



Saltash Town Council

Konsel An Dre Essa



The Guildhall
12 Lower Fore Street
Saltash
PL12 6JX
Telephone: 01752 844846
www.saltash.gov.uk

19 February 2025

Dear Councillor

I write to summon you to the **Meeting of the Joint Burial Board Committee** to be held at the Guildhall on **Tuesday 25th February 2025 at 6.00 pm.**

The meeting is open to the public and press. Any member of the public requiring to put a question to the Joint Burial Board Committee must do so by **12 noon the day before the meeting** either by email to enquiries@saltash.gov.uk or sent to The Guildhall, 12 Lower Fore Street, Saltash PL12 6JX. Please provide your full name and indicate if you will be present at the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

S Burrows
Town Clerk

To Councillors:

Rev L Bushell Hawke (Ex Officio Chairman) R Bullock J Dent J Peggs (Deputy Chairman) B Samuels B Jones L Batham	Other members of the Council for information
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Agenda

1. Health and Safety Announcements.
2. Apologies.
3. Declarations of Interest:
 - a. To receive any declarations from Members of any registerable (5A of the Code of Conduct) and/or non-registerable (5B) interests in matters to be considered at this meeting.
 - b. The Town Clerk to receive written requests for dispensations prior to the start of the meeting for consideration.
4. Public Questions - A 15-minute period when members of the public may ask questions of Members of the Joint Burial Board Committee.

Please note: Any member of the public requiring to put a question to the Town Council must do so by email or via The Guildhall **no later than 12 noon the day before the meeting.**

Members of the public are advised to review the Receiving Public Questions, Representations and Evidence at Meetings document prior to attending the meeting.

5. To receive and approve the minutes from the Joint Burial Board meeting held on 29 October 2024 as a true and correct record. (Pages 4 - 9)
6. To receive the Joint Burial Board budget statement and consider any actions and associated expenditure. (Page 10)
7. To consider Health & Safety reports as may be received.
8. To consider Risk Management reports as may be received.
9. To receive a report from the Service Delivery Department and consider any actions and associated expenditure. (Pages 11 - 15)
10. To receive an update on the Law Commission Burial and Cremation Consultation 2024 and consider any actions. (Pages 16 - 18)
11. To receive an update on the P.C.C registering the churchyard as closed and consider any actions and associated expenditure.
(Pursuant to Joint Burial Board held 29.10.24 minute nr.26/24/25)

12. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960:
To resolve that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press leave the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. (As required or if necessary).
13. To consider any items referred from the main part of the agenda.
14. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960:
To resolve that the public and press be re-admitted to the meeting.
15. To confirm any press and social media releases associated with any agreed actions and expenditure of the meeting.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 29 July 2025 6.30 pm.

SALTASH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Burial Board Committee held at the Guildhall on Tuesday 29th October 2024 at 4.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors: R Bullock, J Dent, J Peggs (Deputy Chairman), B Samuels and B Jones.

ALSO PRESENT: S Burrows (Town Clerk / RFO), W Peters (Finance Officer) and F Morris (Planning and General Administrator).

APOLOGIES: Rev L Bushell Hawke (Ex Officio Chairman).

16/24/25 HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Co-Chairman informed those present of the actions required in the event of a fire or emergency.

17/24/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

a. To receive any declarations from Members of any registerable (5A of the Code of Conduct) and/or non-registerable (5B) interests in matters to be considered at this meeting.

None.

b. The Town Clerk to receive written requests for dispensations prior to the start of the meeting for consideration.

None.

18/24/25 PUBLIC QUESTIONS - A 15-MINUTE PERIOD WHEN MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ASK QUESTIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE JOINT BURIAL BOARD COMMITTEE.

None.

19/24/25 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JOINT BURIAL BOARD MEETING HELD ON 8 AUGUST 2024 AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD.

Please see a copy of the minutes on the STC website or request to see a copy at the Guildhall.

It was proposed by Councillor B Samuels, seconded by Councillor Dent and **RESOLVED** to amend the time of rising on the minutes of the Joint Burial Board Committee held on 8 August 2024 from 7.40 p.m. to 2.40 p.m.

It was proposed by B Jones, seconded by Councillor Bullock and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Joint Burial Board Committee held on 8 August 2024 were confirmed as a true and correct record.

20/24/25 TO RECEIVE THE JOINT BURIAL BOARD BUDGET STATEMENT AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.

The Finance Officer informed Members of the current budget statement contained within the circulated reports pack.

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

21/24/25 TO CONSIDER HEALTH & SAFETY REPORTS AS MAY BE RECEIVED.

Nothing to report.

22/24/25 TO CONSIDER RISK MANAGEMENT REPORTS AS MAY BE RECEIVED.

Nothing to report.

23/24/25 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE SERVICE DELIVERY DEPARTMENT AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.

