

BISHOP'S ITCHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of BIPC Complaints Committee Meeting Monday, 5 August 2024 at 7.00pm Bishop's Itchington Community Centre

Present

BIPC Complaints Committee:

Cllr David Howatson (chair); Cllr Amanda Colton; Cllr Orlaith Horsman

Committee clerk: Alison Biddle

Complainants: Cliff Young; Karin Young; accompanied by Steve Young

In attendance:

Cllr Chris Kettle (PC chair)

Cllr Alistair Lamont

Cllr Norman Thomas

Karen Stevens, Parish Clerk

Val Powell, Cemetery Manager

Members of the public: 2

1 Welcome & introduction

Cllr Howatson, as chairman of the committee, welcomed everyone and explained that this complaints committee had been convened to hear Mr and Mrs Young's complaint about the parish council's actions in respect of the inspection of memorials carried out at Bishop's Itchington Cemetery on 14 May 2024. He emphasised that the committee members had already spent some considerable time looking at the information provided to them prior to this evening's meeting.

2 Structure of the meeting

The purpose of this evening's meeting is to hear Mr and Mrs Young's personal representation and comments. Members of the parish council and officers will then be asked if they have anything to add. Following this, all attendees will be asked to leave for 30 minutes while the committee considers the complaint in private session. Attendees will then be recalled at the end of the 30 minutes to hear the committee's recommendations.

3 Complainants' representation

Karin Young, on behalf of herself and her husband Cliff Young, read out the following prepared statement outlining their reasons for making a formal complaint to the parish council:

While we fully appreciate the need for periodic safety inspections, our complaint is regarding the procedures and actions carried out to the memorial stones in Bishop's Itchington Cemetery on 14 and 17 May 2024.

We trust that the complaints committee will consider all the points raised in our complaint, including the detailed information in the pack we supplied to you on 29 July 2024.

Some of the key issues are:

- The parish council has not followed the advice and/or guidance notes published by the Ministry of Justice, ICCM or NAMM.*
- There is no written memorial safety policy as required under BS8415:2018.*
- The ICCM refers to an ongoing programme of inspections, not inspecting all the headstones in one visit but to decide on the priority of work based on the assessment of risk.*
- There was a lack of pre-planning for the memorial stone inspection on 14 May 2024 other than printing off the risk assessment and the site inspection report. The site inspection report is a completely different document to a memorial stone inspection report. The memorial stone inspection report relates to individual headstones and requires more detailed information.*
- We asked for the memorial stone inspection report for Scott's headstone on 21 May but this was not provided until 11 July, after we had requested FOI. This report does not record the correct or sufficient information.*
- There are no records available for any previous memorial stone inspections carried out.*
- There was a lack of training or, at best, inadequate training. We have been told that the cemetery manager undertook training in 2013 but there is no record available. Since 2013 there have been changes to the ICCM guidance (August 2019, NAMM Code of Working Practice (October 2018) and updated British Standard in 2018. It is still unclear whether the clerk had appropriate training as the PowerPoint detailing her training is dated 2017. ICCM guidance states that all those involved in the inspection process should have undertaken suitable training. We believe that Cllr Ogden has not received any training relating to memorial inspections.*
- No public announcements or notice were given to grave owners regarding the safety checks being carried out to the memorial stones, prior to commencement on Tuesday, 14 May 2024. The documents published by the Ministry of Justice and the ICCM guidelines stress how crucial and essential it is to communicate with grave owners and the local community.*
- There were no resources available on the day of testing, such as signage and stakes etc. This only left one option which was to lay down the memorial stones that failed*

the hand test. The decision to lay down the memorials was made prior to the testing starting, irrespective of the level of movement found. As it is considered to be an acceptable option to stake and bind the memorial stones since 17 May, this should have been considered appropriate on 14 May.

