

PORLOCK PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Burials & Memorials Committee Meeting of Porlock Parish Council held at 11.00am at the Old School Centre on Wednesday 25 June 2026

Councillors Present: J Adlington (Chair), S Colson and D McCanlis

Also present: No members of the public and the Clerk J Jones.

Signed: _____ **Dated:** _____

Min Ref:	Minutes	Action:
BM-2026-001	1) Receive apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1)) Cllr. D Heath	
BM-2026-002	2) Resolve the position of Vice Chair for the committee This item was surplus to requirements as it had previously been resolved that there was no requirement for a vice chair of the committee.	
BM-2026-003	3) Resolve any declarations of interest and dispensations granted No declarations received.	
BM-2026-004	4) Resolve items to be dealt with after the public, including press, have been excluded (Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s1(2)) No items were proposed to be heard in closed session.	
BM-2026-005	5) Resolve the minutes of the Burials and Memorials Committee meeting held on the 16th December 2026 RESOLVED. Chair Cllr. Adlington signed the minutes.	
BM-2026-006	6) Receive an update on committee related actions from the action log report BM-2025-042 Burials - A review of the current processes and practices with council's third parties needs to be undertaken to ensure council regulations, processes and procedures are being followed, and accurate and required information is being collected. Update – To be carried out once the revised Cemetery Regulations have been finalised and resolved for adoption. BM-2025-040 Marking of future plots - Cllr. Adlington to obtain a brief of requirements from the parish office and then visit the cemetery with council's caretaker and grounds maintenance contractor to make a recommendation to the committee. Update - Specification to be drawn up and provided once Cemetery Regulations have been resolved for adoption.	

BM-2025-033 Cemetery Regulations Cllr. Adlington to take first review and then pass the review to the next committee member, with each member reviewing the regulations in turn and passing to the next until all members have had opportunity to review. Update – Agenda item 13.

BM-2025-029 Cllr. Adlington offered to do a review and provide a report of the current fees and structure options. Update – Agenda item 15.

BM-2025-023 Develop an information pack that can be provided to anyone wishing to purchase an exclusive right of burial and to families following the placement of a memorial. Update - A draft pack is in development and subject to adoption of the Cemetery Regulations.

BM-2026-007 7) Public participation

There were no members of the public present.

BM-2026-008 8) Receive an update on the memorial restoration programme at Hawkcombe Cemetery and resolve:

Phase 2 part one has been completed, and phase 2 part 2a has been scheduled for the beginning of July. There are 18 outstanding memorials, not the reported 16, due to two missing memorials from the report provided by the previous memorial company.

a) Phase 2-part 2b works schedule and spend of £1,120 exc VAT (202/4052 EMR326)

RESOLVED.

BM-2026-009 Cllr. Colson requested an updated position in regard to EMR 326 at the next Finance & HR Committee meeting.

JJ

BM-2026-010 9) Resolve the proposed Hawkcombe Cemetery memorial inspection method statement, schedule and spend of £318.75 exc VAT for 75 loose memorials and the committee's recommendation to council (202/4120)

DEFERRED. A review of estimated costs based on remedial works is to be calculated, including a budget for approval, and presented to the Finance & HR Committee meeting.

BM-2026-011 A copy of the proposed signage for marking loose or unsafe memorials is to be provided.

The Clerk reiterated the process for notice and publicity of the inspection, requiring a minimum of 28 days' notice, press publicity and noticeboard publicity.

BM-2026-012 10) Receive an update on the unsafe memorial restoration programme at St Dubricius Churchyard

A List B application was submitted for the most unsafe memorial that has been staked by council. Following feedback, further advice has been sought from the Church's architect, and the method statement has been resubmitted for consideration. Due to other works planned at the Church, the remaining memorials will be put on hold and inspected after scaffolding has been removed. Once the scaffolding has been erected, any requirements and timing of any inspection will be considered.

BM-2026-013 11) Resolve the proposed St Dubricius Churchyard memorial inspection method statement, schedule and spend of £697.00 exc VAT for a full inspection of 164 memorials and the committee's recommendation to council (202/4120)

DEFERRED. A review of estimated costs based on remedial works is to be calculated, including a budget for approval, and presented to the Finance & HR Committee meeting.

BM-2026-014 12) Resolve the contract renewal period for the annual maintenance of the Dunster Steep War Memorial and the committee's recommendation to council

Council discussed the cost saving presented with a three-year contract but felt it more appropriate to approve a one-year renewal and present a longer-term contract option to council after the May elections.

