

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Joint Committee held in the Civic Offices, Havant on Monday 29 September 2008 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Mrs Connie Hockley

Gosport Borough Council

Councillor Peter Edgar
Councillor Dennis Wright (Chairman)

Havant Borough Council

Councillor Anthony Briggs
Councillor Dave Collins

Portsmouth City Council

Councillor Hugh Mason

Apologies for Absence (AI 2)

Councillor Brian Bayford (Fareham Borough Council), and Roger Young (Horticultural Consultant).

255 Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 1) - None.

256 Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 June 2008 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2008 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

257 Matters Arising from the Minutes not specifically referred to on the Agenda (AI 4) - None.

258 Clerk's Items (AI 5) - None.

**259 Portchester Crematorium –
Installation of Mercury Abatement Equipment (Key decision) (AI 6)**

(TAKE IN JOINT REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR,
TREASURER, AND THE CLERK)

The officers presented their joint report which set out the proposal for the project for the installation of mercury abatement equipment on all cremators at Portchester Crematorium that would satisfy the provisions of Air Quality note AQ1 (05) prior to the Government deadline of 31 December 2012. The Engineer and Surveyor advised the Joint Committee that he understood

detailed planning permission was likely to be granted shortly in respect of the planning application for construction of the extension necessary to house the abatement plant.

Following presentation of the report there was an opportunity for questions, during which the following main points were mentioned -

- The financial arrangements for funding the work, as described within the report.
- The arrangements that were currently being progressed regarding the appointment of consultants to oversee the implementation of the project, as explained within the report.
- The arrangements for the appointment of a project review board.
- The content of the risk register, which would be reviewed throughout the life of the project.
- The need for information to be made available to the public and users of the crematorium, and in this respect the aim would be to build on past successful experience and provide information boards, plans and leaflets on the site and also liaise with funeral directors.

RESOLVED (1) that the project brief, set out in Appendix A to the report, for the installation of mercury abatement equipment on all cremators be approved;

(2) that approval be given for the project to proceed at an indicative cost of up to £2million in accordance with the project brief, including separate tenders and contracts for work to the premises and equipment required;

(3) that the funding arrangements set out in paragraphs 17 to 29 of the report be approved, and that should there be any shortfall in resources for the project the Joint Committee agrees to borrow and, at the Treasurer's discretion a loan is taken through Fareham Borough Council or the Public Works Loan Board and repaid over an appropriate period to be decided by the Treasurer;

(4) that a Project Review Board be established in accordance with the details and terms of reference set out in Appendix B to the report, in order to control the project with regular reports being made to the Joint Committee on progress;

(5) that the content of the detailed risk register, set out in Appendix C to the report, be approved and that this be reviewed regularly by the Project Review Board;

(6) that the Joint Committee appoints Councillor Hugh Mason to serve on the Project Board;

(7) that the Engineer and Surveyor, Treasurer and the Clerk to the Joint Committee be authorised to take such action as may be necessary within their particular areas of responsibility to give effect to the recommendations set out above, including entering into any agreements, contracts and other legal documentation that may be required to enable the project to proceed.

260 Report to Those Charged with Governance 2007/08 (AI 7)

(TAKE IN REPORT DATED 29 SEPTEMBER 2008 FROM MAZARS, THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS)

The Treasurer to the Joint Committee introduced the report and explained that the external auditors had indicated that they were in a position to provide an unqualified opinion.

RESOLVED that the report from Mazars be received and noted.

261 Annual Governance Statement 2007/08 (AI 8)

(TAKE IN ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT)

The Joint Committee was advised that this was the first year that it had been necessary to prepare an Annual Governance Statement; previously there was a requirement to publish a statement on internal control. The Annual Governance Statement would form part of the Statement of Accounts for 2007/8.

RESOLVED that the Annual Governance Statement for 2007/08 be approved.

262 Portchester Crematorium Development Plan 2008-2014 (AI 9)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE CLERK TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE, INCLUDING DEVELOPMENT PLAN)

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

- In respect of paragraph 13.3, some statistical information was still required regarding the numbers of burials that had taken place within the four local authority areas. Initial indications were that the figures were running at about the same level as previously given.
- The Manager and Registrar was of the view, having carried out a risk analysis with the Horticultural Consultant, that within the current plan period up to 2014 the grounds were sufficient to accommodate the level of ashes that were expected to be scattered within the grounds.

- Promession, as an alternative to cremation, was a process that had been reported to the Joint Committee in the past, and at that time the Joint Committee had received information about the processes involved. Officers did not recommend at this stage pursuing further enquiries regarding this form of disposal.

RESOLVED that the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee Development Plan 2008-2014 be approved and adopted.

263 Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee – Annual Report - 2007/08 (AI 10)

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

RESOLVED that the annual report for the 2007/08 financial year be noted and received and that it be sent for information to each constituent authority.

264 Engineer and Surveyor’s Report – Planned Maintenance Programme – Progress Report (AI 11)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

265 Manager and Registrar’s Report (AI 12)

(a) General Report

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

RESOLVED that the statistical information submitted by the Manager and Registrar be noted.

(b) Proposed Cremation Regulations 2008

The Manager and Registrar reported that following consultation undertaken by the Ministry of Justice during 2007, it was understood the government would shortly be publishing the Cremation Regulations 2008 (which were likely to come into effect on 1 January 2009). The Joint Committee was advised that these regulations would update and consolidate existing cremation law. As a result there was a need for all forms currently in use to be reprinted and redistributed and information disseminated to doctors and funeral directors. As part of this arrangements would be made to undertake briefings for general practitioners and the medical referees and others with an interest in the subject.

RESOLVED that the Manager and Registrar’s report be noted.

(c) Any other items of topical interest

The Manager and Registrar reported that for the future there would be a short written report on any items of topical interest, which would include any relevant correspondence received.

266 Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 13)

The Clerk to the Joint Committee reported that Roger Young, the Horticultural Consultant, was still convalescing following his illness. As a result Dave Stribling, a colleague, was acting as Horticultural Consultant, and a report from him was submitted to the meeting.

(TAKE IN REPORT OF ACTING HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted and agreed.

267 Date of Next Meeting (AI 14)

RESOLVED that it be noted that the next meeting will be held on Monday 1 December 2008 at 2.00 pm in the Civic Offices, Portsmouth.

The meeting concluded at 2.40 pm.

JH/DMF
1 October 2008
1060929m.doc