



NOTICE OF MEETING

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MONDAY 9 DECEMBER 2019 AT 2.00 PM

**NORTH CHAPEL, PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM
UPPER CORNAWAY LANE, FAREHAM**

Telephone enquiries to to John Haskell, Clerk to the Joint Committee
023 9283 4057

(NB This Agenda should be retained for future reference with the Minutes of this meeting.

The agenda, minutes and non-exempt reports are available to view on-line at www.portchestercrematorium.org)

Membership of the Joint Committee - 2019/20

Gosport Borough Council

Councillor June Cully
Councillor Kathleen Jones

Havant Borough Council

Councillor Tim Pike (Chairman)
Councillor Leah Turner

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Keith Evans
Councillor Simon Martin

Portsmouth City Council

Councillor Lee Hunt
Councillor Steve Pitt

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Declarations of Members' Interests**

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 September 2019 (Pages 7 - 10)

Attached

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes not specifically referred to on the Agenda

5 Clerk's Items

The Clerk to the Joint Committee will report on any matters requiring attention.

(a) Inspection by the FBCA

The Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities have created a new inspection scheme to ensure standards of quality are maintained by crematoria. The purpose of the scheme is to provide the operator of the crematorium with confidence that it meets the national standards laid down by the Federation through its Code of Cremation Practice. As part of this new Inspection Scheme, all 290 crematoria across the UK will be inspected once every 5 years, and Portchester has been selected for inspection shortly.

6 Finance Strategy and Budget for 2020/21 (Pages 11 - 16)

The Finance Strategy was last approved by Members in December 2018, setting out the principles on which the strategy has been compiled, together with risks and other aspects of the financial management framework that the Crematorium operates in.

The attached report from the Treasurer encloses an updated Finance Strategy which provides a clear overview of the Joint Committee's financial framework and provides 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.

RECOMMENDED

(1) that the Finance Strategy 2020/21, attached as Appendix A to the report, be approved;

(2) that the Finance Strategy 2020/21 be sent to the four constituent authorities to note for their information.

7 Revenue Budget Report - 2020/21 (Pages 17 - 28)

The purpose of the attached report from the Treasurer is to set out the revenue budget for 2019/20 and 2020/21, together with the repairs and renewals and capital fund contributions for 2019/20 and 2020/21 and a review

of fees and charges for 2020/21. The current capital works programme for future years has also been included for information.

RECOMMENDED

(a) That the capital works programme as detailed in Appendix D be approved;

(b) That the Joint Committee approves the proposed cremation fees and other charges as set out in Appendices B & C from 1 April 2020;

(c) That the proposed revenue account estimates as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved subject to the Joint Committee's decisions in respect of recommendations a & b above;

(d) That the Joint Committee considers writing to the Leader of each constituent authority to advise them of the annual payment to be received from the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

8 Building Works Programme (Pages 29 - 30)

Report from the Property Manager attached.

RECOMMENDED that the contents of the report be noted.

9 Manager and Registrar's Report (Pages 31 - 34)

(a) General Report attached

(b) Monitoring Register of Public Comments

(c) Any other items of topical interest

10 Horticultural Consultant's Report – Grounds Maintenance (Pages 35 - 36)

Report from the Horticultural Consultant on grounds maintenance attached.

RECOMMENDED that the report be received and noted.

11 Portchester Crematorium Garden of Remembrance –Grounds Clearance (Pages 37 - 44)

The purpose of the attached report from the Clerk to the Joint Committee is to set out for consideration options for dealing with the recurring problems that arise from memorials and other items being placed in the grounds in contravention of the Crematorium Regulations, which are designed to preserve the simple beauty of the gardens.

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the long standing policy (to preserve the simple beauty of the gardens) against the provision of memorials and similar items in the crematorium grounds be re-affirmed, taking into account that this policy is stated on the form completed by families at the time of making application for cremation;**
- (2) That families be allowed to place temporarily one plastic vase supplied by the crematorium in the area where its family ashes have been interred to hold cut flowers, and that as and when flowers have finished blooming, staff will remove the flowers and place the vase into store for collection and re-use;**
- (3) That grounds clearances be undertaken at 3 monthly intervals mid-way between Christmas, Easter, Mothering Sunday and Father's Day, on dates to be settled by the Manager and Registrar;**
- (4) That items removed from the grounds be kept for a period of 6 months, after which they be disposed of if not claimed, and that the Crematorium Regulations be amended accordingly;**
- (5) That the arrangements described in paragraph 8.3.6 of the report be implemented for the storing of items removed;**
- (6) That the Manager and Registrar and the Property Manager consider seeking an alternative location for the storage facility;**
- (7) That the Book of Remembrance continues to be promoted as the primary means of memorial, but officers investigate a proposal for an alternative means of memorial in more detail, for the Joint Committee to consider at a future meeting.**

12 Portchester Crematorium Manager & Registrar Retirement (Pages 45 - 46)

The purpose of the attached report from the Clerk to the Joint Committee is to advise that James Clark, the Manager & Registrar, has given formal notice that he wishes to retire at the end of February 2020, and to report on arrangements to recruit to the post.

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the arrangements made for the recruitment to the post of Manager and Registrar be noted and that authority be delegated to the Clerk, Treasurer and personnel officer to make an appointment after consultation with the Chairman;**
- (2) That the grateful thanks of the Joint Committee be placed on record for the long and distinguished service given by James Clark upon his retirement in February 2020 and for his valuable and outstanding**

contribution for 31 years to the work of Portchester Crematorium and the Joint Committee as Manager and Registrar.

13 Date of Next Meeting – Monday 23 March 2020 at 2pm at Portchester Crematorium

JH/me
26 November 2019
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Agenda Item 3

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Joint Committee held at Portchester Crematorium on Monday 23 September 2019 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Simon Martin

Gosport Borough Council

Councillor June Cully
Councillor Kathleen Jones

Havant Borough Council

Councillor Tim Pike (Chairman)

Portsmouth City Council

Councillor Lee Hunt

Joint Committee Membership & Introductions

Councillor Lee Hunt (Portsmouth CC) was welcomed to the meeting, replacing Councillor Jeanette Smith, who was no longer a member of Portsmouth's Executive.

Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Councillor Steve Pitt (Portsmouth CC) on other council business, Councillor Leah Turner (Havant BC), and Councillor Keith Evans (Fareham BC).

833 Appointment of Vice-Chairman (AI 2)

RESOLVED that Councillor June Cully (Gosport BC), be appointed vice-chairman, for the municipal year 2019/20.

834 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 3) – None

835 Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 June 2019 (AI 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 24 June 2019 be signed as a correct record.

836 Matters Arising from the Minutes not specifically referred to on the Agenda (AI 5) - None

837 Clerk's Items (AI 6)

The Clerk to the Joint Committee reported that a grounds clearance was undertaken recently, following one month's advance notice during August. A considerable amount of memorial items and related material were removed and placed into store, to await collection by families. He reported receipt of correspondence from a Gosport resident complaining about the way in which the clearance had been undertaken and the way in which items had been stored.

The Manager and Registrar explained the procedure that was followed by staff in removing items from the grounds and placing them into large crates, which were then placed on shelves in a small store room, to await public collection. Anything not collected by the time of the next clearance was treated as abandoned and then disposed of. The recent clearance was the first for 12 months, and there had been a number of instances of staff being subjected to verbal abuse, both in person and by telephone.

Members discussed the issues arising and the long standing policy that no permanent memorials, plaques and other ornaments are permitted to be left in the grounds. This requirement was made clear on the forms signed by relatives at the time of booking a funeral. Signs to this effect were also displayed in the grounds.

