

COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE - FRIDAY, 9 JUNE 2023

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE
HELD REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON FRIDAY, 9 JUNE 2023 AT 14:00**

Present

Councillor B Stephens – Chairperson

E L P Caparros

P Davies

G John

JC Spanswick

Apologies for Absence

S J Griffiths, J Lynch-Wilson and C Stallard

Officers:

Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Joanna Hamilton	Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar
Dean Jones	Accountant - Financial
Michael Pitman	Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services

22. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON (FROM RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL MEMBERS)

RESOLVED: That Councillor B Stephens be appointed as Chairperson of the Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee for the ensuing year. Councillor Stephens took the Chair.

23. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRPERSON (FROM BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL MEMBERS)

RESOLVED: That Councillor JC Spanswick be appointed as Vice-Chairperson of the Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee for the ensuing year.

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

25. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee dated 3 March 2023, be approved as a true and accurate record.

26. ANNUAL REVIEW OF 2022-23 BUSINESS PLAN OBJECTIVES

The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar presented a report, in order to advise the Joint Committee on the performance of Coychurch Crematorium during 2022-23. The 'Memorandum of Agreement' relating to the Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee, required that the Joint Committee shall receive a report at the Annual General Meeting reviewing performance against the Business Plan for the preceding financial year.

She referred Members to Appendix A of the report, which identified the performance of Coychurch Crematorium relating to:

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

The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar then gave a resume of some of the key data in respect of each of the bullet points above from the information as detailed in the appendix, for the benefit of the Joint Committees.

Members in turn, confirmed that the information in the report's appendix made for some very positive reading, particularly with regards to performance and the overall satisfaction of the public who had used the Crematorium for the period 2022-23.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee noted the report with pleasure and agreed that a letter of appreciation from Members be sent to staff in the Crematoria, thanking them for all the hard work they had committed to the service during the last 12 months.

27. **INTERNAL AUDIT OF COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM**

The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar presented a report, the purpose of which being, to inform the Joint Committee of a recent Internal Audit of Coychurch Crematorium in respect of financial year 2022-23.

By way of some background information, she confirmed that an Internal Audit review of the Crematorium was undertaken as part of Bridgend County Borough Council's 2022-23 Internal Audit Plan. The objective of the Audit, was to provide assurance to the Joint Committee on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control, governance and risk management arrangements in respect of Coychurch Crematorium. The audit objectives were detailed in paragraph 2.2 of the report.

The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar advised, that the audit identified a number of strengths and areas of good practice for each audit objective. No key issues were identified during the audit, with two low priority recommendations being raised and the management action plan had since been updated with associated management comments.

She stated that the Audit opinion concluded that there was substantial assurance that a sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited. Therefore, there were no further actions required.

A copy of the Internal Audit Report was attached at Appendix A to the report.

In response to a Members question regarding the Rhondda Cynon Taf and Vale of Glamorgan Council's having a link to BCBC's web pages relating to the Crematoria, the Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar advised that this was not possible, as BCBC were the lead Authority and therefore the only one of the through Participating Council's that had ownership and updating rights to this part of the web.

RESOLVED: That the Joint Committee noted the Internal Audit report.

28. **ANNUAL ACCOUNTING STATEMENT 2022-23**

The Accountant Financial Control and Closing presented a report, in order to present the unaudited Annual Accounting Statement for the 2022-23 financial year to the Joint Committee, and to obtain approval to submit the Annual Accounting Statement for Coychurch Crematorium to Audit Wales.

He confirmed that the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2018, required that the Joint Committee must formally approve the Annual Accounting Statement by 30 June this year and certify that they present fairly the financial position of Coychurch Crematorium.

In relation to the current situation, he drew Members attention to Section 1 of the Annual Accounting Statement (Appendix 1 to the report), which showed that in 2022-23 Coychurch Crematorium made a net deficit of £361,665 (difference between Line 1 'Balances brought forward' and Line 7 'Balances carried forward'). The deficit had been deducted from the accumulated reserve for the Crematorium brought forward at 31 March 2022, bringing the total of that reserve to £2,817,942 at 31 March 2023 compared to £3,179,607 at 31 March 2022.

Table 1 in the report, reflected a summary of the final financial position for the Crematorium for 2022-23 compared to the budget set at the start of the financial year.

Paragraph 3.2 of the report, outlined some explanations for the more significant variances from budget, which he expanded upon for the benefit of the Joint Committee.

Table 2 in the report, showed a breakdown of the Planned Capital Maintenance Budget (referred to as Capital Financing costs in Table 1) along with the Outturn and Variances for 2022-23.

In addition to the Annual Accounting Statement, a supplementary Balance Sheet was provided in Table 3 within the report. This supplementary information provided a further breakdown of the figures recorded in the Annual Accounting Statement. The Accountant Financial Control and Closing, advised that this was for information only and was therefore not subject to audit at year end.

Further information concerning the balances detailed in Table 3, were detailed at paragraph 3.4 of the report.

RESOLVED:

That the Joint Committee approved the Annual Accounting Statement for Coychurch Crematorium for 2022-23 (Appendix 1 of the report referred), and requested that the Chairperson of the Joint Committee signs the Annual Accounting Statement prior to submission to Audit Wales.

29. **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

The meeting closed at 14:38