

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE  
HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2/3, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND ON  
FRIDAY, 1 MARCH 2013 AT 2.00PM

Present:-

Representing Bridgend County Borough Council

Councillor E Dodd  
Councillor C Westwood  
Councillor P J White

Representing Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council

Councillor K J Geary - Chairperson  
Councillor G John

Representing Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council

Councillor B Stephens

Officers:

C Howells - Clerk and Technical Officer  
J Hamilton - Crematorium Manager and Registrar  
F Mantle - Finance Manager Technical and Corporate  
M A Galvin - Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees

22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members:-

Councillor E Hacker - Other Council Business  
Councillor C L Jones - Family commitment  
Councillor C Turner - Other Council Business

23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee dated 7 December 2012 be approved as a true and accurate record, subject to Councillor Stephens being added to the list of attendees.

25 PROPOSED REVENUE BUDGET 2013/14

The Treasurer presented a report, the purpose of which was to inform the Joint Committee of the projected financial performance for the Crematorium for 2012/13, and to obtain approval from the Joint Committee for the proposed budget and fees and charges for 2013/14.

The report gave some background information, and paragraph 4.1 included at Table 1 that showed the financial position at 31 January 2013 and the projected outturn for 2012/13.

The Finance Manager, Technical and Corporate outlined significant variances between the budget and projections, such as

- A projected underspend of £9k in the employee budget as a result of a part year vacancy and a reduction in planned overtime;
- A premises overspend of £14k as a result of the unforeseen costs of the replacement of the chapel roof which was partly offset by rescheduling of non-essential planned maintenance into 2013/14;
- The income received from fees and charges to date was above that budgeted and had been projected conservatively into the outturn figure;
- The projected surplus of £117k would be added to the accumulated balance being held to fund the requirement for new cremators;

Table in Paragraph 4.3 of the report reflected the proposed Revenue Budget for 2013/14, which included a general uplift of 2.7% on non-employee expenditure and specific inflationary increases on expenditure in relation to contractual commitments.

The Finance Manager, Technical and Corporate advised that employee budgets had been adjusted to reflect salary increments where applicable. The budget included an inflationary uplift for possible pay awards, and was based on the revised structure as agreed by the Joint Committee on 8 December 2012.

Paragraph 4.6 of the report confirmed that the Business Plan for 2013/14 indicated that there was a budget requirement of £157k to meet expenditure itemised in the Table 3 that followed this. The Finance Manager, Technical and Corporate, confirmed that this figure for 2012/13 had been £120k this year, and that the increase for next year was primarily for planned expenditure spends.

The Finance Manager, Technical and Corporate then referred Members to Paragraph 4.9 and Table 4 which showed the effect on the accumulated balance of the proposed budget for 2013/14. It was projected that at 31 March 2013 there would be an accumulated balance of £532k, which would be held along with the budgeted surplus for 2013/14, to help fund the installation of new cremators at an estimated cost of £1.04m, for which there could be sought additional capital funding.

The report culminated with information regarding Capital Expenditure for 2013/14.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee:

- (1) Approved the revenue budget for 2013/14.
- (2) Approved the increase in fees and charges with effect from 1 April 2013 outlined in Appendix 1 to the report.

26 PROGRAMME OF MEETING 2013/14

The Clerk and Technical Officer submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to seek approval for the proposed Programme of meetings 2013/14.

The Clerk and Technical Officer referred the Joint Committee to Paragraph 3.1 of the report, that proposed the following dates for meetings next financial year.

Friday	7 June 2013	-	Annual General Meeting
Friday	6 September		
Friday	6 December		
Friday	7 March		

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee agreed to approve the Programme of Meetings for the forthcoming year.

27 CREMATORIUM BUSINESS PLAN AND CREMATORIUM FEES

The Clerk and Technical Officer submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to approve the Business Plan and Expenditure Programme for 2013/14, which included proposed increases in crematorium fees.

He advised Members that the figurework outlined in Paragraph 3.1 of the report was erroneous, in that the number of cremations quoted for 2012 were actually the figures for 2011.

The Chairperson suggested that this paragraph be quoted in full in the minutes to reflect the changes as follows:-

“The total numbers of cremations for 2012 was 1487, made up of 891 from Bridgend, 214 from Vale of Glamorgan and 327 from Rhondda Cynon Taf, with 55 non-residents. An agreement with the Princess of Wales Hospital for the cremations of non-viable foetal remains has resulted in an additional 18 communal cremations and 10 individual cremations. Statistical records for the period from January to December 2011 and 2012 are now included in the Business Plan for comparison.”

The Clerk and Technical Officer referred Members to the Service Level Business Plan for 2013/14 attached at Appendix 1 to the report which outlined the service objectives for the period. The replacement of the cremators had been delayed until 2014/15 for the reasons explained earlier in the meeting.

He referred Members to the Service Level Business Plan and to Page 4 which included the strengths of the service which were considerable. Pages 6 and 7 he added, outlined the range of services the Crematorium provided that reflected that it operated that it operated a business effectively, with this reflected by a list of key achievements made over the past three years.

The Clerk and Technical Officer then referred the Joint Committee to the statistical information which compared the year 2012 with 2011, and he advised Members that there had been a reduction of cremations from Vale of Glamorgan since the introduction of the new crematorium there.

He then turned to Page 10 of the ~Service Level Business Plan and expanded upon the issue regarding Mercury Abatement (CAMEO); the Crallo Chapel Improvements and the upgrade of cremations.

The Clerk and Technical Officer then referred to the main report and Paragraph 3.3 which sought to obtain the Joint Committee's approval to increase the cremation charge from £495 - £540, which amounted to an inflation increase plus £25, as the Coychurch Crematorium were in the bottom quartile of the national league table, even if such an increase was approved.

The Clerk and Technical Officer also referred Members to Paragraph 3.4 of the report, where it was suggested that in line with the purchase cost of service books, the cost for these be increased.

A Member asked if the reduction in cremations from the Vale of Glamorgan area had been higher than anticipated as a result of the new crematorium there.

The Crematorium Manager and Registrar advised that the reduction in cremations due to the above was around 20%, which was not quite as much as had been anticipated. Cremations from the areas of Llantwit Major and Rhoose, were being maintained better than had been predicted.

The Crematorium Manager and Registrar in response to a Member's question, confirmed that the recommended increase to the purchase cost of service books was required, as these had not been renewed since 1997. The new book was more substantial in size and contained more hymns and services for cremations than the old books did, in a larger font. The increase therefore took into account publication charges on top of production and administration charges. Whilst the new books would be sold to funeral officiates and Funeral Directors, they would not be available for purchase by the public.

Members commended the report and wished it placed on record their thanks to the continued hard work of the Crematorium Manager and Registrar and her staff.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee:

- (1) Approved the Service Level Business Plan 2013.
- (2) Approved the Crematorium fee for 2013/14 at £540.00.
- (3) Approved an increased fee for the purchase of service books to £25.

The meeting closed at 3.00pm.