- *The Ministry of Justice, NAMM and ICCM give guidance on taking a sensible and proportionate approach to assessing and managing the risk, whereas the majority of the headstones laid down were classified as Priority 1. The ICCM, in response to the Ombudsman's Special Report on Memorial Safety, fully agrees that "Councils should have alternatives to laying down if a memorial fails the test". They agree that "authorities should adopt a flexible approach to avoid unnecessary distress to the bereaved".*
- *The Ministry of Justice states "Only when the memorial poses a significant risk, such as imminent collapse in a way that could lead to serious injury, does immediate action need to be taken to control the risk". The laying down of headstones should be a last resort.*

The parish council has not followed the guidance laid down in these documents.

We believe that the parish council had no statutory authority to reinstate the memorial stones onto their foundation on Friday, 17 May 2024. The clerk has now confirmed that this work was not discussed with or approved by the parish council prior to carrying out the work. Once again, no prior notice was given to grave owners before the reinstatement was undertaken.

It still remains unanswered under what statutory authority did the parish council carry out the work on 17 May 2024. Article 3 of the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 appears not to provide them with statutory authority, "other than action which is necessary to remove a danger". The parish council had already laid down the memorial stones in order to make them safe. They did not consider them to be a tripping hazard.

These are some of the key issues raised in our formal complaint and once again, we refer the complaints committee to our detailed documents in the information pack.

We believe that the information we have supplied for this meeting demonstrates that the actions taken were excessive, insensitive and maladministered. We expected honesty, openness and transparency from the parish council regarding what has happened and the subsequent ongoing complaint process.

This situation has caused us both deep personal distress and the way the complaint has been handled has prolonged and added to this distress.

Whilst our complaint relates primarily to Scott's headstone, our comments relate to all those affected.

End of statement.

The committee members had no questions regarding the complainants' statement.

4 The parish council's position

A written report of the events during and after the cemetery inspection on 14 May 2024 had been provided by the parish clerk along with a copy of the email correspondence between the parish council and the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management (ICCM) on 17 May 2024. These two documents, with their associated appendices, detail the council's position and can be found at Appendix A to these minutes.

5 Questions to clerk and councillors

The following questions were put to the clerk by members of the complaints committee:

- **How significant was the movement in the memorials tested?** The parish clerk replied that the hand test would have pushed them over. There were no alternatives but to lay the affected memorials down as there were so many of them and there were no other resources available. There was particular concern about the risk posed by the memorial for Scott Young; it is next to the path and has a teddy bear design which could be attractive to children. Also, because of the shape of its design, there was a further concern that if it had toppled over, the stone could have broken.
- **Did the ICCM practical training session the clerk had attended in 2021 just deal with the laying down of memorials or did it include staking and binding as well?** The clerk confirmed that the session had only covered the hand/push test and laying down.
- **Had the ICCM provided any updates to the training slides used in 2021?** No updates had been provided.
- **At what point did the parish clerk involve other members of the parish council on 14 May 2024 (in addition to Cllr Ogden who was already helping with the inspection)?** The clerk explained that when they realised that Scott Young's memorial was affected, the cemetery manager had phoned Cliff Young to explain what was happening. It was clear that Mr Young was extremely upset and at this point the clerk rang the parish council chairman, Cllr Kettle.
- **On 17 May 2024, when remedial works took place, was the parish clerk in agreement with this action?** The clerk responded that she was on leave on this date but would not have been confident about the reinstatement of the affected memorials.

