

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL REMOTE MEETING of the Joint Committee held on Monday 21 June 2021 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Apologies submitted

Gosport Borough Council

Councillor Alan Scard

Havant Borough Council

Councillor Lulu Bowerman
Councillor Tim Pike

Portsmouth City Council

Councillor Dave Ashmore

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Clerk to the Joint Committee explained the arrangements for the holding of this virtual remote meeting. This was taking place to allow the members to receive and comment upon various monitoring reports.

New members were welcomed to the meeting and officers serving the Joint Committee and members were introduced.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Ian Bastable and Simon Martin (Fareham BC), Kathleen Jones (Gosport BC), Hugh Mason (Portsmouth CC); and Victoria Hatton (Crematorium Manager).

891. Appointment of Chairman (AI 2)

In Councillor Hugh Mason's absence it was –

AGREED to hold over until the next meeting the appointment of chairman for the municipal year 2021/22.

892. Appointment of Vice-Chairman (AI 3)

In the absence of Fareham BC's members it was –

AGREED to hold over until the next meeting the appointment of vice-chairman for the municipal year 2021/22.

In the absence of a chair and vice chair it was -

AGREED that Councillor Dave Ashmore be chairman for the meeting.

(Councillor Dave Ashmore in the chair)

893. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 4)

None

894. Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 March 2021 (AI 5)

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 22 March 2021 be noted.

895. Matters Arising from the Minutes not specifically referred to on the Agenda (AI 6)

None

896. Clerk's Items (AI 7)

The Clerk mentioned that he had circulated to new committee members background briefing papers about the crematorium and recent joint committee decisions. In response to a later question he undertook to provide new members with a copy of the Joint Committee's approved current financial strategy and budget.

897. Annual Return for the Financial Year Ended 31 March 2021 (AI 8)

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

In submitting this report the Deputy Treasurer advised members that the Joint Committee's account would now be consolidated within each of the 4 local authorities' individual accounts, and were therefore submitted for information. Particular attention was drawn to the revised budget which it had been necessary to approve in September 2020 in response to the pandemic, and various capital improvements that had been undertaken including the book of remembrance room and installation of the Obitus multimedia system. Mention was also made that arising from response to the pandemic the scheduled internal audit had been postponed until summer 2021.

AGREED that the Annual Return for the financial year ending 31 March 2021 be received and signed as appropriate, as follows -

(a) Section 1 - Accounting Statements for Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee be approved and signed;

(b) Section 2 - Annual Governance Statement be approved and signed;

(c) That the Income and Expenditure Statement for the Year ended 31 March 2021 and Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2021 be noted.

898. Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee – Annual Report – 2020/21 (AI 9)

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

In submitting this report the Clerk drew particular attention to section 7(j) – the Competition and Markets Authority Funeral Directors and Crematoria Services Market Investigation. He said that the Funerals Order giving effect to the CMA's decision was published on the 16 June. Those parts relating to crematoria would come into force in mid-September. Under the Order there was a requirement for each crematorium operator to provide the CMA with timely periodic financial information on the number of cremations and revenue received for each type of service conducted. This was in addition to publicising a detailed breakdown of price information, which Portchester already provided.

In considering the report, members referred specifically to the response of the crematorium to the pandemic, and again echoed grateful thanks to staff for their action and way in which they had responded.

AGREED that the annual report for the 2020/21 financial year be received and sent for information to each constituent authority.

899. Building Repairs and Renewal Programme (AI 10)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER)

In submitting the report the Property Manager drew specific attention to the Brief being prepared for the Waiting Rooms Refurbishment. Members indicated support for the works envisaged, and the Property Manager would now be seeking estimates for the scheme.

AGREED that the contents of the report be noted.

900. Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 11)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

AGREED that the report be received and noted.

901. Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 12)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

In the absence of the Horticultural Consultant, Dave Stribling presented the general update on the Crematorium grounds. Particular mention was made the South East in Bloom judging would be taking place on the 15 July. He would also arrange to circulate for members information photographs of the grounds.

AGREED that the report be received and noted.

902. Dates of Future Meetings (AI 13)

In settling dates, the Clerk advised that, subject to operational requirements, arrangements could hopefully be made following a future meeting for those members who wish, to visit the crematorium's technical facilities.

AGREED that the Joint Committee meets at 2pm on the following dates in 2021/22, at Portchester Crematorium –

Monday 20 September 2021

Monday 13 December 2021

Monday 21 March 2022

Monday 27 June 2022

The meeting concluded at 2.28 pm.

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Chairman