Whilst members understood why some families wished to try and leave lasting tributes, there was concern at the appearance of such items and the effect upon the gardens. Arising from discussion it was agreed that the officers bring forward for consideration at a future meeting options for addressing the problems arising from the unauthorised deposit of memorials, plaques and similar items in the grounds of the crematorium.

RESOLVED that the Clerk to the Joint Committee, in consultation with the other officers, bring forward a report for consideration on options for addressing the problems arising from the unauthorised deposit of memorials, plaques and similar items in the grounds of the crematorium.

838 Risk Management (AI 7)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

The Deputy Treasurer amplified the contents of the report and answered questions from members, including confirming that there were no new budgetary pressures as financial provision had already been made for any items that had been identified as requiring action.

The Clerk to the Joint Committee advised that a staffing report in respect of business continuity would be brought forward to the next meeting.

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 Risk Management progress report set out in Appendix C be noted.

839 Building Works Programme (AI 8)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER)

In presenting his report the Property Manager mentioned specifically the Book Room refurbishment and the Water Feature Feasibility study, and answered questions from members.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

840 Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 9)

(a) General Statistical Report

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

Arising from his report and questions, the Manager and Registrar commented generally on the statistical information.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

(b) Any other items of topical interest – public comments register

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

RESOLVED that the report be noted with interest.

(c) Any other matters –

Recycling of Metals Charitable Scheme - Nominations

RESOLVED (1) that in the current round Naomi House Children's Hospice be nominated for an award under the scheme;

(2) that in preparation for the next round the officers consider and check with the ICCM (Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management) whether a local suicide prevention charity could be nominated.

841 Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 10)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

In submitting his report the Horticultural Consultant said that the South and South East In Bloom judging took place on Friday 28 June, and that the Crematorium had recently been advised that it had received a gold award. Members expressed appreciation to the Brighstone Horticultural Team and its on-site supervisor for the special efforts in preparation for and on the day of the judging.

RESOLVED that the report be received and approved, and the congratulations of the Joint Committee be recorded and passed to the Horticultural team and Brighstone Landscapes, the grounds contractor.

842 Date of Next Meeting (AI 11)

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Joint Committee be held at 2pm on Monday 9 December 2019 at Portchester Crematorium.

The meeting concluded at 3 pm.

Chairman

JH/me
24 September 2019
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Agenda Item 6



Report to Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee

Date: **9 December 2019**

Report of: **Treasurer to the Joint Committee**

Subject: **FINANCE STRATEGY AND BUDGET FOR 2020/21**

SUMMARY

At its meeting on 10 December 2018, the Joint Committee approved the Finance Strategy and the revenue budget for 2019/20.

The Finance Strategy for 2020/21 has been prepared and is attached as appendix A of this report, for the Joint Committee's consideration.

The updated Finance Strategy provides a clear overview of the Joint Committee's financial framework and provides added assurance to the Committee and to the constituent authorities that sound and effective arrangements are in place to manage the Crematorium's finances.

Subject to approval, the Finance Strategy will be sent to the constituent authorities. Any comments received from them in response to the strategy will be brought back to the Joint Committee and, if appropriate, incorporated into the strategy when it is reviewed again.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) That the Finance Strategy 2020/21, attached as Appendix A to this report, be approved;
- (b) That the Finance Strategy 2020/21 be sent to the constituent authorities to note.

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

FINANCE STRATEGY AND BUDGET FOR 2020/21

INTRODUCTION

1. The Portchester Crematorium was opened on 27 September 1958 and is the fifth busiest crematorium in England. It is managed by a Joint Committee of eight councillors, two from each of the constituent authorities of Fareham, Gosport, Havant and Portsmouth.
2. The key financial policies of the Joint Committee are set out in the Portchester Crematorium Development Plan – a document that is revisited and reviewed approximately every two years, supported by approved Financial Regulations.
3. The current Development Plan was approved by the Joint Committee on 25 March 2019 and covers the period from 2019 to 2024.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

4. The main focus of prudent financial management is the Joint Committee's Finance Strategy, the overall objective of which is to structure and manage the Joint Committee's financial resources to ensure that they match and support the achievement of the Joint Committee's objectives.
5. At the same time the strategy must ensure that the requirement to set a balanced budget is fully met and that the Joint Committee is able to respond to year-on-year changes and short-term service delivery issues.
6. This can be difficult to achieve when faced with increasing expenditure and one main source of income that is directly affected by fluctuations in the mortality rate and increased local competition.
7. To overcome these difficulties there are a number of fundamental principles that are followed by the Joint Committee and which form the basis of the Finance Strategy.

THE FUNDAMENTAL POLICIES

8. These fundamental and long-standing policies (set out in the following paragraph) on which the Joint Committee's Finance Strategy is based are subject to annual review as part of the budget process:
 - (i) Sufficient reserves and provisions will continue to be made to ensure that:
 - (a) no precept will be required from the constituent authorities within the foreseeable future and;
 - (b) all anticipated capital works can be funded from revenue income.

(ii) That subject to (i) above, an optimum annual contribution be available for re-distribution to each of the constituent authorities.

9. The distribution of the annual contribution in this way is effectively recognition of the significant original investment by each of the authorities in the Crematorium. These payments also assist them indirectly to support their own cemeteries and bereavement services.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT

10. The function of treasury management is to support the funding of the Joint Committee's planned capital works, which should be funded from revenue income. To earmark resources for this purpose any surplus funds are invested with Fareham Borough Council at 0.25% below base rate.

FINANCIAL PLANNING

11. The financial planning process supports the preparation of this Finance Strategy and gives the necessary flexibility to allow the Joint Committee to consider objectives and priorities, as well as the maintenance of service standards and the scope for improvements where necessary, but at the same time seeking to minimise the increase in the overall net budget and the fees and charges for cremation.
12. The Finance Strategy, revenue budget and capital programme are the subject of a report to the Joint Committee by the Treasurer each December.

BUDGETARY CONTROL AND REPORTING

13. An essential pre-requisite of good financial management is to ensure that everyone with responsibility for the control of budgets has access to up to date information on the budgets for which they are responsible to inform their decision making and ensure that strict control of budgets is maintained.
14. Budgets are monitored by the Finance staff on a weekly basis and significant variances are brought to the attention of the appropriate officer and to the Treasurer.
15. Budgetary control information is provided to the Treasurer on a daily basis in respect of revenue expenditure and monthly in respect of capital expenditure.

BUDGET RESPONSIBILITIES

16. Responsibility for budgets rests formally with the Joint Committee but there are arrangements in place as part of the Constitution that delegates certain responsibilities to the officers.

Joint Committee

17. The Joint Committee has the general responsibility for setting the policy and budget framework and must ensure the following:
- Spending plans are approved in accordance with the projected resources of the Joint Committee;
 - Approved revenue budgets, capital programmes and the level of fees and charges are in accordance with the Finance Strategy;
 - Supplementary estimates are only approved after consideration of the Joint Committee's overall financial position.

The Appointed Officers

18. The Appointed Officers have general responsibility for the preparation of the detailed estimates of expenditure and income and the proposed fees and charges are prepared within the context of the Finance Strategy for approval by the Joint Committee.
19. They must also ensure that expenditure is only incurred if it forms part of the revenue budget or capital programme and that the overall revenue budget and capital programme are not exceeded.
20. Any decision to reallocate revenue or capital budgets from one service to another should not exceed the virement rules.

THE OVERALL FINANCIAL POSITION

21. Adherence to these fundamental policies means that the Joint Committee is in a strong financial position and able to meet all planned expenditure from income. Since 1999-2000 the Joint Committee has achieved sufficient surpluses to allow an amount to be distributed to each of the constituent authorities.
22. The main budget issue remains fluctuations in cremation numbers as shown in the following table.

