

GORSTAGE CEMETERY
Manged by Weaverham, Cuddington & Acton Bridge (Joint) Cemetery Committee (JCC)
Minutes Tuesday 19th May 2026 at Northwich Town Council Office

Meeting started 19.03

2026/27		By:
	Present: Cllr J Freeman (JF) (WPC (Chairperson) (WPC) Cllr D Ruchat (DR) (CPC), Cllr A Crist (AC) (CPC) Cllr S Brookes (SB) (CPC), Cllr J McDonald (JM) (CPC) Cllr P Wakefield (PWL) (WPC), Cllr C Fifield (CF) (ABPC) Cllr P Wilkinson (PW) (WPC), In Attendance: Tracey Whitlow – Clerk (TW) Chris Shaw (CS) (NTC) Stephanie Astbury (SA) (NTC)	
Note	Cllr Trevor Brocklebank, ABPC member, has stepped down from the committee, he has been replaced with Cllr David Charlton from ABPC. The JCC thanked Cllr Brocklebank for all his work over the past 6 years.	
26/01	Apologies for Absence were received & accepted from: Mr K Byrne (KB), Cllr J McDonald (JM) (CPC), Cllr D Charlton (DC) (ABPC) M. Gerrard (MG) was not present	
26/02	Declarations of Members' Interests: None	
26/03	Approval of Minutes: The committee Resolved to approve the minutes of the JCC meeting held on 15 April 2026 as a true and accurate record. Signed by the chair.	
26/04	Public Participation: None present	
26/05	Matters Arising: (from previous minutes if not an agenda item) Clerks contract has been issued, with the work from home allowance to be confirmed. Staff sub committee proposed a WFH allowance of £6 per week to cover home office and storage expenses. Resolved to pay £6/week WFH allowance.	
26/06	Cemetery Contractors Report: Northwich Town Council took on the contract of the Cemetery Management on 01.05.26 CS gave a report to the committee including: • G of R plots – suggested charging a fee for Garden of Remembrance plots, as technically with no fee the JCC own the plots. Agreed, Add to next agenda for ratifying. • Moles – large number of moles present. The current sonic devices are not having the desired effect. Approved for NTC to use other methods to deter the moles. • Deeds- Recommends using a Deed Book for Exclusive Right of Burial. Add to next agenda. • Reservations – Consider not having reservations – recommend offering pre-purchase only, as reservations create additional work in following up every 5 years. Add to next agenda. • Vaults – for the JCC to consider installation of vaults – increases options for residents. Add to next agenda.	TW TW TW TW CS

	• Cemetery Maintenance – NTC have no contract for this. The current maintenance contractor finishes on 31.05.26. Agreed for TW, CS & SA to work on an interim resolution to this prior to tenders going out for the maintenance contract. CS to send quote for interim period, to be circulated to JF, CF & DR for approval (see MR26/12) • Building – with a clear out and painting this could be utilised for residents to have a place to meet officers when completing paperwork, and for family members attending funerals in poor weather. Cemetery boards are all rotten and require disposing of. Add to next agenda. • Paperwork Storage – all cemetery paperwork has now been transferred to NTC. Need to establish how this will be indexed. Add to next agenda	CS SA TW
26/07	Cemetery Maintenance Contract: TW to edit and send tender documents to JCC for approval before advertising.	TW
26/08	Internal Audit: Has been received. No exceptions noted.	
26/09	Banking: Resolved for Tracey Whitlow to be added to the mandates for all accounts. Resolved to set up full internet banking for the NatWest accounts. Resolved to remove P Chrimes, T Brocklebank and C Robinson from the bank signatories.	TW
26/10	Transfer of Ownership: Resolved for the current request of transfer of ownership to be allowed, if willing to pay the fee. This does not set a precedent. Any further requests to be approved on an individual basis.	
26/11	Committee Name: Following discussions of various titles for the committee it was agreed, going forward to use ‘Gorstage Cemetery, managed by Weaverham, Cuddington & Acton Bridge (joint)Cemetery Committee (JCC)’ any other changes would have implications with the constitution, HMRC, bank etc.	
26/12	Scheme of Delegation: Agreed for a working group of one councillor from each PC, JF, CF & DR to approve any actions of the clerk, as opposed to needing full JCC approval, for interim items between meetings, particularly during this change over period to NTC, as decisions need to be made in a timely fashion.	
26/13	Accounts/Financial: Ratify/Approve Receipts & Payments: 1. R&P list presented and approved. Appendix 1. 2. Bank reconciliation of 15.05.26 approved and signed. Appendix 2.	
26/14	Clerks Report: • Previous clerk only finished work on 13.05.26, TW has only just acquired the laptop. • Opening of Investment Account – paperwork will require completing again, as one bank signatory has left the committee. • TW will keep a time sheet at present, as this role is now completely different to the previous clerks role, and needs monitoring to ensure correct hours required. Due to handover meetings with both previous clerk and NTC, TW is already over her monthly hours for this month.	

	- All policies to be reviewed at the next meeting, due to the changes in operating the cemetery. - Contract with NTC still to be received. - Clerk noted the extra time the previous clerk has put in to date, AC proposed previous clerk be paid one months salary, seconded CF, voted unanimously. - Resolved for the clerk to purchase gift vouchers of £50 each and thank you cards for the retiring clerk and retiring maintenance manager.	TW
26/15	Correspondence: No correspondence of consequence noted, that has not been actioned or circulated.	
26/16	Meeting Dates: Meeting dates for the next civic year agreed as: Wednesday 15 July 26, Thursday 1 st October 2026, Wednesday 13 th January 2027, Wednesday 31 st March 2027, Wednesday 16 th June 2027. Clerk to make necessary hall bookings.	TW
26/17	Items for Next Meeting: Investment account, policy review, internet banking, all items on MR26/06	
26/18	Date of Next Meeting: The next JCC meeting is planned for WEDNESDAY 15th JULY 2026, following a cemetery visit at 6.30pm.	

The meeting closed at 20.50

Signed:

Date

Appendix 1.

Gorstage Cemetery (JCC)		
Receipts & Payment Schedule		
	Meeting date:	19/05/2026
<u>Receipts since the last meeting:</u>		
Pre-Purchase		£1,240.00
Plot fee		£0.00
Internments		£190.00
Headstones		£600.00
Trans of Ownership		£60.00
		£2,090.00
<u>Payments ratified/for approval:</u>		
Suez	Refuse collection excess	£32.84
S Cadman	April Maintenance	£756.00
C&SPPFFA	Hall Hire	£15.00
Clerk CR	Expenses	£15.00
Clerk CR	Expenses	£302.31
NTC	Inv to date	£1,143.00
Paul Fletcher	Building repairs	£420.00
Edge	Training	£211.20
		£2,895.35

Appendix 2.

Gorstage Cemetery (JCC)	
Bank Reconciliation	
Prepared by T Whitlow - Clerk/RFO	
<u>BANK RECONCILIATION</u>	<u>13.05.26</u>
Nat West Current a/c	£3,935.67
Nat West Deposit a/c	£71,383.88
Total	<u>£75,319.55</u>
<u>CASH BOOK RECONCILIATION</u>	
B/F Nat West Current a/c	£2,440.81
B/F Nat West Savings a/c	<u>£72,561.41</u>
Total B/F 01.04.25	<u>£75,002.22</u>
Receipts to date	£3,647.47
Expenditure to date	£5,970.05
Less unrepresented payments	£2,639.91
Balance	<u>£75,319.55</u>