The following questions were put to Cllr Kettle, the chairman of the parish council:

- **What made Cllr Kettle seek further advice and guidance?** Cllr Kettle explained that Mr and Mrs Young were very distressed so a memorial mason was called. He

visited the cemetery on 16 May and initially proposed to re-erect the stones but then changed his mind. Cllr Kettle then contacted the ICCM which is the parish council's training provider for cemetery management. The ICCM advised that staking and binding was an acceptable alternative method to laying down as long as the memorial could be made secure and those involved in the staking and binding were confident that there was a minimal risk of a memorial falling over. All parish councillors were informed of this advice by email. Councillors supported the recommendation from the ICCM and the required resources of stakes and binders (which were not available on the date of the inspection) were obtained. The parish clerk had no involvement in this; the clerk had been very upset by what had happened on the day of the inspection and had gone home immediately afterwards and therefore it didn't seem appropriate to contact her on a day when she was not on duty. Cllr Ogden and Cllr Lamont were both present and Cllr Kettle saw this as a continuation of the same process to make the cemetery safe. He did not receive any comments about this from any other councillors.

- **Did the parish council have the authority to act as it did?** Cllr Kettle stated that the parish council had not authorised the inspection on the 14 May 2024; it was an exercise carried out by the clerk and cemetery manager which was supported by those councillors who are portfolio holders for the cemetery. Mr and Mrs Young were very distressed and it was possible that other families could also be distressed. The ICCM's recommendation to stake and bind the memorials would make them safe while minimising the impact on families.
- **Why were efforts not made to inform the Youngs and other families formally of the reinstatement of the memorials on the Friday following the inspection?** Cllr Kettle said he did not have Mrs Young's telephone number but she was present in the cemetery on the day and he was able to explain to her verbally what was happening and therefore she was made aware before her son's memorial was reinstated.

6 Final comments

- **Clerk** – no further comments.
- **Councillors**

Cllr Kettle stated that approx 40 memorials had been laid down. A number of families had already offered to have their memorials repaired. The clerk had explained to them the requirement for them to be fixed in accordance with current NAMM standards (National Association of Memorial Masons).

Cllr Lamont questioned the distinction between what constitutes a standard which must be adhered to and what is just guidance for memorials. He also believed that any work in the cemetery should only be carried out by the parish council and not by members of the public.

- **Complainant**

Karin Young stated that she was in the cemetery by chance on the Friday when the memorials were reinstated. She had not been asked for her permission to reinstate Scott's memorial; Cllr Kettle had told her this was best way forward as recommended by the ICCM. She had previously tried to telephone Cllr Kettle but the number shown on the PC's website is incorrect. If she had been able to contact him, Cllr Kettle would have been aware that she did not give her permission.

Cliff Young questioned whether the PC had the statutory authority to touch the memorials. He had also spoken to a memorial mason who did not think that the testing had been carried out correctly. Also, who has the certificates for manual handling training? The clerk had told him that she had. He had to stop work when he received the news about Scott's memorial because he was so upset; he thought the memorial had been vandalised.

Steve Young expressed doubts about the training provided for cemetery inspections which doesn't seem to have included the latest BS standards at the time. It appears that the cemetery manager's last training course was in 2013. He also believes that the inspection could/should be carried out over a longer period of 12 to 18 months so that it is an ongoing programme of work. The ICCM suggests that a cemetery could be broken down into sections to make it easier. He also notes that even the worst category (as defined by the ICCM), can be staked and bound.

Cliff Young raised questions about the previous inspection records which he has been told are locked on an old computer so are not accessible. It should be possible to access them.

Karin Young quoted the ICCM which states that anyone involved in the inspection should have received appropriate training. Cllr Ogden had clearly not had any training so shouldn't be a portfolio holder for the cemetery. Cliff Young added that he felt Cllr Ogden should resign.

Karin Young asked about the individual report relating to Scott's memorial. There is no detail recorded, it's just a tally.

In conclusion, Karin Young read the following prepared statement:

In our opinion we feel the actions Bishop's Itchington Parish Council took on Tuesday 14 and Friday 17 May 2024 at the cemetery were ill-advised, excessive and insensitive and do not comply with British Standards, codes of working practice and various guidelines.