	Cremations				
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Cremations at nil charge (under 16)	22	26	20	26	19
Walk through cremations			80	152	168
	3,389	3,214	3,324	3,206	2,962
Total cremations	<u>3,411</u>	<u>3,240</u>	<u>3,424</u>	<u>3,384</u>	<u>3,149</u>

23. The table below shows a comparison of the 2017 and 2018 cremation numbers with the nearest crematoria. Our numbers were constant in the January to December comparison period. The subsequent drop in our numbers over the final quarter of the financial year 2018/19 has previously been reported to the Joint Committee and partially attributed to there being no serious flu outbreak in the region. It is also possible that a portion of the decline may be cremations taken to a different location but it would be unlikely that different operators would disclose any other information than the published annual statistics.

Location	1 Jan – 31 Dec 2017	1 Jan – 31 Dec 2018
Chichester	1,838	1,860
Southampton	2,296	1,710
Eastleigh	1,832	1,723
Portchester	3,334	3,329
Havant	1,662	1,790

24. The budget setting report for 2020/21 will take account of cremation numbers being experienced and the impact on the level of payment to the constituent authorities. The amount proposed to pay the authorities in 2020/21 will increase to £165,000.

THE CAPITAL POSITION

25. To ensure that sufficient resources are in place to finance all anticipated capital works, an annual contribution is made out of revenue income to the Committee's Capital Works Fund.
26. The Capital Works Fund as at 1 April 2018 was £2,325,000. In order to replenish the Capital Works Fund to levels that will meet future demands of the crematorium a budgeted contribution to this fund of £235,000 will be included in the budget for 2020/21.
27. The Joint Committee also approves annually a programme of repairs and renewal work. To finance this expenditure an annual contribution is made from revenue income to the Repairs and Renewals Fund to ensure that these works are fully funded. The Repairs and Renewals Fund as at 1 April 2019 was £150,000. In order to replenish the Repairs and Renewals Fund to levels that will meet the future demands of the crematorium a budgeted contribution to this fund of £100,000 will be included in the budget for 2020/21.

THE REVENUE POSITION

28. It is the Joint Committee's policy to maintain a significant Revenue Reserve in order to deal with fluctuations in revenue income and expenditure that are outside of the Joint Committee's control.
29. The principal fluctuations are variations in the number of cremations and increased external competition.

30. The Revenue Reserve is an accumulation of budget surpluses from previous years and was £152,969 as at 1 April 2019. It is prudent to maintain the level of this reserve at over £100,000.

FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

31. Each year the revenue budget is prepared on a going-concern basis, taking account of current and previous year's activity as well as changes that are known to occur in the future that will have a bearing on the forecast for the financial year ahead. Changes in the crematorium's operating environment that impact on the current revenue budget are taken into account as part of the revised budget preparation.
32. The revenue reserve provides a small retained resource to meet unforeseen costs or changes in activity. Measures are also considered throughout the year in order to preserve the Joint Committee's income streams and keep costs to a minimum.

SUMMARY

33. Historically, Portchester Crematorium has always strived to provide the best quality of service that it can and to achieve this, the Joint Committee is committed to the maintenance of high standards in relation to both staff performance and to the maintenance, repair and improvement of the Crematorium infrastructure.
34. In addition increases in cremation charges have been kept to a minimum with the current charge being the lowest in Hampshire and well below the national average.
35. The principles of financial management set out in the Finance Strategy continue to support the achievement of these aims and objectives by ensuring that the Joint Committee remains in a strong financial position, able to meet all planned expenditure from income.

Agenda Item 7



Report to Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee

Date: **9 December 2019**

Report of: **Treasurer to the Joint Committee**

Subject: **REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21**

SUMMARY

This report sets out the revenue budget for 2019/20 and 2020/21, together with the repairs and renewals and capital fund contributions for 2019/20 and 2020/21 and a review of fees and charges for 2020/21. The current capital works programme for future years has also been included for information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) That the capital works programme as detailed in Appendix D be noted;
- (b) That the Joint Committee approve the proposed cremation fees and other charges as set out in Appendices B and C from 1 April 2020;
- (c) That the proposed revenue account estimates as set out in Appendix A be approved subject to the Joint Committee's decisions in respect of the recommendations (a & b) above.
- (d) That the Joint Committee considers writing to the Leader of each constituent authority to advise them of the annual payment to be received from the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Joint Committee has in place a co-ordinated finance strategy that allows the consideration of availability of resources to finance both capital and revenue at the same time. There are a number of fundamental principles that are followed by the Joint Committee which form the basis of the finance strategy which are:
 - (i) Sufficient reserves and provisions will continue to be made to ensure that:
 - (a) no precept will be required from the constituent authorities within the foreseeable future and;
 - (b) all anticipated capital works can be funded from revenue income
 - (ii) That subject to (i) above, an optimum annual contribution be available for re-distribution to each of the constituent authorities.
2. This report has been prepared following the finance strategy principles so that members of the Joint Committee can consider in detail the financial position of Portchester Crematorium in the current year and the anticipated position in 2020/21.
3. Detailed information is set out in the various appendices to this report which cover the following:
 - Appendix A - Revised revenue budget for 2019/20 and the revenue budget for 2020/21;
 - Appendix B - Optional charges 2020/21;
 - Appendix C - Cremation fees 2020/21;
 - Appendix D - Capital works programme and funding;

BASE REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20

4. The original revenue budget for 2019/20 was set to a breakeven level, and prepared on a projected outturn basis with an allowance for price increases included within the various budget heads as appropriate.

BUDGET ISSUES

5. The main budget issue remains fluctuations in cremation numbers as shown in the following table. Revised budget setting will take account of this in order to accurately reflect the level of income that we hope to achieve.

	Cremations				
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Cremations at nil charge (under 16)	22	26	20	26	19
Walk through cremations			80	152	168
Total cremations	3,389	3,214	3,324	3,206	2,962
	<u>3,411</u>	<u>3,240</u>	<u>3,424</u>	<u>3,384</u>	<u>3,149</u>

The table below shows a comparison of the 2017 and 2018 cremation numbers with the nearest crematoria. Our numbers were constant in the January to December comparison period. The subsequent drop in our numbers over the final quarter of the financial year 2018/19 has previously been reported to the Joint Committee and partially attributed to there being no serious flu outbreak in the region. It is also possible that a portion of the decline may be cremations taken to a different location but it would be unlikely that different operators would disclose any other information than the published annual statistics.

Location	1 Jan – 31 Dec 2017	1 Jan – 31 Dec 2018
Chichester	1,838	1,860
Southampton	2,296	1,710
Eastleigh	1,832	1,723
Portchester	3,334	3,329
Havant	1,662	1,790

REVISED BUDGET 2019/20

6. The revised budget has been set to a break-even level. The budget variations are shown in the following table, and explained further below.

