

**GREAT CORNARD PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Meeting of the **BURIAL AUTHORITY** of Great Cornard Parish Council

held at The Stevenson Centre on Monday 12th June 2023

**PRESENT** Councillors Cllr Tom Keane **Chairman**

Cllr Marjorie Bark Cllr Tony Bavington

Cllr Sharon Bowman Cllr Jane Brooker

Cllr Melanie Keane Cllr Stewart Sheridan

Cllr Pamela White Cllr Colin Wright

Cllr David Young

Council Manager Mrs N Tamlyn

Council Administrator Miss E Skuce

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Kevin Graham, Jane Wakeman and Judith Wilson.

1. **To confirm Minutes of the Burial Authority meeting held on MONDAY 15th May 2023**

Cllr Bavington stated that he had asked the Council Manager to produce another set of the Minutes from the Burial Authority meeting held on 15th May 2023 wherein all Members are now referred to as ‘Cllr’ and by their preferred first name and surname. Members agreed that this was the most sensible way to describe Members in a non-gender specific way and **AGREED** that all Minutes should be produced in this format from this point forward.

Members **AGREED** that the Minutes of the Burial Authority meeting held on Monday 15th May 2023 are confirmed and signed as a correct record.

1. **To consider the Items BRought Forward List**

Members **NOTED** the Items Brought Forward List.

1. **TO RECEIVE THE NOTES FROM THE CEMETERY WORKING PARTY MEETING HELD ON 1ST JUNE 2023**

Members reviewed the Notes from the Cemetery Working Party meeting held on 1st June 2023 **(see Appendix A).**

A Member sought clarification on item 2 of the notes in relation to the possible wild flower/butterfly garden at the old Laurel Hedge area. The recommendation was not clear in that the area was due to be cleared but then the Cornard Environment and Wildlife Group were to submit a plan to manage any wild flower/butterfly area.

Cllr Bark explained that a decision on the future of the area could not be made at the meeting on the 1st June 2023 because the Cornard Environment and Wildlife Group had not submitted any form of plan to manage the area. It was therefore recommended that pending a plan being submitted, the area is strimmed and kept tidy to deter dumping of waste etc.

Cllr Wright, who is the Chairman of the Cornard Environment and Wildlife Group, stated that the group had considered putting forward a plan to manage the site as a wildlife area but given the history of asbestos found on the site, the group would now not be willing to take on the management.

The Council Manager clarified that a small amount of asbestos containing items were professionally removed following their discovery at the time of the Laurel Hedge being removed. The specialist company had advised that if the land were to be used for burial space in the future, then care would need to be taken when digging any further down than shovel level.

Members **AGREED** with the recommendation to strim the area back and keep it tidy for the time being.

In relation to item 3, Members felt that dealing with issues on a case by case basis could prove expensive and that a blanket policy might be more cost effective. It was **AGREED** for the Council Manager to obtain clear advice from a local stonemason, as per the recommendation in the Report, and also from the ICCM (Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management), and report back to the Working Party.

In relation to item 4, Members **AGREED** to the recommendation that a new litter bin should be purchased and installed along the central avenue next to the water tap.

The Council Manager will investigate costs of a new litter bin and report back to the Council.

1. **INTERMENTS**

**NONE**

**Meeting closed at 8:17pm**

**Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Chairman Cllr Tom Keane**

**APPENDIX A**

**Notes from the Cemetery Working Party meeting held on Thursday 1st June 2023 at 11:00am**

Present: Councillor Tom Keane

 Councillor Mrs Marjorie Bark

 Councillor Stewart Sheridan

 Councillor Colin Wright

 Councillor David Young

 Council Manager Mrs N Tamlyn

 Council Administrator Miss E Skuce

1. **Turning Area**

Members had been provided with copies of Report F14 (Appendix A), presented to the Burial Authority in February 2023, in relation to options for a potential new turning area to the top right hand corner of the Cemetery. Members considered both the ‘grasscrete’ and ‘plastic paver grids’ options and felt that ‘grasscrete’ (a continuation of what is already along the central avenue and to the left, although slightly different in design/appearance as the original paving is no longer available) was the best option and for the Council to pursue quotes on that basis. Members discussed how far round to the right the turning area should go and it was agreed that two quotations should be sought; one for a minimum length (in line with the back of row D and one for a maximum length (in line with the back of row E).

1. **Old Laurel hedge area at the top left corner of the Cemetery**

Members were aware that this area had been cleared of its large Laurel hedge and had been left un-tended since then. The area had been suggested as a possible wildflower/butterfly garden and Members were asked to consider whether this may be detrimental to the area’s use as future burial space.

Members were concerned that if protected species were present, or moved in following the creation of a wildlife area then this would create problems in the future if the space was needed for burials. Given the lack of any alternative land in Great Cornard for future burials, the Council would need to maximise the burial space it had.

A Member was in support of the wildflower/butterfly garden and thought that the area would not be used for burials in the future.

A Member highlighted that a wildlife area could not just be created and left; it would need to be cordoned off, signage put in place, possible designation and a management plan. Also that it would be easier to find alternative land for a wildlife area than it would for burial space.

It was noted that the Cornard Environment and Wildlife Group had expressed an interest in managing the area but had not yet put forward a proposal.

Members agreed to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the area be strimmed and cleared back to keep it tidy and deter the dumping of rubbish and other Cemetery waste. This would be pending the Cornard Environment and Wildlife Group submitting a plan to manage the area, which could then be considered at a future meeting of the Burial Authority.

1. **Trees along the central avenue**

The Council Manager highlighted some of the large root systems that had become problematic along the central avenue; some of which had started growing through graves and causing them to move. A family member of one of the graves had come into the Council office to show photos of the grave being pushed up and the roots starting to surface between the grave and the one next to it. The family member had asked the Council what their plan was for dealing with matters such as this.

Members felt that a case by case basis was the best way of dealing with the issues and agreed to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Council Manager seek the advice of a local stonemason, Luxstones, who had assisted the Council in the past with leaning/moving gravestones at the Churchyard. The outcome of investigations with the stonemason would be presented to a future meeting of the Burial Authority.

1. **Litter bins**

The Council had received a request from a family member for a litter bin to be placed further up the central avenue to assist them when attending family graves. Members were asked to consider the locations of existing bins within the Cemetery and whether it was felt that one could be moved to the central avenue or whether a new litter bin could be purchased.

It was agreed that a new litter bin should be purchased, provided it was either the same as those already there or one appropriate for the area.

It was agreed to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it purchases a new litter bin to be installed along the central avenue next to the tap. Funds would come from the Cemetery Budget as the bin would be emptied by the Community Wardens.