



Report to Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee

Date: **9 December 2024**

Report of: **Treasurer to the Joint Committee**

Subject: **RISK MANAGEMENT**

SUMMARY

The Risk Management Framework and Policy Statement for Portchester Crematorium are subject to annual review. This report sets out the updated documents, which provide evidence that the Risk Management Policy is operating in practice, for approval by the Joint Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. That the Risk Management Strategic Framework and Policy as set out in Appendix A and B of this report be approved.
- b. That the Risk Management progress report set out in Appendix C be noted as a source of evidence that the current Risk Management Policy is operating in practice.

RISK MANAGEMENT

1. Risk Management is an area that is subject to internal audit as part of the Joint Committee's Corporate Governance arrangements. It also forms a key component of the self-assessment process leading to the Annual Governance Statement approved by the Joint Committee.
2. Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect an organisations ability to achieve its objectives and to successfully execute its strategies. Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is a key element of the framework for corporate governance.
3. The responsibilities in relation to Risk Management for the Joint Committee are set out below :

A shared awareness and understanding within the Joint Committee of :

- Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making
- Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively
- Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated

RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND RISK POLICY STATEMENT

4. The Joint Committee has adopted a Risk Management Framework and Risk Management Policy Statement. These two documents are subject to annual review and subject to some minor textual amendments remain up to date, relevant and robust. They define the processes and responsibilities for managing risks across the whole spectrum, and are set out at Appendices A and B respectively. The Joint Committee is asked to approve these documents for their continued application to the system of risk management in place.

RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORTS

5. Discussions have been held between the Manager and Registrar and the Officers to the Joint Committee to gather and report evidence that the Risk Management Policy continues to be implemented, detailed at Appendix C. In particular the policy is considered to be effective if they include:
 - What the top risks are and any new or changes in risks and opportunities that have occurred in the year
 - Actions that have been taken in the year to mitigate risks
 - Incidents that have occurred and actions taken to manage the incident and prevent a repeat
 - Risks and solutions shared with other experts in that subject, including Officers of the four constituent Council authorities

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**PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE
SUMMARY OF RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

Framework Element	Process agreed
Risk Management	
Risk Management Policy	<p>Lead Officer – Clerk to the Joint Committee and Treasurer to the Joint Committee</p> <p>Approved, and reviewed as appropriate by the Joint Committee</p> <p>Annual assessment of adequacy of risk management arrangements</p>
Monitoring and Reporting to the Joint Committee	<p>Lead Officer – Clerk to the Joint Committee and Treasurer to the Joint Committee</p> <p>Discussions are held on an annual basis with Officers to the Joint Committee and the Manager and Registrar to gain assurance that the Risk Management principles are working at the crematorium. The discussion includes:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perceptions of the current top risks 2. Any new or changes in risks / opportunities that have been identified 3. Any mitigating actions they have taken recently to strengthen risk management arrangements 4. Any incidents that have occurred and lessons learnt / actions taken as a consequence <p>Health and Safety Policy approved December 2023, and reviewed November 2024 for subsequent approval.</p> <p>Decision making reports to the Joint Committee include risk information to support recommendations</p>
Maintaining Risk information and assessments	<p>Desktop review of underlying risk registers of risks to the crematorium</p> <p>Risk assessments support any projects implemented at the Crematorium</p>

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT

The Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee recognises that Risk Management is an intrinsic part of Corporate Governance, whilst not being a separate corporate process. Risk Management is an integral part of basic everyday management and decision making, involving foreseeing and averting problems and maximising opportunities. The Joint Committee accepts that some risks will always exist and will never be eliminated.

The Joint Committee recognises that it has a responsibility to manage risks and supports a structured and focused approach to managing them by implementing robust and integrated risk management, adopting and adhering to a number of key principles.

In this way the Joint Committee will better achieve its corporate objectives and enhance the value of services it provides to the community.

The Joint Committee's risk management strategic objectives are to:

- ♦ Integrate risk management into the culture of the Joint Committee
- ♦ Manage risk in accordance with best practice
- ♦ Anticipate and respond to changing public health, social, environmental, legislative, political, economic, technological, competitive and citizen requirements
- ♦ Prevent injury, damage and losses and reduce the cost of risk
- ♦ Raise awareness of the need for risk management by all those connected with the Committee's delivery of services we provide.

These objectives will be achieved by adopting and adhering to the following key principles:

- ♦ Establishing clear roles, responsibilities and reporting lines within the Joint Committee for risk management
- ♦ Employ competent and responsible managers and employees
- ♦ Offering a framework for identifying and prioritising risk areas
- ♦ Reinforcing the importance of effective risk management as part of the everyday work of employees by having conversations and pulling in experts when required
- ♦ Incorporating risk management considerations into all aspects of the Joint Committee's work.
- ♦ Monitoring arrangements on an on-going basis.