	Actuals 2018/19	Base Estimate 2019/20	Revised Estimate 2019/20	Variation
	£	£	£	£
EMPLOYEE RELATED EXPENDITURE	270,911	283,700	285,900	2,200
PREMISES RELATED EXPENDITURE	708,199	636,500	639,500	3,000
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	221,133	236,900	234,500	-2,400
CAPITAL CHARGES	325,316	305,800	305,800	0
SPECIAL EXPENDITURE	1,087,215	1,150,000	1,080,300	-69,700
GROSS EXPENDITURE	2,612,774	2,612,900	2,546,000	-66,900
GROSS INCOME	2,612,774	2,612,900	2,546,000	-66,900

7. Premises related expenditure has increased overall by £3,000; from £636,500 to £639,500. A budget of £2,600 has been added for the repair and maintenance of paved areas, and the budget for water, supply and waste charges, has also been increased. The budget of £115,000 set against repairs and renewals expenditure has not been adjusted for financial year as this expenditure budget is fully offset by the use of the Repairs and Renewals Fund reserve to finance these works so there is no overall effect on the revenue budget deficit / surplus.
8. Supplies and services related expenditure has decreased overall by £2,400; from £236,900 to £234,500. This is a reflection of the reduced cremation numbers affecting the level of Medical Referee and Organist expenditure. Small budget increases are provided for Insurance and Environmental Licences.
9. To ensure that sufficient resources are in place to finance all anticipated capital works, an annual contribution is made out of revenue income to the Committee's Capital Works Fund. As at 1 April 2019 the opening balance of this fund was

£2,325,000. In order to replenish the Capital Works Fund to levels that will meet future demands of the crematorium a budget of £315,300 is included for 2019/20.

10. The Joint Committee also approves annually a programme of repairs and renewal work. To finance this expenditure an annual contribution is made from revenue income to the Repairs and Renewals Fund to ensure that these works are fully funded. The Repairs and Renewals Fund as at 1 April 2019 was £150,000. In order to replenish the Repairs and Renewals Fund to levels that will meet future demands of the crematorium a budget of £50,000 is included for 2019/20.
11. Gross income has decreased overall by £66,900; from £2,612,900 to £2,546,000. This is mainly due to projected income being reduced to reflect the estimated number of cremations reduced to 3,150 for the financial year to 31 March 2020.

BASE BUDGET 2020/21

12. The base budget for 2020/21 has been set to a breakeven level. The budget variations are shown in the following table, and explained further below.

	Actuals 2018/19	Base Estimate 2019/20	Base Estimate 2020/21	Variation
	£	£	£	£
EMPLOYEE RELATED EXPENDITURE	270,911	283,700	290,200	6,500
PREMISES RELATED EXPENDITURE	708,199	636,500	672,500	36,300
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	221,133	236,900	246,600	-9,700
CAPITAL CHARGES	325,316	305,800	305,800	0
SPECIAL EXPENDITURE	1,087,215	1,150,000	1,070,000	-80,000
GROSS EXPENDITURE	2,612,774	2,612,900	2,585,100	-27,700
GROSS INCOME	2,612,774	2,612,900	2,585,100	-27,700

13. Premises related expenditure has increased overall by £36,300; from £636,200 to £672,500. The budget for gas and electricity has been increased by £36,000 and the budget for NDR has been increased by £3,400. The budget of £115,000 set against repairs and renewals expenditure has not been adjusted for this financial year as this expenditure budget is fully offset by the use of the Repairs and Renewals Fund reserve to finance these works so there is no overall effect on the revenue budget deficit / surplus.
14. Supplies and services related expenditure has increased overall by £9,700; from £236,900 to £246,600. This is a reflection of the reduced cremation numbers affecting the level of Medical Referee and Organist expenditure. Small budget increases are provided for Insurance and Environmental Licences. An additional £12,400 has been added to the budget for equipment maintenance to allow for customer focused service improvements.
15. Within Special Expenditure the budget for payment to the constituent authorities has been increased by £20,000. To ensure that sufficient resources are in place to finance all anticipated capital works, an annual contribution is made out of revenue income to the Committee's Capital Works Fund. As at 1 April 2019 the opening

balance of this fund was £2,325,000. In order to replenish the Capital Works Fund to levels that will meet future demands of the crematorium a budget of £235,000 is included for 2020/21.

16. The Joint Committee also approves annually a programme of repairs and renewal work. To finance this expenditure an annual contribution is made from revenue income to the Repairs and Renewals Fund to ensure that these works are fully funded. The Repairs and Renewals Fund as at 1 April 2019 was £150,000. In order to replenish the Repairs and Renewals Fund to levels that will meet future demands of the crematorium a budget of £100,000 is included for 2019/20.
17. Gross income has decreased overall by £27,700; from £2,612,900 to £2,585,200. This increase takes account of the proposed cremation fee for 2020/21, with projected figures of 3050 cremations and 140 walk-through cremations for 2019/20.

REVIEW OF FEES & CHARGES

18. The optional charges are set out in Appendix B to this report, with considered increases proposed against Book of Remembrance and Memorial Cards charges. Charges are rounded to the nearest pound for ease of cash handling and it is proposed that these are increased from 1 April 2020.
19. The cremation fees are set out in Appendix C to this report, with a £20 increase proposed for 2020/21, equating to 3.17%. This is set having due regard to cost increases for employees, utilities and other premises cost increases along with service enhancements for our customers. The fee level of £650 is still below the 2019 average cremation fee for the UK of £797.64, and the 2019 average cremation fee for Hampshire of £856. The table below shows a comparison of the January 2019 fees with the nearest crematoria:

Chichester	£1,070
Southampton	£795
Eastleigh	£915
Portchester	£615
Havant	£850

20. The walk through cremation service is now well established with 168 services in 2018/19. It is proposed to maintain the current fee of £400 in order to retain the current level of demand.

FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

21. The revenue budget has been prepared based on a going-concern basis, taking account of current and previous year's activity as well as changes that are known to occur in the current and next financial year.
22. The Revenue Reserve is an accumulation of budget surpluses from previous years and was £152,969 as at 1 April 2019. In accordance with the Finance Strategy for 2020/21 it is prudent to maintain the level of this reserve at over £100,000 in order to provide a small retained resource to meet unforeseen fluctuations in revenue income and expenditure that are outside of the Joint Committee's control. Measures are also considered on an on-going basis in order to preserve the Joint Committee's income streams and keep costs to a minimum. After taking into

account the revised estimates for this year, and the proposed charges for 2020/21, the balance of the General Fund Revenue Reserve will not be increased.

23. The repairs and renewals programme is fully funded from an earmarked fund and as at 1 April 2019 the opening balance was £150,000. In order to replenish the Repairs and Renewals Fund to levels that will meet future demands of the crematorium a budget of £50,000 is included for 2019/20.
24. The 5 year capital programme, from 2019/20 to 2023/24, totals £3,280,000. The programme is set out as being fully funded from the existing Capital Works Fund balance of £2,325,000 plus annual contributions over the life of the programme totalling £1,450,300. This demonstrates that the programme is heavily reliant on continued revenue contributions to the Capital Works Fund so that the programme of work can be fulfilled along with required reactive capital expenditure for mechanical equipment to maintain the crematory function. Wherever possible, steps will be taken to strengthen the Capital Works Fund balance, for example, where underspends occur in the year.

