

MINUTES OF TALGARTH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING RE ST GWENDOLINE'S CHURCHARD BUSINESS, AT 6PM, WEDNESDAY, 30 JUNE 2021, HELD REMOTELY

MEMBERS PRESENT BY VIDEO LINK: Cllr P Lewis (Mayor) (In the Chair), Cllr L Elston-Reeves (Deputy Mayor), Cllr A Bufton, Cllr M Dodds, Cllr G Jones, Cllr A Lord, Cllr T McClatchey, Cllr R Parry, Cllr W Powell (Town & Powys County Councillor), Cllr R Reid

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr C Voyle

IN ATTENDANCE BY VIDEO LINK: Josephine Rumsey (Town Clerk)

WELCOME: Cllr P Lewis, Mayor, welcomed Town Councillors, to the 23rd virtual meeting of Talgarth Town Council by Skype.

21/100 RESIGNATION – Cllr P Lewis, Mayor, reported that Cllr Stephen Mark Kirk Thomas had resigned on 19 June 2021 due to taking up a new teaching position in Stourbridge. It was noted that this vacancy had been reported to PCC and the deadline date is 15 July 2021 when it will be confirmed as to whether any requests for election have been received. If not, we can advertise the vacancy and co-opt at the 8 September meeting

21/101 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no Declarations of Interest.

21/102 NOTES OF THE BURIAL SUB GROUP MEETING HELD ON 3 JUNE 2019 – Notes of the Sub Group meeting held on 3 June 2019 had been circulated, for ease of reference.

21/103 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/UPDATE:

- **Request by resident to remove flower beds either side of the family Bench and to plant a maple tree in this location** – Cllr A Bufton reported that he had spoken with the resident. **RESOLVED:** The resident can remove the flower beds in this location and replace with turf and to renew the slabs if required but not to plant a maple tree in this location.
- **Seats/benches in Churchyard – Maintenance & Record of inspections** – Cllr R Reid reported that he has recently checked for safety and painted on a protective covering on all of the seats/benches in the Churchyard, except the seat provided by a local resident, BW which he wishes to maintain himself.
- **Sun Dial restoration** – Noted that the Talgarth Historic Society has secured the required £600 for the Sun Dial Renovation – the work to be undertaken, as soon as possible, by Tim Martin and his Team of Volunteers.
- **Trees in Churchyard – professional inspection** – Cllr A Bufton reported that the last professional tree inspection in St Gwendoline's Churchyard, was undertaken in 2013, and confirmed that he does undertake regular visual checks of the trees himself, especially after windy/stormy weather, in order to check there are no loose branches etc. Cllr Bufton also reminded us that we have trees that need professional inspections, from time to time, in other Town Council owned properties, ie the King George V Playing fields, noting that last professional tree inspection at this location was undertaken by PCC, prior to the Transfer of the King George V Playing fields, Pavilion etc to the Town Council in April 2016. **RESOLVED:** To arrange to invite Tenders for Inspection of all Town Council owned trees, as soon as possible.

- **Friends of St Gwendoline's Churchyard group-** It was noted that the 2 ladies of this group, who regularly tidied up the Churchyard of litter etc had both finished some 2 years ago (one moved away from the area and the other local lady did not wish to carry on).
RESOLVED: To advertise on the Church Notice Board and the Town's Notice Board for any interested persons/groups interested in reviving the 'Friends of St Gwendoline's Churchyard'.
- **Rubbish accumulating at the rear of the church** – Cllr A Bufton reported that this is still a problem as visitors tending to graves still leave their rubbish in a pile near the 5 bar gate, where it clearly says on the Notice – 'Please take your Rubbish home'. Noted we are very grateful to Martin Leighton, our Contractor, who has agreed to remove any rubbish each time he undertakes a cut of the Churchyard.

Cllr G Jones joined the meeting at 6.25pm due to connection difficulties.