Bishop's Itchington Parish Council

- *did not provide pre-inspection notifications or have effective communication with the local community;*

- *does not have a written memorial safety policy, as required under BS8415:2018, which should include inspections, assessments and actions;*
- *does not have adequate site risk assessments or method statements to carry out the actual work;*
- *has not reviewed the cemetery/churchyard risk assessments since October 2014;*
- *has not completed a health and safety site inspection since 14 June 2011;*
- *did not prioritise the memorial stones most at risk or assess the risk posed by the memorial stones properly;*
- *did not set a realistic time scale for the inspections and subsequent making safe of the memorial stones;*
- *did not have sufficient resources or signage available on 14 May 2024 to stake and bind the memorial stones;*
- *did not provide adequate training for those carrying out the inspection on 14 May and subsequent reinstatement on 17 May 2024;*
- *laid memorial stones flat without considering all the options available in order to make them safe;*
- *did not provide post inspection notifications to all memorial stone holders;*
- *does not have a workable, satisfactory and clear plan of what to do next after a memorial stone has been laid down;*
- *does not have adequate record keeping including detailed inspection records for 14 May 2024, or previous inspections;*
- *has not followed the guidance laid out in the ICCM Management of Memorials document or the Ministry of Justice document;*
- *did not have the statutory authority required to undertake work to the memorial stones on 17 May 2024;*
- *provided misleading and inaccurate information during the complaint process.*

In our formal complaint email to the clerk , dated 23 June 2024, we have identified the actions we feel are required in order to resolve our complaint.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the complaints committee for giving up their time to listen to and consider our complaint.

End of statement.

Cliff Young wanted to make it clear that he is not an abusive person, but he had been very upset by what had happened and he has since apologised to both the parish clerk and to the cemetery manager. He emphasised that his complaint is not about money but about people doing their jobs properly.

Finally, Cllr Howatson said that Mr Young's apology was taken as read. He could not conceive what Mr and Mrs Young had been through. He hoped that smart lessons would be learned and that Mr and Mrs Young would feel reassured by the end of this process.

7 Private recess

Attendees were asked to leave the meeting at 8.00pm while the complaints committee considered what they had heard this evening in addition to the information already provided. Attendees will be recalled in 30 minutes.

8 Adjournment for specialist advice

It was not necessary to adjourn the meeting for specialist advice.

9 Recommendations to full council and complainants

Attendees were recalled to the meeting at 8.30pm.

Cllr Howatson explained that he was going to read out a statement of the committee's findings and recommendations to the parish council. He asked for Mr and Mrs Young's patience while he read the following statement:

Statement & Recommendations of BIPC Complaints Committee

The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI 1977 No 204) is relevant to the carrying out of cemetery management. It gives the parish council power as a burial authority under the heading of 'General powers of management':

"3. (1) Subject to the provisions of this order, a burial authority may do all such things as they consider necessary or desirable for the proper management, regulation and control of a cemetery."

This includes making safe memorials as part of an ongoing risk assessment regime.

The parish council as a burial authority has responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and various Regulations made under the provisions of the Act, and the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957 to ensure the cemetery is maintained in a safe condition. The Bishop's Itchington Cemetery Rules and Regulations give further local authority and guidance, on the council's duty of care to visitors, on memorial maintenance and on maintaining the safety of the cemetery,

Together all these give the parish council the authority to carry out any work they deem necessary to make the cemetery safe for anyone visiting the cemetery.

Memorials themselves are the responsibility of the grave owners, who are responsible for maintaining them in a safe condition. Memorial masons are responsible for erecting memorials safely and in accordance with the various consumer legislation. Masons are responsible for erecting memorials in accordance with current standards.

Notwithstanding the above, it is the burial authority that is prosecuted where accidents involving memorials are concerned, even though they do not belong to them, thus this overarching responsibility to make sure that cemeteries are safe for staff to work in and people to visit.

We are all agreed and satisfied that that the parish council had the appropriate authority to carry out the work initiated on the 14th through to the 17th May 2024.

