

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Mansfield and District Crematorium Joint Committee** held in the Ashfield District Council Offices on Monday, 16 September 2019 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT: Councillor Barsby, Councillor T Hollis, Councillor H Smith, Councillor A Burgin (Acting Chairman) Councillor Richardson and Councillor L Hurst (*did not act as Chairman due to arriving after the meeting commenced*)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: A Abrahams (Vice-Chairman) and Councillor T Smith (Committee Member)

1755 APPOINTMENT OF ACTING CHAIRMAN

Members of the Committee were informed that due to the delay of the Chairman and that the Vice-Chairman had submitted his apologies it was necessary to appoint an Acting Chairman should they wish to proceed with the meeting.

AGREED (unanimously) that Councillor A. Burgin from Mansfield District Council be appointed as Acting Chairman in order that the meeting may proceed.

1756 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor A. Burgin declared a personal interest as an employee of Ashfield District Council.

1757 DECLARATIONS OF INTENT TO RECORD THE MEETING

NOTED that no intention to record the meeting was declared.

1758 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 MAY 2019

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 May 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Acting Chairman.

1759 MATTERS ARISING

None

1760 APPOINTMENT OF TREASURER TO THE MANSFIELD & DISTRICT CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the report of the Human Resources Manager (Mansfield District Council) in relation to the appointment of the Treasurer to the Mansfield and District Crematorium Joint Committee following the retirement of the former Treasurer, Mick Andrews.

AGREED that:

- (a) the services of a Treasurer 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 Mansfield District Council; and

- (b) the Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) at Mansfield District Council be appointment as Treasurer.

1761 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REVIEW REPORT FROM 1 APRIL 2019 - 31 JULY 2019

The Joint Committee considered the Financial Management Review report for the period 1 April to 31 July 2019, detailing the income and expenditure incurred to 31 July 2019 and the variances expected at year end. The variances due to employee expenses, premises related expenses and variances in supplies and services were reported. Members noted that the forecast position to 31 March 2020 was a surplus of £761,079 compared to the budgeted surplus of £869,652 which was a reduction of £108,573.

In noting that the reason for the above reduced amount Members queried what action was being taken to advertise the facilities available at the crematorium. The Director & Registrar stated that conversation were regularly held with funeral directors that used the Mansfield facility. The drop off in usage was attributable to the outlying areas where families of the deceased chose facilities which were closer to their home. In relation to costs, the feedback from the funeral directors was positive.

In response, a Member of the Committee commented that he would wish to see a more formal arrangement made with the funeral directors, suggesting that this could possibly be undertaken by an Officer of one of the constituent authorities. The Director & Registrar suggested that it may be beneficial to hold an open evening and providing light refreshments, with both funeral directors and the Members of this Committee being invited to attend. This would offer all parties the opportunity to discuss the current facilities and what they would wish to see in the future. The Member added that he would also wish to see a joint letter of support from the Leaders of the three authorities.

In relation to the timing of such an event, it was suggested that it be held when the website was fully operational and that it would also offer the opportunity of reaffirming that the facility was fully operational when the programmed capital works commenced.

Members discussed whether the facility remained competitive in relation to new and existing crematoria. The Director & Registrar advised that the fees and charges had been adjusted in April 2019 and that a pre-10am service had been made available at a reduced price. A service at this cost was also available to: public health funerals; those families on a limited budget; or those who wished to hold a 'no frills' funeral.

Members requested that a report providing figures be compiled in relation to which funeral directors had used the Mansfield Crematorium, both in the past and recently and that this could also be looked at from the view point of population growth in the constituent areas. Other information to be fed into the report was information as to what other crematoriums offered to their customers so that a comparison could be undertaken.

The Director & Registrar advised Members that many of the funeral directors were having to restructure their businesses due to the downturn in the number of funerals. She also advised that there was an increasing number of families who were choosing to have 'do-it-yourself' funerals thereby reducing the cost.

AGREED that:

- (a) the financial information provided in Appendix 1 and Table 3 of the report be noted;
- (b) the capital budget increase of £835 identified in 3.2.5 be approved;
- (c) an opening evening for funeral directors and Members of the Committee be held, the date of which was to coincide with when the website was fully operational; and
- (d) a report be presented to a future meeting of the Committee detailing which funeral directors had used the Mansfield Crematorium, both in the past and recently. The report to provide information as to how population growth had and could, in the future, affect the usage of the facility and to also provide information as to what other crematoriums offered to their customers so that a comparison could be undertaken.

