

# Embleton Joint Burial Committee

**Meeting of Chairs of Craster, Embleton and Newton by the Sea PC's with NALC to discuss status and standing orders; held in The Creighton Hall, Embleton on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 2:30pm.**

**Present:** Neville Fawcett (EJBC), Terry Howells (EPC), Bryn Owen (CPC), John Roper (NPC), David Francis (NALC)

**Clerk:** Geoff Newcombe (EJBC), Melissa Gilroy (Clerk EPC)

**In Attendance:** Kate Cairns (NPC), Gordon Coxon (EPC), Derek Gerrard (NPC), Elizabeth Pearson (CPC), David Morgan (EPC), Bob Foster-Smith (NPC)

## Notes of Meeting

### 1. Apologies

None received.

### 2. Nominate Chair

It was agreed that David Francis NALC secretary should lead the discussion.

### 3. The parish councils seek professional advice on the terms of reference and standing orders of the EJBC in light of current guidance and best practice

#### General questions and answers:-

Copies of the minutes of the Joint meetings between Craster, Embleton and Newton by the Sea to discuss the EJBC with NALC on 1st May 2014 and 6th October 2014 were made available to the meeting. It was noted that Resolution 2 of the 6<sup>th</sup> October minutes had been adopted by all three Parish Council's. The meetings of 1<sup>st</sup> May and 6<sup>th</sup> October were reviewed by the NALC Secretary.

NALC pointed out that due to the change in the financial regulations the 2014/15 audit would now be undertaken as part of the host PC accounts; i.e. Embleton PC.

NALC confirmed that it was acceptable to have a separate bank account for EJBC (for practical purposes), but that audit will be included as part of EPC audit.

Terms of Reference (TOR); today's meeting has no power to make a decision but can agree a form of words to go back to the three PC's for approval. The proposed TOR for EJBC is based on the version provided by NALC following the previous meetings, however some paragraphs have minor differences as suggested by each PC (comparative table of versions supplied). These will be discussed and agreed following today's advice from the NALC Secretary. EPC should be satisfied that financial and legal protective measures are sufficient and that these principles should be applied to improving contract consultation procedures.

The NALC secretary pointed out the requirement for Transparency for council's with a <£25K budget which will supersede the audit.

The following specific comments were made on the proposed TOR:

Paragraph No:

1 Add EPC as host Parish Council;

2 OK

3 OK

4 OK however NPC felt stronger safeguards were needed. NALC suggested sub-para. 10(ii) was OK but other safeguards could be added in more appropriate later paragraphs as necessary. NALC stated that reference to cremation was inconsequential to EJBC.

5 Nominations to represent each PC should be made at the Annual Meeting of each PC and nominees minuted.

NALC commented that there is local discretion as to the composition (not linked to demographics) of EJBC however in case of disagreement the Principal Local Authority (NCC) can be called in to arbitrate composition and TOR of committee. Members decided to leave the composition at 2,3,2 members as shown in proposal but to add at Paragraph 13 the need to review every 4 years. NALC Secretary commented that non PC members are not normally eligible to be EJBC members.

6 OK

7 OK

8 NALC said that the rules should be compatible with those of the host PC (EPC) and that a majority vote should stand as per host PC.

Members wanted to know how to proceed on consultations between formal meetings; NALC Secretary said that he would an example protocol for dealing with this process.

NALC Secretary said that the EPC Clerk should check that the EPC SO's cover all the EJBC functions.

9 Members agreed to adopt NPC's recommendation that a substitute delegate with voting powers be allowed to attend a meeting in the absence of the nominee; however members also suggested that this should be limited to one meeting only to prevent blocking/filibustering the committee. If a nominee was not available for the subsequent meeting it would be adjourned with an immediate reconvene date specified.

10 CPC Chair stated that previous enquiries had found that each PC was jointly and severally responsible for public liability; Clerk to check minutes and with insurers.

Clerk to check if the above situation causes duplication of insurance and if there is any opportunity for cost saving.

11 Members agreed to adopt version proposed by CPC.

Cemetery land is currently registered to EJBC; NALC Secretary suggested that it would be desirable to register the land to one PC. This is not an urgent task but should be on the To Do list.

12 Members agreed to adopt the version proposed by NPC. Clerk to check that Clerk Job Description covers delegation action and there should be a fall-back position for the Chair to be able to take action in the Clerk's absence.

13 OK

14 OK

Audit Advice from NALC Secretary:

EJBC can run its own accounts;  
Year-end accounts to be integrated into EPC accounts;  
Transparency Regulations. Move accounts onto EPC website and check with regulations that all required information is displayed/available.  
NALC is running a series of Transparency training sessions at various venues around the County over the next couple of weeks that members and officers are welcome to attend.

### Notes

These meeting notes should be read in conjunction with the TOR Comparative Table and the proposed agreed version of the TOR (attached)

CPC = Craster Parish Council

EPC = Embleton Parish Council

NPC = Newton by the Sea Parish Council

NALC = Northumberland Association of Local Councils

TOR = Terms of Reference

PC = Parish Council