CONCLUSION

25. This report includes various amendments to the budgets which, together with the proposed increase in fees and charges, will ensure that the Joint Committee remains in a strong financial position and that sufficient reserves are built up to cover any future budget shortfall.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Revenue account for the year ended 31 March 2020 and 2021

APPENDIX B – Optional charges

APPENDIX C – Cremation fees

APPENDIX D – Capital works programme

Reference Papers

- (a) Report of the Treasurer to the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee 'Revenue Budget 2019-20' - 10 December 2018.
- (b) Report of the Treasurer to the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee 'Annual Return For The Financial Year Ended 31 March 2019' – 24 June 2019

Andrew Wannell, CPFA
Treasurer to the Joint Committee
Civic Offices, Fareham

For further information on this report, contact Kate Busby, 01329 824685

REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2021

	Actual 2018/19 £	Base Estimate 2019/20 £	Revised Estimate 2019/20 £	Base Estimate 2020/21 £
EMPLOYEES				
SALARIES	203,646.89	212,500	212,500	217,000
SALARIES OVERTIME	3,512.14	3,500	3,500	3,500
NATIONAL INSURANCE	17,562.37	19,000	18,200	19,000
SUPERANNUATION	45,759.62	47,500	50,500	49,500
FIRST AID ALLOWANCE	192.00	200	200	200
STAFF TRAINING	0.00	1,000	1,000	1,000
STAFF ADVERTISING	237.60	0	0	0
TOTAL EMPLOYEES	270,910.62	283,700	285,900	290,200
PREMISES				
R & M OF BUILDINGS	8,244.24	17,500	17,500	13,700
REPAIRS AND RENEWALS	208,796.24	115,000	115,000	115,000
FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT	535.00	0	0	0
R & M OF FIXED PLANT	69,353.11	85,000	85,000	85,000
R&M OF GROUNDS	71,110.13	70,000	70,000	70,000
R&M OF GARDEN IMP.SCHEME	3,341.00	1,500	1,500	1,500
R&M OF PAVED AREAS	0.00	0	2,600	0
ELECTRICITY	41,716.37	42,000	42,000	48,000
GAS	75,396.38	75,600	75,600	105,600
RENTS - GENERAL PAYABLE	12,157.90	12,500	12,500	12,500
NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES	193,256.00	197,600	197,600	201,000
WATER CHARGES - SUPPLY (PWC)	2,724.36	1,000	2,000	2,000
SEWERAGE & ENV. CHARGES (SWS)	7,356.29	4,500	4,500	4,500
FIRE PRECAUTION APPLIANCES	439.05	400	700	700
CONTRACT CLEANING	4,799.50	4,500	4,500	4,500
CLEANING MATERIALS	405.67	400	400	400
TOILET REQUISITES	23.83	1,000	100	100
REMOVAL OF WREATHS	8,543.55	8,000	8,000	8,000
TOTAL PREMISES	708,198.62	636,500	639,500	672,500
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES				
FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT PURCHASE	7,499.01	3,000	8,000	5,000
MATERIALS (OPERATIONAL)	0.00	100	100	100
FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT MAINT	7,236.45	6,000	6,000	18,400
FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT AGREE'T	620.00	1,300	1,300	1,300
PROTECTIVE CLOTHING & UNIFORMS	998.40	1,600	1,600	1,600
LAUNDRY	9.16	100	100	100
BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS	333.20	400	400	400
EXTERNAL PRINTING	1,696.40	3,000	3,000	3,000
STATIONERY	1,421.84	1,500	1,500	1,500
BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE	20,563.32	15,000	15,000	15,000
MEMORIALS CARDS	4,566.34	5,000	5,000	5,000
CONSULTANTS FEES	4,065.00	1,500	1,500	1,500
ADMIN.EXPENSES – FAREHAM	14,602.45	24,000	24,000	24,000
ADMIN.EXPENSES – PORTSMOUTH	12,580.00	13,000	13,000	13,000
MEDICAL REFEREES FEES	56,682.00	61,000	55,200	57,000
ORGANISTS FEES	10,379.44	14,000	10,000	10,500

ENVIRONMENTAL LICENSE	772.00	0	800	800
PEST CONTROL	535.32	500	500	500
GRAPHIC DESIGN	0.00	500	500	500
POSTAGES	1,018.47	1,200	1,000	1,200
TELEPHONES	2,421.67	4,000	4,000	4,000
COMPUTER SOFTWARE	5,156.31	5,000	5,000	5,000
WEB CAST SERVICES	2,280.00	1,500	1,500	1,500
SUBSISTENCE EXP – EMPLOYEES	315.45	700	500	700
COURSES/CONFRENCES	249.00	1,000	1,000	1,000
GRANTS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS	1,472.79	2,500	2,500	2,500
INSURANCES	15,740.79	17,000	18,500	18,500
ADVERTISING	0.00	500	500	500
NON RECLAIMABLE VAT	46,396.52	50,000	50,000	50,000
BANK CHARGES	1,522.17	2,000	2,000	2,000
OTHER EXPENDITURE	0.00	0	500	500
TOTAL SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	221,133.50	236,900	234,500	246,600
CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS				
DEPRECIATION	325,316.00	305,800	305,800	305,800
TOTAL CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS	325,316.00	305,800	305,800	305,800
SPECIAL EXPENDITURE				
CONTRIBUTION TO CAPITAL FUND	302,437.60	335,000	315,300	235,000
PENSION INTEREST COSTS	63,000.00	75,000	75,000	75,000
CONTRIBUTION TO R & R FUND	118,796.24	100,000	50,000	100,000
PAY TO CONSTITUENT AUTHORITIES	600,000.00	640,000	640,000	660,000
TRANSFER TO REVENUE RESERVE	2981.32			
TOTAL SPECIAL EXPENDITURE	1,087,215.16	1,150,000	1,080,300	1,070,000
GROSS EXPENDITURE	2,612,773.90	2,612,900	2,546,000	2,585,100
INCOME				
CONTRIB.FROM GARDEN IMP.FUND	0.00	-1,500	-1,500	-1,500
CAMEO TMAC INCOME	-13,198.92	0	0	0
SALES	-175.00	0	0	0
SALE OF MEMORIAL CARDS	-7,980.02	-7,000	-7,000	-7,000
CREMATION FEES	-1,888,830.00	-2,013,000	-1,950,000	-1,982,500
BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE	-57,639.15	-52,200	-55,000	-55,000
ORGANISTS FEES	-24,262.52	-30,700	-22,000	-30,600
WEB BROADCASTING	-2,775.00	-2,000	-2,000	-2,000
MISCELLANEOUS FEES & CHARGES	-9,570.00	-7,000	-9,000	-7,000
INTEREST ON INVESTMENTS	-10,602.75	-3,500	-3,500	-3,500
BANK INVESTMENT ACCOUNT	-628.30	-200	-200	-200
RETURN ON PENSION FUND ASS	-42,000.00	-50,000	-50,000	-50,000
CAPITAL CHARGE - ASSET RENTS	-325,316.00	-305,800	-305,800	-305,800
MOVEMENT ON PENSIONS RESERVE	-21,000.00	-25,000	-25,000	-25,000
EXP.FINANCED FROM RESERVES	-208,796.24	-115,000	-115,000	-115,000
GROSS INCOME	-2,612,773.90	-2,612,900	-2,546,000	-2,585,100

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

OPTIONAL CHARGES

	Charges <u>2019/20</u> £	Proposed Charges <u>2020/21</u> £	% <u>Increase</u>
<u>BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE (INC. VAT)</u>			
Single entry (2 lines)	53.00	55.00	3.77
Double entry (5 lines)	88.00	90.00	2.27
Double entry with badge or crest	138.00	140.00	1.45
Treble entry (8 lines)	120.00	125.00	4.17
Treble entry with badge or crest	170.00	175.00	2.94
<u>MEMORIAL CARDS (INC. VAT)</u>			
Single entry (2 lines)	39.00	39.00	2.56
Double entry (5 lines)	46.00	48.00	4.35
Double entry with badge or crest	96.00	98.00	2.08
Treble entry (8 lines)	52.00	55.00	5.77
Treble entry with badge or crest	101.00	105.00	2.94
<u>USE OF ORGAN (INC. VAT)</u>			
Use of Organ	34.00	35.00	2.94
Services of Organist 45 minutes	34.00	35.00	2.94
Services of Organist 30 minutes	24.00	25.00	4.17
<u>OTHER</u>			
Scattering of ashes from other Crematoria	56.00	58.00	3.57
Temporary retention of cremated remains	15.00	15.00	0

