

**Minutes of a meeting of the VC Stone Working Party
held on Wednesday 16th October 2019 at 9.30am
in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham**

Present: Councillors John Boyd, Paul Field and Owen Jeffery.

In attendance: Naomi Mildenhall (Services Manager)

VCSWP/2019/01 ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN
Councillor Paul Field was elected as Chairman.

VCSWP/2019/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
There were no apologies for absence, Councillor Boyd joined the meeting at 9.45am.

VCSWP/2019/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Councillor Jeffery declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of the Memorial Hall.

VCSWP/2019/04 TERMS OF REFERENCE
To agree Terms of Reference for the Working Party,

To consider all matters relating to the relocation of the VC Stones and make recommendations to the Recreation and Amenities Committee as appropriate.

Quorum: The quorum shall be a minimum of two of the elected members.
the Terms of Reference

AGREED

VCSWP/2019/05 VC STONES
A number of locations were discussed including: Memorial Hall, Original Houses of the Recipients, Broadway on a plinth or new location and St Mary's Church.

Councillor Boyd joined the meeting.

The Memorial Hall Foundation had been approached in principle and the response was that it would be inappropriate; 2 of the 3 recipients of the Victoria Cross had not died during the actions that led to their award for gallantry, the one that did already had his sacrifice recorded on the war memorial. The war memorial was a focus of reflection and sorrow for those who paid the ultimate price, to record an act of gallantry, after which the recipient lived for 30 years would cut across its sanctity. They agreed that the Foundation would expect Thatcham Town Council to do a full consultation to prove it was the will of the general public, families of the recipients and the regimental association. The paving slabs would not be accepted until work was being carried out to renovate the garden. Councillor Jeffery informed the Working Party that the timeline for that work was likely to be at least three to four years.

AGREED to consult with the public over the coming two-week period on potential new locations through Council Surgery and actively engaging within the Broadway at various times.

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VCSWP/2019/05 Continued

Further discussion was given to temporarily protecting the stones however due to being part of the pavement there were no way to do this without causing a trip hazard. Concerns were raised over the likelihood of damage if they were moved.

AGREED to get quotes for replacements in advance of moving them so they could immediately be put on order if required.

VCSWP/2019/06 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE RECREATION AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE

AGREED no recommendations at this time.

VCSWP/2019/07 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11th November 9.30am

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.30am

Signed: _____ Date: _____