

URGENCY ITEMS - MINUTE OF DECISION

Delegation arrangements for dealing with matters of urgency

Paragraph 7.2.1 of the Council's Constitution provides that Chief Officers may take urgent decisions if they are of the opinion that circumstances exist which make it necessary for action to be taken by the Council prior to the time when such action could be approved through normal Council Procedures. They shall, where practicable, first consult with the Leader and Chairman (or in their absence the Vice Chairman) and the Opposition Spokesperson of the appropriate committee (Constitution incorporating a scheme of delegation approved by the Council on 14th May 2013)

Given the current emergency in respect of the Covid-19 pandemic and the decision taken to suspend committee meetings while social distancing measures continue, the urgency decision provision under Paragraph 7.2.1 of the Council's Constitution has been widened to extend the consultation to include the Leaders of all the political groups on the Council.

Subject: Mansfield Crematorium

Appropriate Committee: Mansfield and Ashfield Joint Crematorium Committee

Details of Item (including reason(s) for use of urgency procedure):

Mansfield Crematorium is seeking to fulfil its responsibilities in response to the COVID-19 crisis, and increase capacity. A decision on revised opening hours and charging arrangements is required urgently and it would cause unacceptable delay to convene a remote meeting of the Joint Crematorium Committee.

Ashfield District Council, Mansfield District Council, and Newark & Sherwood District Council have constituted the Joint Crematorium Committee to exercise their respective powers for the provision, running, maintenance and management of Mansfield Crematorium. Section 101(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 says that this arrangement does not prevent the Council from exercising these functions itself. It is proposed that the Council's Chief Executive considers this item by virtue of this Section and the urgency delegation set out above. It is acknowledged that the three Authorities will need to make a unanimous decision in order for it to be implemented.

The Crematorium currently offers direct cremation at £490 prior to 10am in the morning – during the pandemic period the Crematorium proposes to offer that facility after 4pm. This would mean that the Crematorium has a concentration of coffins coming in at a time it can cope with storage and also still allow families to have a normal service during the day. The Crematorium is currently booking direct cremations in at 15 minute slots to increase its capacity.

The Crematorium currently has a surcharge of £108 in place for Saturday funerals – it is not currently receiving any requests for Saturday funerals and this may be partially due to the surcharge. The Crematorium proposes to remove the surcharge and offer the same price as during the week (£778), and extend the number of service times available on Saturdays from 8 to 14. This would help with downtime of machinery as the cremators do not like to become really cold as it affects the brickwork, would aid start up times on a Monday and would help meet requests coming through the Local Resilience Forum.

Decision

During the period of the COVID-19 crisis, and subject to review 6 months from today's date, for Mansfield and Ashfield Crematorium to offer direct cremations at £490 after 4pm. To remove the surcharge for Saturday funerals, and extend the operating times on Saturdays to 3.15pm.

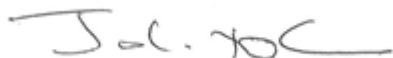
Members Consulted

Joint Committee Members:

Councillor Mrs Lydia Hurst, Chairman	16/04/2020 agreed
Councillor Tom Smith	16/04/2020 agreed
Councillor Mrs Gill Dawn (also Group Leader)	16/04/2020 agreed

Group Leaders:

Councillor David Lloyd	17/04/2020 agreed
Councillor Paul Peacock	17/04/2020 agreed
Councillor Peter Harris	16/04/2020 agreed



Signed
Chief Executive

Date: 17 April 2020