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1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 MARCH 2023

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Minute Item 1

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING of the Joint Committee held in the North Chapel, Portchester Crematorium on Monday 20 March 2023 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Joanne Burton (Chairman)
Councillor Susan Walker

Gosport Borough Council

Councillor Alan Durrant
Councillor Alan Scard

Havant Borough Council

Councillor Tim Pike (Vice Chairman)

Portsmouth City Council

Councillor Steve Pitt

Apologies for Absence (AI 1) –

Councillor Lulu Bowerman (Havant BC) and Councillor Lee Hunt (Portsmouth CC); Ashley Humphrey, Horticultural Consultant

972 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2) – None

973 Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 December 2022 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 12 December 2022 be signed as a correct record.

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

Minute 963 – Proposed crematorium development , Stubbington/Lee-on-the-Solent

The Clerk reported that a planning application for this proposed development had now been submitted to the local planning authority.

The Clerk undertook to ensure that relevant factual information relating to Portchester Crematorium was submitted to the LPA.

NOTED

975 Clerk's Items (AI 5) -

a) Recycling of Metals Charitable Scheme – The Clerk reported that the members' nomination of the Rowans Hospice had now been submitted for consideration as a recipient under the scheme.

976 Capital Programme Addition 2022/23 and 2023/24 (AI 6)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

In submitting the report the Deputy Treasurer explained the necessity of carrying out this work and that it would provide additional resilience particularly at the time when the cremator replacement programme was being undertaken.

RESOLVED that the re-brick of cremators be added to the capital works programme as detailed in Appendix A to the report, and the revised programme be approved.

977 Obitus Optional Charges 2023/24 (AI 7)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

In submitting the report the Deputy Treasurer explained the percentage increases for those items that were currently available. A number of the products being offered were 'new' and had not previously featured in their new format.

Members agreed with a suggestion that the 'Obitus bundle' of items should be renamed 'Obitus package'.

RESOLVED that the proposed optional charges as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved from 1 April 2023.

978 Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 8) -

(a) General Statistical Report for December 2022 – February 2023

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

In submitting her report the Manager highlighted that at present the cremators were working at maximum efficiency. Mention was also made of how well Obitus was being received and the level of take up.

(b) Other items of topical interest - None

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

979 Building Repairs and Renewal Programme (AI 9)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER)

In submitting his report the Property Manager highlighted that some items of proposed work were on hold whilst the cremator replacement scheme is developed.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

980 Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 10)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

Members commented that they were very impressed with the wood sculptures which they had viewed at the conclusion of the December meeting.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

981 Development Management Plan 2023 – 2028 (AI 11)

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

The Clerk explained that the officers had now reviewed and revisited the previous Development Plan approved in March 2021, and had prepared for the Joint Committee's approval and adoption a revised development management plan.

The plan sought to look at medium term developments in the period up to 2028, and in the longer term beyond 2028. It also sought to indicate the continuing and future intentions of the Joint Committee and thereby guide both the management of the crematorium function and future policy decisions that may be required.

The following main changes to the previous plan were mentioned –

Para 9.3 – The decision to provide a 'memorial tree' with engraved leaves;

Para 12.2 – Cremator replacement programme;

Para 12.3 – Options for remodelling the garden of contemplation area;

Para 13.4 – Keeping under review the proposed crematorium at Stubbington;

Para 14 – Population trends;

Para 15.3 – The possibility of expanding the capacity of the South Chapel;

Para 16.4 – The set of plans already agreed to reduce crematorium's carbon emissions;

Para 17.4 – The creation of a 'babies garden' scattering area;

Para 17.7 – Ways and means of possibly adding soil to improve soil structure;

Section 18 – The role of medical examiners, and medical referees.

Arising from comments and questions mention was made of Section 9 relating to memorials.

The Manager and the Clerk to the Joint Committee updated members on items of correspondence that had been received since the last meeting (and resultant publicity arising) and replies that had been given explaining the long standing policy in respect of no memorials and grounds maintenance. Members were also advised of complaints that had been received in the same period from people who objected to informal memorials and similar items being left in the grounds.

Members had previously been advised of the forms and information provided to families, and via funeral directors, about scatterings and the no memorials policy. Having considered whether any revision to forms or further information was required, members concluded that the action currently being taken was sufficient.

RESOLVED (1) that the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee Development Management Plan 2023 - 2028 be approved and adopted.

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

982 Portchester Crematorium Replacement Cremators Programme (AI 12)

Before considering this item the Joint Committee -

RESOLVED that under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the Appendix to the report because it contains 'exempt information' as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

**(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER
AND EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

The Property Manager updated members on the results of the further work undertaken by the Joint Committee's consultants into the replacement of the cremators at Portchester Crematorium. He also explained the procurement strategy had been developed in conjunction with Fareham BC's Procurement team.

To allow all suppliers to take part in the procurement process a formal capability assessment was run with all suppliers being asked a series of questions based on the Joint Committee's key requirements set out in the main report. This information was formally requested via the South-East Business Portal.

The Property Manager advised members of the responses received from each of the companies and the conclusion as to how to proceed, as set out in the exempt report.

The Joint Committee was advised that further reports would be brought forward for approval by members, including in respect of building works and hold over facilities. Members would also be advised of the terms of the proposed contract. It was currently considered there was a sufficient budget for all elements of the project.

RESOLVED (1) That authority be given to negotiate with the company mentioned in the exempt appendix to the report to supply replacement cremators and associated equipment within the overall budgetary provision for this work.

(2) That authority to settle and approve the terms and conditions of the contract with the company be delegated to the Property Manager in consultation with the Treasurer and the Clerk, and after consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Committee.

(3) That further reports be submitted to the Joint Committee as the project proceeds.

983 Date of Next Meeting (AI 13)

The next meeting of the Joint Committee will be at 2pm on Monday 26 June 2023 at Portchester Crematorium.

The meeting concluded at 2.50 pm.

Chairman

JH/me
21 March 2023
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