

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE  
HELD REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON FRIDAY, 3 MARCH 2023 AT 14:00**

Present

Councillor – Chairperson

E L P Caparros  
C Stallard

S J Griffiths  
B Stephens

G John

JC Spanswick

Officers:

Nimi Chandrasena	Democratic Services Officer - Support
Stephen Griffiths	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Joanna Hamilton	Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar
Dean Jones	Accountant - Financial
Michael Pitman	Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services
Zak Shell	Head of Neighbourhood Services

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

17. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee dated 28 October 2022, be approved as a true and accurate record.

18. CREMATORIUM BUSINESS PLAN AND FEES

The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar for Coychurch Crematorium presented the report the purpose of which was to approve the Crematorium Business Plan and Fees Report for 2023-2024.

She mentioned that the Business plan is presented to the Joint Committee for approval as it sets out service objectives and proposed maintenance and improvement projects for the forthcoming financial year. The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar for Coychurch Crematorium made reference to Appendix 1 which was the Service Level Business Plan and drew the committee's attention to the Green Flag award won by the Crematorium again in 2022 and the fact that the Service remains financially self-sufficient. She also mentioned the staffing structure, details of the business hours and types of memorialisation offered. She drew reference to the contents of the report mentioning the different ways the Crematorium markets itself and communicates with its service users and also referred to the different ways in which the crematorium remains environmentally sustainable.

The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar for Coychurch Crematorium listed the key achievements over the last 10 years particularly that of the installation of external lighting in 2021 and the renewal of the two chapels' digital music facility including the installation of the visual tribute screens. She mentioned the structural building work which commenced in 2022 and ongoing to the extension of the flower court and main chapel exit.

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She drew the committee's attention to the performance indicators relating to the previous 5 years the results of which were derived from the service questionnaires, the existing targets of service level satisfaction to be extended to the years 2023-2024.

The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar for Coychurch Crematorium referenced point 4 of the Clerk and Technical officer's report which detailed the annual statistics which she took the committee through. She related the figures in 2020 to the pandemic and stated that the 2022 figures were settling to the pre-pandemic level. She then proceeded to take the committee through the subsections under point 4 which detailed the current situation and proposals.

The Head of Operations- Community Services re-iterated, in reference to paragraph 4.4 that what appeared as an increase of the fee for the hire of the chapel for a memorial service from £82 to £220 was not an actual increase but an anomaly in the original fee stated.

A discussion between a member, the Bereavement Services Manager / Registrar of Coychurch Crematorium and the Head of Operations – Community Services took place in relation to rationale and matching of CPI.

It was explained that fees had been aligned with the overall increase in prices throughout BCBC. The crematorium utilises high levels of energy and the prices are reflective of the national increase in energy and other goods and services utilised in its standard operations. They stated that the increase was made in order that services continue to be maintained at a high standard in line with its reputation.

The chairperson and a member commended the Bereavement Services Manager on the content and presentation of the report and progress made.

RESOLVED:                      The Joint Committee agreed to approve the Service Level Business Plan 2023-24.

    The Joint Committee agreed to approve the cremation fee for 2023-24 at £824.00 and a general increase in all fees of 10.5%.

    The Joint Committee agreed to approve the fee for hiring the crematorium chapel for a thirty-minute memorial service at £220.00 for 2023-24, which would double on Saturdays.

### 19. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2022-23 AND PROPOSED REVENUE BUDGET 2023-24

The Accountant, Financial Control and Closing presented a report the purpose of which was to inform the Joint Committee of the projected financial performance for the Crematorium for 2022-23, and to obtain approval from the Joint Committee for the Proposed Budget and Fees and Charges for 2023-24.

He stated that the 2022-23 Revenue Budget was approved by the Joint Committee at its meeting on 4 March 2022 and proceeded to present all sections under the report which included the current situation/proposal and the proposed budget for 2023-2024. The report also detailed Planned Capital Maintenance Spending Requirements, Fees and Charges and the Accumulated Balance.

A member queried the rate of the increased memorial service fee and the expected revenue resulting from the increase in the fee over the coming year. The Accountant, Financial Control and Closing stated he was unsure if an individual breakdown was available but saw that the general increase was forecast from 1.55million to 1.62million in the year 2023-24. He stated that he would endeavour to obtain further details around the figures.

The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar for Coychurch Crematorium stated that the exact increase in revenue from increasing the memorial service fee had not been calculated. She clarified that they had seen an increase in usage of the larger Chapel for memorial services, particularly prior to cemetery burials, by local funeral directors prior to all funeral services being moved to the second chapel while building works were being carried out, as the fee was significantly lower than that in the local churches. She stated that the Crematorium's primary concern was to protect cremation and not become a general place for the hire of a Chapel because they were cost effective.

**RESOLVED** : The Joint Committee

- Noted the projected financial performance for 2022-23
- Confirmed and approve the revenue budget to be adopted for 2023-24
- Approved the increase in fees and charges with effect from 1 April 2023 outlined in **Appendix 1**.

20. **PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2023-24**

The Bereavement Services Manager presented a report which sought approval for the proposed programme of meetings for 2023-24.

She stated that the memorandum of agreement for the crematorium stated that the Joint Committee held at least two meetings in a municipal year, one of which must be the annual general meeting.

The first meeting of the Joint Committee after the annual meetings of Councils shall be the joint committee's annual general meeting, and that's the meeting that the Joint committee will elect, a chairman and the vice chairman for the ensuring year. She stated that the Joint committee may hold as many other meetings at such intervals as they as they find necessary or convenient and proceeded to propose a series of dates.

The Chairperson inquired the possibility of a site visit so that the committee could look at the proposals and see the operations and renovation work in progress.

The Bereavement Services Manager stated that they normally try to undertake a site visit prior to the Annual General Meeting.

In response to a query from a member as to whether the site visit can be undertaken upon completion of the flower court, the Bereavement Services Manager stated that the extension work with the flower court is not expected to be completed prior to the AGM and is more likely to be completed towards September 2023. She said she however felt that a site visit would be beneficial particularly as there were newly elected members on the joint committee who had not had a tour of the facilities before.

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RESOLVED :       The Joint Committee approved the  
programme of meetings for 2023-24.

21. URGENT ITEMS

None