RESOLVED. Recommend to council a one-year contract with the War Memorial Conservation Company at a cost of £2,495.00 exc VAT.

BM-2026-015 13) Review the current draft cemetery regulations and resolve the committee's recommendations to council including but not limited to:

The Clerk took the committee through the key outstanding points raised by committee members for clarification as identified through the review process of the proposed amended regulations.

a) the granting period of the exclusive right of burial

RESOLVED. Recommend to council the granting period of the exclusive rights of burial be changed from 75 years to 30 years as is recommended by the ICCM and to include the exclusive right of memorial.

b) management of exclusive right of burials (Extensions and Expirations)

RESOLVED. Recommend to council the inclusion to the regulations, extensions and expirations as drafted.

RESOLVED. Recommend to council the revised regulations as amended, including 13a and 13b, subject to review by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM), with amendments made by the ICCM to be included either as a requirement or best practice.

BM-2026-016 14) Resolve to obtain a quote for the provision of two cemetery benches to be positioned opposite the garden of rest and the introduction of memorial plaques

RESOLVED. Specification recycled plastic benches with arms.

BM-2026-017 15) Resolve cemetery charges with regards to:

a) Reviewing the current burial and memorial charges and introduce a more simplified model for full burial or interment of ashes consisting of:

i) A plot fee

RESOLVED. To include the purchase of ERoB and the right to place a memorial up to 2ft, including subsequent additions to the memorial.

ii) An all-inclusive interment fee

RESOLVED. Includes interment and soil removal charges.

iii) A memorial installation fee

RESOLVED. No fee.

iv) Exhumation fee

RESOLVED. Price on application.

Meeting extension 20 mins (13:20)

RESOLVED.

JA/JJ

b) Reviewing the current doubling of fees for 'non residents',

RESOLVED. Amended 15b to: Review the current fees for 'non-residents'.

RESOLVED. Fees for non-residents to be quadruple the 'resident' fee.

c) Reviewing the current 'non resident' criteria,

RESOLVED. Amended 15c to: Review the current 'resident' criteria.

DEFERRED. Review criteria to include a generational (grandparent) connection criteria.

d) Reviewing administration charges for register searches,

RESOLVED. Search of 'the register' changed to no charge and charges being applied to search of council's burial records (papers).

e) Memorial plaques

DEFERRED. Plaque specification to be defined and cost to include installation only.

f) Introducing an annual price increase in-line with inflation as part of the annual budget process

RESOLVED. Amended to, Introducing an annual price increase at a minimum of the rate of inflation as part of the annual budget process.

RESOLVED.

BM-2026- 018 16) Receive a progress update on council's cemetery administration

The Memorials Officer gave a brief update on progress. The burial records database (spreadsheet) continues to be updated during unpaid hours as it has become almost impossible to complete this task during working hours due to the level of work coming into the office. The objective is to have a records database that has an entry for every plot in the cemetery with currently available data. Work is ongoing to help make clearer the language and meaning of burials, such as Exclusive Right of Burials, deed periods, rights, etc., and what these mean in plain English. There is a proposal on the Finance & HR agenda to discuss a new accounts package, which includes cemetery management and offers additional benefit to the administration of council's burials activity.

Committee requested that an agenda item be included for a future meeting to discuss historic record entry, approaches and associated benefits.

BM-2026- 019 17) Discuss budget planning and requirements for 2027/28 and 2029-2032 forecasting

The Clerk outlined the budget planning process and requested that the committee begin considering items that would need to be included for discussion. The Clerk also raised the outstanding cemetery improvement works and associated costs, currently estimated at c.£100k, and the plan and priority to address these works over a period as current funding options had been exhausted.

BM-2026- 020 18) Note outstanding/deferred items:

15) Resolve cemetery charges with regards to:

d) Reviewing the current 'non resident' criteria,

RESOLVED. Amended 15c to: Review the current 'resident' criteria.

DEFERRED. Review criteria to include a generational (grandparent) connection criteria.

e) Memorial plaques

DEFERRED. Plaque specification to be defined and cost to include installation only.

BM-2026- 021 20) To receive any other business - For information only

Porlock Inspired has been awarded the funds and works will begin in the Autumn.

Hawkcombe Cemetery is officially known as Porlock Cemetery. Council paperwork is being amended to reflect this.

Meeting closed at 1:25pm