

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING of the Joint Committee held in the North Chapel, Portchester Crematorium on Monday 26 June 2023 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Joanne Burton
Councillor Susan Walker

Gosport Borough Council

Councillor June Cully
Councillor Alan Scard

Havant Borough Council

Councillor Liz Fairhurst

Portsmouth City Council

Councillor Hugh Mason

Welcome and Introductions

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

Apologies for Absence – Councillor Lulu Bowerman (Havant BC), and Councillor Lee Hunt (Portsmouth CC).

984 Appointment of Chairman (AI 2)

AGREED that the appointment of Chairman for the municipal year 2023/24, being a member from Havant BC, be held over until the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

985 Appointment of Vice-Chairman (AI 3)

RESOLVED that Councillor June Cully (Gosport Borough Council) be appointed vice-chairman for the municipal year 2023/24.

(Councillor June Cully in the Chair)

986 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 4) – None

987 Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 March 2023 (AI 5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 20 March 2023 be signed as a correct record.

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

(a) Minute 974 – Proposed crematorium development , Stubbington/Le-on-the-Solent

The Clerk reported that as requested he had written to the planning authority providing factual information regarding usage and operational arrangements at Portchester.

(b) Minute 975 – Recycling of Metals Charitable Scheme

It was reported that the nomination had been successful and the Rowans Hospice had received £12,000 from the scheme.

NOTED

989 Clerk's Items (AI 7) -

Fareham BC Health and Public Protection Scrutiny Panel

The Clerk reported that he and the Crematorium Manager attended a meeting of the Scrutiny Panel on 20 June at its request who had wished to examine and be assured of the ability of Portchester Crematorium to accommodate the needs of a growing population within Fareham and beyond.

The Panel had been given a presentation and background briefing paper, which illustrated clearly that Portchester Crematorium had the capacity and services to provide the reassurance sought.

NOTED

990 Annual Return for the Financial Year Ended 31 March 2023 (AI 8)

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

The Deputy Treasurer highlighted key points within the report and arising from questions explained that financial estimates were based on estimates of the number of funeral services likely to take place, a number that had reduced following the rise in numbers during the pandemic.

RESOLVED that the Annual Return for the financial year ending 31 March 2023 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 2023 and Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2023 be noted.

991 Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee – Annual Report – 2022/23 (A9)

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

RESOLVED that the annual report for the 2022/23 financial year be received and approved and it be sent for information to each constituent authority.

992 Building Repairs and Renewal Programme (AI 10)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER)

In submitting his report and in response to questions the Property Manager highlighted that some items of proposed work including the lighting upgrade were on hold whilst the cremator replacement scheme is developed to ensure that potentially abortive work and expense was not undertaken.

In respect of the scheme for the replacement of the water feature it was proposed to carry out a temporary upgrade of the area and it was envisaged this could be advance enabling work for the larger project being developed.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

993 Replacement of Cremators – Update Report (AI 11)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER)

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted

**994 Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 12) -
(a) General Statistical Report for March 2023 – May 2023**

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

In submitting her report the Manager highlighted that in respect of the Obitus multimedia system it had recently been upgraded to enable those watching by webcast to see a full screen version of any personal tribute being shown within the chapel. A much valued addition to the service already appreciated by families and friends who were unable to attend a funeral in person.

(b) Other items of topical interest - None

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

995 Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 13)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

The Horticultural Consultant mentioned that the South and South East Britain in Bloom judges would be visiting the crematorium during the coming week.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

996 Feasibility Study into proposal for the Fountain Area including the Development of a Garden of Contemplation (AI 14)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER)

The Property Manager explained the results of the feasibility study into options to develop the existing fountain area, including proposals for a new Garden of Contemplation and related works. This would also include new exit arrangements for the South and North chapels. The scheme would give a significant improvement to the facilities provided at the crematorium for those attending services and for acts of remembrance.

Members were updated on the early costings that showed the scheme at between £1.5m and £3m at today's construction costs. There was currently insufficient funds within the capital budget for this scheme due to existing commitments including the cremator replacement programme. Details of an alternative option which would include removal of the fountain and replace with planting would significantly improve the appearance of the area in the short term, at an estimated cost of £75k.

RESOLVED (1) that the results of the feasibility study report be noted;

(2) that an alternative scheme for the removal of the existing concrete fountain, provision of planting and potentially a memorial as a short-term solution be added to the Capital Programme for 2023 / 2024;

(3) that the results of the feasibility study should be reviewed, and a rationalised scheme be prepared;

(4) that an update report be provided during 2025 on the review of proposals, with revised costs and an update on the funding.

997 Dates of Future Meetings (AI 15)

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee meets at 2pm on the following dates in 2023/24 at Portchester Crematorium –

**Monday 25 September 2023
Monday 18 March 2024**

**Monday 11 December 2023
Monday 24 June 2024**

The Meeting concluded at 2.45pm