

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Joint Committee held in the Town Hall, Gosport on Monday 16 June 2014 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Keith Evans
Councillor Leslie Keeble

Gosport Borough Council

Councillor Alan Scard
Councillor Dennis Wright

Havant Borough Council

Councillor Tony Briggs

Portsmouth City Council

No members appointed at the date of meeting

Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Councillor Dave Collins (Havant BC), Andy Wannell (Treasurer), and Terry Garvey (Engineer and Surveyor)

Welcome and Introductions

Councillor Alan Scard (Gosport BC) and Councillor Tony Briggs (Havant BC) were welcomed to the meeting.

575. Appointment of Chairman (AI 2)

RESOLVED that Councillor Leslie Keeble (Fareham Borough Council) be appointed Chairman for the 2014/15 municipal year.

(Councillor Leslie Keeble in the Chair)

576. Appointment of Vice-Chairman (AI 3)

RESOLVED that Councillor Tony Briggs (Havant Borough Council) be appointed vice-chairman for the 2014/15 municipal year.

577. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 4)

None.

578. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 March 2014 (AI 5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 10 March 2014 be signed as a correct record.

579. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT SPECIFICALLY REFERRED TO ON THE AGENDA (AI 6)

580. Clerk's Items (AI 7)

None.

581. Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee - Annual Report - 2013/14 (AI 8)

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

RESOLVED that the annual report for the 2013/14 financial year be noted and received and it be sent for information to each constituent authority.

582. Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement 2013/14 (AI 9)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

The Deputy Treasurer presented the report, and arising out of discussion mention was made of the likely reduction in income following the opening of the Oaks Crematorium; the situation of which was being monitored.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

583. Annual Return for the Financial Year Ended 31 March 2014 (AI 10)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

The Deputy Treasurer presented the report and in response to a question explained that the 2013/14 figure for land and buildings shown in the balance sheet was as the result of a revaluation that had been undertaken to bring the value in line with the insurance sum.

RESOLVED that the Annual Return for the financial year ending 31 March 2014 be approved 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) Section 4 - Annual Internal Audit Report be noted.

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

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

In presenting this report the Deputy Engineer and Surveyor referred to the meeting on 10 March 2014, under exempt minute 573, at which the Joint Committee received a report regarding the Building Surveying Consultancy Service, the contract for which (following a one year extension) expired on 31 March 2014.

To ensure continuity of building consultancy support services Fareham Borough Council's Building Services were formally requested to provide interim support until a longer term solution is put in place. The Joint Committee was advised that the arrangements subsequently made with Fareham BC were progressing satisfactorily.

The Deputy Engineer and Surveyor outlined progress being made on the planned maintenance programme and related matters set out in the report circulated in advance of the meeting. In particular the meeting was advised that the -

- hard wired alarm system (ref 7) had been completed;
- fence and gate works and car parking (ref 8) had been completed;
- water feature (ref 10) was currently de-commissioned until leak repair work was undertaken;
- Legionella Risk Assessment and Register (ref 15) had been completed;
- Asbestos Register (ref 16) had been commissioned;
- Fire Risk Assessment and Register (ref 17) had been commissioned.

The cost of preparing each register was estimated to be £500 per register.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

585. Crematorium South Chapel Refurbishment (AI 12)

Members were reminded that as part of the Joint Committee's initiatives in respect of developing and enhancing the Crematorium's services it was agreed to ask a design consultant to advise on décor and decoration for the South Chapel. Members had previously been consulted informally on a range of design principles, to enable a scheme to be worked up to presentation stage.

Robert Benn, of Robert Benn Associates, gave members a briefing on progress with bringing forward a scheme of refurbishment works for the interior of the South Chapel, and during the presentation drawings were shown and the following main points were made -

- The design features proposed aimed to respect the 1950's style of building;

- Wood panelling was proposed to be affixed to parts of the walls, and this would be demountable and durable so that when necessary access could be obtained to services;
- The provision of lighting would be a key feature;
- The use of the correct type of timber should improve acoustics;
- The panelling would be pre-fabricated off site;
- New carpeting to be provided;
- The estimated cost, excluding fees and VAT, was £175,000, and this sum recognised the degree of weekend and out of hours working.

During the presentation Mr Benn answered questions from members to clarify points of detail. These included the importance of the choice of wood to be used.

The Clerk explained that if members wished to proceed it would be appropriate to formally appoint Robert Benn Associates so that the scheme could be progressed. In addition it was suggested that authority be given to make financial provision within the current estimates and to authorise the scheme to be undertaken. However, the Clerk emphasised that the scheme would be kept under review by the officers and further reports, as necessary, brought forward to members before work was initiated on site.

