

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE held at the Crematorium, Barnstaple on Friday 24th June 2016 at 2.30 p.m.

Present: Representing North Devon District Council

Councillors Harrison, Jones and Yabsley

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors Dezart, S.Inch (Chairman) and Langmead

Officers

Procurement and Service Delivery Manager, Treasurer,
Secretary and Accountant

(a) APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN 2016/17

RESOLVED, that Councillor S Inch be appointed Chairman of the Joint Committee until re-appointments are made in the next municipal year.

(b) APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Edgell, Johns, Lane, Le Maistre and Moores

(c) APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN 2016/17

RESOLVED, that Councillor Yabsley be appointed Vice Chairman of the Joint Committee until re-appointments are made in the next municipal year.

(d) MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2016 (previously circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(e) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest announced.

(f) MATTERS BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman reported that the opening of the new chapel was well attended and a great success. He thanked the Officers for organising a successful opening.

(g) CREMATORIUM MATTERS

The Joint Committee considered a report by the Crematorium Manager (previously circulated).

Staffing Issues

The Joint Committee noted the following:

That one of the three Crematoria Technician's had left to work for a local funeral director. The vacancy had been advertised internally and also externally and the successful candidate would start on 25 July 2016.

Achievements

The Joint Committee noted the following:

That the new chapel had been in operation since 16th March and the official opening was on 12th April with coverage on BBC Radio Devon and ITV South West TV News.

The operation had proven extremely successful with superb feedback from all users. The Funeral Directors are now given the opportunity to use either Chapel depending on the size of congregation. The new operational challenge resulting from having 2 chapels had been absorbed by staff.

The flower room had undergone a major update. The entrance had been moved to the side so not to interrupt the flow of people out of the chapel. The room had been redecorated with a new floor installed and new flower stands ordered. The works would reduce noise entering the chapel, prevent visitors being 'trapped' by a service exiting from the adjacent chapel and present a much more pleasant atmosphere. The works were combined with a new disabled access ramp to the flower room and into the central area of the gardens, replacing the previous steps.

Cremator Maintenance

The Joint Committee noted the following:

That the Joint Committee had previously approved for the Cremators to be maintained by payment as needed rather than by maintenance contract. Part of the projected maintenance plan was for the cremators to have a new hearth every two years and a full rebuild of the brickwork every 5 years. Cremator 2 had gone 4 years without needing a new hearth but it was now needed as soon as possible to protect the integrity of the cremator walls. This was a standard requirement and could be programmed to prevent any inconvenience. The cost would be around £11,000 and would come out of funds put aside in this financial year for this purpose. The revenue budget that included these funds had already been approved.

Crematorium Figures

The Cremation figures were noted.

Metals Charity Recycling Award

It was noted that the latest cheque for £4,444 had been presented by the Chairman to the North Devon Hospice on 20th April 2016 .A press release was published to the usual sources. Both North Devon Journal and North Devon Gazette published a piece. The next charity on the nomination list was CRUSE

Grounds Improvement Working Group

The Joint Committee noted the proposed priorities for disabled access/health & safety works. The members of the working group had been consulted and the consensus was that work should start as soon as possible with the highest Health and Safety priority first.

The list had been put in priority order as follows:

1. Cremator area wash facilities (H&S) - £10,000
2. External water supply improvements (H&S) - £5,000.
3. Two areas of flooding prevention (Top Section Corner & Rembrandt – H&S) - £10,000
4. Crazy paving replacement (H&S & Disabled Access) - £10,000
5. Disabled ramp from upper car-park (Disabled access) - £12,000
6. Path from upper car-park to Authors/Royals (Disabled Access) - £5,000
7. Any remaining funds to be used to improve flood-prone paths leading from the flower room ramp.

It was RESOLVED that the above works be commenced as soon as possible and the allocated budget previously approved used for this purpose.

Dedication of Rowan Chapel

The Joint Committee noted that a request had been received to consecrate Rowan Chapel. The Aspen Chapel had been dedicated in 1966, rather than consecrated. Enquiries of the non-religious 'officiates' had not revealed any obstacle to an ecumenical dedication. The difference was if the chapel was consecrated then it was dedicated formally to a religious purpose, where as a dedication it was given over exclusively to a single use or purpose but would not cause offence to non-denominational officiates.

It was RESOLVED that the Rowan Chapel be dedicated rather than consecrated

(h) PHASE 2 EXTENSION UPDATE REPORT

The Joint Committee noted a project update report (previously circulated) by the Procurement and Service Delivery Manager.

The Procurement and Delivery Manager reported that there had been two major snagging issues, the unevenness of some of the brickwork cladding and the condition of the far end of the car park which had not been laid correctly. These issues were being addressed. He also reported that the new catafalque had been installed.

The Chairman reported that the following issues that had been raised with him:

That the person leading the Service should be on a raised platform.

That the sound system was not working correctly as people could not hear the service. The Procurement and Service Delivery Manager stated that he would get the sound system re-tested.

That people could not find the donation box.

(i) OUTTURN 2015/16

The Joint Committee considered a report by the Treasurer (previously circulated) regarding the outturn 2015/16.

The Procurement and Service Delivery Manager briefly outlined a proposal for the old garage building. It was suggested that the garage be demolished and a storage area built with a cafeteria style room at the front that could be leased out and used for events.

The Committee were in favour of such a proposals subject to a business case and report being brought back for consideration

RESOLVED:

- (A) That that the Outturn Report 2015/16 be noted and the level or Working Balance be maintained at £100,000.
- (B) That consideration of the distribution of the balance in the Crematorium Capital Requirements Reserve be deferred to the next meeting and the Officers prepare a long term maintenance plan and costings of works required at the Crematorium.

Chairman

The meeting ended at 3.22 p.m.