Members received and discussed the Service Delivery Department report as contained within the circulated reports pack.

It was proposed by Councillor Peggs, seconded by Councillor Dent and **RESOLVED;**

1. To note the report;
2. To approve the purchase of double entrance gates to the side entrance of the Churchyard, to be installed by the Service Delivery Team at a cost of £775.00 allocated to Budget Code 6104 General Site Maintenance;
3. To approve the Service Delivery Team to purchase and use the MossOff Chemical Free Product to help remove the moss across the pathways at the Churchyard at an approximate cost of £25 for 5 Litres allocated to Budget Code 6104 General Site Maintenance;
4. PCC Members to liaise with Reverend Laura Bushell Hawke to move the Health and Safety Signage forward as soon as possible.

24/24/25 TO SET THE FEES AND CHARGES FOR THE YEAR 2025/26 RECOMMENDING TO THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE.

The Finance Officer reported on the proposed amendments to the Fees and Charges for the year 2025/26.

Members discussed and debated the Fees and Charges for the year 2025/26.

It was proposed by Councillor Dent, seconded by Councillor B Samuels and resolved to **RECOMMEND** the Joint Burial Board Fees and Charges for the year 2025/26 as attached to the Policy and Finance Committee Meeting to be held on 12 November 2024.

25/24/25 TO SET THE JOINT BURIAL BOARD BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2025/26 RECOMMENDING TO THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE.

The Finance Officer worked through the budget statement for the year 2025/26 contained within the circulated reports pack.

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that the Property Maintenance Sub Committee have not yet inputted their figures into Budget Code BB EMF 6170 Repairs to Cemetery Wall from the meeting held on 28 October 2024.

Members discussed and debated the budget setting for the year 2025/26.

It was proposed by Councillor Bullock, seconded by Councillor B Samuels and resolved to **RECOMMEND** the Joint Burial Board Budget Statement for the year 2025/26 as attached to the Policy and Finance Committee Meeting to be held on 12 November 2024 subject to the Property Maintenance 5 Year Plan figures.

Operational Income:

1. Budget Code 4600 BB Cemetery Fees – to remain at £6,000. No further burials; only re-openings will be permitted;
2. Budget Code 4607 BB Memorial Bench Income to remain at £450 due to there being further capacity for Memorial Benches;

Operational Expenditure

3. To delete Budget Code 6103 BB Health and Safety as Health and Safety items are purchased by Policy and Finance for all sites. To vire unspent funds at the end of the financial year to Budget Code 6170 BB EMF General Maintenance;
4. To vire unspent funds at the end of the financial year from Budget Codes 6104 BB General Site Maintenance and 6108 BB Tree Survey and Tree Maintenance to Budget Code 6170 BB EMF General Maintenance;

BB – EMF Expenditure

5. Budget Code 6170 BB EMF Repairs to Cemetery Wall to be renamed BB EMF General Maintenance. Any funds left in unused budgets to remain in the EMF fund for future use;
6. Budget Code 6170 BB EMF General Maintenance – considered at the Property Maintenance Sub Committee held on 28 October 2024, figures are yet to be transferred.

26/24/25 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE P.C.C REGISTERING THE CHURCHYARD AS CLOSED AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.

Members discussed the report submitted by The Senior Policy and Data Compliance Monitoring Officer contained within the circulated reports pack.

The Town Clerk advised Members that until there is something more solid on the horizon than a consultation about a future recommendation, St Stephen's Church should proceed with the parameters of the current law.

It was proposed by Councillor B Samuels, seconded by B Jones and **RESOLVED** that PCC continue to proceed with the closure of the Churchyard which relates to Minute Number 11/24/25 reporting back at the next Joint Burial Board Committee Meeting.

27/24/25 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960:

To resolve that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press leave the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. (As required or if necessary).

28/24/25 TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE MAIN PART OF THE AGENDA.

None.

29/24/25 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960:

To resolve that the public and press be re-admitted to the meeting.

30/24/25 TO CONFIRM ANY PRESS AND SOCIAL MEDIA RELEASES ASSOCIATED WITH ANY AGREED ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE OF THE MEETING.