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

CREMATION FEES

	Number of Cremations 2018/19	Existing Charge 2019/20 £	Proposed Charge 2020/21 £	% Increase
A young person whose age at the time of death did not exceed 16 years	19	No charge	No charge	
A person whose age at the time of death exceeded 16 years	2,962	630	650	3.17
Walk through cremation	168	400	400	0.00

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME

	Revised Budget 2019/20	Budget 2020/21	Budget 2021/22	Budget 2022/23	Budget 2023/24
	£	£	£	£	£
Balance of Fund as at 1.4.2019	2,325,000	2,500,300	2,595,300	2,895,300	3,195,300
Advance during year	315,300	235,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
		2,735,300	2,895,300	3,195,300	3,495,300
Less Applications					
Cremator Furnace Relining	90,000	90,000			
Hearth Replacement	50,000	50,000			
Replacement cremator programme					3,000,000
	140,000	140,000	0	0	3,000,000
Balance of Fund	2,500,300	2,595,300	2,895,300	3,195,300	495,300

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REPORT TO: PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

ON: 9 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT OF: IAN COUSINS, PROPERTY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUILDING WORKS REPORT



2018 /19

Ref	Item Description	Status	Budget £	Anticipated Cost £	Variation £	Commentary
1901	Glazing Repairs	On-going	25,000	25,000	0	Prices being obtained for works
1902	Vestry Refurbishment	Pre- Start	6,000	13,000	7,000	Order placed for larger scheme
1903	Paving and Stonework Cleaning	On-going	5,000	5,000	0	Prices being obtained for works
1904	Surfacing and Paving Repairs	On-going	6,000	4,515	0	Further Inspections due December 2019
1905	Fencing Repairs	On-going	5,000	5,000	0	Initial works completed
1906	External Redecoration	Feasibility	3,000	3,000	0	Review requirement during Spring 2020
1907	Fire Precautions Upgrade	Feasibility	5,000	5,000	0	Minor works identified

2019 / 20

Ref	Item Description	Status	Budget £	Anticipated Cost £	Variation £	Commentary
2002	Music Room Refurbishment	Feasibility	1,000	1,000	0	
2003	Book Room Refurbishment	Quotation	2,500	2,500	0	Prices being obtained for works
2004	South Chapel New Curtains	Feasibility	12,000	12,000	0	
2005	Conservatory Redecoration	Feasibility	2,500	2,500	0	
2006	Water Feature Feasibility	Quotation	5,000	5,000	0	Proposals and Fees proposals requested for February 2020
2007	Groundsman Building Repairs	Feasibility	6,000	6,000	0	Works now programmed for Spring 2020

2020 / 21 Repairs and Renewal Programme

Ref	Item Description	Status	Budget £	Anticipated Cost £	Variation £	Commentary
2101	Chapel multi-media system	Feasibility	9,500	9,500	0	
2102	Works to Roofs	Feasibility	3,500	3,500	0	
2103	Surfacing and Paving Repairs	Feasibility	5,000	5,000	0	

Note - Items previous reported as completed are not shown

Recommendation - That the report be noted

Ian Cousins

Property Manager

Agenda Item 9

REPORT TO: PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT
COMMITTEE – 9th DECEMBER 2019



REPORT BY: MANAGER AND REGISTRAR

STATISTICS

1. MONTHLY COMPARISON

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>
SEP	263	249	210	225
OCT	253	252	246	263
NOV	278	279	277	248*

2. TOTAL CREMATIONS

	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TO END NOV</u>
2016	3355	3067
2017	3334	3075
2018	3329	3099
2019	-	2902*

3. DISPOSAL OF REMAINS

Ashes received from other Crematoria.....	44
i) Total disposals within grounds.....	211
ii) Remains removed from crematorium.....	480
iii) Retained.....	45
	TOTAL 736**
Scattered 29%	Removed 71%

4. GAS CONSUMPTION

Total gas consumption (cu.m.).....	68741**
Total cremations.....	736
Average gas consumption (cu.m).....	93

* Correct at 26th November

** To end 25th November

JAMES CLARK
MANAGER & REGISTRAR
26TH NOVEMBER 2019

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Portchester Crematorium Complaints and Compliments Log – Month – September 2019 - December 2019

Date	Author & Address (if given)	Email Letter (LP) Personal Visit (PV)	Summary of Complaint or Compliment	Date of Reply	Summary of Response & Action Agreed/Required	Review Date
September 2019	Numerous	Telephone & In person	Complaining about the Joint Committee's policy on Garden clearances		Numerous explanations given of the reasons for the policy. Report being prepared for December meeting.	
6/9/19	Mr T	Letter	Thanking us for conducting the garden clearance	16/9/19	Rang Mr T and thanked him for his letter	
19/9/19	Mr B	Email in person and telephone to cllr Jones	Complained about his items being removed and the method of storage of items, claims his was broken and wants damages	19/9/19	Spoke with Cllr Jones and emailed explaining why and how we do it, still not satisfied	
17/9/19	anon	Personal visit	Complained about signage at crematorium wanted immediate changes and was not prepared to compromise his view or listen to explanation	17/9/19	Spoke with both myself and Mrs Jenkins who explained signage was under review	
20/9/19	Ms M	Email and phone call	Complained about dogs not on lead in garden on Saturday 7/9 and urinating on borders <u>Demanded</u> signage	20/9/19	Said I would discuss at Committee on Monday and ring her back with decision on Tuesday 24 th Decision made to enforce regulations with signage.	
28/10/19	Mrs O	email	Complained no access to Book room because	28/10/19	Apologised and explained this work had to be programmed for	

			of carpet cleaning		the weekend and the carpet given time to dry.	
08/10/2019	Mr B	Personal Visit	If we are to remove memorials and keep garden tidy suggested removing dead cuttings in the North Border 3 post by the fencing that he apparently claimed had been there for 3 months.	8/10/2019	HJ said that she would take a look at the area as she was not aware and would have the area tidied. HJ discovered that the dead cuttings were a possible result of residents in adjacent park cutting back the overhang of our trees and tossing back the cuttings over the fence. HJ mentioned this to gardener who cleared that afternoon.	

Agenda Item 10



**REPORT TO: PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE
Monday 9th December 2019**

REPORT BY: THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT

CREMATORIUM GROUNDS – GENERAL UPDATE

The grounds continue to look good as we approach the Winter period. The contractor has worked very hard to maintain standards during the particularly wet autumn that we have just had.

We are carrying out shrub planting at the moment. This is a task that I aim to complete before Christmas, which is the busiest time for visitors.

I am awaiting confirmation from Rumwood Nursery, the rose supplier, on prices and availability and will place an order for delivery in January. They will be planted as soon as delivered.

We lost an Acacia tree in the storms and strong winds recently. It was cleared very quickly and efficiently by the tree contractor we use (Gristwood and Toms). The tree was situated North of the Book Room. I do not intend to replace it as the area is already heavily planted with trees.

The bedding displays were replaced in October and are interplanted with tulips. We also planted snowdrops among the heathers at the North entrance.

More bulbs were added under the beech tree and I am looking forward to a spectacular display in the Spring.

The contractor Brighstone continues to perform very well and I am pleased with their work.

Ashley Humphrey,
Horticultural Consultant

*Background List of Documents –
Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 – None*

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Agenda Item 11



**REPORT TO: PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE –
9 DECEMBER 2019**

**REPORT BY: CLERK TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE
in consultation with
THE TREASURER
MANAGER AND REGISTRAR and
THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT**

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE – GROUNDS CLEARANCE

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out for consideration options for dealing with the recurring problems that arise from memorials and other items being placed in the grounds in contravention of the Crematorium Regulations, which are designed to preserve the simple beauty of the gardens.

