

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2/3, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND ON FRIDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2013 AT 2.00PM

Present:

Representing Bridgend County Borough Council

Councillor E Dodd - Chairperson  
Councillor C L Jones  
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 Services Manager  
F Mantle - Finance Manager Technical and Corporate  
A Rees - Senior Democratic Services Officer – Committees

38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A D Owen.

39 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

40 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee held on 7 June 2013 were approved as a true and accurate record.

41 GREEN FLAG AWARD

The Clerk and Technical Officer presented a report which advised the Joint Committee on the Coychurch Crematorium's successful application for a Green Flag Award in 2013. He stated that the Crematorium had received its first award in 2010 and a re-submission for the Award was made in January 2013 with the Award being formally announced in July 2013. The re-submission for the Green Flag Award was to confirm the Crematorium's commitment to maintaining high standards, which can be appreciated by all visitors.

The Clerk and Technical Officer informed the Joint Committee that the Assessment feedback illustrated the strengths and recommendations identified by the assessors during their visit to

the Crematorium. He stated that the Awards required an annual application and a further submission would be made in January 2014.

Members of the Joint Committee congratulated the staff of the Crematorium on achieving the Green Flag Award.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee noted the award of the Green Flag Award for 2013 and the assessor's feedback.

42 MARGAM CREMATORIUM

The Bereavement Services Manager reported on the implications on the Crematorium of the temporary closure of Margam Crematorium which had suffered a fire in the crematory which damaged the roof and created smoke damage throughout the buildings. She stated that Coychurch Crematorium and Swansea Crematorium immediately assisted funeral directors in re-arranging funerals for that day and have continued to provide a service for families from Neath Port Talbot. Since then, funeral directors now book funeral arrangements directly with Coychurch Crematorium and there had been no further communication with Margam Crematorium.

The Bereavement Services Manager informed the Joint Committee that it was unknown when Margam Crematorium will become fully operational again and Coychurch Crematorium would continue to assist until further notice. She stated that this temporary measure has affected the demand for cremations but due to the seasonal variation in service provision, it would not affect booking times. If this situation were to continue into the busier winter period then alternative operational measures may have to be considered.

The Bereavement Services Manager highlighted a comparison of cremations in July and August 2012 and 2013, which had seen an increase in 9 cremations in July 2013 and 30 cremations in August 2013 compared to the corresponding period in the preceding 12 months. She stated that it was not possible to distinguish between families from within the Bridgend County Borough boundary who would have otherwise utilised Margam Crematorium.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee noted the impact of the closure of Margam Crematorium.

43 REVENUE MONITORING STATEMENT 1 APRIL TO 31 JULY 2013

The Finance Manager Technical and Corporate presented the report of the Treasurer which informed the Joint Committee of details of income and expenditure for this financial year and which gave a projection of the final projected outturn. She explained the variances between the Budget and Projected Outturn which had seen the overall projected surplus for 2013/14 increasing from £62k to £183k, due to an overpayment of rates for the financial years 2010/11 to 2013/14 following a rating valuation. This income would be transferred to reserves at the year end to finance the costs of the replacement cremators.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee noted the report.

44 POST AUDIT ANNUAL RETURN 2012/13

The Finance Manager Technical and Corporate presented the report of the Treasurer on the post audited Annual Return for the financial year 2012/13. She stated that amendments made to the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations in 2010 result in a Joint Committee with income and expenditure of less than £1m per annum being defined as a 'minor joint committee'. In this case, the "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners' Guide" has been identified as being proper practice for the preparation of accounts by minor joint committees. The Practitioners' Guide refers to the preparation of an

annual return by bodies with income and expenditure of less than £1m, which includes an income and expenditure account and balance sheet, rather than a Code compliant statement of accounts. Minor joint committee that complete an annual return receive a limited assurance audit carried out in accordance with guidance issued by the Wales Audit Office. The unaudited annual return was presented to the previous meeting of the Joint Committee on 3 June 2013 and had now been audited by KPMG, the external auditors appointed by the Joint Committee and who had not made any amendments.

The Finance Manager Technical and Corporate informed the Joint Committee that the surplus for the year remains at £123k, which leaves an accumulated surplus of £538k as at 31 March 2013. She also informed the Joint Committee that the mutual responsibilities of auditor and the audited body had been expressed in the 'Management Letter for 2012/13', which set out the limited assurance audit opinion and which confirmed the information contained in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and that no matters have come to the auditor's attention giving cause for concern that legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee noted and approved the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2013 and the auditor's 'Management Letter for 2013/13'.

45 MR CHRIS HOWELL, CLERK AND TECHNICAL OFFICER

The Chairperson announced that this would be the last meeting of the Joint Committee that Mr Chris Howell, Clerk and Technical officer would be attending prior to taking up a new post at Swansea Council. She thanked Mr Howell on behalf of the Joint Committee for his service to the Joint Committee and wished him well in his future role. Mr Howell thanked the Members of the Joint Committee for their support and he felt confident that with the support of the Bereavement Services Manager and Crematorium Manager and Registrar the Crematorium would move forward.

The meeting closed at 2.15pm.