- **Churchyard land & land on outside of wall opposite Old School House (Land Registry) update** – It is noted that the Land Registry has confirmed that the Church is Registered but the Churchyard grounds are not registered and neither is the piece of ground adjacent the Churchyard wall that the Town Council has maintained for many years.
The Land Registry also advised that the process of a first registration should be undertaken by a Solicitor or Conveyancer. The fee to the Land Registry would depend on the values of the Churchyard and the piece of land, in this instance. To go ahead with this, both pieces of land would have to be valued by a professional person.
Williams, Beales Solicitor has confirmed that from the 1924 Transfer Deed, it is noted that the Town Council owns the Churchyard and advised us, that with the piece of ground adjacent to the Churchyard wall which we wish to register, we would need to provide certain statements detailing our ownership of the land and to conduct a land search.
It is noted that the Solicitors fees quoted for this total registration work, would be in the region of £600 - £800.00 plus VAT and disbursements.
RESOLVED: To initially look into any possible ownership of the piece of land adjacent to the to the Churchyard wall.
- **Churchyard Walls** – Cllr A Bufton reported that he has recently checked out the condition of the Churchyard boundary walls which all appear to be in a good state at the present time.
- **Proposed Management Plan for Paths and Tree Planting in Extension of 'H' Block – Extension part of Churchyard** – Cllr A Bufton reported that a proposed plan had been drawn up for paths and tree planting by a previous colleague - to the left and right hand sides above Row F in 'H' block, but nothing has progressed.
RESOLVED: That the Town Council should assess the planning of any future tree planting in the Churchyard.
- **Churchyard plan** - Cllr A Bufton reported the Churchyard plan is continually being updated.

Cllr M Dodds left the meeting at 7pm to attend another pre-arranged meeting.

- **Health & Safety Audit of Memorial Stones & Measuring of Memorial Stone angles – update, followed by a professional Health & Safety Audit** – It was noted that the Clerk has recently spoken to MEMSAFE who confirmed how the Health & Safety testing is now undertaken, ie with the audit first, followed by a report, including photography – which would give an indication of the location of the stone and suggestions for any remedial works.
RESOLVED: To request a quotation from MEMSAFE, to undertake a full Health & Safety Audit of St Gwendoline's Churchyard, as soon as possible.

Old Yew Tree (fallen) – Cllr A Bufton reported that after the Yew Tree had fallen in Feb 2014, the Yew Preservation Society had intimated that the tree may begin to spurt again and that Yew trees are very tough, and this may take decades. Cllr Bufton reported that he had been in conversation with a local resident, who had some thoughts on developing this area, suggesting seating and a garden area. Some further ideas were discussed suggesting some local groups may wish to adopt and develop this area. Another suggestion was a Veteran’s Memorial. Noted Cllr L Elston-Reeves offered together with Cllr A Bufton, to lead on this project.

RESOLVED: To advertise on both the Church and the Town Hall Notice Boards, inviting interested people/groups to come forward to adopt and/or develop the fallen yew tree area.

Cllr W Powell left the meeting at 7.12pm due to connection difficulties.

- **Churchyard fees review** – Noted that the Clerk had circulated information of neighbouring towns/villages Churchyard/Cemetery fees, for comparisons.

RESOLVED: To arrange a separate full Town Council meeting to set fees/procedures and further discuss the Health & Safety Audit of the Churchyard, as soon as possible.

- **Pre-bought grave plots** – Cllr A Bufton reported some of the difficulties being encountered by pre-bought grave plots. **RESOLVED:** To discuss this matter further at the separate meeting.

- **Howell Harris – Proposed Information Notice Board** – Received a response from the BBNPA as to whether planning permission is required to erect an Information Notice Board, as follows:
‘if the Community/Town Council or Local Authority were to erect a Community Notice Board on land within their ownership or on land which they have control over, it is likely that this could be carried out without the need to make an application to the Local Planning Authority for formal planning permission, although an assessment of the proposal would need to be sought to determine if it does fall under Part 12 Class A (b) of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Advertisement consent would probably not be required if the information to be displayed is only referring to this particular site.

Noted that Neil Poulton, Presbyterian Church in Wales (PCiW), confirmed that the sign was not included in the original planning application. He also mentioned that they have invested a considerable sum in the restoration of the tomb and the planned relocation of the original stone to Trefeca, and they may be willing to make a contribution to the sign.

Some concern was raised that the grass is growing very high inside the railings which surrounds the renovated stone causing difficulty for maintenance/cutting of grass around this stone.

RESOLVED: To ask Niel Poulton if the Presbyterian Church in Wales is planning the maintenance of the Howell Harris grave, due to the difficulty that the grass is growing very high inside the railings which surrounds the renovated stone and to seek what contribution the PCiW would possibly be contributing to the Information Board.

21/104 ANY OTHER BURIAL RELATED MATTERS –

- **War Memorial Signs** – Quote received from Andrew Meredith Signs, for supplying 2 x bilingual ‘No Parking’ signs, mounted on oak and fixing on the War Memorial walls – 1 on either side – Cost £80 total.
RESOLVED: To accept the Quote of £80 – option B with Welsh first followed by English.
- **Wildlife, wild flowers in the Churchyard** – **RESOLVED:** This to be an Agenda item at a future meeting.

21/105 DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS: 7pm Wed 14 July 2021

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.35 pm.

SIGNED:

DATE: