

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES
COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE
FRIDAY 27TH JUNE 2008

1. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

- 1.1 There have been many changes in Bridgend's management structure over the past two years which has resulted in the previous Technical Officer taking on the responsibilities of the Clerk to the Joint Committee. Positions have previously been filled from Bridgend County Borough Council's management structure as indicated below:

Chief Executive as Clerk & Personnel Officer
Executive Director - Resources as Treasurer
Executive Director - Environmental as Technical Officer

- 1.2 Due to changes within Bridgend County Borough Council's management structure and associated responsibilities implemented in April 2008, it is necessary to review how Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee is to be supported by officers.
- 1.3 In 1967, an Agreement was developed between the constituent Councils at that time to set up the Joint Committee and specifies that the Joint Committee appoint a Clerk and Treasurer and such other officers and servants as they deem necessary. In view of this requirement and the revised management structure now in place, it is recommended that the Head of Street Scene is appointed as Clerk and Technical Officer and the Corporate Director Resources is appointed as Treasurer for Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee. These officers will continue to have the authority to delegate their responsibilities to an appropriate officer as required.
- 1.4 As the Agreement of the Joint Committee has been in place for some time, there is an obvious need to review and update the information relating to the operation and membership of the Joint Committee. Therefore, I would recommend that a draft revised agreement is prepared for consideration and approval at a future meeting of the Joint Committee.

1.5 Recommendation

The Joint Committee is recommended to:

- a) Approve Bridgend County Borough Council's Head of Street Scene as Clerk and Technical Officer
- b) Approve Bridgend County Borough Council's Corporate Director - Resources as Treasurer
- c) Approve the preparation of a revised Agreement of the Joint Committee for consideration at a future meeting.

2. THEFT OF COPPER FROM CREMATORIUM ROOF

- 2.1 During the morning of the 8th April 2008, a section of the copper roof covering to the Coity Chapel was stripped and stolen. The chapel is located to the side of the main Crallo chapel and is used for smaller congregations. The theft was reported to the Chairperson of the Joint Committee and to the Police. To date, nobody has been apprehended for the theft.
- 2.2 Copper was the original material used by the building's architect as a feature on some of the roofs. In view of the Crematorium's Grade 2* listed building status, Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC) Conservation Officer was consulted to determine whether an alternative replacement material could be utilised instead of copper in order to deter thieves. However, it has been advised that CADW would need to be consulted on such a proposal and it is unlikely it would approve any alternative materials.
- 2.3 A specialist contractor has indicated that an estimate of the cost of replacing the copper section would be in the region of £20,000. There is sufficient funding within the building maintenance budget to cover the cost of replacing the copper, however, it would be necessary to delay some of the planned maintenance works previously identified in the Business Plan for the current year. The roof has been made watertight.
- 2.4 Following the theft of the copper, BCBC's CCTV surveillance unit provided the Crematorium with temporary surveillance coverage of the site in order to prevent further thefts of copper occurring. Although the Crematorium is fitted with alarms to chapels, offices and the yard area, there are no security systems covering roofs or entry into the grounds. In view of the value of scrap metal, particularly copper, it is considered that the Crematorium security system should be enhanced in order to deter any further thefts. A specialist security company has looked at the issue, and has proposed installation of additional external alarms and CCTV coverage which could be linked to BCBC's CCTV Centre in Bryncethin. The cost of this work is £10,200.

2.5 In view of the urgent need to improve security at the Crematorium, authorisation has been given to proceed with the necessary installation work. There is sufficient funding within the building maintenance revenue budget to undertake the work. However, it would again be necessary to postpone some of the planned maintenance works previously identified in the Business Plan for the current year.

2.6 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Joint Committee:

1. Notes the action taken to date following the theft of copper from the Crematorium roof.
2. Authorises the invitation of a quotation from a specialist contractor for the replacement of the stolen copper.

3. VENTILATION OF CRALLO CHAPEL

3.1 At the meeting of the Joint Committee on 7th December 2007, a report was submitted which detailed the issues encountered with a lack of air movement inside the main Crallo Chapel. The report recommended the commissioning of BCBC's Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Section to prepare a feasibility report on improvement options.

3.2 The findings of the feasibility are as follows:

a) **Ceiling Mounted Fans**

This method could effectively circulate but would not reduce humidity. It would be difficult to maintain the fan units due to the height of the ceiling and may cause the existing lights to oscillate with the air movement. The estimated cost of the work is £8,000.

b) **Natural Ventilation System**

This would draw on the natural air surrounding the building and create a circulatory air movement. However, the plant required to run this system would need some building works and large ducting. As the building is a Grade 2* listed building, any work of this nature would require CADW approval. The estimated cost of the work is £40,000.

c) **Air Conditioning Equipment**

This option provides a solution to both the air movement problem in Crallo Chapel and the dysfunctional heating system in Coity Chapel. Heat pumps could be utilised to alternate between air conditioning on warm days and heating as and when required. These types of units are low in noise output, energy efficient and require only minor plumbing works and the proposed installation will have only a minimal effect on the building structure. The estimated cost of the work is £40,000.

