

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Joint Committee held in the Collingwood Room, Civic Offices, Fareham on Monday 17 June 2013 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Leslie Keeble

Gosport Borough Council

Councillor Christopher R Carter (standing deputy)
Councillor Dennis Wright

Havant Borough Council

Councillor Mike Fairhurst

Portsmouth City Council

Councillor Hugh Mason
Councillor Jason Fazackarley

Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Councillor Peter Edgar (Gosport Borough Council), Councillor Keith Evans (Fareham BC), Councillor David Collins (Havant BC), engaged on other council business, and Andy Wannell, the Treasurer to the Joint Committee.

Welcome and Introductions

Councillor Mike Fairhurst (Havant BC), and Councillor Christopher Carter (Gosport BC) were welcomed to the meeting.

515 Appointment of Chairman (AI 2)

RESOLVED that Councillor Hugh Mason (Portsmouth City Council) be appointed Chairman for the 2013/14 municipal year.

(Councillor Hugh Mason in the Chair)

516 Appointment of Vice-Chairman (AI 3)

RESOLVED that Councillor Leslie Keeble (Fareham Borough Council) be appointed vice-chairman for the 2013/14 municipal year.

517 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 4) - None

518 Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 March 2013 (AI 5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 11 March 2013 be signed as a correct record.

519 Matters Arising from the Minutes not specifically referred to on the Agenda (AI 6)

The Clerk referred to Minute 507 and mentioned that arrangements had now been made to give a presentation to Gosport Borough Council's Scrutiny Board at 5pm on Wednesday 17 July at the Crematorium, to include a tour of the facilities.

Any members of the Joint Committee wishing to see the presentation would be welcome to attend.

520 Clerk's Items (AI 7) - None

521 Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee – Annual Report - 2012/13 (AI 8)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE CLERK TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE)

Arising from discussion, reference was made to the future opening of a new crematorium at Bartons Road, Havant. Members were advised that the latest public information indicated the facility, to be operated privately by Southern Co-operative, was due to open in autumn 2013. There would be a further update report at the next Joint Committee meeting.

RESOLVED that the annual report for the 2012/13 financial year be noted and received and it be sent for information to each constituent authority.

522 Internal Audit Plan 2013/14 to 2017/18 (AI 9)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

Elaine Hammell, Head of Audit and Assurance at Fareham BC, presented this report. In doing so members were reminded that Fareham BC was responsible for dealing with the financial administration related to the activities of the Joint Committee, including the provision of internal audit services, and reporting on them to the Joint Committee.

Councillor Keeble explained that although a member of Fareham BC's Audit and Governance Committee he did not, as a member of that committee, see reports on the crematorium, unless they had been called in for scrutiny.

RESOLVED (1) that the plan of internal audit work set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved;

(2) that the Treasurer to the Joint Committee be given delegated authority to make minor changes to the coverage within the number of audit days agreed; any such change(s) to be reported to the following Joint Committee meeting after the change.

523 Risk Management (AI 10)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

In presenting this report, the Deputy Treasurer drew particular attention to the risk registers that had been reviewed, and to a set of proposed financial regulations that had been prepared to bring together and clarify existing practices and arrangements.

In response to questions from members, the following main points arose –

- In respect of Operational Risk 12 – Car parking - It was explained that the capacity of the existing car parks had been calculated and designed following a traffic management survey.
- In respect of the three risk categories (High, Medium, and Low) used in the risk registers – some members enquired as to the form of quantitative assessment that had been used to allocate a category to each risk. The Deputy Treasurer explained the background and that previously a matrix system had been used to identify and score each risk element before arriving at a final assessment. The officers forming the Crematorium Governance Assurance group had now reviewed the previous assessments before settling each current risk category set out in the appendices to the report. In response to a request from some members, the Deputy Treasurer undertook to circulate to members for the next meeting the background matrix information in respect of each risk.
- The Deputy Treasurer noted that ‘Insufficient chapel space’ should be assessed and added as an additional risk.
- Following completion of the mercury abatement project (which had been the subject of separate risk assessments) any related issues would now be subsumed into Operational Risk 6 – ‘Cremators cease to function’.

RESOLVED (1) that the Risk Management Strategic Framework and Policy as set out in Appendices A & B of the report be approved;

(2) that the revised Strategic and Operational Risk Registers set out in Appendices C & D to the report be approved;

(3) that the Financial Regulations set out in Appendix E to the report be approved.

(4) that the Treasurer makes available to members the matrix information used to identify, assess and score each risk.

524 Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement 2012/13 (AI 11)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

525 Annual Return for the Financial Year Ended 31 March 2013 (AI 12)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

RESOLVED that the Annual Return for the financial year ending 31 March 2013 be approved and signed as appropriate, as follows -

- (a) Section 1 - Accounting Statements for Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee be approved and signed;**
- (b) Section 2 - Annual Governance Statement be approved and signed;**
- (c) Section 4 - Annual Internal Audit Report be noted.**

526 Engineer and Surveyor's Report - Planned Maintenance Programme - Progress Report (AI 13)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

527 Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 14)

(a) General Statistical Report

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

In submitting the report, the Manager and Registrar drew particular attention to the large number of cremations undertaken during the 5 months to the end of May 2013 (2,020) compared with similar periods in previous years (1,781 in 2012; and 1,784 in 2011). He also confirmed that the average gas consumption was 71cu.m per cremation.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

(b) Any other items of topical interest

In response to questions, the Manager and Registrar explained that the cremation fee at Portchester (currently £520 per annum) was considerably less than other crematoria in the area. It was not known what level of charges would be introduced at the new Havant crematorium (The Oaks).

NOTED

528 Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 15)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

In presenting his report, the Horticultural Consultant explained that the rose beds by the Brian Kidd summer house were now flowering better than expected. Those few trees that had been felled would not be replaced thereby allowing space for other trees to continue to develop and grow.

RESOLVED that the report be received and approved.

529 Crematorium Mercury Abatement Project (AI 16)

(a) Maximising the Benefit of Mercury Abatement Plant

(TAKE IN REPORT FROM THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

Following consideration of the report and in response to questions, members were hopeful the work proposed could be undertaken at an early date.

RESOLVED (1) that the proposal outlined by Pope Consulting Ltd to incorporate the mercury abatement heat exchangers into the existing Crematorium building heating systems be approved;

(2) that approval be given for an additional £28,500 capital scheme in the current financial year.

(b) General Report

The Engineer and Surveyor explained that following completion of this project last year some minor works were currently being undertaken to the roof level fan system.

The Joint Committee was advised that at present it was still understood CAMEO (Crematoria Abatement of Mercury Emissions Organisation), of which Portchester was a member, was likely to start trading from 2014 onwards. Under CAMEO's 'burden sharing' scheme crematoria that had carried out abatement would receive payments financed by those crematoria that had decided not to abate.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(c) Appointment of Member Representative to serve on the Project Review Board

The Clerk explained that although the project had been completed there might be some residual matters that could require attention and it would therefore be appropriate to re-appoint a member to serve on the Review Board.

RESOLVED that Councillor Hugh Mason be appointed the member representative to serve on the Project Board.

530 Energy Generation (AI 17)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

Consideration was given to the report of the Engineer and Surveyor on the investigation into the possibility of solar-generated electricity at the Crematorium. Some members commented on the advancements they believed had been made in photovoltaic panel technology, thereby extending the length of life of solar panels that were currently being manufactured. Members supported pursuing further investigations of this initiative.

The Engineer and Surveyor drew attention to issues of structural integrity, equipment maintenance, and particularly visual appearance that would need to be addressed if and when any scheme was to proceed.

RESOLVED that the possible benefits of solar-generated electricity and ways and means by which this could be achieved at the Crematorium continues to be investigated, with particular reference to visual amenity and the Engineer and Surveyor be asked to report to a future meeting.

531 Grievance and Disciplinary Appeals Committee – Appointment of Representatives (AI 18)

RESOLVED that Councillors Hugh Mason, Leslie Keeble and Dennis Wright be appointed, (together with Councillors Jason Fazackarley, Mike Fairhurst and Christopher Carter as standing deputies) to serve on the Appeals Committee, as agreed on 14 June 2010 under minute 360.

532 Horticultural Grounds Maintenance Contract (Exempt Item) (AI 19)

Before considering this item the Joint Committee –

RESOLVED that the public be excluded from the meeting during this item of business because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of ‘exempt information’ within paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The purpose of the report from the Horticultural Consultant was to explain that the contract for the provision of horticultural and grounds maintenance services expires in December 2014. The report sought the Joint Committee’s instructions as to the way forward.

Take in exempt minute setting out the decision of the Joint Committee in respect of the consideration of this matter, which includes a requirement for the Horticultural Consultant to report back to the Committee in September 2013 .

533 Contract for Professional Consultancy Building Services at the Crematorium (Exempt Item) (AI 20)

Before considering this item the Joint Committee -

RESOLVED that the public be excluded from the meeting during this item of business because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' within paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The purpose of the report by the Clerk to the Joint Committee, prepared in consultation with the Engineer and Surveyor was to explain that the existing contract for professional consultancy building services had been extended for a further one year term, until 31 March 2014. It also sought approval and instructions from the Joint Committee as to the way forward.

RESOLVED (1) that the recommendations contained within the exempt report be approved.

(2) that the Engineer and Surveyor reports back to the Joint Committee in September 2013 on the action being taken.

534 Dates of Future Meetings (AI 21)

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee meets at 2pm on a rotating basis on the following dates in 2013/14, at the venues indicated –

**Monday 23 September 2013 (Havant)
Monday 9 December 2013 (Portsmouth)
Monday 10 March 2014 (Fareham)
Monday 16 June 2014 (Gosport)**

The meeting concluded at 3.30pm

Chairman

JH/me
18 June 2013
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