

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Mansfield and District Crematorium Joint Committee** held at Ashfield District Council on Monday, 18 September 2023 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT: Councillor A Burgin (Chairman)

Councillor C Huskinson, Councillor H Smith, Councillor S Richardson, Councillor C Whitby and Councillor P Peacock

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor J Zadrozny as substitute for Councillor T Hollis

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor T Hollis (Vice-Chairman), Councillor L Brazier and Councillor P Taylor

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

In accordance with the Constitution the offices of Chairman and Vice Chairman shall, in successive years, rotate between the three constituent authorities. The Chairman for 2023/24 to be a Member from Mansfield District Council.

The outgoing Vice Chairman, Councillor S Richardson invited Mansfield District Council to nominate a Chairman for this year.

Councillor S Richardson nominated Councillor A Burgin who then accepted the role.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

The Vice Chairman for 2023/24 to be a Member from Ashfield District Council.

The newly elected Chairman, Councillor A Burgin invited Ashfield District Council to nominate a Vice-Chairman for this year.

Councillor J Zadrozny (substituting for Cllr T Hollis) nominated Councillor T Hollis to then accept the role.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Mansfield Councillor A Burgin declared his annual interest as an employee of Ashfield District Council.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTENT TO RECORD THE MEETING

NOTED that no intention to record the meeting was declared apart from through the usual web platforms.

5 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 FEBRUARY 2023

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 February 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 OPERATIONS REPORT

The report provided an update on staff and the current operation of the Crematorium.

The Crematorium and Cemeteries Manager and Registrar presented the report highlighting staffing, cremator and ancillary equipment, BACAS upgrade, project update, internal audit and cremation data.

The Children's Funeral Fund part of the report explained that the funeral services for children under the age of 18 are free at the point of sale, for bereaved parents. Crematorium and burial authority operators are able to claim back any costs associated with a child funeral service from the Government Child Funeral Fund.

It was explained to the Committee that in order to improve bereavement service provision for the parents of deceased children it is proposed that funds claimed back from infant and child services be repurposed to improve the children's section within the crematorium, on an ongoing basis.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- i) Members noted the report.
- ii) the Committee approved the upgrade of the BACAS system at a cost of £26,820 over 5 years, with the additional cost being financed from existing budgets.
- iii) the Committee approved the use of funds claimed back from the Child Funeral Fund, to be utilised to improve the Child Bereavement Service provision and to provide an update to the Committee in the next 12 months.

7 POND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The report provided an update on the pond within the memorial gardens.

The Crematorium and Cemeteries Manager and Registrar highlighted that at the previous meeting an objection was made to the removal of the pond feature within the memorial gardens and that a further report be brought to the Committee with regard to the development of the pond.

In light of the objection received from the Committee, research was carried out in order to determine the impact that the removal of the pond may have on families who had chosen to scatter the ashes of their loved ones.

However due to the information relating to the location of scattered ashes being predominantly paper based and relating to scatterings that have taken place over a 60 year period, it was not possible to identify the total number of families affected.

The Committee were updated that the pond had now been fully reinstated with the addition of a waterfall to the rear of the feature, with additional planting in the area to take place in the coming weeks.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- i) Members noted the report.

8 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022/2023

The report provided the annual report and statement of accounts for 2022/2023 showing the Committee's financial position as at the 31 March 2023 and the revenue and capital activity during the financial year.

The Finance representative on behalf of the Treasurer of the Mansfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee informed the meeting that this was a statutory document providing the financial activity for April 2022 to March 2023, having been approved by Assurance Lincolnshire.

The Chairman and Finance representative on behalf of the Treasurer to sign off the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for 2022/2023.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- i) the statement of accounts as presented in Appendix A for the financial year 2022/2023 be approved.
- ii) the 2022/2023 budgeted surplus distribution as detailed in Appendix A, 3.7, pages 7 and 8 be approved.
- iii) up to £82,747 of unused capital budget in 2022/2023, as detailed in 3.8.1 of the report, to be carried forward into 2023/2024 be approved.
- iv) the detailed revenue and capital information provided in Appendix C, be noted only.

9 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REVIEW APRIL-JUNE 2023

The report provided the forecasted year end position for 2023/2024 financial year for the Mansfield Crematorium as at 30 June 2023.

The Finance representative for Mansfield District Council gave an overview of the report to the members of the Committee.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- i) the financial information provided in Appendix 1, Table 1 and Table

2 be for noting only.

10 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Members noted the Committee Work Programme, with future changes to dates and times to be considered.

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING - MONDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2023 AT MANSFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES

12 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Agreed (unanimously) that under section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

13 NEW CREMATORIUM UPDATE REPORT

Committee resolved that under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of this item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

It is considered that the need to treat the information in this report as exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosure because of potential to prejudice the commercial interests of the contractor, if the financial details were to be put into the public domain thereby becoming available to competitors.

Meeting closed at 11.21 am.

Chairman