- 3.3 It is considered that Option c) provides the most cost effective and efficient solution for the ventilation problem in Crallo Chapel and the heating problem in Coity Chapel.
- 3.4 The Crematorium Business Plan includes cost items for the provision of ventilation in Crallo Chapel and replacement heating in Coity Chapel at a cost of £70,000 and £15,000 respectively. The combining of the two works items as suggested by the Mechanical and Electrical Engineers would offer a saving of £45,000.
- 3.5 If the Joint Management Committee authorises the purchase and installation of the equipment as outlined in Option c), it is proposed that the system is installed in early 2009/2010.

3.6 **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Joint Committee authorises the invitation of tenders for the purchase and installation of equipment as outlined in Option c) for installation in early 2009/10.

4. **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 As an integral part of BCBC's ongoing local performance management system, an assessment of users' satisfaction of the Crematorium's services is undertaken on a quarterly basis.
- 4.2 Attached at **Appendix 1** are the results that relate to the Crematorium for the last quarter, commencing 1st January 2008. The statistics are obtained by means of a questionnaire which is sent to bereaved families following a cremation. Members will note that the overall satisfaction level to a standard of either good or excellent was 100%. The annual performance also attained a 100% performance rating.

4.3 **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Joint Committee notes the level of performance.

LOUISE FRADD CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

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Background Papers:

1. Agreement of the Joint Committee 1967
2. Nil
3. Report to Joint Committee 7/12/07 and Minute No. 142
4. Responses received 1/1/08 to 31/03/08

APPENDIX 1
SERVICE FOR THE BEREAVED – CREMATORIUM
(January. 2008– March 2008 incl.)

Responses 57

During the implementation of your funeral requirements, how would you rate?

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
The availability of service times	56%	40%	3%	
The arrangements on the day of the funeral		82%	16%	2%
The presentation of the cremation plot	76%	24%		
In your dealings with staff how would you rate: -				
		Excellent	Good	
Average			Poor	
Literature and Information given	80%	20%		
Presentation of personnel	83%	17%		
General Attitude of staff	85%	15%		

How would you rate the following conditions within cemeteries/crematorium: -

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
Chapels	82%	18%		
Access roads and footpaths		83%	17%	
Rose gardens and grounds		91%	9%	
Grass cutting around memorials	82%	18%		
Toilets	72%	28%		
Water stations & waste bins		72%	28%	
OVERALL SATISFACTION	87%	13%		

If the cremated remains of the deceased were removed from the crematorium please state why:-

- To be buried in family grave in local church
- Will be scattered at home
- Wanted to be with family
- Personal burial
- My husband wishes were to be scattered at sea
- Taken back to Funeral Directors as not sure what to do with ashes. We are thinking of re-opening local burial plot
- He wanted to be with his family and departed wife
- Funeral Director has taken the remains but they will be coming back to the crematorium
- Will be removed to my home then to local cemetery for burial
- To be buried in local churchyard
- In local cemetery where we can walk
- Churchyard burial

- My mothers ashes are being buried with my fathers ashes at local church
- Private location with remains of wife
- To be interred with my father in family grave
- To be interred locally to family
- Interment in local cemetery
- To be scattered on mothers grave
- To put in a special place
- Already have burial plot in local cemetery
- Ashes interred with my father
- The deceased wished his ashes to be scattered at sea
- A wish to avoid memorialisation and scatter in nature
- To be buried in grave in local cemetery
- Request by deceased to be interred in family grave
- To return to Scotland
- Ashes to be buried with my father in local cemetery
- Wanted to be buried closer to home
- To be laid to rest in local cemetery with the remains of husband
- Burial in chapel grounds

What other form of memorialisation would you like to see: -

- Planting of trees possibly

Do you have any further observations or comments: -

- Thank you for the way my sister's service was carried out
- A lovely place to leave a loved one, it seems much care and attention is placed on them
- Coychurch Crematorium is a credit to Bridgend and Mid Glamorgan
- Fantastic service and excellent overall service
- The overall service and surroundings were outstanding
- I wish to thank all the staff and everyone at the crematorium who were wonderful, kind and caring to myself and family. God bless you all
- I have been to Coychurch many times but always find standards very high
- On the day my observations were directed elsewhere. I have attended other funerals and can assure you that you are doing a sterling service to the bereaved
- I have been to many crematorium and I (and my family) commend yours. It feels comforting somehow. The windows are beautiful. Everyone was caring and although a half hour slot, didn't feel rushed at all
- These questions do not really apply when there has been a prior church service and the ashes will be taken to the churchyard. The corridor into the chapel is lovely
- Well Done
- Everything wonderful
- Everything went well on the day, we were very satisfied
- It was a beautiful service in a lovely small chapel. Thank you
- Coaching for first time bearers
- It was a source of comfort that the service ran so smoothly
- Overall, an excellent service