

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Joint Committee held in the Civic Offices, Portsmouth on Monday 12 December 2016 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Keith Evans

Gosport Borough Council

Councillor Dennis Wright (Chairman)
Councillor Keith Farr (standing deputy)

Havant Borough Council

Councillor David Guest

Portsmouth City Council

Apologies received for non-attendance

Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Councillor Susan Bell (Fareham BC), Councillor Alan Scard (Gosport BC), Councillor Tony Briggs (Havant BC), and Councillors Lee Mason & Rob New (Portsmouth CC)

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

709 Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 September 2016 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 19 September 2016 be signed as a correct record.

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

711 Clerk's Items (AI 5)

(a) Portchester Crematorium Web Site

The Joint Committee was given a demonstration of the refreshed and updated Portchester Crematorium Web Site. Members extended special thanks to Helen Jenkins, the Deputy Manager and Registrar, and Fareham Borough Council's web development team for implementation of the new web site.

NOTED

712 Finance Strategy and Budget for 2017/18 (AI 6)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

The Deputy Treasurer presented and highlighted the key aspects within the report and in response to questions the following main points arose –

- The increase in the amount of Business Rates payable by cemeteries and crematoria from 2017 onwards following receipt of draft rateable re-valuation from the Valuation Office Agency including consideration of a possible appeal;
- The level of contribution required to the capital works fund bearing in mind the value of a scheme for future cremators replacement;
- The extent of the refurbishment and remodelling works undertaken to the South Chapel to maintain its high quality and marketability, given the changed operating environment of Portchester following the opening of The Oaks.

RESOLVED (1) that the Finance Strategy 2017/18, attached as Appendix A to the report, be approved;

(2) that the Finance Strategy 2017/18 be sent to the four constituent authorities to note for their information.

713 Revenue Budget Report - 2017/18 (AI 7)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

The Deputy Treasurer presented and highlighted the key aspects within the report including the two options proposed for cremation charges, the reasons for which were explained to and discussed by the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED (a) That the capital works programme as detailed in Appendix E be approved;

(b) That Option 2 be approved for the proposed cremation fees and other charges as set out in Appendices B & C from 1 April 2017;

(c) That the proposed revenue account estimates as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved;

(d) That the Joint Committee writes to the Leader of each constituent authority to advise them of the annual payment to be received from the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee in 2016/17 and in 2017/18.

714 Building Works Programme (AI 8)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR)

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

715 Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 9)

(a) General Statistical Report

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

In submitting his report the Manager and Registrar advised that by the end of the calendar year he expected the total cremation figure to be in line with the figures for 2015.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

(b) Any other items of topical interest – public comments register

The Manager and Registrar reported that following the introduction of the public comments register in September, in addition to the usual number of miscellaneous enquires and expressions of thanks, there had been five logged comments. One occasion was when a member of the public had expressed concern and required special assistance in locating interred ashes within a large shrub area. Another member of the public had complained about a dog being walked off a lead in the grounds. There had also been three written expressions of thanks for assistance given by staff.

NOTED

(c) Health and Safety Policy

The Manager and Registrar reported that the Crematorium's Health and Safety policy had been reviewed and was ready for signature by the Chairman of the Joint Committee.

NOTED

716 Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 10)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

In addition to presenting his report the Horticultural Consultant showed members the glass trophy that had been awarded to the Crematorium upon receiving a Gold Award in the 2016 South and South East Britain in Bloom Awards. The criteria for the award included not only the quality of the grounds but also the appearance of buildings together with environmental and related matters.

RESOLVED that the report be received and approved.

717 Portchester Crematorium Grounds Maintenance Contract (AI 11)

Before considering this item the Joint Committee –

RESOLVED that the public be excluded from the meeting during this item of business because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of ‘exempt information’ within paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

(TAKE IN EXEMPT MINUTE)

The purpose of the exempt report was to advise on the arrangements for the continued provision of horticultural and grounds maintenance services during 2017 and arrangements and the timetable to invite tenders for a new contract to commence in January 2018.

The Joint Committee agreed (summarised) that arrangements be made to invite tenders for the grounds maintenance contract and noted the interim arrangements made for the provision of grounds maintenance until the start of the new contract.

718 Date of Next Meeting – Monday 20 March 2017 at 2pm in Fareham

The meeting concluded at 2.48pm

Chairman

JH/me
13 December 2016
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