

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Joint Committee held in Conference Room A (The Duisburg Room), Civic Offices, Portsmouth on Monday 11 March 2013 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Keith Evans
Councillor Leslie Keeble

Gosport Borough Council

Councillor Peter Edgar (in the Chair)
Councillor Dennis Wright

Havant Borough Council

Councillor David Collins
Councillor Yvonne Weeks

Portsmouth City Council

Councillor Hugh Mason

Apologies for Absence (AI 2)

Councillor Jason Fazackarley (Portsmouth City Council) – Engaged on other council business.

504 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 1) - None

505 Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 December 2012 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 10 December 2012 be signed as a correct record.

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

(a) Minute 500 – Metals Recycling Scheme

The Clerk reported that following the Joint Committee's nomination, the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) had now given a donation of £4,333 from the Recycling of Metals Scheme to the South Hampshire branch of Cruse Bereavement Care.

A cheque was presented to Mr Terry Garvey, a representative of Cruse, who thanked the Joint Committee for its nomination.

The ICCM annually invited cremation authorities to nominate bereavement related charities, and the Joint Committee would be asked later in the year to make a nomination to receive consideration for a donation from the 2013 scheme distribution.

507 Clerk's Items (AI 5) – Havant BC Scrutiny Board Presentation

The Clerk reported that together with the Manager and Registrar, and Deputy Treasurer, they had recently given a presentation to Havant Borough Council's Scrutiny Board on the role and responsibilities of the Joint Committee and the management and operation of the Crematorium. This presentation arose from the decision taken by the Joint Committee under minute 496.

The informative presentation had been well received.

NOTED

508 Development Plan 2013 -2018 (AI 6)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE CLERK)

In presenting his report the Clerk explained that the Development Plan submitted for approval was an updated version of the current Plan, previously approved in December 2010.

Consideration was given to the Development Plan document, during which the following main points arose –

Section 7 – Development in technology –

In respect of the internet viewing of services, it was noted that with the advances in technology on a number of occasions families had used mobile phone technology, via laptop and skype to relay a service to distant relatives.

Section 10 – Fees and Charges Policy –

The various options in respect of fees and charges included within this section had been contained within successive Development Plan documents for many years passed, and were nothing new. Whilst at present it was considered unnecessary to contemplate most of these options, circumstances in coming years might make it necessary to consider them.

Arising from discussion the Joint Committee re-affirmed that it has no plans to introduce car parking charges or to charge for the cremation of a minor.

Section 12 – Repairs and Maintenance –

All maintenance and new build were carried out in a style to match the architecture and fabric of the original building.

Section 16 – Environmental Issues –

In respect of the utilisation of surplus or waste heat arising from the regulation of flue gas temperatures, the Engineer and Surveyor explained that three heat exchangers had been included as part of the installation of the mercury abatement equipment. The intention would be to make use of the heat exchangers as and when it was necessary to renew the Crematorium's existing heating system.

At the request of the Joint Committee the Engineer and Surveyor undertook to investigate and report back on the feasibility of using now the heat exchangers and linking them to the heating system.

Section 17 – The Grounds and Long Term Strategy for the Disposal of Remains

The Manager and Registrar amplified the content of this section and emphasised that the current risk assessment confirmed that the grounds were able to take the number of scatterings that the crematorium required without causing detrimental effects on the soil.

Mention was made that occasionally non visitors to the crematorium used the external car parking area. Whilst this did not immediately appear to prevent genuine visitors from parking the situation would need to be kept under review.

RESOLVED (1) that the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee Development Plan 2013 - 2018 be approved and adopted;

(2) that the Development Plan be next reviewed in 2 years time.

509 Engineer and Surveyor's Report - Planned Maintenance Programme - Progress Report (AI 7)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

510 Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 8)

(a) General Statistical 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 from the statistical report, the Manager and Registrar advised that there were always funeral slot times available three or four days ahead, but taking these up relied upon funeral directors having the logistical arrangements in place to undertake the funeral.

The Manager and Registrar also mentioned that there was a growing trend for families to take out funeral bonds, which effectively tied that family to one funeral director, who at particular times may have its resources stretched, and therefore be unable to carry out a funeral at an early date.

NOTED

511 Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 9)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

In presenting his report the Horticultural Consultant explained that the alpines on the rockery by the fish pond would now probably be replanted in the autumn, and not during March (as mentioned in the report).

RESOLVED that the report be received and approved.

**512 Crematorium Mercury Abatement Project –
Report by Engineer and Surveyor (AI 10)**

The Engineer and Surveyor mentioned that at this stage there was nothing further to report on the extensive programme of specialist work for the mercury abatement project which was completed in late summer 2012.

The Clerk referred to an outstanding fees invoice for this project, in respect of which some further information was required before the Engineer and Surveyor was in a position to authorise payment.

Although financial provision was available within the overall budget for the mercury abatement project, to pay the invoice was beyond the amount that could be authorised by the Engineer and Surveyor under his delegated powers. Such sum would normally be authorised by the Joint Committee, upon the recommendation of the Engineer and Surveyor.

The Project Review Board would be meeting when appropriate to consider a report from the Engineer and Surveyor. So as not to delay this matter, given that the Joint Committee would not meet again until mid June, approval was sought to delegate authority to the Treasurer, in consultation with the Clerk, to approve the release of funds to meet such fees as may be authorised by the Engineer and Surveyor in respect of this project.

RESOLVED (1) that the Engineer and Surveyor's report be received and noted;

(2) That the Treasurer, in consultation with the Clerk, be authorised to approve the release of funds to meet such fees as may be authorised by the Engineer and Surveyor in respect of settlement of any outstanding professional fees invoice, and to report back on the outcome to the Joint Committee.

513 Crematorium - Staffing Matter (AI 11)

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.

Consideration was given to the exempt report from the Manager and Registrar which sought approval to the variation of the hours worked by a crematorium employee, to maintain and enhance customer service.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report in respect of Post no ZZ009 be approved.

514 Date of Next Meeting (AI 12)

RESOLVED that it be noted that the next meeting will be held on Monday 17 June 2013 at 2pm in the Civic Offices, Fareham.

The meeting concluded at 2.45pm

Chairman

JH/me
13 May 2013
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