

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Joint Committee held in Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Gosport on Monday 20 June 2011 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Keith Evans
Councillor Leslie Keeble

Gosport Borough Council

(Apologies submitted)

Havant Borough Council

Councillor David Collins
Councillor Leah Turner

Portsmouth City Council

Councillor Hugh Mason
Councillor Lynne Stagg

Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Councillors Peter Edgar and Dennis Wright (Gosport BC), and James Clark (Manager and Registrar), Roger Young (Horticultural Consultant), and Mark Pam (Deputy Engineer & Surveyor).

Welcome and Introductions

Councillors Leslie Keeble, Lynne Stagg, and Leah Turner were welcomed to the meeting.

410 Appointment of Chairman (AI 2)

RESOLVED that Councillor Dave Collins (Havant Borough Council) be appointed Chairman for the 2011/12 municipal year.

(Councillor Dave Collins in the Chair)

411 Appointment of Vice-Chairman (AI 3)

RESOLVED that in the absence of representatives from Gosport Borough Council the appointment of a vice-chairman be held over until the next meeting.

412 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 4) – None.

413 Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 March 2011 (AI 5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 7 March 2011 be signed as a correct record.

414 Matters Arising from the Minutes not specifically referred to on the Agenda (AI 6) – None.

415 Clerk's Items (AI 7) – None.

416 Actual Income and Expenditure Account for Year Ending 31 March 2011 (AI 8)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

417 Annual Financial Return 2010/11 (AI 9)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

The Treasurer explained that one effect of the new accountancy and audit regulations was to provide a changed format for the annual financial return as the Joint Committee fell within the 'light touch' audit regime.

Arising from the report, the Treasurer answered questions from members in respect of the level of carry forward balances in relation to the forward capital works programme, the mercury abatement project and the long term future cremator replacement programme. The Treasurer also confirmed he was satisfied sufficient financial provision had been built into the budget to enable the mercury abatement project to be completed.

The Treasurer also reminded members that the Joint Committee received information and were asked to make decisions upon the recommended level of balances when considering the budget and finance report each year.

In response to a question, the Engineer and Surveyor explained that on those very few occasions when a coffin exceeded the standard size, following the funeral service at Portchester, cremation would be undertaken at one of the few specialist crematoria with a non standard size cremator, and the ashes subsequently returned to Portchester.

RESOLVED that the Annual Financial Return for the year ending 31 March 2011 be approved and signed prior to submission to the Joint Committee's external auditors.

418 Annual Governance Statement (AI 10)

(TAKE IN DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT)

RESOLVED that the Annual Governance Statement for the year ending 31 March 2011 be approved and signed for inclusion within the Annual Financial Return.

419 Engineer and Surveyor's Report - Planned Maintenance Programme - Progress Report (AI 11)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee notes the contents of the report.

420 Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 13)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

RESOLVED that the report be received and approved.

421 Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 14)

(a) General Report

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

(b) Any other items of topical interest

Arising out of the Manager's report, in response to a question regarding utility costs, the Treasurer explained that gas was purchased through a procurement arrangement undertaken by Fareham BC, as part of a larger purchasing consortium. The current contract was secure for the next 12 months. Any future potential rise in fuel prices would be built into the budget projections.

In respect of electricity costs, the suggestion of using solar panels was made, and the Engineer and Surveyor undertook to arrange for this to be considered.

Arising from the discussion under minute 417, Councillor Keeble asked for the Joint Committee to be advised on the number of occasions it had been necessary for a coffin that exceeded the standard size to be transferred elsewhere for cremation.

RESOLVED (1) that the Manager and Registrar be asked to report back to the next meeting on the number of occasions when it has been necessary for a non-standard size coffin to be transferred to a specialist crematorium for cremation.

(2) that the Engineer and Surveyor be asked to report back to a future meeting on the feasibility of solar panels being used to provide electricity.

422 Crematorium Car Park – Use for School ‘Park and Stride’ Scheme (AI 14)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE CLERK)

The Clerk reminded the Joint Committee that the land upon which car park is constructed is leased from Fareham BC. Whilst the Joint Committee has the power to approve and undertake any matters relating to crematorium functions, it was felt it would be more appropriate for Fareham BC to formally authorise this suggested use, if supported by the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED that the request from Northern Infant School be supported by the Joint Committee, and Fareham BC be recommended to approve the use suggested, subject to the following main terms and conditions –

- (a) The use of the external overflow car park for a park and stride scheme is at the sole discretion of the Joint Committee, such use to be reviewed annually;**
- (b) The Joint Committee reserves the right to withdraw its support to the use at anytime;**
- (c) The Joint Committee and the land owners shall have no liability arising from the use proposed;**
- (d) The Head Teacher of Northern Infant School to be responsible for co-ordinating with other schools in the area who may wish to join the scheme.**

423 Crematorium Mercury Abatement Project – Project Review Board Report (AI 15)

(a) General Report

(TAKE IN REPORT OF PROJECT BOARD)

Councillor High Mason, as Chairman of the Project Review Board, gave a general overview of the project, current position and background to the need to undertake the works.

The Engineer and Surveyor explained the specialist nature of the works and that they could only be undertaken by a limited number of contractors, of which the Joint Committee had appointed FT.

The Engineer and Surveyor reported that both he and the Joint Committee’s professional consultants were currently awaiting further information from FT, which was required as soon as possible to enable the contracts with both FT and the building contractor (who would shortly be appointed) to be integrated. The Project Review Board had been kept advised of the current situation and had met just prior to the meeting of the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED (1) that the report be received and noted; and

(2) that it be noted that additional steelwork is required as part of the building works to accommodate load bearing equipment at an estimated cost of up to £25,000, and that this sum can be met from within the overall project cost.

(b) Appointment of Member Representative to serve on the Board

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee re-appoints Councillor Hugh Mason as its member representative to serve on the Project Board.

424 Crematorium Mercury Abatement Project – Building Works (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 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

The Engineer and Surveyor explained that the purpose of the exempt report was to advise on the receipt of tenders for the building works required to accommodate the mercury abatement equipment and to recommend the appointment of a contractor.

RESOLVED that the tender from Speltham Contractors be accepted in the sum mentioned in the report, and £25,000 be added to the cost of the tender as a contingency item to allow for any additional costs that may arise in respect of additional steelwork, as reported under minute 423.

425 Dates of Future Meetings (AI 16)

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee meets at 2pm on a rotating basis on the following dates in 2011/12, at the venues indicated –

Monday 19 September 2011 (Portchester Crematorium)

Monday 12 December 2011 (Portsmouth)

Monday 5 March 2012 (Fareham)

Monday 18 June 2012 (Gosport)

The meeting concluded at 2.40pm

Chairman

JH/DMF
20 June 2011
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