

Minutes of meeting of Rothbury Joint Burial Committee held on Tuesday 11th October 2021 commencing at 730pm in the Dovecote Room, Jubilee Institute

Those Present: Cllr Mrs Dawson (Chairman)	-	Rothbury Parish Council
Cllr Sutton	-	Rothbury Parish Council
Cllr Devlin	-	Rothbury Parish Council
Cllr Famelton	-	Hollinhill Parish Council
Cllr Mrs Dunn	-	Whitton & Tosson Parish Council
Cllr Webb	-	Thropton Parish Council
C Miller	-	Clerk

2021/47 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2021/48 Declaration of Members Interests

There were no Declaration of Members Interests.

2021/49 Minutes of previous meeting held 10th August 2021

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting held 10th August 2021 be accepted as a true record.

2021/50 Cemetery Lodge and grounds

2021/50/01 To receive update on proposals regarding diverting the stream, to enable the current extension land at the burial ground to be utilised for burials

Rothbury Parish Council had met with Northumberland Estates to discuss the proposal, with Estates to advise in due course if the option to divert the stream would be possible.

2021/50/02 To approve new sink and mixer taps for cemetery lodge

It was resolved the JBC were in agreement to installation of a new sink and mixer taps at the cemetery lodge, at an approximate cost for materials of £120-£150, with Cllr J Sutton to fit free of charge. Rothbury Parish Council to consider the request at their meeting 13/10/21.

2021/51 Cemetery Staffing and staff facilities

2021/51/01 To receive update on burial ground clearance works

At the present time, leaf clearance works were being actioned. The tree inspection had been carried out with report awaited, and it was anticipated there would be one tree requiring urgent removal.

2021/51/02 To receive update on improvements to sheds

Quotations were still awaited for replacement doors, with two contractors to provide prices, however at the present time, there were problems with lead-in time for materials.

2021/51/03 To receive update on staff training requirements

On-site training for two cemetery personnel had been organised for March 2022, the earliest date possible.

2021/52 Finance

2021/52/01 To note payments from 1st August to 30th September 2021

Payments were noted.

2021/52/02 To receive the most recent financial accounts

The most recent financial accounts were accepted as a true record.

2021/52/03 To receive update on purchase of mini digger for grave preparation

Cllr J Sutton had contacted several companies with varying prices received for new and secondhand machinery. A company from Leeds had quoted £6650, including VAT, plus delivery charge, for a new Japanese, diesel model, which Rothbury Parish Council would consider at their meeting 13/10/21.

2021/53 To receive update on the following matter raised in public interest report year ending 31/3/17
2021/53/01 Joint Committees: The possibility of Thropton, Whitton & Tosson, Hesleyhurst and Hollinghill Parish Council's being able to contribute an annual fee to Rothbury Parish Council who would then take on full responsibility of the cemetery. To receive queries from Hesleyhurst Parish Council regarding the proposed dissolution, as follows:

Since the agenda for the meeting had been posted, Whitton & Tosson Parish Council had also submitted queries.

A discussion followed regarding individual Parish Council's cemetery cost contributions – however they could not be compared to Longramlington Joint Burial Committee due to their minimal outgoings of £1700/annum.

Clerk had been advised a fairer way to work out the individual Parish Council's contributions was by number of electors, as opposed to the Council Tax base system, however the figures produced had led to three of the RJBC parishes paying more precept – including Hesleyhurst – with three paying less precept.

A Parish Council who left the Burial Committee would be entitled to a share of the assets, however an alternative would be to allow their parishioners parish resident burial fees for a set number of years. Advice Clerk received had indicated non-resident fees in perpetuity would not be appropriate

It was agreed the matter of dissolution would not be possible before the budget/precepts for 2022-2023 were confirmed, as the County Council were yet to advise how the anomaly with Snitter parish could be resolved, and no timescale was available for resolution of this.

The assets were currently held in the name of four trustees, which is permissible, however it would be advisable to have these put into the name of the Parish Council(s).

There were differing opinions as to whether Burial Committees could be dissolved, although a Parish Council can leave a JBC, public consultation should be carried out to ascertain the electorate view.

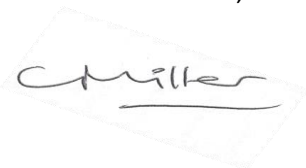
It was agreed to take no further action on the matter of dissolution until the County Council had advised how the Snitter anomaly could be resolved, and the external audit reports for 2018, 19, 20 & 21 were received, which were to contain issues relating to the RJBC. On receipt of this information, the Joint Burial Committee would formally contact each constituent parish to advise on options.

2021/54 To receive Interim External Audit Report 2020-2021, as follows:

We are unable to complete our review work on the AGAR and supporting documentation as a result of correspondence received in relation to 2020/21 and/or prior years. Once we have finalised our review and completed any additional work arising from that correspondence, a final report will be provided with the certificate of completion detailing any qualifications and 'other' matters.

2021/55 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of Rothbury Joint Burial Committee will be held on Monday 13th December commencing 730pm in the Dovecote Room, Jubilee Institute.



Claire Miller
Clerk to Joint Burial Committee

The meeting closed at 8pm.