.
- b. **Security camera:** Cllr Barton to check the card **Action: AB**
- c. **Access to top field:** There were trackmarks in the gap in the hedge between the new cemetery and the area to the left of the chapel. Cllr T. Walton agreed to speak to the tenant of top field about this
- d. **Spoil:** It was queried whether the spoil should be left on top of the adjoining grave but it was agreed that this was acceptable. This is covered by an additional paragraph in the draft Cemetery Guidelines.
- e. **Removal of plastic flowers etc:** It was agreed to ask The Shed to make some small markers to serve as notices, explaining that items will be removed by a specified date
- f. **Path in Secret Garden:** It was agreed to consider putting a dead hedge in order to divert visitors away from the area beneath the Scots Pine and to await results of the Ecological Survey before finalising the route of the path.
- g. **Hedges and Trees:** The Groundsmen to chip remaining laurel in Secret Garden and add to the existing path  
Clearing of wild clematis from trees and shrubs on the A4 border – to be carried out by the working party in February  
Coppicing of hazels - Cllr T. Walton to carry out **Action: TW**  
Reduction of Laurels on A4 border - carried out by working party in February  
Cutting back of Ash around Pictor monument – Daniel Part agreed to do this
- h. **Planter to go by path into top part of Cemetery:** Cllr T. Walton to do this **Action: TW**
- i. **Work to branch on Scots Pine;** The quote from Tree Parts Ltd in the sum of £480 + vat had been accepted but following advice from Daniel Part it was agreed to leave this work for the time being.

**9. Items for discussion:**

- a. **Burial Charges for the forthcoming year:** A comparison of charges had been made with other local Cemeteries.

It was **recommended** that the following increases be made for 2024/25

Single burial	-	Increase from £200 to £300
Ashes interment	-	Increase from £150 to £200
Headstone application	-	Increase from £125 to £150
Exclusive Rights of Burial	-	Increase from £200 to £300
Exclusive Rights – Ashes	-	Increase from £125 to £200

Prices for a non-parishioner will be double

It was **recommended** that the cost for the In Memorium Board application remains at £75 and the cost of an entry in the Book of Remembrance remains at £20 per line

- b. **Book of Remembrance – recent damage; repair and how to heat the ante-toom**  
When the Clerk went to change the Books over on 1<sup>st</sup> October it was found that the velvet at the bottom of the cabinet was saturated and the vellum spine on the Book had been badly damaged. It was established that the thermostat was not working and the heating had stopped. The thermostat had been replaced, Cllr H. Parker had hairdried the vellum and Cllr T. Walton has added two dehumidifier sachets.

Cllr Tye is going to take the book to George Bayntuns in Bath for a quote to repair the spine and advice on how to look after the book.

The Council will investigate options on how to heat the cabinet properly.

The Clerk had contacted the insurance company and a claim can be made for the cost of the repair less £250 excess

- c. **Rent for lease of adjoining field:**

It was **recommended** that the rental remains at £400 pa. Cllr T. Walton will speak to the tenant about replacing the stock fence  
**Action: TW**

- d. **Ecological Corridor in Cemetery:** When Daniel Part had visited the Cemetery to look at the broken bough on the Scots Pine he had found a unique Ecological Corridor of trees on the western boundary. He had drawn up a report which had been circulated. He recommended that the Wiltshire Council be approached with the proposal that Tree Preservation Orders are placed on all these eighteen trees to maintain this unique habitat and to protect them from any damage or loss from the proposed planning application for a solar park in the adjoining field. The trees are in the AoNB but not in a Conservation Area.

It is **recommended** that Melissa Turner be asked to carry out an Ecological Survey at a cost not exceeding £1000 and that the Council applies to Wiltshire Council for Tree Preservation Orders on all the trees. Daniel Park will deal with this at no cost to the Council.

An application for funding can be made to the Cotswold Conservation Board.

**Action: HP/TW**

- e. **New information Sheet on “Looking after your memorial”:** Draft guidelines had been drawn up and were discussed. These will accompany the Cemetery Rules.

It is **recommended** that the guidelines be accepted.

A notice will be put on the graves prior to any articles being removed.

It was agreed that safety checks on headstones only need to be carried out annual

- f. **Date for next Working Party:** This will be carried out on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 10.00 am

- g. **Date of next safety check of headstones:** Summer 2024

**10. Forward Plan and Risk Assessment:**

To be updated

**11. Correspondence:**

**Applications for memorials:** The following applications had been received

Franklin Memorials Ltd	-	Headstone	Tony Webb deceased
James Long Ltd	-	Additional inscription	Roy Wheeler deceased

**12. Items to be included in the budget:**

- £2000 in next year's budget for repairs to headstones
- £1000 for Ecological Survey on the Corridor

**13. Items of report and future agenda items:**

- a. **Issues raised at the Public Question Time:** To be put on the next Agenda
- b. **Green Burial:** Discuss an alternative way to mark the Green Burials
- c. **Dates of meetings:** Clerk to send dates of the Committee meetings to Tony Jones and invite him to join the meeting and the walkround

**14. Date of next meeting and walkround:**

Next meeting - 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 Walkround – Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January at 2.00 pm

*Meeting closed at 8.40 pm*

**Chair**