It was proposed by Councillor Peggs, seconded by Councillor B Samuels and **RESOLVED** to issue the following Press and Social Media release:

1. Law Commission Burial and Cremation Consultation 2024.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 25 February 2025 at 6.00 pm

Rising at: 4.24 pm

Signed: _____
Chairman

Dated: _____

Joint Burial Board Committee - Burial Board Budget 2024-25
Saltash Town Council
For the 10 months to 31 January 2025

Account	Prior YTD 2023/24	Budget Including Virements 2024/25	Actual YTD 2024/25	Budget Available 2024/25	Precept Budget 2025/26
Burial Board Operating Income					
4600 BB Cemetery Fees (St. Stephens)	7,185	8,863	7,010	1,853	6,000
4605 BB SLA Payment Grass Cutting	628	628	659	(31)	659
4607 BB Memorial Bench Income (St Stephens)	0	450	0	450	450
Total Burial Board Operating Income	7,813	9,941	7,669	2,272	7,109
Burial Board Operating Expenditure					
6100 BB Petrol	272	541	192	349	200
6101 BB Machinery Maintenance Costs	94	769	541	228	793
6103 BB Health & Safety	0	119	0	119	0
6104 BB General Site Maintenance	541	1,513	1,007	506	2,000
6108 BB Tree Survey & Tree Maintenance	2,650	3,914	480	3,434	4,032
6109 BB Memorial Bench (Expenditure)	0	376	0	376	388
Town & Waterfront Expenditure	0	0	0	(0)	0
Total Burial Board Operating Expenditure	3,557	7,232	2,221	5,011	7,413
Total Burial Board Operating Surplus/ (Deficit)	4,256	2,709	5,448	(2,739)	(304)
Burial Board EMF Expenditure					
6170 BB EMF Repairs to Cemetery Wall	15,763	3,023	0	3,023	3,000
Total Burial Board EMF Expenditure	15,763	3,023	0	3,023	3,000
Total Burial Board Expenditure (Operational & EMF)	19,320	10,255	2,221	8,034	10,413
Total Burial Board Budget Surplus/Deficit	(11,506)	(314)	5,448	(5,762)	(3,304)

Key
Spending is on target as predicted at this point in the financial year
Spending is higher than anticipated and needs to be monitored closely
Budget is overspent - requires investigation and recommend virement

Agenda Item 9

To receive a report from the Service Delivery Department and consider any actions and associated expenditure

Report to: Joint Burial Board (St Stephens Churchyard)

Date of Report: 19.2.2025

Officer Writing the Report: Services Delivery Manager

Officers Recommendations

Minute from previous committee meeting.

23/24/25 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE SERVICE DELIVERY DEPARTMENT AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.

Members received and discussed the Service Delivery Department report as contained within the circulated reports pack. It was proposed by Councillor Peggs, seconded by Councillor Dent and RESOLVED; 1. To note the report;

2. To approve the purchase of double entrance gates to the side entrance of the Churchyard, to be installed by the Service Delivery Team at a cost of £775.00 allocated to Budget Code 6104 General Site Maintenance;

3. To approve the Service Delivery Team to purchase and use the MossOff Chemical Free Product to help remove the moss across the pathways at the Churchyard at an approximate cost of £25 for 5 Litres allocated to Budget Code 6104 General Site Maintenance;

4. PCC Members to liaise with Reverend Laura Bushell Hawke to move the Health and Safety Signage forward as soon as possible.

1. Churchyard Gates.

We recently completed the replacement of the cemetery gates to the side entrance in Farm Lane of the churchyard. They are far more robust and now shut correctly making them much safer for the public to use. We also managed to come just under the budget as noted in the minutes. The doors will require preservative treatment during the summer and going forward to keep them from deteriorating. The team have received some nice comments from the public about the doors when they were working on site replacing them.



Members are asked to note the update.

2. Grass cutting & Moss Control

We have started with the grass cutting program maintaining the sections of the churchyard that are regularly visited including the ashes and children's ashes areas. This will also include maintaining the grass around the Church on a regular basis.

The older sections will receive a spring cut, then left to take on the wildflower meadow style look. We will cut pathways for access through and around these areas. This will also include the war graves and Fireman's graves when required.

The moss control has been purchased and will be carried out during some dryer weather over the next month so that the treatment can work correctly. We will treat areas most affected first.



Members are asked to note the update.

3. Uneven ground signs St Stephens Churchyard

We are still waiting on the approval of the Health & Safety signs via the PCC Members and the Reverend Laura Bushell Hawke (minute nr. 23/24/25). The request forms part of the Health and Safety for the churchyard. Upon approval the signs will then be placed at the entrances of the Churchyard.

The signs are 400m x 400m, details below.



PCC Members are asked as a matter of urgency to seek approval reporting back to Saltash Town Council. Due to the Town Council's site responsibility, should we not receive any form of communication from the PCC by the end of March the Health and Safety signs will be installed.

4. Headstone Survey

Once we have the approved signs in place, the PCC will need to inform the families of the survey taking place to avoid any upset if headstones are found to be unsafe. We will create a social media post to help inform those that visit the Churchyard.

Depending on what the survey confirms, unsafe headstones will be either laid down or stake and wrapped to support the headstone, and a notice placed on the headstone. We anticipate this to be done during the summer months.

The results of the survey will be issued to the PCC for managing accordingly.

