

Devizes

& Roundway Joint Burial Committee

Town Hall
St. John's Street
Devizes
Wiltshire SN10 1BN
Clerk: Mrs Sarah Todhunter

Clerk: Sarah Todhunter
Tel: 01380 722160
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MEETING

Date: Thursday, **18 September 2014**

Time: **MEET AT THE CEMETERY GATES AT 6.15PM**

Venue: Council Chamber, Town Hall, St John's Street, Devizes

Enquiries: Town Hall - 01380 722160

MEMBERS

Devizes Town Council:

Councillors: Mrs Burton
Mrs Bridewell
Mrs Evans
Giraud-Saunders
Nash
Parker
Wooldridge

Roundway Parish Council:

Councillors: Callow
Stevens
Miss Von Berg
Batchelor

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the meetings held on the 5 June 2014, which have been circulated with the agenda.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. FINANCIAL MATTERS

Schedule of Payments: Since the last meeting accounts to £80,705.42 (net) have been paid (Doc 5/1).

6. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2013 – 2014

Members of the Committee will recollect that at the meeting of the committee held on 5 June 2014, members approved accounts for the year ended 31 March 2014.

The Annual Return for the financial year along with supplementary documents was sent to Grant Thornton UK LLP on 6 June 2014. The notice of satisfactory conclusion of the Audit was received from the auditors on 5 August 2014.

The requisite notice of conclusion of the audit has been placed on the Devizes Town Council and Roundway Parish Council notice boards.

7. REPORT FOR DECISION – SERVICES LEVEL STANDARD

Recommendation

That the Committee reviews and agrees the service level standard for the running of Devizes Cemetery.

Purpose of the Report

To agree the service level standard for the financial year 2015/16.

Background

Some years ago it was agreed that a scheduled setting out the level of service which the Town Council provides to run Devizes Cemetery should be compiled and this document would set out the cost of each of those tasks.

Officers have reviewed the schedule for this year, which is in line with with the current year, a copy for members review is issued alongside. In terms of costs, there is little fluctuation on last year as the main cost, salaries, have been again frozen for the current year.

Options Considered

The committee needs to decide if they accept the proposed Services Level Standards as set out.

Implications & Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

The financial implications are set out in the schedules.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives the committee ancillary powers which allows it to carry out anything which is incidental to its main power which in this case is The Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9 and 10 give both Roundway Parish Council and Devizes Town Council the power to provide and maintain cemeteries.

Environmental Implications

Officers are not aware of any environmental implication associated with this decision.

Risk Assessment

Not agreeing a Services Level Standard will leave the Burial Committee vulnerable to poor maintenance, and unknown maintenance charges.

Crime and Disorder

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

8. REPORT FOR DECISION - CEMETERY COST SPLIT 2015/2016

Recommendation

That the Committee agree the split for the cost of running the cemetery between Devizes Town Council and Roundway Parish Council.

Purpose of the Report

To set the split for charges for financial year 2015/2016.

Background

It is agreed that the split for cemetery costs should be apportioned on the basis of the percentage of the number of council tax dwellings in each parish as a % of the total combined number.

As at the 21 July the number of dwellings provided by Wiltshire Council was as follows:

Ward	Council Tax Dwellings	Percentage
Devizes Total	5787	71.4%
Roundway Total	2319	28.6%
Total Dwellings	8106	100.0%

Options Considered

The committee are required to decide if they agree the above figures as percentage split for the cost of running the cemetery.

Implications & Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

The financial implication impact is on the constituent councils rather than the burial committee.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

The way in which the Burial Authority splits the costs of running the cemetery is ancillary to The Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1970 s1.

Environmental Implications

Officers are unaware of any environmental implications associated with this decision.

Risk Assessment

Officers are unaware of any risk implications associated with this decision.

Crime and Disorder

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

9. REPORT FOR DECISION – FEE AND CHARGES FOR 2015/16

Recommendation

That the committee agrees the fees and charges for financial year 2015/2016.

Purpose of the Report

To set the burials committees fees and charges for 2015/2016.

Background

Each year at the meeting the committee sets the fees and charges for the following years.

Attached to the agenda is a copy of the proposed fees and charges for financial year 2015/16, Officers have based the increase on 2% which is lower than the rate of the retail price index.

Options Considered

The committee needs to decide if they wish it agree the fees and charges as set out by officers or agree their own pricing structure.

Implications & Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

The income generating potential for the cemetery has an impact on the amount of each of the parent authorities has to pay towards the running of the cemetery.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

The Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9 and 10 give both Roundway Parish Council and Devizes Town Council the power to provide and maintain cemeteries

Environmental Implications

Officers are not aware on any environmental implications associated with the decision

Risk Assessment

Officers are not aware on any risk implications associated with the recommendation as set out. Should the committee decided to alter the fees and charged as set out, this could lead to a shortfall in income.

Crime and Disorder

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

10. REPORT FOR DECISION - ADOPTION OF DRAFT ESTIMATES FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2015 – 2016

Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to consider the draft estimates and agree a budget for the financial year 2015-16.

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to set the burial authorities budgets for 2015-16.

Background

To help members with the decision, officers have set out a written commentary on individual cost headings. This year officers have made some significant efforts to control costs.

EXPENDITURE

Direct Operational Costs

The committee will have agreed at this meeting the operational costs associated with the provision of direct labour at the cemetery based on the agreed standard of service. These figures are included in the estimates. The 0.3% increase relates to a 1% increase in salaries in the current year.

Administration Costs

The committee will have agreed at this meeting the cost of administering to the burial committee. The 1% increase relates to an increase in salaries in the current year previously mentioned.

Insurance

The insurance of the Cemetery now comes under the Town Council's policy, which is then recharged to the burial committee. This offers a small saving.

Commercial Rates

Wiltshire Council has given officers an indication of the level of rates payable in 2015/16 and this figure is included in the estimates.

Water & Electricity

The estimated budget for electricity is based on current consumption usage levels. Water is charged on an annual charge.

Membership Subscriptions

The Burial Committee is a member of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management and also members of the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities. Membership of these bodies enables the burial committee access to information regarding changes in legislation and practise.

Audit Fee

The Burial Committee should continue with lighter touch audits and therefore the cost should therefore be in line with advice given regarding the cost of light touch audits.

Planned and Responsive Maintenance

Other than capital projects there is not other planned work. Responsive maintenance will be undertaken as necessary.

Lodge Maintenance

Over the past few years there have been some significant works carried out on the lodge. There are no such plans for the current year other than responsive maintenance.

Replacement Tools and Equipment

All equipment is owned by the Town Council.

Purchase of Memorial Plaques

The cost of purchasing memorial plaques is passed directly to customers.

Mole Control

Following a decision to control moles in the cemetery this is an ongoing contractual arrangement.

Floral Displays

The cost of Devizes Town Council's parks department to supply floral displays in the cemetery.

Contingencies

This amount is used for meeting unexpected charges.

Memorial Benches & Plaques

The cost of memorial benches & plaques are met from memorial income. The ongoing maintenance of these benches is met from this budget heading.

Cemetery Software

This cost relates to the support of the computerised burial record systems.

INCOME

Fees Associated with Burials

Officers have utilised the past two years data to provide their past estimate of income in 2015/16 anticipated that income will be in line with last year income.

Cemetery Lodge Rent

This is a negotiable set amount.

Options Considered

Members need to decide what level of income and expenditure is achievable.

Implications & Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

The estimates are the bases for all the financial resources

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

Devizes and Roundway Parish Council's have jointly agreed to fund the Burial Committee on a split based on the number of council tax dwellings in each parish as a %age of the total under section Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1970 s1.

Environmental Implications

Officers are not aware of any environmental implications associated with this decision.

Risk Assessment

No setting of a budget would leave the committee open to challenge by the auditors for financial mismanagement

Crime and Disorder

Officers are not aware of any implications Under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

11. REPORT FOR DECISION - SETTING OF THE PRECEPT 2015/2016

Recommendation

Following the decision of the Joint Burial Committee on agenda item 10, the JBC are required to set the precept for the financial year 2015/2016

Purpose of the Report

To set the precept for the Devizes and Roundway Joint Burial Committee for financial year 2015/16

Background

Once members have formally agreed the estimates for financial year 2015/16 members are required to set a precept to ensure there is sufficient funding to run the service.

Implications & Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

If members fail to set a precept there will be insufficient funds to meet the agreed expenditure.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

Devizes and Roundway Parish Council's have jointly agreed to fund the Burial Committee on a split based on the number of council tax dwellings in each parish as a % of the total under section Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1970 s1.

Environmental Implications

Officers are not aware of any environmental implications associated with this decision.

Risk Assessment

Not setting a precept would leave the committee open to challenge by the auditors for financial mismanagement and improper governance.

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. REPORT FOR DECISION – APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Recommendation

That the committee confirms the appointment of Mr Alistair Morrison as the Internal Auditor for the Devizes & Roundway Joint Burial Committee (JBC). He is directed by officers to carry out the duties as prescribed by the Audit Commission.

Purpose of the Report

To confirm Mr Morrison's appointment as the internal auditor for the burial committee and that he has the authority to audit and sign the annual accounts.

Background

It is a requirement that the JBC's annual accounts are audited and signed off by an independent internal auditor; therefore it is essential that the committee approve the post of internal auditor. Officers are satisfied that the internal auditing work of the committee will be conducted professionally by Mr Morrison, and that no issues have been raised by the Committee's external auditors. Mr Morrison will undertake an inspection of the Committee accounts and processes four times a year alongside that of Devizes Town Council and will follow an audit plan to ensure a consistent approach.

Options Considered

No other options have been considered as this is a legal requirement, however if the committee should so wish to appoint another internal auditor it will have to instruct officers to recruit an alternative candidate through a financial agency and agree that this cost can be set against the general reserve.

Implications & Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

The cost of the internal audit is included within committee estimates.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

These are outlined in the report above.

Environmental Implications

Officers are not aware of any resulting from this report.

Risk Assessment

These are outlined in the report above.

Crime and Disorder

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

13. 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