2. Recommendations

- (1) That the long standing policy (to preserve the simple beauty of the gardens) against the provision of memorials and similar items in the crematorium grounds be re-affirmed, taking into account that this policy is stated on the form completed by families at the time of making application for cremation;**
- (2) That families be allowed to place temporarily one plastic vase supplied by the crematorium in the area where its family ashes have been interred to hold cut flowers, and that as and when flowers have finished blooming, staff will remove the flowers and place the vase into store for collection and re-use;**
- (3) That grounds clearances be undertaken at 3 monthly intervals mid-way between Christmas, Easter, Mothering Sunday and Father's Day, on dates to be settled by the Manager and Registrar;**
- (4) That items removed from the grounds be kept for a period of 6 months, after which they be disposed of if not claimed, and that the Crematorium Regulations be amended accordingly;**
- (5) That the arrangements described in paragraph 8.3.6 of the report be implemented for the storing of items removed;**
- (6) That the Manager and Registrar and the Property Manager consider seeking an alternative location for the storage facility;**

(7) That the Book of Remembrance continues to be promoted as the primary means of memorial, but officers investigate a proposal for an alternative means of memorial in more detail, for the Joint Committee to consider at a future meeting.

3. Background

3.1 The Joint Committee at the meeting on the 23 September 2019 was updated on the clearance of the grounds that had taken place earlier in September, and that as a result complaints had been received. One complaint was about the way in which the clearance had been undertaken and the way in which items had been stored to await collection.

3.2 The Joint Committee, whilst understanding why some families wish to put up a memorial or leave objects in the gardens, felt a balance has to be struck, given the reasons for the long standing policy that there should be no memorials. The Joint Committee therefore agreed there should be a report to the December meeting on options for addressing the problems arising from the unauthorised deposit of memorials, plaques and similar items.

4. Current Long Standing Policy

4.1 The Joint Committee has a long standing policy against the provision of memorials and similar items in the crematorium grounds, in order to preserve the simple beauty of the gardens. This policy has been reaffirmed over the years in the biennial Crematorium Development Plan, the most recent version of which was approved by the Joint Committee in March 2019.

4.2 This policy is stated clearly on the form completed by families at the time of making application for cremation. In practice the form is completed by a funeral director, taking instructions and information from the member of the family responsible for arranging the funeral, after which the family member is asked to confirm the details and sign the form. To reduce the possibility of families claiming they are unaware of the policy, funeral directors should be reminded of the need to draw this specific requirement to families at the time the form is completed.

4.3 Crematorium Regulations are displayed in public areas, and regulation 10 (relating to use of the grounds) includes a requirement that 'no person shall place on or dig or drive into the turf or cultivated ground, any vase, container, receptacle, metal, plastic or wooden stake or plaque, or drive any nail into any tree, or place artificial flowers or ornaments within the grounds'.

4.4 It is quite in order for families to lay cut flowers (out of their wrapping).

5. The Issues

5.1 Whilst ashes are interred in the garden of remembrance in an area requested by a family, specific 'plots' as such are not allocated for their exclusive use. It is not like a cemetery where a specific area for a burial is purchased.

5.2 The placing of memorials of whatever kind whilst, bringing perhaps comfort to the bereaved family, can in turn upset other families who have ashes interred in the same

area. From time to time complaints are received from families asking when such items are going to be removed, because they have become distressed upon finding them. Attention has then been drawn to the regulations that prohibit leaving memorials of whatever kind in the grounds.

5.3 Although the Joint Committee in December 2015 asked that grounds clearance be undertaken every 3 months, this has not always proved possible, with the grounds becoming overwhelmed with objects, which detracts from their overall appearance, and gives rise to complaints.

5.4 The Manager and Registrar and the staff are aware of the sensitivities removing items can cause. They are the front line for the sometimes hostile abuse that follows, but if the process is not gone through the gardens would become unmanageable and overwhelmed.

6. The Grounds Clearance Procedure

6.1 Before any clearance is undertaken notices are displayed prominently in the gardens a month before warning this will be taking place. Some families then choose to remove their personal tributes, often replacing them after the clearance has been completed, in contravention of the regulations.

6.2 When the clearance is undertaken, crematorium staff remove items and place them into plastic crates, marked with the areas from which they have been removed. Items removed have included stone plinths and plaques, photograph frames, plastic vases, windmills, and balloons. The crates are then placed on shelves in a storage room. Some items are too large or too heavy to be placed in the boxes, and are therefore placed at ground level in the room. Glass vases and glass ornaments left in the grounds are removed by staff as soon as they are seen because these present a particular hazard if they become broken.

6.3 Families wishing to retrieve items are invited to look through the boxes. It is accepted this is not an easy task because apart from knowing the particular area from which they have been removed, most items have no indication as to the family name. Whilst families are asked to treat items with respect when sorting through boxes, it would appear this does not always happen, with the result that items become misplaced or damaged.

6.4 Material that has been removed is kept for collection until the next clearance, at which time it is disposed of.

6.5 To the north of the crematorium is the privately owned Portchester Memorial Gardens. Funeral Directors have been asked to advise families that if a permanent memorial is desired it is more appropriate for ashes to be interred in that setting or a cemetery.

7. The Crematorium Gardens

7.1 Since its opening in 1958 the crematorium gardens have been extended to the size they are today, comprising much appreciated lawns, trees, shrubs and bulbs, and magnificent floral displays and a pond and rockery, all of which are maintained to the highest standard.

7.2 The opportunity was taken to have large attractive planter tubs provided along the building frontage to commemorate the 60th year of the Crematorium, which opened in September 1958.

7.3 The Crematorium has also received on a number of occasions the prestigious Gold Award in the annual South and South East Britain in Bloom Awards. The criteria for the award included not only the quality of the grounds but also the appearance of buildings together with environmental and related matters.

7.4 Brighstone Landscapes (the grounds maintenance contractor) has continued to carry out a very high standard of work, which regularly receives public acclaim.

8. Options for Consideration

8.1 Set out below are options for consideration, together with a commentary on each, highlighting the key advantages/disadvantages of each -

- (a) Abandon the current long standing 'no memorials' policy;
- (b) Continue to enforce the policy, & ensure clearance takes place at 3 monthly intervals, thereby reducing the amount of material to be removed at each clearance;
- (c) Relax the policy to allow only a very simple form of tribute to be placed;
- (d) Provide a Memorial wall or similar means for memorials upon which family names could be inscribed.

8.2 (a) Abandon the current long standing policy

8.2.1 To abandon the policy would allow the grounds to become very cluttered over a short period of time, and inevitably some form of clearance action would be needed. The clearance in September 2019 was the first for 12 months. During that period many objects had been left. Complaints had been received from families asking when a grounds clearance would be taking place. This in itself indicates that many people would be unhappy to see the gardens become over run with a wide range of personal tributes – as mentioned above anything from stone ornaments to windmills and balloons.

8.2.2 Allowing such items to remain also brings with it difficulties for the gardening staff who have responsibility for keeping the grounds neat and tidy so they can be enjoyed by all who visit. It also deprives other families of placing flowers in an area that has been taken over by objects.

8.2.3 Consideration must also be given to families who, fully aware of the crematorium's 'no memorials' policy, spelt out at the time of arranging a funeral, would not wish to see that policy changed.