[PCC Members are asked to arrange for the families to be informed of the summer headstone survey at their earliest opportunity and to manage the results of the survey when received.](#)

[JBB Members are asked to support a social media post under agenda item 15.](#)

5. General ground maintenance

The Department has already carried out some general maintenance with hedge trimming and the removal of ivy to the base of the larger trees around the boundary.

We are also investigating a possible water leak from one of the very old standpipes in the churchyard. This has made the ground area near the pipe extremely wet to the footpath. We have requested via the PCC/Warden for information or a plan showing the pipe layout. Once we have a better understanding, we can look at a way forward. We will then inform the JBB of the outcome at a following committee meeting.



There may be a requirement to dig a trench to find the pipe and repair the leak or remove this standpipe altogether or cap off the pipe and locate a new tap in a better location.

Any associated cost for this work will be reported at a following committee meeting.

PCC Members are asked to contact the Service Delivery Manager asap to find the best solution for this matter to be dealt with.

JBB Members are asked to note the update.

Signature of Officer:

Service Delivery Manager

To receive an update on the Law Commission Burial and Cremation Consultation
2024 and consider any actions.

Report to: Joint Burial Board Committee - 25 February 2025

Date of Report: 19 February 2025

Officer Writing the Report: Planning and General Administrator

Officers Recommendations:

Members to note the update on the Law Commission Burial and Cremation Consultation 2024.

Report Summary

Update from The Law Commission website www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/burial-and-cremation/

Current project status:

1. Initiation – complete
2. Pre-Consultation – complete
3. Consultation – complete
4. Policy Development – under review
5. Report – yet to be actioned

The Law Commission is seeking to reform the law of burial in England and Wales, which is piecemeal, complex and outdated. It is also gauging solutions for unresolved issues in cremation law.

We published a [consultation paper](#) and a [summary](#) on 3 October 2024, and the consultation closed on 9 January 2025. **We are now analysing responses before making our final recommendations to Government.**

The problem

Burial law is governed by a patchwork of legislation, some of which dates to the 1850s. There are different laws in place for burial grounds which are operated by local authorities, the Church of England, the Church in Wales, and private burial grounds. This complex picture has emerged as a result of different historical development, and it means that there are gaps in the safeguards which protect the dignity of the people who are buried in burial grounds.

Burial space is running out across England and Wales, with the situation worse in some urban areas. Grave reuse has been proposed as a solution to this problem, but reform to permit the reuse of graves must include sufficient safeguards to maintain public support.

Cremation law has been reformed more recently in 2017, but some issues remain unresolved. Concerns have been raised about entitlement to ashes, and what may be done with them.

There are also issues relating to the ownership of medical implants which are removed before cremation and relating to sets of ashes which have not been collected from funeral directors' premises.

Our review

This work is part of our overall Burial, Cremation and New Funerary Methods project, which has two other strands. Please see the link at the top of this page for more detail of the project's origins and scope.

The consultation paper

On 3 October 2024 we published a consultation paper containing our provisional proposals, and open questions on issues relating to law reform. The consultation paper and a summary of the consultation paper are available in the "documents" section of this page.

The consultation paper contained provisional proposals for reform on a number of issues, including:

- the regulation of burial grounds;
- grave reuse and reclamation;
- closed and disused burial grounds, and exhumation;
- the rights granted to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission; and
- cremation law.

Listen to Professor Nicholas Hopkins [discuss the consultation here](#).

Commonwealth war burials

There has been some media coverage which suggests that the Law Commission is proposing that Commonwealth war graves (graves of servicemen and women who died in the first and second world wars) should be reused. This is not the case.

Grave reuse is currently permitted by law in London local authority cemeteries, and a few cemeteries with their own private Acts of Parliament. In these cemeteries, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission must be notified before a burial ground operator seeks to reuse a grave, and has the power to object to the reuse of a Commonwealth war grave.

Our provisional proposals would include these same requirements in any extension of grave reuse. That would mean the Commonwealth War Graves Commission would be able to stop Commonwealth war graves being reused. Our provisional proposals would also give the Commonwealth War Graves Commission additional rights to enable them to protect Commonwealth war graves in other ways.

Our provisional proposals therefore seek to increase rather than decrease the protection available to Commonwealth war graves.

Next Steps

The consultation period for this sub-project closed on 9 January 2025. We will use the responses to the consultation to develop our final recommendations for reform, which ultimately will be published in a report. We expect the report will be published towards the end of 2025.

During our consultation period, we held events across the country and online to share information about our provisional proposals and give stakeholders a chance to ask questions to inform their consultation responses. These events were held in York, Cardiff, London, Birmingham and Bath, as well as two online events. We recorded one of these, the online event on the 2 December, and the video is embedded below

Signature of Officer:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the letters 'FRU' in a stylized, cursive font.