

MEETING OF SHEFFORD AND CAMPTON JOINT BURIAL BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Board held via Zoom on Thursday 23rd January 2025 2pm.

Present: Cllr Pollard as Chair, Mackin for Shefford, Cllr Ash for Campton and Chicksands, Clerk for Campton and Chicksands, Tammy Medley, Admin assistant Checka Quinlan for Shefford.

01/25 APOLOGIES/ DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

Clerk for Shefford Francesca Fitch, Cllr Jez Perkins, Cllr Fensome.

02/25 ELECTION OF CHAIR:

Cllr Mackin proposed Cllr Pollard, seconded by Cllr Ash, Cllr Pollard accepted.

03/25 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING, MATTERS ARISING

The minutes 3rd October 2024 meeting were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting, proposed by Cllr Ash, seconded by Cllr Mackin, all agreed.

04/25 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:

None.

05/25 RIALTAS:

A new computer has been purchased for SE. We are currently awaiting dates from Rialtas to upload the Cemetery software onto this new computer. Due to both Clerks recovering from surgery, there has been no further progress on the inputting of cemetery data. However, SE's hours have been increased from 8 to 16 hours per week from 1st January 2025, and work is due to recommence on the inputting very shortly.

06/25 STAFFING:

Due to other commitments and recovering from further surgical procedures, the Clerks have only carried out one joint working day since the last committee meeting on 27th November 2024 (Full day)

07/25 BUDGET AND CEMETERY FEES:

Following a resolution at the last meeting (which was agreed by both Councils) for increasing the cemetery fee structure on an annual basis in line with the current RPI, approval was sought to increase the fees at the new reporting of the RPI @ 15th January 2025 (RPI is currently at 3.91% and was 3.6% @ November 2024) rounded up to the nearest full pound. Proposed by Cllr Ash, seconded by Cllr Pollard, all agreed.

08/25 FINANCE:

The bank balance on 4th January 2025 is £36,402.88 in credit.

The income and expenditure report for the nine months to 31 December 2024 is attached for review by the Committee, together with the variances analysis showing explanations for actual expenditure against budgeted costs. Please note that the income is down by £1.1k (across all income codes) compared to figures for the nine months to 31 December 2023.

The ICCM is offering the discounted price of £46.00 to purchase the publication – Essential Law for Cemetery and Crematorium Managers 2025 edition (the previous edition printed in 2021 has been

withdrawn from sale). Approval was sought from the Committee to purchase a copy of the publication for reference purposes. Proposed by Cllr Ash, seconded by Cllr Mackin, all agreed.

09/25 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE:

A local Memorial Mason, M Stafford, is willing to assist the Clerks/Admin Assistant to carry out topping testing of memorials at a fee of £100 per day (to be carried out at a weekend). This would include making safe of any memorials in situ (lying flat). Approval was sought from the Committee to engage M Stafford for 2 days work, which is hoped to cover the topple testing at the Campton Burial Ground + the Cemetery. This would not include the production of a formal written report. Proposed by Cllr Pollard, seconded by Cllr Ash, all agreed. Cllr Mackin requested that the clerks be updated with information regarding individual memorials that need repairing so that the details can be sent to grave owners. Cllr Mackin also requested that the clerks seek to fill the sunken graves and if necessary, notify the grave owners that items will be removed from the grave and stored in the Chapel whilst topping up takes place. He is concerned that the graves could be a health and safety issue and the JBB could be liable if someone trips or falls. TM will speak with FF.

Approval was sought from the Committee to continue to contract the grass cutting/grounds maintenance tasks for the Burial Ground + Cemetery to DJ Granger Grounds Maintenance Ltd and 2 Elms of Shefford Gardening Services respectively at the rates as per budgeted for the 2025/26 year. Proposed by Cllr Ash, seconded by Cllr Pollard, all agreed.

A quotation has been received for review by the Committee from 2 Elms of Shefford Gardening Services for the annual cutting of the hedges totalling £2,350. Proposed by Cllr Mackin, seconded by Cllr Ash

A quotation has been received for review by the Committee from 2 Elms of Shefford Gardening Services of £600 to carry out the edging of the grass around each ashes memorial plaque (using an edging iron). Proposed by Cllr Mackin, seconded by Cllr Ash

The water for the standpipe has been turned off at the mains to protect the standpipe tap from the frosts. Complaints have been received from the public about this action.

10/25 CAMPTON BURIAL GROUND:

The order has been raised to English Building and Restoration to carry out additional remedial works to the front perimeter wall (adjacent to Greenway) totalling £7,260. This work is scheduled to be carried out in April 2025.

The winter clearance works have been carried out as agreed at the previous meeting, including removal of green fly tipping for the safety of grass cutting operations and public access.

The fee for the architects drawing in support of the reregistering of the Campton Burial Ground in the ownership of Campton and Chicksands Parish Council and Shefford Town Council (the ownership is currently registered in the name of St Albans Diocese) has been paid. No further updates on the process have been received. Cllr Ash will meet TM at the church yard to confirm the drawing.

11/25 AOB

Cllr Ash thanked the Committee for the works to the wall in the Churchyard, Campton, residents are appreciative of the works to upkeep historical masonry.

12/25 NEXT MEETING

Thursday 17th April 2025, 2pm via Zoom.