

PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Joint Committee held in the North Chapel, Portchester Crematorium on Monday 24 June 2019 at 2.00 pm.

Present

Fareham Borough Council

Councillor Keith Evans
Councillor Simon Martin

Gosport Borough Council

(Apologies received for non-attendance)

Havant Borough Council

Councillor Tim Pike
Councillor Leah Turner

Portsmouth City Council

Councillor Jeanette Smith

Joint Committee Membership & Introductions

The new membership for the 2019/20 municipal year was noted.

Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Councillor Steve Pitt (Portsmouth CC) on other council business, Councillor June Cully (Gosport BC), and Councillor Kathleen Jones (Gosport BC)

821 Appointment of Chairman (AI 2)

RESOLVED that Councillor Tim Pike (Havant Borough Council) be appointed Chairman for the 2019/20 municipal year.

(Councillor Tim Pike in the Chair)

822 Appointment of Vice-Chairman (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the appointment of a Gosport Borough Council representative as vice-chairman be considered at the next meeting.

823 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 4) – None

824 Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 March 2019 (AI 5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 25 March 2019 be signed as a correct record.

825 Matters Arising from the Minutes not specifically referred to on the Agenda (AI 6)

(a) Minute 815 – Recycling of Metals Charitable Scheme

Members noted that a cheque for £8,000 was recently presented by Councillor Simon Martin (chairman 2018/19) to the Rowans Hospice, which had been received from the Recycling of Metals Charitable scheme operated by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management.

826 Clerk's Items (AI 7)

The Clerk to the Joint Committee reported on the following matters –

(a) New Government Measures to Update Crematoria Provision

On the 8th April the government set out a package of measures to update crematoria to reflect the needs of different cultures and faiths in Britain. The announcement followed a review of crematoria provision and facilities where the government received around 150 responses from many faith and belief groups. A copy of the government's proposals was circulated to members at the time of the announcement.

In summary the full package of measures to ensure crematoria are fit for purpose is –

- To revise national guidance on the siting and design of crematoria, subject to further consultation;
- Offer support to community groups interested in operating their own crematoria or associated facilities;
- To ask authorities to take all reasonable steps to allow the needs of those with different faiths to be met in public buildings, encourage providers to be more transparent about their services, and have appropriate staff training to understand different faith requirements.

(b) Competition and Markets Authority Funeral Directors and Crematoria Services Market Investigation

Members were advised that as part of the CMA's market investigation the officers had responded to a request for a range of statistical and financial information relating to funeral services and the costs involved in operating and maintaining Portchester Crematorium. Full details of the CMA investigation and its timetable were set out in the Summer issue of the Resurgam magazine, circulated to members. It appeared that the CMA's final report would be published in the latter part of 2020.

Arising from the government report on crematoria provision and the CMA investigation, the Manager & Registrar explained that Portchester Crematorium always fitted in with the specific religious requirements of families, for example Sikhs and Hindus.

Members agreed that the Joint Committee should await the outcome of the CMA investigation and review at that time whether there were any specific actions the Joint Committee should be taking.

(c) Presentation to Fareham BC's Policy and Resources Scrutiny Board

The Clerk, and the Manager and Registrar, would be making a presentation, at Fareham BC's request, to its Policy and Resources Scrutiny Board on 24 June 2019, on the functions and operation of the Crematorium and the Joint Committee.

NOTED

827 Annual Return for the Financial Year Ended 31 March 2019 (AI 8)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE TREASURER)

The Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer presented the report and in doing so drew specific attention to and highlighted various sections of the Annual Return, and answered questions from members.

RESOLVED that the Annual Return for the financial year ending 31 March 2019 be approved and signed as appropriate, as follows -

- (a) Section 1 - Accounting Statements for Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee be approved and signed;**
- (b) Section 2 - Annual Governance Statement be approved and signed;**
- (c) That the Income and Expenditure Statement for the Year ended 31 March 2019 and Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2019 be noted.**

828 Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee – Annual Report - 2018/19 (AI 9)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE CLERK TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE)

RESOLVED that the annual report for the 2018/19 financial year be noted and received and it be sent for information to each constituent authority.

829 Building Works Programme (AI 10)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER)

In presenting his report the Property Manager mentioned specifically the completion of the snagging and final account for the North Chapel project, and the progress with refurbishment works that were currently being undertaken to the office and reception area.

The Property Manager also referred to the feasibility study that would be required for the present Area of Contemplation & water feature.

The Chairman mentioned a project in which Havant BC had involved the University of Portsmouth school of architecture, and he said he would put the school to touch with the Property Manager to see if it could assist.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

830 Manager and Registrar's Report (AI 11)

(a) General Statistical Report

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

Arising from his report and questions, the Manager and Registrar commented generally on the statistical information and the number of cremations to date, indicating that Portchester was still in the top 5 busiest crematoria in the country, whilst maintaining a fee level that recognised the contribution that the Crematorium played to the wider community.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

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

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE MANAGER AND REGISTRAR)

RESOLVED that the report be noted with interest.

(c) Any other matters – Grounds clearance

Arising from a question, the Manager and Registrar explained that arrangements would be made, probably during August, for a clearance of objects left in the grounds.

831 Horticultural Consultant's Report (AI 12)

(TAKE IN REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL CONSULTANT)

In submitting his report the Horticultural Consultant said that the In Bloom judging would be taking place on Friday 28 June.

RESOLVED that the report be received and approved.

(Following the meeting members were invited to a tour of the grounds by the Horticultural Consultant, and the Crematorium facilities generally by the Manager and Registrar).

832 Dates of Future Meetings (AI 13)

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee meets at 2pm on the following dates in 2019/20, at Portchester Crematorium –

Monday 23 September 2019

Monday 9 December 2019

Monday 23 March 2020

Monday 22 June 2020

The meeting concluded at 2.40pm

Chairman

JH/me
25 June 2019
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