Given the above, the background to this affair is the need to carry out an inspection of the cemetery at least every 5 years – this would be related to the resources available to the council. A large municipal authority with large resources would be able to carry out inspections more frequently than a small parish council with limited resources .

An inspection can be carried out more frequently, but every five years is the maximum period between inspections. The cemetery risk assessments were reviewed by the parish council in 2011 and 2014 but it is unclear whether there were physical inspections. No records exist. There does not seem to be any evidence of an agreed calendar of inspections carried out of the Bishop's Itchington Cemetery. The last inspection of the cemetery took place in 2019, though there is no record in existence. No inspections were carried out during the period of the pandemic. An inspection planned for 2022 did not take place because of the illness of one of the parties to the planned inspection.

The parish council has been seriously undermanned for some time, (there should be 10 councillors, and it has been operating with four vacancies for some time). It is only recently that the council has been up to full strength and as a result the council decided to review and re-allocate the various work areas, also called portfolio areas, that make up the council's various responsibilities. The role of the portfolio holders is to provide assistance to the clerk and council as a whole in progressing their particular work area. It is an accepted way of spreading the workload across the council. It is worth noting that the parish councillors are volunteers giving up their time to assist the running of aspects of the community. As stated above, the council has been short of councillors for some time. The clerk is also part-time. One of the portfolio areas is that of the cemetery and churchyard, and it was agreed that Councillors Ogden and Lamont were allocated to this portfolio, and they agreed to take this on.

The clerk, as the council's Responsible Officer, given that the last cemetery Inspection appeared to have taken place in 2019, decided that an inspection should take place. The inspection would be carried out by the clerk herself, Val Powell (cemetery manager since 2013), and Cllr Selena Ogden, one of the councillor portfolio holders. The clerk had attended a training course in June 2022¹, run by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM). The cemetery manager had attended a similar course in the past, but

1. See parish clerk's answers at minute ref 5 above. Date clerk attended training now confirmed as 2021.

there is no record of the date. The ICCM course is a combination of theory and practice, with an opportunity to work in a cemetery.

The Ministry of Justice document, "Managing the Safety of Burial Ground Memorials" gives some practical advice for dealing with unstable memorials. It recommends a risk based and proportionate approach to managing memorials. The approach should be integrated into the operator's (burial authority) overall burial ground management regime. There is further advice and guidance contained in the ICCM "Management of Memorials" This also confirms that the approach should be based on risk assessment. It defines a dangerous or unstable memorial " as one that will move and continue to fall to the ground with the exertion of a force of 25Kg or less". The ICCM document seems flawed in that 25KG is a mass and not a force - but I will return to that.

All the guidance, including that from the MoJ and ICCM stresses the importance of good communication of the inspection and assessment process. There is no getting away from the fact that just focussing on the risk and safety of memorials alone has the potential to lead to distress.

The 14th May inspection started and proceeded without giving advance notice or communicating with the community. The basis for this decision was that this had "never been done with previous inspections and the inspections were dependent on the weather being conducive to undertaking the inspection." With the benefit of hindsight, that was an unfortunate course of action. Whilst the decision was taken with the best of intentions taking into account precedent and the possibility of inclement weather, it is one of the issues at the core of the complaint.

We (the complaints committee) are collectively concerned that the work proceeded in the absence of a clear cemetery detailed plan of what should take place before, during and after the inspection and assessment. During previous inspections, any unstable headstones/memorials were laid down. This should be a last resort - something that was brought out at the training but is also brought out in the other advice source referred to above. The clerk was aware that an intermediate step in the process was "binding and staking" memorials, but both she and the cemetery manager felt they were not "competent to undertake this to an appropriate level to prevent damage to the memorials and reduce/eliminate the risk to anyone attending the cemetery".

