

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BURIAL GROUNDS AND PROPERTIES
COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 25TH OCTOBER 2016**

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

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.

11/16: Issues from Inspections of Burial Grounds:

a) Golford Cemetery:

The Chairman advised Members that he had visited Golford this morning together with the Clerks and the grounds contractors. There were a few issues, some tree work was needed; there was moss on the paths and some paths are cracked. The paths will be pressure washed and then repaired. A parishioner had complained about the strimming and we had met her and addressed her concerns. Another parishioner had asked the Clerk to pass on her compliments to the contractors as she thought the Cemetery was looking in good order. The bund needs clearing and this will be undertaken in the near future. Cllr. Bunyan asked whether any progress had been made on a woodland burial site. Cllr. Clifford confirmed that it is still on our wish list.

b) St. Dunstan's Churchyard:

The Chairman tabled the tree report undertaken by Discover Trees. All Members agreed it was very good report. The Clerk had made the necessary application to the TWBC Tree Officer and had invited quotes from three contractors. Cllr. Clifford had asked Cllr. Cook to make the PCC aware that quotes had been invited and there might be some disruption. Cllr. Hall referred to the magnolia and that it had been pruned quite recently. Cllr. Clifford read out the works necessary to put the magnolia back into good health. After a full discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Clifford to accept the quote from Treework in the sum of £16,420 excluding VAT, subject to the works being ratified by Dan Docker, Tree Officer. This was seconded by Cllr. Fairweather and agreed. Only two quotes were received and the second quote had come in at £26,765 which was substantially higher. Cllr. Swann reminded Members that Treework had carried out the work previously and had been recommended by the TWBC Tree Officer.

c) Sissinghurst Cemetery:

Cllr. Fairweather stated that the Cemetery is in good order and there were no issues to be raised. He was pleased to report that the entrance works had now been completed by the developers of the adjacent housing site.

d) Cranbrook & Sissinghurst War Memorials:

The Chairman reported that there were no issues to raise and he thanked Reflections who clean both the Cranbrook and Sissinghurst memorials, free of charge, prior to Remembrance Day.

12/16: Issues from Inspection of Properties:

a) Angley Cottage:

Cllr. Clifford reported that he had carried out an inspection and the cottage was in very good order in terms of decoration and the garden was landscaped. The tenants were to be congratulated. There was a damp patch in the sitting room which he had instructed Hurstway to address. Cllr. Bunyan suggested that the chimney liner may need to be removed as this could be adding to the problem. The Clerk read out the works suggested by the contractor to alleviate the problem. The issue of the chimney liner would be relayed to Hurstway.

b) Vestry Hall:

The Chairman stated that it had been pointed out to him that the main stairwell required re-decoration and he suggested that we should get estimates for decorating both the front and rear entrance areas in readiness for the next meeting. This was agreed.

c) Vestry Hall Cottage:

Cllr. Clifford referred to the survey carried out earlier this year and the requirements of the tenant's contract in that they are responsible for the internal decoration. There were some issues that are the responsibility of the Parish Council and a quote had been obtained for dealing with rising damp to the wall in the lounge (north side), there were two options – a modern radical option which would require listed building consent in the sum of £2,235 or a lesser invasive method which would be a repair in the sum of £1,145. To carry out the lime plaster repairs and decoration of the stair well would cost £795 and with regard to the condensation in the inner porch it had been recommended that two opening fanlights are placed on the second lock or the installation of vents in the glass. A budget quote would be £200. There had been a query whether the water pressure was adequate and it had been confirmed that this was adequate. A quote had been obtained for a new shower installation at the request of the tenant and this came in at £2,410. All sums excluding VAT. After a full discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Fairweather, seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed to accept the quotes in relation to the less invasive method for the rising damp, the lime plaster repairs and the ventilation in the inner porch. It was not agreed to undertake the installation of a new shower.

The windows in the Council Chamber required attention and a quote had been received in the sum of £600 to carry out the repairs. Cllr. Hall suggested that the Conservation Officer might be able to help with advice. It was proposed by Cllr. Clifford, seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed to accept the quote to carry out the repairs.

The Clerk informed Members that the Conservation Architect had been asked for advice regarding siting a defibrillator on the front of the Vestry Hall.

d) Information Centre:

The only issue which needed to be added onto the Five Year Plan was the sanding of the floor/replacement flooring.

13/16: Noticeboards and Shelters:

Cllr. Goodchild was not aware of any issues. Cllr. Bunyan mentioned that the price quoted for replacing the polycarbonate on the Sissinghurst Map had been prohibitive. It was agreed to inspect the millennium roundel to see if the wood needed oiling or varnishing.

14/16: Benches & Cycle Racks:

Cllr. Hall made the suggestion that if anyone donated a bench that we should adopt the National Trust idea of having an endowment for the future maintenance. A discussion took place but it was

generally agreed that this would not be appropriate. The amount set aside in the budget was to cover the installation of any new benches and the repair of existing benches.

15/16: BT Telephone Kiosks:

The Clerk informed Members that Cranbrook in Bloom had confirmed that they would be planning floral displays in the kiosks for next year. The new First Responders Group were also interested in putting a defibrillator in the Bakers Cross kiosk which is close to the Frythe Estate.

16/16: Budget & Five Year Plan:

The Five Year Plan was examined and commented on. Cllr. Bunyan suggested that the external painting of the Vestry Hall should be considered. It was last painted in 2004. With regard to the flooring in the Information Centre, Cllr. Hall suggested that TWBC might be asked to make a contribution. Cllr. Swann noted that the telephone kiosks were not included, this would be amended. Cllr. Clifford suggested that a tree report would be useful on the Sissinghurst Cemetery and he therefore proposed that we ask Discover Trees to undertake a report as soon as possible to identify any urgent work which might be required. This was seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed.

The Clerk brought forward an issue with regard to the Burials Regulations. Any new cremation tablets have to be installed onto a 24" x 24" slab which stops them from sinking. This would also be beneficial on the existing cremation tablets. It was agreed that the wording be amended to include "this regulation applies to existing tablets if they are removed for any reason."

A review of fees both in relation to Burials and Vestry Hall/Council Chamber and Addison Room was carried out. After a full debate it was proposed by Cllr. Goodchild, seconded by Cllr. Bunyan and agreed not to increase the fees for 2017 – 2018. The Vestry Hall Cottage rent was discussed, but Members were reminded that this is part of a package which includes their wages and would be looked at in the Policy & Resources budget. Angley Cottage rent was increased last year and is part of the Tomlin Murton Playing Field Trust. Cllr. Clifford reiterated his comments regarding the good condition of the Cottage when he undertook his inspection.

Cllr. Swann had prepared the budget in draft form for discussion by Members and the Budget sheets were circulated to members. Members fully discussed the budget figures put forward and amendments were made where necessary.

The Chairman then thanked Cllr. Swann for all his hard work in preparing the budget. Cllr. Bunyan proposed that the Burials and Properties Budget 2017/2018 as filed with these Minutes be agreed. This was seconded by Cllr. Goodchild and agreed.

17/16: Items for Information:

No items were raised.