

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2/3, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND ON FRIDAY, 7 JUNE 2013 AT 2.00PM

Present:

Representing Bridgend County Borough Council

Councillor E Dodd
Councillor C L Jones
Councillor A D Owen
Councillor D R Pugh
Councillor C Westwood

Representing Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council

Councillor K J Geary
Councillor E Hacker
Councillor G John

Representing Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council

Councillor B Stephens
Councillor R K Turner

Officers:

C Howells	-	Clerk and Technical Officer
J Hamilton	-	Crematorium Manager and Registrar
S Hooper	-	Bereavement Manager
F Mantle	-	Finance Manager Technical and Corporate
J Monks	-	Democratic Services Officer – Committees

28 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON

Members agreed to continue the rotation of Chairperson between the represented County Councils for the forthcoming year. Councillor E Dodd, representing Bridgend County Borough Council, was nominated for the position of Chairperson of the Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee.

RESOLVED: That Councillor E Dodd was appointed to the Chair of the Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee for the forthcoming year.

29 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

RESOLVED: That Councillor B Stephens representing Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council was appointed to Vice-Chairperson of the Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee for the forthcoming year.

Councillor Dodd then took the Chair and welcomed Councillor Owen to his first meeting of the Joint Committee.

30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P J White as he was on holiday.

31 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

32 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee held on the 1st March 2013 were approved as a true and accurate record.

33 ANNUAL REVIEW 2012/13

The Clerk and Technical Officer presented a report which advised the Joint Committee on the performance of the Crematorium during 2012/13. He took Members to Appendix A of the report which identified the following:

- Number of cremations
- Service standards
- Planned expenditure
- Achievement of Business Plan objectives

He reported that any works which had been postponed would be incorporated into the budget for 2013/14.

He advised Members that the percentage of cremations which had taken place during the year were 6% down on the previous year. This was considerably fewer than the expected, as it was estimated that as a result of the opening of the new Crematorium in Barry, the percentage was expected to be in the region of 20%. Although the estimated surplus for the year was £31,000, the actual was £120,000, which indicated the additional number of cremations which had taken place during the year.

Public Satisfaction

The Clerk and Technical Officer reported that the results of the quarterly review customer questionnaire showed that the overall satisfaction level of good or excellent remained at 100%. The report provided examples of responses to the questionnaires received throughout the past year. He took the opportunity to thank the Crematorium staff, who maintained the quality and standards at the facility, and who worked hard to rectify any problems that may arise with customers.

Expenditure

The Clerk and Technical Officer outlined the programme of expenditure for 2012/13 and reported a few changes. Improvements to the Chapel, which had been delayed due to some issues with the contractors, were now planned for this year; the budget for the improvements would be rolled forward to the current financial year. He further reported that the yard gate had now been replaced, and would be paid for in this year's budget. With regard to the CAMEO payments (abated cremations) the Authority would not now be required to pay them.

One Member referred to the metal which had been stolen from the roof of the Crematorium and asked how this had affected future insurance cover.

The Bereavement Manager advised that the insurance for this financial year had already been agreed, but action had been taken to combat such thefts by the roof and drainpipes being coated with SmartWater, a proven crime prevention solution which also acts as a deterrent. She had contacted the Insurance and Risk Management Officer to find out if the introduction of SmartWater would have a favourable effect on the insurance cover, but was informed that it would only prove beneficial if it was also used by other services within the Authority. The

Crematorium Manager and Registrar added that the insurance had paid out £5,000 towards the roof replacement, which had cost a total of £25,000.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee noted the report.

34 CREMATOR REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME

The Crematorium Manager and Registrar presented a report to seek Members' approval for the design programme to replace the existing cremators, install mercury abatement equipment, and to prepare drawing and documents of the proposals to enable planning and tender processes to be undertaken. She referred to the site visit some Members had attended prior to the meeting and tabled a proposed plan detailing the draft outline proposals.

She explained that the existing cremators would be kept in use until the replacement cremators were installed; which would be at the most convenient time to suit the Crematorium so there would be a minimum of disruption to the service. The new extension and alterations to the building would take place within the same timescale, as the installation of the mercury abatement equipment and the new cremators would take up a large amount of space that was not currently available. She advised that one of the new cremators would be able to accommodate larger-sized coffins.

As the building was Grade 2 listed, the extension and alterations would be required to satisfy stringent planning conditions and in order to comply; the extension would be built out into the yard so that it would not be visible within the grounds of the Crematorium. To allow for ease of installation, a temporary roof would be installed on the new extension. This would enable the manufacturers to pre-build the cremators at their establishment, and then transport and lift them in situ, via cranes by removing the temporary roof. This method would save two months down time. She advised that the new cremators would be constantly linked to the manufacturers via broadband for maintenance purposes. As part of the design, refrigeration would also be installed to enable some cremations to be held over until the following day, which was not currently possible. She added that with the opening of the Crematorium in Barry, there would be a slight reduction in the number of cremations, and therefore the cremators would not get as much use as the current ones.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee approved the design programme for the replacement of the existing cremators, and the preparation of project drawings and documents to enable tender submissions for the proposed crematory extension and installation of new cremators.

35 CREMATORIA ABATEMENT OF MERCURY EMISSIONS ORGANISATION (CAMEO)

The Bereavement Manager presented a report to update the Joint Committee on the CAMEO Scheme and the likely contribution costs. In 2005 the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) announced its plan to reduce mercury emissions from UK crematoria by 50%, which became effective from December 2012. The Joint Committee at that time had resolved that Coychurch Crematorium would opt for the burden sharing alternative, rather than install mercury abatement facilities. It was initially announced that payments towards the CAMEO Scheme would commence in January 2013, however, this had now been delayed until January 2014. A pilot scheme would operate throughout the year to assist in identifying costs and income for future years, and a charge of £47.25 for each cremation would be used as part of the exercise. She reported that this amount may change and confirmation of the actual charge was awaited. As the scheme would not now be effective until 2014, this had resulted in a reduction in budget expenditure for 2013/14.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee noted the report and the adjustment to the financial budget 2013/14.

36 AUDIT INSPECTION

The Clerk and Technical Officer presented a report to inform the Joint Committee of a recent internal audit which had been carried out on the administration processes within the Crematorium. The objective of the audit was to provide assurance to the Joint Committee that satisfactory internal controls were in place.

He reported that the audit had been positive and had concluded that the effectiveness of the internal control environment was considered to be sound. Therefore substantial assurance was placed on the management of risks. A copy of the audit report was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee noted the report.

37 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2012/13

The Finance Manager - Technical and Corporate presented the unaudited Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2012/13 to the Joint Committee and obtain approval to submit the annual return for Coychurch Crematorium to the Authority's appointed external auditors, KPMG. She explained that there was a requirement for an annual return to be approved by the Joint Committee, attached at Appendix 1 to the report. In addition, a full Statement of Accounts was prepared for information, attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

She advised that Coychurch Crematorium had made a net surplus of £123,000; however the Statement of Accounts showed the surplus as £124,000, reported under Income and Expenditure. This was due to an adjustment being included in respect of holiday entitlements as required by accounting practice. A breakdown of the final financial position for the Crematorium for 2012/13 was detailed at paragraph 4.2 of the report.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee approved the annual return for Coychurch Crematorium for 2012/13.

The meeting closed at 2.45pm.