1762 RECYCLING OF METALS

The Committee considered the report of the Director & Registrar in relation to the Recycling of Metals obtained through cremation and the donation of monies received therefrom.

The report set out that each of the three local authorities nominated a bereavement based charity which served their respective area to benefit from the monies received from the recycling of metals. The names of the three charities that had benefited in the past were listed with Members being asked to consider which charities they would wish to see future monies distributed to.

In considering the report and which charities should benefit from future monies received, all Members agreed that they would wish to see Nottinghamshire Hospice removed from the list of charities.

Members debated how the current donations were calculated, with one Member suggesting that it should be amended to more accurately reflect the usage of the facility by the residents of each area e.g. Mansfield and Ashfield to receive 40% each of the monies and Newark & Sherwood 20%. The Member also suggested that the rotation period be for a 5 year period e.g. MDC – years 1 and 4; ADC – years 2 and 5; and NSDC – year 3. The Director & Register outlined the way in which the monies were received and distributed. She advised that there was no facility to split the monies raised from the metals recycled. In response to how much money had been distributed the previous year, the Director & Registrar advised that there had been 2 payments, 1 of £9k and 1 of £7k.

A Member expressed concern as to the proposed amendment and the way in which monies were distributed, commenting that it could result in one charity receiving a disproportionately high amount in comparison to the others. The Director & Registrar stated that there was no way to foresee the amount of monies that could be raised and distributed. She suggested that consideration be given to the way in which the charities were funded and whether they relied on a consistency of income.

In response to when one of the local authorities could amend their charitable nomination, the Director & Register advised that it would possibly be in October 2019.

At the conclusion of the debate Councillor T. Hollis proposed and Councillor H. Smith seconded that:

The amount of monies raised from the recycling of metals through cremation be split between the constituent local authorities as follows:

Ashfield District Council	40%
Mansfield District Council	40%
Newark & Sherwood District Council	20%

and that the rotation of distribution be as follows:

Mansfield District Council	Years 1 and 4
Ashfield District Council	Years 2 and 5
Newark & Sherwood District Council	Year 3

On being put to the vote the above proposal was **lost** with 3 votes for and 4 votes against (following the Acting Chairman using his casting vote).

AGREED that:

- (a) the Joint Committee agreed to support charities that gave the most benefit locally to both those who were in end of life care and also in the wider community for counselling etc. of those who required bereavement counselling;
- (b) each of the 3 local authorities nominated a bereavement based charity which served their respective area;
 - (i) MDC – John Eastwood Hospice
 - (ii) NSDC – Beaumont House Hospice
 - (iii) ADC – to be confirmed
- (c) any monies gained through the final collection for any of the remembrance services held at the crematorium (usually in December) also be donated to the nominated charities; and
- (d) all nominations be taken in rotation.

1763 ABATEMENT EQUIPMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Director & Registrar which sought to update Members on the proposed timelines for work which related to the abatement equipment to ensure operation in accordance with Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 which were made under the Pollution, Prevention and Control Act 1999 and cascaded down to crematoria under the Process Guidance Notes PG5/2(12).

The report set out the background to the works with the proposed projected plan of works being detailed in Appendix 1 of the report. It was, however, noted that the timeline could be subject to change, dependant on weather conditions and possible location of stack pipes.

In response to how disruption would be kept to a minimum, the Director & Registrar advised disruption would be kept to a minimum and that the majority of work would be undertaken during opening hours. It was anticipated that any potential noisy works would be undertaken on a Friday or Monday. She also confirmed that the cost of the works was within the budget figure.

AGREED that the report be noted.

1764 LAUNCH OF NEW WEBSITE

The Committee considered the verbal and visual presentation of the Crematorium's website by the Director & Registrar. She advised that its full development had been delayed due to sickness absence by the web developer.

A Member suggested that, when complete, the website displayed images of the grounds as they provided an attractive image of the facility. The Director & Registrar confirmed that images of the grounds and chapels would be included and updated on a regular basis to reflect the changes in seasons.

It was noted that all the 3 local authorities would be required to update the link from their own website into the new crematorium website.

1765 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman of the Committee apologised to the Members for her late arrival. She also thanked Councillor Burgin for undertaking the role of Acting Chairman throughout the duration of the meeting.

1766 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that all the following forthcoming meetings would be held at 10am on a Monday:

9 December 2019	(Mansfield DC)
24 February 2020	(NSDC)
18 May 2020	(ADC)

Meeting closed at 11.00 am.

Chairman