

Wigton Burial Committee - Annual meeting 16 July 2025

In attendance

Councillor Mary Clark (Chairman)
Councillor Mary Huntington
Councillor Tony Huntington
Councillor John Mattinson
Councillor William Marrs
Councillor Chris Scott
Councillor John Hamblin

2 members of the public

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Shane McCarthy, and Councillor George Girvan.

2. Minutes of the Wigton Burial Joint Committee

Minutes of the Wigton Burial Joint Committee AGM held on 19 June 2024 - **approved**.

3. Declarations of Interest

None

4. Exclusion of the Press and Public

None

5. Public Participation

None

6. Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Mary Clark be elected Chairman of the Wigton Burial Joint Committee for the 2025-2026 municipal year.

7. Election of Vice-Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Tony Huntington be elected Vice-Chairman of the Wigton Burial Joint Committee for the 2025-2026 municipal year.

8. WBJC Accounts

Following a mediation meeting with Mary Bradley, Chair of CALC, there had been a complex issue regarding VAT being investigated. There were potentially four years of issues which needed to be resolved. An allegation had been made that the VAT calculations were incorrect, to the tune of around £3,000, which related to 2 areas - burial fees and general administration, and the house attached to the burial grounds.

RESOLVED that the Wigton Clerk, acting as RFO to the Joint Committee would continue to investigate with Cumberland Council.

9. Business Plan

A copy of the proposed business plan was presented, which identified short, medium and long term goals. This would allow honest budgeting, with realistic considered

expected income and expenditure. There would be an element of agreeing that cemetery costs must be balanced with public view.

The 2024/25 budgeted income was £35,000, which left for a deficit of £16,000 which must be met by the three Councils in direct proportion.

Long term, consideration must also be given to the cemetery house, ensuring that the house is taken care of, and in good condition, which would take considerable funds. Money from the rental income of the house should be reinvested in the house.

RESOLVED that the business plan be agreed.

10 Terms of Reference

It was considered an ideal time to review the Terms of Reference for the burial Committee. Any changes should be brought to all three Councils for review.

Mary Bradley, Chair of CALC offered to help attend meetings and act as a neutral voice in the matter. The Terms of Reference could then also be run past the CALC solicitor.

RESOLVED that the three Chairs of the Parish Councils be appointed to the Working Group to review the Terms of Reference, with co-options as required.

Meeting concluded at 7.25pm

Wigton Burial Committee - Main meeting 16 July 2025

In attendance

Councillor Mary Clark (Chairman)

Councillor Mary Huntington

Councillor Tony Huntington

Councillor John Mattinson

Councillor William Marrs

Councillor Chris Scott

Councillor John Hamblin

2 members of the public

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Shane McCarthy, and Councillor George Girvan.

2. Minutes of the meeting of the WBJC Meeting

The accuracy of the minutes were disputed as Councillor Mary Clark was Chairman, not Acting Chairman as stated, and the fact that the discussed fees were to be forwarded to Cumberland Council, which had been incorrectly recorded.

With regard to the Headstone and Cenotaph repairs, 14 out of 25 repairs had been completed, not 14 out of 15.

These minutes were to be brought back to the next meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations

None

4 Exclusion of the Press and the Public

RESOLVED that pursuant to the section 1(2) of the Public Bodies Act 1960 it was resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of agenda item 13.

5. Public Participation

None

6. Finance Matters

6.1 To receive financial statement, approved payment and budget monitoring for the first quarter of 2025/2026

Concern was raised over whether the Management receipt was going into the wrong column. The reserves for the Cenotaph should have a monetary value.

RESOLVED that the budgets should be checked for accuracy.

6.2 To approve regular payments for 2025/2026

It was acknowledged that there had been no VAT paid for the fourth quarter. It had been agreed at the Annual Meeting to get to the bottom of the VAT situation, beginning with the previous quarter, and work backwards. Effort was still being made to get the correct information if possible.

RESOLVED to update at the next meeting.

7. Clerk

At this moment in time, the Burial Committee was in limbo as they couldn't function without administrative support, but could not have their own employee. Wigton Town Council could employ an officer solely for the Burial Committee, but it would need a job description, an idea of workload, and idea of monetary cost.

RESOLVED that a job description for a Clerk for the Burial Committee be produced, and in the meantime to continue to use Locum Clerks from CALC.

8. Cemetery Fees

RESOLVED that the item be deferred until the next meeting.

9 Terms of Reference

This item had been agreed during the Annual Meeting of the Burial Committee held earlier that evening.

10. Grounds Maintenance

Any decision would have to be taken under Wigton Town Council's Financial Regulations.

RESOLVED that a tender be advertised, to enable quotes to be received for cutting grass fortnightly, and strimming monthly around 2000 headstones.

11. Bench Regulations

RESOLVED that a bench policy needs to be drawn up and update, to allow for approved benches to be placed in a sensible manner.

12. Service Level Agreement

RESOLVED that Councillors Girvan and Marrs were to bring forward a report to a future meeting.

13. Cemetery Estate

Confidential

Meeting closed at 9.28pm