

13 September 2007

LLANELLI JOINT BURIAL AUTHORITY

Minute Nos. 20 - 34

At the **Meeting** of the **Llanelli Joint Burial Authority** held at Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, on Thursday, 13 September 2007 at 4:00 pm.

Present: Cllr. T. J. Jones (Vice Chairman (in the Chair))

Cllrs.

T. D. Bowen
S.L. Davies
D. J. Harries

M. Howells
M. E. Prothero
C. E. Richards

20. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman extended a welcome to Cllr S.L. Davies who was attending her first meeting.

21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs C. C. Lucas, A. G. Morgan and E. Smith.

22. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

23. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the following minutes (copies of which had been previously circulated) be confirmed and signed as a true record of proceedings

Ordinary Meeting - 11 July 2007

24. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORTS

RESOLVED that the income and expenditure reports for June and July 2007 and the provisional report for August 2007 be noted.

13 September 2007

25. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

Consideration was given to the schedule of payments for July and August 2007, which revealed expenditure for the months amounted to £22,789.12 and £19,148.57 respectively.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

26. MEMORIAL TESTING FIGURES

Consideration was given to the memorial testing figures for July and August 2007, which revealed that 346 memorials had been tested at Stage 1 level and that 4 had failed.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

27. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2006/2007 – FINAL REPORT

Further to Minute No. 93 (14 March 2007), Members considered the final report in respect of the Authority's Internal Audit for 2006/2007, compiled by Auditing Solutions Ltd.

The final report did not differ from the interim report and there were no matters that needed addressing.

The report author commented that once again, no significant queries had arisen that required further referral to the Authority and as such no action plan had been prepared. Having congratulated the staff for all their good work it was

RESOLVED that the report be accepted.

28. WELSH PURCHASE CARD

The Secretary informed Members that the Burial Authority did not have petty cash available in the cemetery office and any sundry items were initially purchased by staff at their own expense who were then subsequently reimbursed by the Authority by cheque payment. Furthermore many suppliers were moving to electronic payments and would not accept official orders for goods especially when ordering online. The Welsh Purchase card was recognised by the Assembly Government and would allow staff to purchase items over the Internet and at local businesses. The Secretary stated that a monthly statement would be received for use of the card and payment would be made in full so no interest charges would be incurred. The card would allow the Authority to source goods and services at cheaper prices over the Internet thereby taking advantage of the speed and convenience of ordering online.

Following discussion it was

13 September 2007

RESOLVED that the Secretary be authorised to apply for three Welsh Purchase Cards to be issued to himself and the two members of staff at the cemetery office.

29. INTERMENTS IN GRAVES WHERE MEMORIALS HAVE BEEN MADE SAFE BY THE BURIAL AUTHORITY

Members considered the Secretary's report regarding interments in graves where memorials had been made safe by the Burial Authority. The current policy was not to allow further interments in a grave if the family concerned refused to repair the memorial in instances where it had failed an inspection test. However, before an interment could take place policy dictated that the memorial was removed from the cemetery in any event by the appointed memorial mason prior to the burial. This was to facilitate the opening of the grave. Therefore if interments were permitted in graves where memorials had been made safe by the Authority, the hazard would be automatically removed from the cemetery grounds. The removal of the memorial would force the grave owner to take some form of action. This would either result in the memorial being retained by the grave owner off site, or alternatively, it being fully repaired, during its reinstatement in the cemetery grounds. Either way the Burial Authority would rid itself of the problem. After a brief discussion it was

RESOLVED that the policy be amended to allow an interment in a grave where the memorial had been made safe by the Authority on the proviso that the memorial is removed prior to the interment taking place. This policy revision will also apply to the interment of ashes.

30. NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES FOLLOWING MEMORIAL INSPECTION TESTS

The Secretary informed Members of the administrative difficulties experienced by the cemetery office staff when having to contact a grave owner about a memorial inspection test, where a memorial had failed the test and where very little contact information about the grave owner was held on the original address record and/or where records were obsolete. The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) had confirmed that in such cases the Authority could by-pass the normal notification procedures and instead advertise details of the memorial in the local press. This would streamline the notification process by not having to send out letters to grave owners based on incomplete or obsolete contact details. After a brief discussion it was

RESOLVED that the policy be amended so that henceforth no letters will be sent out to grave owners where insufficient contact information is held or where records are obsolete. Furthermore, and in accordance with the advice received from the ICCM the Authority will attempt to contact grave owners by proceeding direct to public notice and by using the local press.

31. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Further to Minute No. 81 (14 February 2007), the Secretary provided Members with a progress report regarding the Authority's risk assessment action plan:

13 September 2007

- A fire risk assessment had now been completed for the main office, and assessments for the chapel and storage sheds were currently being drafted;
- A full report on the effectiveness of CCTV would be presented to Members at the November committee meeting;
- Data Protection Staff at the Information Commissioner's Office had confirmed that the Burial Authority was not required (at present) to register under the Data Protection Act because the data processed was only used to support the Authority's primary activity of contacting grave owners from time to time. Data Protection staff had also sent the Authority a self assessment guide to check its exempt status;
- Llanelli Rural Council's Technical Services Officer had initiated a records/analysis check of the Authority's assets to assist internal control. Documented control sheets were being formulated; and
- Memorial Testing procedures were well documented and memorial inspection tests were ongoing.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

32. CEMETERY ENHANCEMENTS

The Secretary provided Members with a progress report on ongoing cemetery enhancements as follows:

(1) INSTALLATION OF BENCHES, INTERPRETATION PANELS AND GENERAL SIGNAGE

Further to Minute No. 88 (14 March 2007), the Secretary confirmed that several cemetery locations for the placement of various items of cemetery furniture had now been agreed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman following a site visit. Furthermore a quotation had been received for £700 for the installation of five concrete foundation bases required for the benches. Members were reminded that the cost of which would be met from general reserves.

(2) TRAFFIC SIGNS

New traffic signs had been erected throughout the cemetery grounds to improve road safety.

(3) CEMETERY CAR PARK

Further to Minute No.81 (8 March 2006) a site meeting was held with the representatives of Carmarthenshire County Council, the Gwalia Group and Tycoes Construction Group to finalise plans for converting the compound area into a car park and to rectify shortcomings with the car park strip at the northern end of the cemetery near the private lane adjacent to the Bryngolau estate. The work was due to start during September 2007.

13 September 2007

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED that the progress report be noted.

Cllr M. E. Protheroe left the meeting to attend another engagement.

33. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT, 1960

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the following matter be considered in private and that the power of exclusion of the public under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960 be exercised.

34. STAFFING MATTERS

(1)WORKFORCE SHIFT PATTERN

The Secretary presented Members with a report on the current working hours of the cemetery workforce and how their work pattern might change in the future. After a brief discussion it was

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and that the Secretary be authorised to start discussions with the cemetery workforce and Trade Union(s).

(2)ASSISTANT CEMETERY SUPERVISOR

The Secretary reported the receipt of a resignation letter from M.E as he wished to take early retirement. However, as M.E. had not given 12 months notice he would not be entitled to his long service pay award. M.E. had been made fully aware of this, and his employment would terminate on 30 September 2007. The Secretary felt that the impending vacancy should not be advertised immediately. This would enable a review of staffing arrangements to take place.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED that a letter be sent to M.E. accepting his resignation and thanking him for his service and that the impending vacancy shall not be advertised for the time being so that the Secretary may carry out a general review of the staffing arrangements, the findings of which are to be reported to a future committee meeting.

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The meeting concluded at 4:40 pm
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