It would seem that the ICCM training referred to the step solution to dealing with memorials. It dealt with the theory of the 'stake and binding' solution but the practical training focused on laying down a memorial as a temporary measure to avoid any potential health and safety risk until a solution/repair could be made. This in itself seems to introduce a new hazard, a trip hazard. Was the training itself flawed and incomplete? The team on the 14th certainly embarked on an exercise where the predestined outcome was going to be laying down any memorials that were deemed to be unsafe. There was no clear pre organised plan to take account of the potential routes to making safe any memorials found not to be 'safe' on the day and it follows that any essential equipment was not available to the team on the day of the inspection.

Given “that there was no expectation of large numbers of unsafe memorials being found”, the question arises as to why, when the exercise got to, say, a dozen laid down memorials, why the team did not take stock and give consideration to the way the exercise was being carried out. It must be an issue to consider as to how proportional and individual each assessment was, and the time scale - the whole exercise was carried out in less than an afternoon?

It seems however that the team, having started on the exercise, decided, understandably that the only way to ensure the safety of the whole cemetery was to proceed until they got to the end, which was a total of 50. There is a question as to the correct figure, with some reference to 40 and also 50.

Those memorials laid down included the memorial of Scott Young, which has led to the complaint, this hearing and a considerable amount of distress.

We are satisfied, that there was no ill intent on behalf of those completing the risk assessment and inspection, and we believe that there was concern about the impact the outcome would have on memorial owners, and the cemetery manager’s telephone call to Mr & Mrs Young is indicative of this. However, this does not outweigh the fact that much of what followed could have been avoided by the adoption of a carefully worked out plan which included a suitable communication strategy in advance.

On the 14th of May, when Mr & Mrs Young had received the telephone call to tell them what had happened, Mr C Young, made his way to the cemetery to see for himself the outcome of the inspection exercise.

In the meantime, the clerk informed the PC chairman, asking him to meet Mr Young. The chairman informed the vice chairman and they both agreed to attend the cemetery. Up until this point neither had any knowledge of the inspection.

In attendance at the cemetery on the late afternoon of the 14th had been Mr C Young, the clerk, the cemetery manager, Cllr Ogden, the chairman and vice chairman.

Mr Young was understandably distressed; I will return to that later. I believe that there was, some shouting, acknowledged in the bundle at Tab3 page 10. This was directed at both the staff and councillors. Apologies have been made to the clerk and cemetery manager, (see above), but not to the councillors involved, who after all were unaware of anything relating to the inspection until they received the call from the clerk.

The three of us here just cannot begin to conceive the distress caused during the history of what has happened to Scott Young; we have only learned of these in our consideration of this complaint.

Some of the exchanges at the cemetery on the 14th May referred to ‘legal action’. In that situation and because the parish council is a representative public body, any subsequent actions by the council would have had to be made with this in mind. This would have led to delay because of the need to carry out appropriate consultations with insurers and others. Unfortunately, that inevitably leads to delay, none of which was deliberate.

What happened on the following days is difficult to work out, in particular who was in touch with who. The clerk met a memorial mason, a Mr Davies on the 16th, accompanied by the vice chairman to seek advice about re-instating the memorials, but nothing came of that. In the meantime, the chairman was in discussion with the ICCM about a temporary solution of staking and binding to support the memorials. The email from the Chairman to the ICCM gives a temporary solution to the reinstating of the memorials by staking and binding. Accordingly, a working group was set up on Friday, 17th May to carry out this task. We believe that the actions of staking and binding the memorials is still within the authority granted to the parish council as the burial authority and this was again done with the best of intentions. There was no need for approval of the full council, the authority would derive from the devolved responsibility to the portfolio holder(s). As we understand the circumstances, Mrs Young was informed what was to happen, that Scott's memorial would be 'staked and bound', but no consent was sought or given.

I return to the question of the 25Kg 'force' mentioned in the ICCM guidance in order to try and contextualise the exercise that took place on the 14th. 25Kg is a substantial weight - in reality more than most airline baggage weight limits. If we imagine the effort required to lift a 25 Kg mass, then the memorials would have been laid down with a lesser force.

