

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Joint Committee held in the Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth on Monday 14 December 2015 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Keith Evans

Gosport Borough Council

Councillor Alan Scard
Councillor Dennis Wright

Havant Borough Council

Councillor Tony Briggs (Chairman)

Portsmouth City Council

Councillor Ken Ellcome

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Sue Bell (Fareham BC), Councillor David Guest (Havant BC), Councillor Robert New (Portsmouth CC), and Ashley Humphrey (Horticultural Consultant)

661. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 6612)

662. Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 September 2015 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 14 September 2015 be signed as a correct record.

663. Matters Arising from the Minutes not specifically referred to on the Agenda (AI 4)

664. CLERK'S ITEMS (AI 5)

665. Finance Strategy and Budget for 2016/17 (AI 6)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

The Joint Committee was reminded that the Finance Strategy was last approved in December 2014. This set out the principles on which the strategy had been compiled, together with risks and other aspects of the financial management framework that the Crematorium operated in.

The Deputy Treasurer explained that the report included an updated Finance Strategy which provided added assurance to the Joint Committee and to the constituent authorities that sound and effective arrangements are in place to manage the Crematorium's finances. In considering the report particular mention was made of Treasury Management and the investment of any surplus funds; budgetary control and monitoring, and the Crematorium's overall financial position.

RESOLVED (1) that the Finance Strategy 2016/17, attached as Appendix A to the Treasurer's report, be approved;

(2) that the Finance Strategy 2016/17 be sent to the four constituent authorities to note for their information.

666. Revenue Budget Report - 2016/17 (AI 7)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

Members gave consideration to the Treasurer's report which set out the revenue budget and repairs and renewals programme for 2015/16 and 2016/17, together with a review of fees and charges. The revised capital works programme for 2015/16 and future years had also been included for consideration at Appendix E to the report.

In considering the report and in response to questions, the following main points arose –

- The reduction in the number of cremations during 2014/15 was less than originally anticipated, with a consequent less than expected reduction in income;
- The proposed cremation fee for 2016/17 of £560 (a £10 increase over 2015/16) was well below the average fee nationally and locally;
- A new 'walk through' cremation fee of £400 was proposed for introduction in 2016/17;
- Further explanation of the revised and base budget variations and the ways and means by which budget monitoring was undertaken.

RESOLVED (a) That expenditure of £115,000 in 2016/17 to be financed from the repairs and renewals fund as detailed in Appendix D to the report be approved;

(b) That the capital works programme as detailed in Appendix E be approved;

(c) That the proposed charges as set out in Appendices B and C to the report be approved from 1 April 2016;

(d) That the revenue account estimates as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved;

(e) That the Treasurer writes to the Leader of each constituent authority to advise them of the reduction in the annual payment to be received from the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee in 2015/16 and 2016/17, and the reduction in 2017/18.

667. Portchester Crematorium Accounts Certification Work 2014/15 (AI 8)

(TAKE IN INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 1047)

The Joint Committee was advised that the Internal Audit final report no. 1047 covered the findings arising from the work carried out to support the 2014/15 certificate.

In considering the report and in response to questions, the following main points arose –

- The arrangements to ensure evidence of value for money testing especially in respect of long standing suppliers;
- Invoice payment and budget monitoring.

RESOLVED that the report be received and the recommendations made and action taken be noted.

668. Engineer and Surveyor's Report - Planned Maintenance and Building Works Progress Report (AI 9)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

In submitting his report the Engineer and Surveyor drew particular attention to the progress made with the scheme for the refurbishment and remodelling of the South Chapel. This work had now been completed and photographs showing the chapel were shown to the Joint Committee. The Engineer and Surveyor explained that the officers in conjunction with the architect were now looking at replacing the curtains with a different coloured material, and this approach was supported by members.

Arrangements would be made for members to visit the Crematorium upon completion of all the work, and for appropriate publicity including an item in each local authority magazine.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

669. Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 10)

(a) General Report

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

The Manager and Registrar reported on the overall number of cremations that would take place during the current calendar year, which was likely to be about 3,308 - broadly in line with 2014.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

(b) Any other items of topical interest

(i) Grounds Clearance –

The Manager and Registrar reminded the Joint Committee of its long standing policy against the provision of permanent memorials and that it was left to him to arrange periodic clearance of personal objects left in the grounds. The Manager and Registrar explained that the frequency of clearance would be increased to every 3 months and in accordance with established practice notice of removal would be posted in the grounds. Members endorsed the action being taken.

RESOLVED that the increased frequency of grounds clearance action being taken by the Manager and Registrar be endorsed.

670. Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 11)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

Dave Stribling (in the absence of the Horticultural Consultant) presented the report.

RESOLVED that the report be received and approved.

671. Portchester Crematorium - Logo (AI 12)

Consideration was given to a report advising that work had commenced on improving the image and navigation of the Crematorium's web site. As part of this the report suggested that now would be an ideal time to adopt a logo that could become an integral part of the web site theme and image for the crematorium including use on literature. Three sample logos were submitted for consideration, and after discussion members agreed to support Logo B.

RESOLVED that Logo B be approved for adoption for Portchester Crematorium.

672. Date of Next Meeting - Monday 14 March 2016 at 2pm in Havant (AI 13)

RESOLVED that it be noted that the next meeting of the Joint Committee will be at 2pm on Monday 14 March 2016 in the Civic Offices, Havant.

The meeting concluded at 2.31 pm.

Chairman

JH/me
15 December 2015
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