



Stanway

Parish Council

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ITEM 21b

To **DEBATE** the Corporate Governance's Review (Stage 2) update from 12th May 2021 meeting (previously circulated), including to **CONSIDER** the idea of the burial ground operating outside of a committee

The following questions and points have been raised by the Deputy Clerk in response to the above as The Corporate Governance Committee requested a full and complete debate from both sides of the discussion:-

Before any changes are made may I suggest the following be taken into consideration:

1. It is important to make SPC fully compliant in its current practice. This will not happen until Amanda Ward, as Clerk to this committee has access to the office filing cabinet, to undertake all the outstanding filing and check that all the records already held on file meet all legal obligations.
2. By asking Asst. Clerk to take full responsibility for the Burial Ground it is important that she has undertaken all necessary training. This may take some time so if restructuring does take place it should be a gradual process and not with immediate effect.
3. Colin Lax is the only person with the skill set and proper understanding/training to measure out the graves. Will Asst. Clerk be expected to take on this role too as part of her responsibilities?
4. If Asst. Clerk (as the Burial Ground Proper Officer) is unavailable, who will cover for her? She will not always be able to attend every burial, so presumably she will have a deputy.
5. Who will Asst. Clerk be reporting to if it is not a specialist committee/councillors?
6. The councillors, working as a corporate entity, have collective responsibility for all decisions made by the council. Proper Officers are the employees of the council making decisions on their behalf.
7. By having Asst. Clerk working on her own without being hampered by reporting to a committee, how will an audit trail be established? Who will sign off on decisions? Who has final responsibility?

My recommendation remains as before, that the Burial Ground Committee should be set up as a stand-alone committee, and report only to Full Council, as the other existing committees.