

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Mansfield and District Crematorium Joint Committee** held in Ashfield District Council, Urban Road, Kirkby in Ashfield, NG17 8DA on Monday, 16 December 2024 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT: Councillor T Hollis (Chair)
Councillor P Peacock (Vice-Chair)

Councillor C Huskinson, Councillor H Smith, Councillor A Burgin,
Councillor S Richardson, Councillor C Whitby, Councillor S Crosby and
Councillor R Cozens

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTENT TO RECORD THE MEETING

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

14 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 MAY 2024

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 May 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

15 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.

16 CREMATORIUM DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS 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.

The Committee then reverted back to the open meeting.

17 OPERATIONS REPORT

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

The Crematorium and Cemeteries Manager and Registrar presented the report highlighting the staffing, cremator and ancillary equipment, building maintenance and repair, environmental permit inspection, FBCA inspection, health and safety audit, events calendar and cremation data.

The Chair requested a breakdown of costs for repairs for the next meeting.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- i) Members noted the report.

18 CHILDREN'S FUNERAL FUND

The report provided an update on the planned Children's Fund spend.

Funeral services for children under the age of 18 are free for bereaved parents. Crematorium and burial authority operators can claim back any costs associated with a child funeral service from the Government Child Funeral Fund. Reclaimed funds are in line with current fees and charges.

To improve the bereavement service, provision is made for the parents of deceased children and children who experience bereavement. In September 2023 the Committee approved that any funds claimed back can be repurposed to improve the children's bereavement services at the crematorium, on an ongoing basis, rather than these funds being utilised as income. This report set out the planned projects and anticipated spend.

Councillor Paul Peacock left the meeting

Given the lack of literature available it was considered that something could be produced by the Crematorium in conjunction with several stakeholders. A meeting has taken place between The Children's Bereavement Centre, a local children's bereavement charity that supports bereaved children in Newark and Sherwood, Mansfield and Ashfield only. After discussion it was identified that the charity are already progressing with a project to develop their own literature and therefore it was felt that the crematorium could support in other ways as highlighted in the report.

The Chair requested for the next meeting, to show how bereavement service counselling is advertised.

As the Children's Bereavement Centre is expanding more into Mansfield and Ashfield, as currently more so in Newark, the Chair requested that a briefing note be provided.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- i) Members noted the report.

19 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REVIEW APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2024

The report showed the forecasted year end position for the 2024/2025 financial year for the Mansfield Crematorium as at 30 September 2024.

The Head of Finance 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 table 1 and appendix 1 is for noting only.
- ii) the budget for Repair/Maintenance Cremators is increased by £63,000 from General Fund as detailed in 1.1.2 of this report.

20 ANNUAL REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2025/26

The report provided the proposed fees and charges to be introduced from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

The Committee discussed the trends and inflation for the cremation fees, as wanting to be comparable with other crematoriums.

The Chair moved an alteration to the recommendations in the report, which was seconded by Councillor Whitby.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- i) the proposed cremation fee as shown in table 2 for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 be approved. The fee proposed for 2025/26 is £1,017, which is an increase of £48 (5%) on the 2024/25 standard cremation fee. The medical referee fee of £18.50 will be added to these proposed standard cremation fees. Subject to the total fees shown in table 2 being rounded-up to the nearest £50.
- ii) the proposed standard cremation fees as shown in table 2 for 2026/27 and 2027/28 be approved in principle. The standard cremation fees proposed are: 2025/26 £1,017, 2026/27 £1,068 and 2027/28 £1,121, being an increase of 5% in all three years. The medical referee fee of £18.50 will be added to these proposed standard cremation fees. Subject to the total fees shown in table 2 being rounded-up to the nearest £50.
- iii) the proposed fees and charges for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, as set out in Appendix 1 are approved.

21 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Members noted the Committee Work Programme.

22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING - MONDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2025

Meeting closed at 10.40 am.

Chair