

Embleton Joint Burial Committee

Minutes

of the Meeting held in the Ladies Room at the Creighton Hall, Embleton on
Monday 5th December 2016 at 6pm

Present: Bryn Owen; Chair (BO), Neville Fawcett; Vice Chair (NF), Terry Howells (TH), Gordon Coxon (GC), Craig Silk (CS), Derek Gerrard (DG), Elizabeth Pearson (EP)
Clerk: Geoff Newcombe

707. Apologies for absence

Bob Foster-Smith; Craig Silk was the alternative representative from Newton PC.

708. Declarations of Interest

None declared

709. Confirmation of the minutes of the last meetings held 10th October 2016

The minutes were agreed and signed off as a true record.

Proposer: Derek Gerrard

Seconder: Neville Fawcett

Unanimous

710. Matters arising

711. Maintenance of Cemetery

- Trial eco-management scheme – leaving areas of grass as meadow. Northumberland Wildlife Trust update – Thanks sent to Steve Lowe of NWT who responded with his thanks for the interest and disappointment that scheme not to be implemented.
- Headstone Survey Progress Update – Verbal report – BFS was not available therefore item held over until next meeting.
- BO presented a draft check sheet that members could use on Cemetery visits in future to ensure that maintenance standards were meeting expectations.
- CS raised the issue of quality of grave preparation and attendance at the interment of his father. Photographs of caterpillar tracks from a digger were shown as extensive between graves and no artificial grass was used to dress the graveside during the funeral ceremony. Members offered their sincere apologies to Mr Silk for the distress caused and asked the clerk to write to the caretaker outlining the items of complaint and asking for a response.

712. Contract Tender Task Force

- Scoping Meeting report – (BO & GN) NF, BFS, DG, TH, GC, BO, GN met on 20/10/16, agreed terms, items and format of tender. Tender invitation to be notified to current contractor, placed on notice boards and verbally advertised. BO & GN to meet with NCC to help scope contract; also met local undertaker

to aid scoping Tender notification to ask for interest and 4 tender documents were requested; to be returned by 28th Nov 2016.

Tender evaluation - (BO & GN) NF, DG, TH, EP, BO, GN met on 2/12/16. Two tenders were received within date. Opened and evaluated unmarked; both tenders covered all the items on the tender schedule, therefore the cheaper of the two tenders was proposed as recommended for acceptance by TH, seconded by NF and unanimously accepted. Recommendation to be presented to EJBC at 5/12/16 meeting.

Members were minded to accept the lower tender as recommended by the Task Force on receipt of two satisfactory references and confirmation at the subsequent EJBC meeting. A meeting would then be sought for the Task Force to meet the new contractor.

The clerk was asked by the meeting to write to the C Cllr, Kate Cairns, and ask her to investigate why NCC had increased their tender price for cutting the grass from £87 per cut in 2014 to £447 per cut in 2016.

713. Long Term Business Plan for Cemetery/House

Consultation with Parish Council's – BO Progress report – In view of the new maintenance contract for next financial year it was proposed that an advisory letter be sent to all Parish Councillors regarding the EJBC position on the current tenancy of the Cemetery House not being linked to the maintenance contract (copy attached).

Proposer: Terry Howell

Secunder: Neville Fawcett

Unanimous

714. Financial.

- Business Rating – Informative; as previous draft valuation £600; now valuation Office and NCC have the cemetery at the correct location/post code. EJBC is exempt from payment.
- Fixed Business telephone line cancellation progress – A Further complaint was made to the BT Resolutions Manager dealing with Ombudsman. A letter of apology was received for further letters and compensation being sent to wrong persons. Now 2 x cheques being sent as further compensation - £5.69 (Refund), £10.00 (Compensation for re-direction).
- Precept/budget 2017/18 draft – New maintenance contract does not alter the projected budget approved at the October 2016 meeting; members requested the clerk to inform the constituent PC clerks that no precept would be required for the 2017/18 financial year.

Bank Balance £8,091.31 @ 18/10/2016

Received since 10/10/2016

- Caretaker Rent x 2 (November & December) - £450.00
- Inscription-Plot 1058b - £75.00
- Inscription-Plot 1103b - £75.00
- Interment-Plot 944b (Burial £600, Grave digging £200) - £800.00
- BT Refund - Business line cancellation (£5.69 Refund, £10.00 Compensation for re-direction) - £15.69

Spent since 10/10/2016

- Clerk (pay & expenses) - £361.99
- HMRC (PAYE) - £81.80
- Caretaker Contract Payment (£345) x 2 - (November & December) – £ 690.00
- Caretaker (Interment & Admin Plot 96) - £180.00
- Creighton Hall - £26.25
- NCC Water Charges (£13.73) x 2 (October & November) - £ 27.46
- Bathroom repairs - £ 36.00

Cheques Required

- Clerk (pay & expenses) - £285.37
- HMRC (PAYE) – £66.80
- Caretaker (Interment & Admin Plot 944b) - £180.00
- D Robertson rent (2015 & 2016 @ £2yr) - £4.00
- Creighton Hall (Task Force 2/12/16; £13.75, EJBC 5/12/16; £13.75) - £27.50

Proposer: Neville Fawcett
 Seconder: Gordon Coxon
 Unanimous

715. Items for Next Agenda

Charges for 2017/18

716. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday 6th February 2017 @ 6pm.