

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Mansfield and District Crematorium Joint Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Ashfield District Council Offices, Urban Road, Kirkby in Ashfield, NG17 8DA on Monday, 10 December 2018 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT: Councillor R Sears-Piccavey (Chairman)

Councillor Mrs L Hurst, Councillor D Payne, Executive Mayor K Allsop and A Tristram

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Mrs M Dobson, Councillor M Barton and Councillor H Smith

1728 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

The Clerk to the Joint Committee advised that she would present Agenda Item No. 11 which had been circulated following the publication of the Agenda and then withdraw from the meeting whilst the Members considered the item.

1729 DECLARATIONS OF INTENT TO RECORD THE MEETING

There was no audit or visual recording of the meeting.

1730 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Joint Committee considered the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2018.

AGREED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

1731 MATTERS ARISING

None

1732 THE FUTURE IMAGE OF MANSFIELD AND DISTRICT CREMATORIUM

The Joint Committee considered the report of the Director & Registrar of the Joint Crematorium Committee in relation to the proposal to modernise the service and to create a new public image. The report set out that the proposal was to look at what the current service provision was with the aim of building on that to meet the needs of the bereaved family, funeral directors, minister, officiants and other users of the service. It was also proposed to look at the fees and charges and whether service provision met local need and encouraged others to use the services provided.

The report also suggested that consideration be given to whether the name of the facility should be changed and whether it should adopt an official image, recommending that this be a forget-me-not as it was considered an appropriate sentiment for the service provided.

The Director & Registrar presented to Members the work undertaken so far on the development of a standalone website for the crematorium together with the suggested official image. She also advised that over the past two weeks she had monitored how the crematorium had been referred to in Orders of Service etc. and of those she had read only two had referred to the crematorium as Mansfield & District.

All Members agreed that for the purposes of branding the facility should be referred to as Mansfield Crematorium. It was further agreed that the staff would wear a lapel pin in the suggested design of a forget-me-not and that this also be used on the website and letterhead paper. The website would also link into local authority's cemetery services and provide information about public health funerals.

It was noted that there would be an open day to launch the new branding of the crematorium with the date being decided at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) re-branding of the crematorium was an essential move to ensure that it was in line with neighbouring competition, promoting a fresher and more polished image;
- (b) a standalone website and social media presence be adopted;
- (c) the 'forget me not' be approved as the adopted design;
- (d) the re-branding include the simplifying of the name by which the crematorium was known to "Mansfield Crematorium";
- (e) approval be given to hold an 'open day' on a date to be agreed at the next meeting to help promote the crematorium; and
- (f) the sum of £2,000 be set aside from existing budgets to promote the new branding.

#### 1733 CHANGES TO WORKING HOURS AND SERVICES

The Joint Committee considered the report of the Director & Registrar in relation to the proposal to move to extended services and amended practices at the crematorium.

The report set out details of the proposal to move to a longer time slot for each service which would reduce the number of slots available from 108 to 102 services per week. Changes were proposed to the time of day certain types of funerals were held together with the proposal to open later on 2 evenings a week. Paragraph 3.11 of the report set out the current weekend opening hours together with the proposed changes. It was also proposed that no charges be made for cremations of children under 16 years of age.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) a change to opening hours at weekends to a 4pm finish time be approved with effect from 1 April 2019 together with the two late night finishes with a review after a year to determine whether to expand the service or not;
- (b) changes to the current funeral times on offer be made as described in the report with effect from 1 April 2019 together with the amended charging policy;
- (c) no charges be made for cremations until the deceased reaches 16 years of age at the time of death; and
- (d) the Director & Registrar be given delegated authority to extend or alter opening times as and when necessary in exceptional circumstances or to accommodate particular requests to ensure the best revenue options for the service.

1734 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REVIEW APRIL-OCTOBER 2018

The Joint Committee considered the Financial Management Review report for the period 1 April to 31 October 2018, detailing the income and expenditure incurred to 31 October 2018 and the variances expected at year end. The report also set out the significant variances between the forecasted outturn position and the budget for the following: employee expenses; premises related expenses; supplies and services expenses; depreciation and impairment total forecasted; income total forecasted; and below net cost of service total forecasted. The report also provided a note of liabilities and reserves and current VAT implications.

AGREED (unanimously) that the financial information provided in Appendix 1 and Table 3 be noted.

1735 ANNUAL REVIEW OF FEES & CHARGES FOR 2019/2020

The Joint Committee considered the report which set out the proposed fees and charges to be introduced from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. Table 1 provided a comparison from other crematoria for previous years with Table 2 setting out the previously recommended increase for the basic cremation from 2019/2020 based on a 5% increase. Table 3 set out alternative percentage increases to the basic adult cremation and the additional forecasted income that the higher percentage increase would generate.

In considering the report Members noted the cost of the medical referee's fee was included in the cost of a cremation and queried whether this could be separated out in order to make it clear to the public how the overall cost was calculated. The Director & Registrar advised that this would cease in the forthcoming years and the role would then be undertaken by a Medical Examiner or the Coroner who would then make the decision on whether to allow the cremation to take place.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the proposed cremation fee as shown in Table 2 and to be introduced from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 be approved with the proposed fee for 2019/2020 being £738.50, which is an increase of £34 (5%) on the 2018/2019 cremation fee; and
- (b) the proposed cremation fees as shown in Table 2 for 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 be approved, in principle, with the fees being proposed for 2020/2021 being £774.50 and 2021/2022 being £812.50.

1736 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 2019/2020- 2021/2022

The Joint Committee considered the report which set out the details of the revised revenue and capital budgets for 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 and the proposals for 2021/2023. It was reported that a review of the budgets for 2020/2021 onwards would take place prior to the setting of the revenue budgets in 2019, in order to identify future savings and efficiencies.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the proposed revenue and capital budgets for 2019/2020 be approved; and
- (b) the proposed revenue budgets for 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 be approved, in principle.

1737 APPOINTMENT OF CLERK TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE

The Joint Committee considered the report which sought to make provision for the services of a Clerk to the Committee following the departure of the present post-holder on 31 December 2018.

In considering the report Members noted that when the previous Treasurer had left, honorarium payments to the post-holder had ceased and a Service Level Agreement (SLA) had been entered into. In order to adopt a consistent approach it was agreed that the provision of both committee services and Clerk be undertaken by way of a SLA with the service being initially provided by Newark & Sherwood DC.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the Joint Committee notes and endorses the decision of Mansfield District Council to meet the pension strain in respect of Kirsty Cole, the Clerk to the Mansfield and District Crematorium Joint Committee, in the sum of £335.86, having regard to the circumstances of her departure and note that she will be leaving the role on 31 December 2018;
- (b) the services of a Clerk together with the provision of committee services be undertaken by way of a Service Level Agreement with

one of the constituent authorities with the service initially being provided by Newark & Sherwood District Council; and

- (c) Newark & Sherwood District Council receive a payment equivalent to the honorarium paid to the previous post-holder for the provision of the services of a Clerk to the Joint Committee and that Newark & Sherwood nominate a suitable officer to undertake the role accordingly.

*Following the presentation of the report, the Clerk to the Joint Committee left the meeting during the debate and vote thereon.*

1738 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman of the Joint Committee presented to both the Clerk and the Treasurer a basket of fruit by way of a gift to mark their service to the Joint Committee. This would be their last meeting of the Joint Committee and he thanked them both for their service and advice to Members past and present.

1739 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Monday, 11 February 2019 at 10am at the offices of Mansfield District Council.

Meeting closed at 11.04 am.

Chairman