The complainants have raised questions about a notice, Tab 5 page 2 - the notice placed on the notice board announcing that the inspection had taken place, suggesting some sinister intent to mislead. My understanding is that this notice was prepared in a hurry using a previous template which has the date of the 8th of May. I am content with that explanation and the council had nothing to gain by posting an incorrect date.

Taking all the above into account and also bearing in mind that as far as we have been made aware there have been no further adverse reactions to the exercise that took place on the 14th we make the following recommendations

- *An apology to be made in writing to the Youngs from the parish council recognising within it that the lack of communication, the poor decision making, and execution caused them significant and unnecessary distress.*
- *Scott's memorial to be reinstated in full consultation with and to the satisfaction of Mr & Mrs Young, at the parish council's expense.*
- *If there are any outstanding questions, these should be answered in full and within a reasonable time frame to be agreed between the Youngs and the council.*
- *The council should continue to identify family contacts and communicate what has happened to all affected families.*
- *Any future risk assessments and inspections of the cemetery should be publicised in advance and carried out in accordance with published good practice.*

- *The parish council should reflect on the matters that have taken place and learn lessons moving forward and address any dysfunctionality within the council, particularly with respect to communication and collaborative working*
- *The cemetery manager and portfolio holders should devise and work up a thorough and detailed memorial management policy. This will include details of the required training of those employed to undertake future risk assessments, the communication policy required, a detailed risk assessment, action and exit planning protocol. Recording policy detailing what information is to be kept, how it will be recorded and where records will be stored.*
- *We recommend that the next inspection be led by either an employee or member of the council who has completed the recommended City and Guilds qualification (NAMM) approved safety inspection and assessment of memorials OR that a specialist agent is employed to complete this assessment.*
- *The council should engage a specialist to assess the current state of the cemetery to determine whether there is an underlying environmental issue such as groundwater or drainage that is leading to the instability of such a high number of memorials, or whether there is an issue with the standards that have been in place by any particular stone masons as per BS8415:2018 required standards so that action can be taken to lessen the likelihood of this happening again. (Contact has been made with NAMM to assess the feasibility of this, an answer is awaited)*
- *A site plan and action plan to be in place with works/timescale and costs agreed.*
- *All work undertaken to be by an approved NAMM accredited stonemason.*
- *Consideration to be given to a move over to the BRAMM scheme of accreditation which is considered under NAMM's codes of working practice to be highest level approval of memorial stone masons.*
- *Annual risk assessments to take place until the scale of the problem is identified and suitably addressed. Interim reviews of the current remedial works to be in place and recorded appropriately.*
- *Deeds to be re-written for future memorial owners to include full details about the rights and responsibilities of memorial owners and the parish council, making clear the expectation that memorial owners will have owners' insurance.*
- *Cemetery rules and regulations to be updated and made public on the parish council website.*
- *All memorials assessed as unsafe within this risk assessment to have permanent fixes made. Repairs completed to BS8415:2018 standards, repairs to be certified and copies of the certificates entered onto an appropriate database for future reference. On this occasion alone, because of the extraordinary circumstances, the costs will be*

met by the parish council. (This decision has already been taken by the council in respect of the 14th May inspection).

- *Families to be asked for their consent for their information to be retained for contact purposes on the parish council secure database.*

End of statement

Having listened to the full statement and recommendations of the complaints committee, the complainants responded with the following comments:

- Cllr Lamont is not listed on the parish council's website as a portfolio holder for the cemetery.
- There is still a discrepancy regarding the date of the training course attended by the clerk.
- To clarify, Steve Young and Cliff Young were not at the cemetery at the same time on the 14th May 2024.
- Cliff Young remains very unhappy about the actions taken on 17th May to reinstate Scott's memorial without his permission.

Cllr Howatson explained that the committee's recommendations will be put to the parish council for approval and adoption at the next full council meeting on Monday, 2 September 2024.

The meeting closed at 9.08pm.