

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING of the Joint Committee held in the Collingwood Room, Civic Offices, Fareham on Monday 18 March 2024 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Joanne Burton
Councillor Susan Walker

Gosport Borough Council

Councillor June Cully (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Alan Scard

Havant Borough Council

Apologies submitted

Portsmouth City Council

Councillor Hugh Mason

Apologies for Absence – Councillor Lulu Bowerman (Chairman) & Councillor Liz Fairhurst (Havant BC), Councillor Lee Hunt (Portsmouth CC)

(Councillor June Cully in the Chair)

1023 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2) – None

1024 Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 December 2023 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 11 December 2023 be signed as a correct record.

1025 Matters Arising from the Minutes not specifically referred to on the Agenda (AI 4) - None

1026 Clerk's Items (AI 5)

(a) Portchester Crematorium Future Improvement Proposals

The Clerk explained that under minute 1014 mention had been made that it was hoped that a report could be presented at this meeting on options for bringing forward at an earlier date opportunities to undertake a range of improvements to the South Chapel, redevelopment of the fountain area, and other physical improvements.

Members were advised that the Cremator replacement project had absorbed a considerable amount of officer time in the negotiations with the cremator supply company and developing the extent of related building and other works required to accommodate the new equipment.

At this stage, due to other work commitments, it had not as previously hoped been possible to carry out since the last meeting in December 2023 a detailed appraisal of each element of the proposals, including a priority for their implementation. The aim remained however to bring forward, as previously agreed, a report reviewing the Feasibility Study proposals, revised costs, funding options, and an implementation programme.

NOTED

1027 Replacement of Cremators – Update Report (AI 6)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER)

In submitting his report the Property Manager amplified the main points in respect of the proposed contract with Facultatieve Technologies. Reference was also made to the recent outcome of the tender process for the building works to facilitate provision of the 4 new cremators. This work would be undertaken by Vale Southern Construction Ltd.

Mention was made of the hold over facilities to be acquired by the Joint Committee, and the viewing room to be provided for families that took account of various faiths and cultural needs.

The Property Manager explained that earlier in the day there had been a successful on site meeting between officers, FT and Vale to progress working arrangements. Periodic reports on progress with the project including financial monitoring would continue and also be shared with Chairman and Vice Chairman.

During discussion the following main points arose –

- Although the scheme was still on budget there were always risks with any project of this size;
- The viewing room and separate hold over facilities would be provided within phase 1, and the way in which both would be used was explained;
- During the works it was not at present envisaged there would be a need to extend the crematorium's working hours, although occasionally there may be a need to suspend the timing of some midday services and also make use of the hold over facilities;
- Media and communications information would be prepared and issued, with the Joint Committee members being kept advised. There would also be information displayed at the crematorium.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee notes the written progress report for the period December 2023 – February 2024 and the verbal update.

**1028 Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 11) -
(a) General Statistical Report for December 2023 – February 2024**

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

In submitting her report the Manager highlighted that Obitus web cast usage was on a par with the regional average, and that visual tributes were above the regional average.

In respect of the annual total number of cremations, Portchester was still within the top 10 crematoria nationally.

(b) Other items of topical interest –

- **Federation of Burial and Cremations Authorities – 3 Yearly Inspection**

Members were advised that the result of the recent in depth 3 yearly inspection by the FBCA had just been received. The Manager and Registrar was pleased to report this showed that Portchester had an excellent level of service provision, and also had a 100% score for its administration and ceremony.

Members asked that all members of the crematorium team be congratulated on this achievement.

- **Memorial Tree and Memorial Frieze**

The Manager and Registrar reported that a brochure was being developed to promote sales of memorial leaves and plaques. In addition to distributing brochures to families that had booked services they would also be placed in the Book of Remembrance Room for those that have had previous services.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted and that all members of the crematorium team be congratulated on the result of the FBCA inspection.

1029 Building Repairs and Renewal Programme (AI 10)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER)

In submitting his report the Property Manager mentioned that the Chapel entrance resurfacing (item 2114) had now been completed. Item 2120 - The fountain had now been removed and interim planting would be undertaken in the area. The investigation works that were required at the Garden Shelter (item 2118) was to investigate the extent of decay in the structure.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

1030 Crematorium Grounds – General Update (AI 12)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

The Clerk explained that Lisa Grinter was indisposed and unable to attend the meeting. She had confirmed to him that there was nothing additional to report.

The Clerk also mentioned that Ashley Humphrey, the Horticultural Consultant, had now retired, and members wished him well for the future.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

1031 Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee next meets at 2pm on Monday 24 June 2024 at Portchester Crematorium.

The Meeting concluded at 2.45pm

Chairman

JH/me
19 March 2024
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