RESOLVED (1) That Robert Benn Associates be thanked for their presentation of proposals for the refurbishment of the South Chapel and that the design principles for the scheme of refurbishment for the South Chapel be approved.

(2) That Robert Benn Associates (RBA) be appointed to progress the design scheme on appropriate terms and conditions to be settled by the Engineer and Surveyor after consultation with the Clerk to the Joint Committee and the Treasurer.

(3) That financial provision of £175,000 plus professional fees and VAT for the estimated cost of implementing the scheme be made in the Joint Committee's budget for 2014/15.

(4) That authority be given for the scheme to be undertaken and supervised by Fareham Borough Council's Building Services.

586. Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 13)

(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 consideration of the statistical report the Manager and Registrar gave members a general indication of the likely number of cremations that would be undertaken during the calendar year. He also reported that the slight reduction in the daily number of cremations had enabled four extended time slots to be introduced each day in the South Chapel – 2 in the morning and 2 in the afternoon, each of 45 minutes duration. This arrangement had now stopped service over-runs and ensured, so far as possible, that services kept to their advertised times.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

587. Publication of Cremation Records On-Line (AI 14)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

Arising from presentation of his report and questions the Manager and Registrar explained that a free service would continue to be available to personal callers at the crematorium.

RESOLVED the proposal set out in the report to make available the cremation records on-line be approved, and the Manager and Registrar be authorised to finalise the arrangements.

588. Video Streaming of Services Through the Internet (AI 15)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

Members were reminded that in September 2013 the Joint Committee approved, as part of a report on developing and enhancing the crematorium's services, the provision of secure internet streaming of funeral services for any family requesting it. The Manager and Registrar, in consultation with the Clerk to the Joint Committee, was authorised to finalise the arrangements including the necessary security safeguards for the provision of this service. This would include settling the level of charge, which would be fixed in consultation with the Treasurer.

RESOLVED that the proposal set out in the report be approved.

589. Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 16)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

RESOLVED that the report be received and approved.

590. Crematorium Mercury Abatement Project (AI 17)

The Deputy Engineer and Surveyor updated the Joint Committee on the outstanding matter regarding sound insulation mitigation works referred to in minute 571, considered at the meeting on 10 March 2014.

Regrettably the new solution had not progressed as quickly as expected. Fareham Borough Council's Building Services team, who had recently been appointed to deal with building services and maintenance related matters, were now taking this forward as a priority. They were now pursuing a solution with the manufacturer of the mercury abatement equipment and with acoustic engineers, as well as the Environmental Health officer responsible for noise issues.

Reference was made to the need to ensure that nearby residents were advised of the action being taken to install sound mitigation. The Clerk explained that he had prepared a letter for circulation, which was read to the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED that the action being taken to carry out sound mitigation works be noted, and that local residents be advised of the action being taken.

591. Grievance and Disciplinary Appeals Committee - Appointment of Representatives (AI 18)

RESOLVED that Councillors Leslie Keeble, Alan Scard and Dennis Wright be appointed, (together with Councillors Keith Evans and Tony Briggs as standing deputies) to serve on the Appeals Committee, as agreed on 14 June 2010 under minute 360.

592. Horticultural Grounds Maintenance Contract (AI 19)

Before considering this item the Joint Committee –

RESOLVED that the public be excluded from the meeting during this item of business because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' within paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Joint Committee was reminded that the contract for the provision of horticultural and grounds maintenance services would expire in December 2014.

Vince Venus, Portsmouth's Street Environment and Parks Manager updated members on the outcome of negotiations with the current contractor for a two year extension of the existing contract until the end of December 2016, on similar terms and conditions, but would produce a modest saving resulting from a change to the inflation indices.

Extending the contract would allow for it to be aligned with other Portsmouth City Council contracts so that concurrent procurement could be undertaken,

but with the crematorium grounds maintenance being a discrete lot as part of the overall contract.

RESOLVED that the action taken by Portsmouth City Council's Procurement Service be noted and the action taken to extend the current grounds maintenance contract until December 2016 be approved.

593. Dates of Future Meetings (AI 20)

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee meets at 2pm on a rotating basis on the following dates in 2014/15, at the venues indicated –

**Monday 15 September 2014 (Havant)
Monday 15 December 2014 (Portsmouth)
Monday 16 March 2015 (Fareham)
Monday 15 June 2015 (Gosport).**

The meeting concluded at 3.10pm.

.....
Chairman

JH/me
19 June 2014
1060616m.doc