

**A MEETING OF THE WIGTON BURIAL JOINT COMMITTEE WAS HELD ON**

**WEDNESDAY 15<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023 AT 7.00PM**

**PRESENT –**

Councillor Mary Clark (Acting Chairman)  
Councillor Mary Huntington  
Councillor Tony Huntington  
Councillor William Marrs  
Councillor Anne Jackson  
Councillor John Mattinson  
Councillor John Hamblin  
Councillor Chris Scott  
Councillor George Girvan

**WBJC/26/2023 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES & REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

NONE

**WBJC/27/2023 TO RECEIVE MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

Councillor Clark reiterated that all WBJC correspondence should also be sent to the clerks to Waverton and Woodside.

**RESOLVED**

The minutes of the WBJC meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were accepted as a true record.

**WBJC/28/2023 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS, MEMBERS AND OFFICERS TO GIVE NOTICE OF INTERESTS ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

NONE

**WBJC/29/2023 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

None

**WBJC/30/2023 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

To receive any representations from members of the public – Members of the public are invited to speak for a maximum of 5 minutes each. The maximum total time for public participation will be 10 minutes. At the close of this item, members of the public will no longer be permitted to address the Council Members unless invited to do so by the Chairman.

### **Agenda item 8 was moved to this section.**

Two residents attended the meeting to express their upset over the issues with the headstones being placed in a different formation at the cemetery. They revealed they had not been informed that the headstone would be placed at the foot of the grave instead of the head, prior to their family member being buried. The acting chairman conveyed the committee's apologies and explained that it was a miscommunication that had led to this incident as it had been a decision that was made several years ago, before the majority of the current committee members were part of the WBJC.

Members considered a solution, with Cllr Scott proposing to revert to the original formation for this current row of headstones. This was seconded by Cllr Girvan. Members voted with the **UNANIMOUS** decision to revert to the original formation.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the headstones will be placed at the head of the graves for this row. It was agreed that before changes were made in the future a robust policy would be created with all persons involved in the burial process being informed in advance. It was also agreed that the WBJC would be financially responsible for moving a headstone for a separate family. A letter will be sent to the two families involved, providing them with a formal apology. Further letters will be sent to the burial partners, informing them of the decision to revert to the previous approach to burials until further notice.

Cllr Scott agreed to contact the two families involved and provide them with an update.

#### **WBJC/31/2023 NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER**

#### **RESOLVED**

Councillor Scott was welcomed as the new committee member.

#### **WBJC/32/2023 ROLE OF THE CLERK**

Members discussed the role of the clerk, confirming it would be slightly different to the town clerk position. A list of responsibilities were read out by the acting chair, Cllr Clark, which members agreed to.

#### **RESOLVED**

That members and the WBJC clerk agreed to the roles and responsibilities. Cllrs Girvan and Marrs also requested the asset register so they could check for inaccuracies.

#### **WBJC/33/2023 2024/2025 GRAVE SPACES ON WEST WALL**

Members discussed a request to have three graves next to the west wall, where there is a dead tree stump. Some members expressed their concern over whether

this would be possible as removing the tree stump could disrupt the main cemetery wall which already has a slight 'belly'.

## **RESOLVED**

The clerk would arrange for a specialist dry stone waller to review the wall and the stump and report back to the WBJC with their comments and recommendations.

## **WBJC/34/2023 BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET**

Members reviewed the business plan and the budget for 2024/2025.

Cllr Girvan raised that the electoral figures received from his clerk were different so they would be sent to the WBJC to compare and amend. This would have no implication to the final budget, only a slight change in the precept request from each parish.

## **RESOLVED**

That all members approved the final business plan and budget for 2024/2025.

## **WBJC/35/2023 ACCESS PLANS AND PREPARATIONS**

Members discussed how they planned to proceed with the project to enhance and change the cemetery entrance, making it wheelchair accessible.

It was noted that due to the cost of the project, this would need to be tendered out to three contractors. A separate meeting will be held after Christmas to discuss the tendering process. It was also noted that different contractors would be encouraged to view the entrance area and submit a tender based on their ideas and plan.

Members asked if there were any other grants or funding available for this project, members were advised that Cllr Lynch, Wigton's Cumberland representative may have a pot of money that could be accessed. **ACTION** – Clerk to contact Cllr Lynch and to research any other sources of funding.

## **WBJC/36/2023 CHAIR'S REPORT**

The chair asked what the situation was in relation to the VAT on the cemetery house. It was noted it was in relation to the Your Move administration charges which was a reclaimable expense that has not yet been recovered. This is the same situation as the VAT that can be reclaimed for the burial sales' administration fees. The RFO is aware of the situation and is working on resolving the current and previous financial years.

Meeting Closed – 8:45pm

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023