

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE held at the Crematorium, Barnstaple on Friday 18th November 2016 at 2.30 p.m.

Present: Representing North Devon District Council

Councillors Edgell, Jones, Lane, and Yabsley

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors S.Inch (Chairman), Johns and Langmead

Officers

Procurement and Service Delivery Manager, Crematorium
Manager, Treasurer, Secretary and Accountant

(a) APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Harrison and T. Inch.

(b) MINUTES

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

In answer to a question regarding the car park the Procurement and Service Delivery Manager stated that the major repairs to the damaged areas were scheduled to commence on 12th December and the area remained fenced off.

It was agreed to add an item on future agenda 'Matters Arising'.

(c) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest announced.

(d) CREMATORIUM MATTERS

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

Achievements

The Joint Committee noted the following:

- (i) **Book of Remembrance.** That a new display cabinet had been ordered to replace the existing ageing one and that the manufacturer was based in Bideford.
- (ii) **New ash burial site.** That a new site had been commissioned to extend the life of the high profile memorialised areas and provide a very long term solution to the shortage of space as well as improving the look of a run-down area of the garden. The opportunity was also taken to extend the fencing meaning that half of the woodland bordering perimeter was now close board fenced.
- (iii) **On-line Book of Remembrance.** That the ability to view entries in the Book of Remembrance on the internet had been commissioned. This would involve a modest annual cost but would allow families anywhere to view an entry.
- (iv) **BACS Payments for Funeral Directors.** That to streamline the payment process an online payment system had been implemented.
- (v) **Website Updated and improved.** That the website had been updated and some additional information incorporated.

Larkbear Housing Development

The Joint Committee noted the following:

That there were plans for over 800 new homes, around the south/southeast edge of the crematorium site, with only the woodland separating them from the Crematorium. Planning consent had been submitted with a view to starting phase one, some 244 houses accessed from the Old Torrington Road. The works would involve significant changes to the road network with the only access to the crematorium being via Roundswell/Gratton Way (Sainsbury) where the existing bus gate was situated. A new bus gate would be installed in the Old Torrington Road. This would be the only access to the development for residents and heavy traffic associated with the build and there were concerns about the impact on the crematorium. The Traffic Impact assessment submitted by the developers was over 4 years old, made no mention of the crematoriums significant vehicle movements and obviously took no account of the increased capacity and demand or the new housing development adjacent.

The representations made by the Crematorium Manager were noted
It was also noted that the application had been refused at this stage.

The Joint Committee expressed concern that it had not been consulted and were concerned that the proposal did not restrict access to the Crematorium (a major facility) and be accessed only through an Industrial Estate but that access be retained along Old Torrington Road.

It was agreed that the Crematorium Manager be authorised to write on behalf of the Joint Committee expressing these concerns and a the letter be copied to all Crematorium Joint Committee Members, the relevant District and County Councillors

Crematorium Figures

The Cremation figures were noted.

Metals Charity Recycling Award

It was noted that CRUSE had been nominated in accordance with the Committees decision and that the Chairman would present a cheque for £4337.

The next charity on the rota was the Children's Hospice South West.

It was agreed that the list of Charities be considered at the next meeting

Dedication of Rowan Chapel

The Committee noted that the Bishop of Exeter had dedicated the new Chapel on Saturday 12th November and the event was arranged with support from the Voice Community Choir.

The Bishop had praised the building as one of the best in the area

Councillor Langmead expressed disappointment at the lack of Councillors who attended the dedication service.

Legislation – Changes to Medical Referee Post

The Committee noted that the Government had announced its intention to introduce a new system of medical scrutiny of deaths and the authorisation of burial or cremation in April 2018 (Section 19 Coroners and Justice Act 2009 & Health and Social Care Act 2012).

This would directly affect both Councils as it was a requirement that medical examiners be appointed by local authorities in England. The post would usually be based at a hospital as access to medical records was necessary, but the post could be 'shared' between authorities.

The fee for the service (anticipated to be in the £80-£100 bracket) would be collected by the local authority.

The fee would apply to both cremation and burial services, making burial more expensive as there were no medical fees at present and reducing the cost of cremation as the existing medical fees were usually £180.

The existing medical referee service provided at the North Devon Crematorium which authorises each cremation would cease.

The Bereavement Service at North Devon Hospital are aware of the likely requirement to provide accommodation facilities for the post.

The authority of the Joint Committee is sought to commence discussions with all interested parties to ensure seem less adoption of the new legislative requirements.

It was agreed that the Crematorium Manager be authorised to commence discussions with the Bereavement Service at the Hospital and to include resources and funding issues.

(e) PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT – QUARTER 2 2016/17

The Joint Committee considered and noted a report by the Treasurer (previously circulated) regarding the performance for April to September 2016/17

It was agreed that the acquisition of business debit cards be approved subject to a limit of £250 per item.

(f) DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates for future meetings were agreed:

Friday 10 February 2017 @ 2.30 p.m.

Friday 2 June 2017 @ 2.30 p.m.

Friday 4 August 2017 @ 2.30 p.m.

Friday 20 October 2017 @ 2.30 p.m.

Friday 9 February 2018 @ 2.30 p.m.

Chairman

The meeting ended at 3.24 p.m.