8.2.4 For these reasons **the officers do not recommend** abandoning the 'no memorials' policy.

8.3 (b) Continue to enforce the policy, & ensure clearance takes place at 3 monthly intervals, thereby reducing the amount of material to be removed at each clearance

8.3.1 One complaint received highlighted the complainant's concern that items removed from the gardens had not been properly stored, referenced or looked after, giving rise to items being misplaced and hard to find, and in some instances had 'simply been piled in a corner'.

8.3.2 The room in which items have been stored is of sufficient size to accommodate items removed over a 3 month period, but clearly the longer the period between clearances the greater the number of items. Longer intervals in turn can lead families to believe that it is quite in order to place memorials 'as other people have done', which is a comment often made to staff, irrespective of the 'no memorials' signs that are displayed.

8.3.3 The staff appreciate the need for sensitivity in removing items from the grounds and placing them into store. At particular times of the year the gardens attract a high volume of visitors – for example at Christmas, Easter, Mothering Sunday and Father's Day, at which time the number of tributes increases dramatically.

8.3.4 The Officers consider and **RECOMMEND** that clearances at 3 monthly intervals would ensure that smaller quantities of memorials and tributes would need to be taken into store and hopefully would be found more easily by families when seeking to retrieve a removed item. These clearances would be timed to take place in periods mid-way between the dates mentioned in paragraph 8.3.3 above. These dates should be set annually and publicised. However, on occasion it might not always be possible to keep to the precise dates due to staff holidays, sickness or volume of services.

8.3.5 Although undertaking a clearance every 3 months may reduce the size of the task, it is suggested that items removed are kept for a period of 6 months, after which they are disposed of if not claimed. Wording to this effect would be included in the grounds clearance notice, and the Crematorium Regulations amended accordingly.

8.3.6 The officers' **also recommend** that the type of plastic boxes used to collate items should be of a more sturdy construction with improved labelling, and that where necessary transparent bags be used to hold some items – for example photo frames and small mementos.

8.3.7 Whilst the present room, close to the south chapel, continues to be available as a store, the officers **recommend** that consideration could be given to seeking to find an alternative location for this facility, possibly involving the construction of a new storage building. This would require careful assessment and a provisional estimate of cost before a final decision on a new facility is made.

8.4 (c) Relax the policy to allow only a very simple form of tribute to be placed

8.4.1 Coupled with the recommendations set out in Section 8.3, the officers have noted that a considerable number of flower vases were retrieved as part of the recent grounds clearance. Most of these vases were made of black plastic, some bearing personal family tributes. Whilst the regulations allow for the placing of floral tributes on the ground, there appears to have been a growing desire from families to place cut flowers in vases so that they stay in bloom for longer.

8.4.2 The officers **recommend** that families be allowed to place temporarily one plastic vase in the area where its family ashes have been interred to hold cut flowers, and that as and when the flowers have finished blooming staff will remove the flowers and place the vase into store for future collection and use.

8.4.3 To facilitate the arrangement set out above, it is suggested that the crematorium makes available green cone shaped vases, and makes clear these are the only vases acceptable for use in the gardens. Families could collect these from a racked area to be provided at the back of the crematorium close to a water tap. When the gardeners clear dead flowers each Friday, the vase too could be removed and replaced in the racking for reuse.

8.5 (d) Provide a Memorial wall or similar means for memorials upon which family names could be inscribed.

8.5.1 Some crematoria have created a focal point – such as a wall or similar structure or provision, within their grounds which families can use for a memorial plaque. The crematoria make a charge for such a facility. It does however encourage families to leave flowers at that point, although there is no guarantee that flowers or memorial tributes would not be left in the grounds where a family has chosen not to purchase a ‘space’ in the crematoria’s facility.

8.5.2 Historically at Portchester Crematorium, the Book of Remembrance has been the preferred way in which loved ones could be remembered with a personal tribute, for which a charge is made. Each day the Books of Remembrance are open at the anniversary date, and this has proven to be a popular facility, where families can leave flowers in the Book Room, in vases that have been provided by the crematorium, or in their own receptacles.

8.5.3 The Property Manager & the Manager and Registrar are currently working on a scheme that will refresh and improve the Book Room, and make available an increased area where flowers can be displayed.

8.5.4 There is, however, the opportunity to provide a different facility, for those families wishing for a permanent memorial that can be viewed daily, particularly given the size of the grounds. Providing a memorial wall, or similar, would require careful consideration about design, siting cost and maintenance. Consideration is currently being given to the future of the Area of Contemplation (the water fountain area) and it may be that members might wish this to be taken into account as part of the review of the area.

8.5.5 Alternatively, there are a number of alternative means for offering a different type of memorial. For example, other Crematoria (such as South Essex, South Tyneside and Altrincham) offer attractive memorial trees that allow families to have leaves inscribed for a fixed period, for an appropriate fee. These facilities can be indoors, or located outdoors within the grounds, require very limited maintenance and provide an alternative which is less intrusive than a built structure.

8.5.6 Finally, to the north of the crematorium is the privately owned Portchester Memorial Gardens, where funeral directors have been asked to advise families that this provides a means for ashes to be interred in that setting if a permanent memorial is desired, or a cemetery.

8.5.7 Officers **recommend** that members endorse the continued promotion of the Book of Remembrance as the primary means of memorial, and request officers to investigate a proposal for an alternative means of memorial in more detail, for the Joint Committee to consider.

9. Conclusion

9.1 The placing of memorials and other objects in the gardens is a sensitive and emotive issue, raising concerns from some families who wish to place a lasting tribute to a loved one and to other families who object to items being placed in an area where they too have a loved one's ashes. The long standing policy against the provision of memorials and other objects was first set at the time the crematorium opened in 1958, and is clearly stated on all cremation application forms. It is a policy designed to ensure primarily the long term simple beauty of the gardens for all who have occasion to visit the crematorium.

9.2 This report has set out to examine and consider within section 8 the options for dealing with the recurring problems and concerns that have been expressed, and members are asked to approve the recommendations set out in Section 2 of this report.

John Haskell
Clerk to the Joint Committee

Background List of Documents –
Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972: *None*

JH/me
20 November 2019

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**REPORT TO: PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE -
9TH DECEMBER 2019**

REPORT BY: THE CLERK TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM MANAGER AND REGISTRAR - RETIREMENT

1. James Clark, the current post holder, has given formal notice that he wishes to retire on the 29 February 2020. Under the terms of the member and officer delegations, appointment to the post is currently reserved to the Joint Committee.
2. Because of the timescale involved and to seek to ensure that a new post holder is able to take up the position at or soon after Mr Clark retires, the following arrangements have been made, in consultation with the chairman –
 - Fareham BC's personnel unit has been consulted and involved in the recruitment process;
 - Job description and details have been reviewed;
 - The post has been advertised, with a closing date of 12 December;
 - Interviews are to be undertaken on the 8 & 9 January;
 - The interviewing panel will comprise the Clerk and the Treasurer plus a personnel officer, with authority to appoint after consultation with the Chairman.
3. Since the Crematorium opened in 1958, it has only had 3 managers, and at one time Mr Clark worked with both of them (having started his career at Portchester in 1983) and becoming Manager and Registrar in 1989.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the arrangements made for the recruitment to the post of Manager and Registrar be noted and that authority be delegated to the Clerk, Treasurer and personnel officer to make an appointment after consultation with the Chairman;**
- (2) That the grateful thanks of the Joint Committee be placed on record for the long and distinguished service given by James Clark upon his retirement in February 2020 and for his valuable and outstanding contribution for 31 years to the work of Portchester Crematorium and the Joint Committee as Manager and Registrar.**

John Haskell
Clerk to the Joint Committee

Background List of Documents –
Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972: None

JH/me
26 November 2019

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