The key components of the Risk Management Framework are:

- **Monitoring and Reporting to provide assurance to the Joint Committee that the principles are working in the management of the crematorium**
- **Underlying risk registers of risks to the crematorium reviewed**
- **A set of Health and Safety hazard assessments**
- **Inclusion of risk information in decision making reports to the Joint Committee**
- **Risk assessments supporting any projects implemented at the Crematorium**

**Governance Assurance Group
Annual Risk Management Update 2024/25**

A discussion was held with the Manager and Registrar, Property Services Manager, Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer along with input from the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to the Joint Committee during November 2024. A summary of the evidence gathered from the discussions is set out below.

Risk or Opportunity	Actions being taken
<p style="text-align: center;">New crematorium opens reducing our market share</p>	<p>Treasurer to the Joint Committee</p> <p>Where possible information is gathered and the potential impact on our ongoing operation and revenue streams are considered.</p> <p>Monitor the situation and continue to report to the Joint Committee.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Cremation Plant</p> <p>The crematorium site is of regional importance providing cremation services for a large geographical area.</p> <p>The existing cremators are currently being replaced over a two year period by four new gas cremators and associated equipment to ensure their continued reliable performance.</p>	<p>Manager and Registrar and Property Manager</p> <p>Maintenance contract in place with cremator manufacturers for cremators and associated equipment to ensure they are maintained in good order.</p> <p>Continuity of operations has been strengthened by the reline (in 2023) of two of the existing cremators, improving resilience especially through the winter period and during the replacement programme.</p> <p>The replacement cremator work is taking place in two phases. Phase 1 has been between April and December 2024, and has included new plant room access, hold over facility and viewing room, structural works to allow installation of 2 new cremators & abatement equipment following removal of 4 existing cremators.</p> <p>Phase 2 will take place between April and October 2025 involving removal of the two remaining old cremators, installation of 2 new cremators and abatement equipment, and replacement of the chimney stack liners.</p> <p>Monthly officer meetings review progress on meeting our requirements and timescales. Update reports are presented to each Joint Committee.</p> <p>Legislative change in terms of emissions will be taken into account as part of the replacement.</p> <p>Comprehensive Risk Register prepared and updated when required. Monitored as part of the regular monthly meetings and will feed into the updated Business Continuity Plan.</p>

<p>Business Continuity – Operational and Staffing</p> <p>The way in which cremation services are conducted; staffing and office resources deployed; and the use of IT and related equipment are kept under review.</p>	<p>Manager and Registrar and Clerk to the Joint Committee</p> <p>The aim of the long standing operational Business Continuity Plan, which is reviewed periodically, is to prepare an effective and timely restoration after a disruption or interruption in service, and identify actions required to continue cremations at Portchester.</p> <p>Clerk and Treasurer to the Joint Committee Manager and Registrar</p> <p>Review Portchester Crematorium structure and whether the current employment model remains relevant and most appropriate for the staff employed there.</p> <p>The administration team has been expanded to improve cover and resilience and to facilitate provision of new services.</p> <p>ICT upgrade to the cloud completed and introduction of a new telephone system. The Epilogue upgrade has facilitated improved invoicing arrangements for memorial sales and debtor management requirements.</p>
<p>Facilities and Arrangements</p> <p>The chapels and associated facilities have progressively been updated over the last few years. With the needs and expectations of our customers continuing to change we need to keep reviewing and improving our facilities.</p>	<p>Manager and Registrar and Property Manager</p> <p>Using customers feedback we will bring forward programmes of work to ensure we remain the Crematorium of choice within our area on a par or above our competitors with the facilities we provide.</p> <p>A programme of improvements to the facilities and services offered were considered and approved by the Joint Committee in the September 2024 meeting. Working around the delivery of phase 2 of the cremator replacement programme these works will be programmed over the next two years.</p>

<p>Climate Change Action Plan</p> <p>Develop an action plan to mitigate and adapt to impacts of climate change and reduce our carbon footprint</p>	<p>Manager and Registrar and Property Manager</p> <p>The Portchester Crematorium Carbon Reduction Plan 2022 was approved at the December 2022 meeting of the Joint Committee. This is monitored and actions that have been taken will be reported on a regular basis.</p> <p>Review of operations and mitigations will be ongoing, and we will continue to look for opportunities to help us achieve the objectives within the Plan.</p>
<p>Opportunities to Complement and Enhance the Crematorium's Core Activities</p> <p>Changing attitudes in society and the needs of the bereaved can lead to new initiatives and services</p>	<p>Manager and Registrar</p> <p>Recent examples include the provision of a baby memorial plot; new memorials of a Maple Leaf Tree, Landmark and Naval Frieze; and the provision of a family viewing room.</p> <p>Opportunities will continue to be explored to ensure that Portchester remains the crematorium of choice, meeting the needs of local residents.</p>