

# *Devizes*

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## *& Roundway*

### *Joint Burial Committee*

Town Hall  
St. John's Street  
Devizes  
Wiltshire SN10 1BN

Clerk: Sarah Todhunter  
Tel: 01380 722160  
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## **MEETING**

Date: Thursday, 4 September 2008  
Time: **Promptly at 7pm**  
Venue: Council Chamber, Town Hall, St John's Street, Devizes  
Enquiries: Town Hall - 01380 722160

### MEMBERS

#### Devizes Town Council:

The Town Mayor: Councillor Mrs Burton  
Councillors: Gudgeon  
Leighton  
Parsons  
Mrs Evans  
A R Taylor  
Nash

#### Roundway Parish Council:

Councillors: Booth  
Callow  
Miss von Berg  
Stevens CBE

## **AGENDA**

### **1. MINUTES**

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the meetings held on the 6 June 2008, which have been circulated with the agenda.

### **4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

### **5. DISCLOSURE(S) OF INTEREST**

To receive any disclosures by a Councillor(s) and/or Officers in matters to be considered at this meeting in accordance with the provisions of Sections 94 or 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the National Code of Local Government Conduct.

**6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

At the Chairman's discretion, members of the public attending the meeting will be allowed to ask questions, make a statement or address the

Committee upon a matter of concern, which is relevant to the Committee. A time limit of 5 minutes per person will be permitted, but this may be extended at the Chairman's discretion and a maximum period of 20 minutes has been allocated by the Committee for this item of business.

**7. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

Schedule of Payments: Since the last meeting accounts have been paid details of which will be tabled at the meeting.

**8. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – ADJUSTMENT TO ANNUAL STATEMENT**

The external auditor, Mazars LLP, has requested that the total receipts for the 2007/2008 Annual Return (box 3 - total receipts less precept) be amended to exclude ear marked reserve movements for the financial year. The revised Annual Return (doc 8/1) is attached for member's information.

This has now been completed and, as requested, has been countersigned by the Chairman and Clerk (RFO). The balance sheet presented at the previous meeting remains unchanged.

**9. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – ONGOING WORKS IN DEVIZES CEMETERY**

**Chapel Redecoration** – quotations have been received for this work, however, the project has been hampered by the resignation of the Direct Services Manager and the summer holiday period.

**Secondary Security Gates** – at its meeting on 13 March 2008 the committee agreed that

*Manually operated wooden secondary gates,  
secured with Radar locks be installed to allow  
access into the cemetery*

This project is being progressed, although there are some technical difficulties with the optimum location. It is hoped that these can be resolved and this option pursued to establish whether it is effective.

**Cemetery Railings** – this work has been completed.

**Cemetery Open Day** – at its meeting on 12 March 2008 the committee agreed that this would take place following the decoration of the Chapel. As the redecoration project has not been able to be progressed, it is likely that the Open Day will take place in the spring.

**Restoration of the Hemington Memorial** – this work has been completed.

**Genealogy Search Facility** – this project is currently being progressed.

**10. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – LAND ADJACENT TO DEVIZES CEMETERY**

The landowners, Merchant Venturers, have levelled the area of land adjacent to Devizes Cemetery that was being used as a BMX track.

At the same time, the fence, belonging to the Joint Burial Committee has been repaired.

At the time of writing there have been no incidents of antisocial behaviour.

It was regrettable that such action had to be taken, however, because of the damage being caused to the Cemetery and to the area of land itself, the landowners decided that there was no alternative.

**11. REPORT FOR DECISION – COMPLAINT REFERENCE WILDLIFE ACTIVITY IN THE CEMETERY**

**Recommendation**

Members are recommended to consider two complaints from owners of cemetery graves and decided how they wish to respond.

**Purpose of the Report**

Officers received a verbal complaint on the 18 July from Mrs Stiles and a written complaint from Mr Gillett on the 23 July (unrelated), concerning flowers being eaten/ destroyed by wildlife in the Cemetery and then lady in question thought that the presence of a peacock might have something to do with it. Officers responded to both complainants, explaining that although it was regrettable the flowers on their grave had been eaten by wildlife, the location of the cemetery on the edge of farmland left it vulnerable to this sort of attack.

**Background**

The complainant's also referred to the lack of suitable fencing to preclude deer and other wildlife from entering at will.

Existing fencing is not designed to preclude all wildlife and animals such as deer can easily jump the current fencing or walk in at the exposed points that adjoin the surrounding countryside. Rabbits and other forms of burrowing animals can easily burrow under fencing unless it is buried to a suitable depth.

It is officers understanding that at no time have the Roundway and Joint Burial had a policy of zero wildlife in the Cemetery and therefore from time to time it is likely that wildlife may enter the land and cause a nuisance.

This matter was considered at the meeting of 20 October 2005 and at that time it was decided not to improve or install suitable fencing to exclude wildlife from the cemetery.

Preliminary enquiries have been made with regard to finding the owner of the peacock but so far officers do not have that information and it is believed that it just walks in through the main entrance. To date there have been no other complaints regarding the peacocks' behaviour nor has it been observed eating or destroying flowers anywhere.

### **Options Considered**

The committee will need to decide if they wish to improve the fence that surrounds the cemetery so that wildlife is excluded and decide if they wish officers to make extensive enquiries into finding the peacock owner or contact the animal welfare organisations to re-home it.

### **Implications & Risks**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

To secure the complete cemetery site deer proof fencing will need to be erected around the entire perimeter. This will have a very large cost implication which officers expect to be in excess of the current general reserve. If this committee is minded to secure the site from deer officers will obtain suitable quotations.

#### **Legal Implications and Legislative Powers**

Officers are not aware of any legal implications with regard to the fence but the removal of the peacock may be an issue with wildlife authorities.

#### **Environmental Implications**

The cemetery is located in a rural location neighbouring open countryside.

#### **Risk Assessment**

There is no guarantee that a complete perimeter fence will exclude wildlife as the main gate has to be open to allow visitors access and the cost in relation to the problem will be prohibitively expensive

#### **Crime and Disorder**

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

## **12. QUESTION TIME**

Members will be allowed a short period in which to put questions on matters of concern to the Committee, which are not contained in the report of matters formally considered by the Committee at this meeting.

The question may be answered at the meeting or may be referred back to the Committee at a later date. The question may not be the subject of any further debate.

CLERK TO THE JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE