

## **PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Joint Committee held in the Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth on Monday 15 December 2014 at 2.00 pm.

### **Present**

#### **Fareham Borough Council**

Councillor Leslie Keeble (Chairman)  
Councillor Keith Evans

#### **Gosport Borough Council**

Councillor Alan Scard  
Councillor Dennis Wright

#### **Havant Borough Council**

Councillor Tony Briggs

#### **Portsmouth City Council**

Councillor Ken Ellcome

### **Apologies for Absence (AI 1)**

Councillor David Guest (Havant Borough Council), engaged on other council business, and Councillor Robert New (Portsmouth City Council).

### **606 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2) – None**

### **607 Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 September 2014 (AI 3)**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 15 September 2014 be signed as a correct record.

### **608 Matters Arising from the Minutes not specifically referred to on the Agenda (AI 4) - None**

### **609 Clerk's Items (AI 5)**

Arising from minute 598, the Clerk was pleased to report receipt of a letter from Dr Duncan Walters, Deputy Medical Referee since November 1989 who had retired in August 2014, thanking members for his retirement certificate and expressing his pleasure at being able to serve the Joint Committee over so many years.

The Clerk also reported that he, together with the Treasurer and Manager & Registrar, had attended a meeting of Fareham Borough Council's Scrutiny Board on 20 November 2014, when the Board had been updated on the principal work of the Joint Committee and the Crematorium's operational activity.

**RESOLVED that the Clerk's report be noted.**

**610 Portchester Crematorium Accounts Certification Work 2013/14 (AI 6)**

(TAKE IN INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 1026)

The Joint Committee was advised that the Internal Audit final report no. 1026 covered the findings arising from the work carried out to support the 2013/14 certificate.

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

**611 Portchester Crematorium Governance Audit 2014/15 (AI 7)**

(TAKE IN INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT)

Members were advised that the report detailed the Internal Audit work carried out in 2014/15 of some of the governance controls in place for the Joint Committee. The internal audit had been undertaken in accordance with the 5 year plan of work approved by the Joint Committee in June 2013, and supplemented the certification audit work, reported under minute 610.

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

**612 External Audited Annual Return Year Ending 31 March 2014 – Issues Arising Report (AI 8)**

(TAKE IN REPORT OF TREASURER)

Members were advised that BDO LLP, the external auditors for the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee, had completed their work on the Annual Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2014, and had also provided an 'Issues Arising' report.

The Deputy Treasurer explained that the report sought acceptance and approval of the audited Annual Return; set out the matters raised within the Issues Arising report, and detailed the action taken with regard to them, and any future action required.

**RESOLVED (1) that the audited Annual Return be accepted and approved;**

**(2) that the BDO LLP External Audit Issues Arising Report for the year ended 31 March 2014, attached as Appendix A to the Treasurer's report, be noted;**

**(3) that the actions taken and required with regard to Internal and External Audit recommendations be noted.**

**613 Engineer and Surveyor's Report –  
Planned Maintenance and Building Works Progress Report (AI 9)**

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.**

**614 Crematorium South Chapel Refurbishment (AI 10)**

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

In submitting his report the Engineer and Surveyor mentioned that RBA Architects were currently considering the design implications and detail of the proposed orientation of the wooden cladding.

As part of the overall scheme arrangements were also in hand for the appointment of a specialist lighting consultant.

Mention was also made that 3 quotations had been received for the role of the Construction (Design and Management) co-ordinator, and it was proposed to make an appointment.

**RESOLVED that the progress with this project be noted.**

**615 Mercury Abatement Project (AI 11)**

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

In submitting his report updating the Joint Committee on progress towards the noise reduction measures associated with the operation of the mercury abatement equipment, the Engineer and Surveyor reported that it was hoped the new sound acoustic grilles should be received from the manufacturer by the end of January 2015.

**RESOLVED that the action taken be endorsed and the officers be authorised to continue to take any further action that may be necessary to achieve the satisfactory reduction in noise level.**

## **616 Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 12)**

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

Arising from the report, the Chairman mentioned correspondence he had exchanged with a family regarding a replacement for a tree that it had been necessary to remove from the Crematorium grounds.

**RESOLVED that the report be received and approved.**

## **617 Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 13)**

### **(a) General Report**

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

In response to questions arising from his report, the Manager and Registrar reported on the overall reduction in the likely number of cremations that would take place during the current calendar year.

**RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.**

### **(b) Any other items of topical interest**

- (i) Video Streaming of Services Through the Internet –** Sound cabling had been installed, and the full vision and sound service was now available.

**RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.**

## **618 Finance Strategy and Budget for 2015/16 (AI 14)**

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

In considering the report, the Joint Committee was reminded that the Finance Strategy was last approved in December 2013 - it 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 Treasurer's 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.

**RESOLVED (1) that the Finance Strategy 2015/16, attached as Appendix A to the Treasurer's report, be approved;**

**(2) that the Finance Strategy 2015/16 be sent to the four constituent authorities to note for their information.**

## 619 Revenue Budget Report - 2015/16 (AI 15)

(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 2014/15 and 2015/16, together with a review of fees and charges. The revised capital works programme for 2014/15 and future years had also been included for consideration at Appendix E to the report.

The Deputy Treasurer reported that the figures included within the report had been prepared and presented based a continued decline in income equivalent to approximately 15% based on 10 year average cremation numbers.

Arising from discussion members agreed that it would be more prudent to anticipate a further reduction in cremation numbers to approximately 20% as The Oaks becomes more established. Members further agreed that the cremation fee should increase by £30, from £520 to £550, from the 1 April 2015. There would be no impact on the revenue budget figures presented for 2015/16.

**RESOLVED (a) That expenditure of £137,250 in 2015/16 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 2015, except that the cremation fee be £550 from 1 April 2015;**

**(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 received from the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee in 2015/16 and beyond.**

## 620 Portchester Crematorium Job Evaluation Review (Exempt Item) (AI 16)

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 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.**

The Clerk explained that the purpose of the attached report containing exempt information was to set out the results of a job evaluation review into the pay and grading of employee posts at Portchester Crematorium. The report was the result of a review requested by the Joint Committee in September 2012.

**RESOLVED that the recommendations set out in the exempt report by Fareham Borough Council's Senior Personnel Officer be approved.**

**621 Date of Next Meeting (AI 17)**

**RESOLVED that it be noted that the next meeting of the Joint Committee will be at 2pm on Monday 16 March 2015 in the Civic Offices, Fareham.**

The meeting concluded at 2.48 pm.

Chairman

JH/me  
17 December 2014  
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