

Chilterns Crematorium Joint Committee

Tuesday, 21st June, 2011 at 4.30 pm

Cabinet Room, King George V House, King George V Road, Amersham

Note: Following the meeting of the Joint Committee the Liaison Meeting will be held at 6.45 p.m. at the Crematorium, preceded by refreshments at 6.00 p.m.

A G E N D A

- 1 Evacuation Procedures
- 2 Election of Chairman
- 3 Appointment of Vice-Chairman
- 4 Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 1 - 6*)

To sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2011.
- 5 Apologies for Absence
- 6 Declarations of Interest
- 7 Open report (and appendices) of the Clerk and Superintendent to the Joint Committee:
 - 7.1 Service Plan 2011 - 2012 (*Pages 7 - 8*)
Appendix 7.1 (Pages 9 - 12)
- 8 Open report (and appendices) of the Treasurer to the Joint Committee:
 - 8.1 Statement of Accounts 2010/11 (*To Follow*)
 - 8.2 56th Annual Report (*Circulated Separately*)
- 9 Exclusion of the Public
To resolve that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt

information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act

- 10 Private Report of the Officers:
- 11 Site Search: Aylesbury Crematorium (*Pages 13 - 16*)
 - Appendix 12.1 (Pages 17 - 18)*
 - Appendix 12.2 (Pages 19 - 20)*
 - Appendix 12.3 (Pages 21 - 24)*
 - Appendix 12.4 (Pages 25 - 26)*
- 12 Crematorium Buildings - Theft Of Copper And Lead (*Pages 27 - 28*)
- 13 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members are asked to bring their diaries to the meeting.

Members have agreed to locate meetings at Amersham, Aylesbury and High Wycombe on a rotation basis. The next meeting will be held at Aylesbury.

Note: All Reports will be updated orally at the meeting if appropriate and may be supplemented by additional reports at the Chairman's discretion.

Membership: Chilterns Crematorium Joint Committee

Councillors:	Brian Roberts	Aylesbury Vale District Council
	David Thompson	"
	Nick Rose	Chiltern District Council
	Michael Smith	"
	David Carroll	Wycombe District Council
	Mrs Jean Teesdale	"

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CHILTERN CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

**MINUTES of the Meeting of the
CHILTERN CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE
held on 27 JANUARY 2011
at CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

PRESENT:

Councillor K McPartland Aylesbury Vale District Council - Vice-Chairman

Councillors: T Green Wycombe District Council
N M Rose Chiltern District Council
R Scott Wycombe District Council
D Thompson Aylesbury Vale District Council

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors M R Smith (Chiltern District Council).

26 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 23 September 2010 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

28 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The next Annual Conference of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management was due to be held in October 2011 and it was

RESOLVED -

That the Chairman of the Joint Committee and the Superintendent be nominated to attend the 2011 Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management Annual Conference

29 LIAISON MEETING WITH PERSONS TAKING SERVICES AND FUNERAL DIRECTORS

In accordance with the practice of holding annual liaison meetings with persons taking services and funeral directors it was

RESOLVED -

That the next Liaison Meeting be provisionally scheduled to held at the Crematorium at 6.45 pm on 15 June 2011 to be preceded by refreshments at 6.00 pm.

30 COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS 2010

The Joint Committee received a report giving details of the complaints and compliments that had been received about the Crematorium in 2010 and the action that had been taken in response to the comments received.

The Joint Committee was pleased to note that the number of complaints had fallen from the previous year. From the comments received from the returned questionnaires the following changes were proposed:

1. Position of the loudspeaker to improve effectiveness
2. Remind funeral directors of the temporary nature of the container provided by the Crematorium for cremation ashes
3. Review the hard of hearing loop in the Milton Chapel.

It was advised that the “temporary container” had changed from a plastic container to a cardboard container principally for environmental reasons and to facilitate the storage of the containers at the Crematorium. Funeral directors were asked to inform families in relation to this arrangement so that families knew what to expect and this would be reiterated at this year's Liaison Meeting. In response to a question it was advised that funeral directors returned ashes to families in the majority of cases and for this reason it was suggested that there would be insufficient demand to warrant the provision of a longer term storage container.

RESOLVED -

That the report be noted.

31 SCANNING OF MANUAL CREMATION REGISTERS AND DECEASED ON LINE

The Joint Committee considered a report at the meeting on 15 January 2009 highlighting the eventual need to scan alphabetical indexes into an electronic format. In light of further deterioration of early cremation registers and indexes, which as original documents were only in existence in paper form, it was advised that these needed to be scanned now in order to retain and safeguard the records.

A further recommendation was made to process the records using a data capture system to allow for quick access of the records and this process was required if the records were to be accessed via Deceased On Line in the future. It was established that the paper records would be retained once the records had been scanned. The Joint Committee noted that data capture was a tried and tested method, proven to generate searchable records once scanned.

RESOLVED -

1. That the manual cremation registers and indexes be scanned for an estimated cost of £4,500.
2. That the data capture of the manual cremation registers and indexes proceed at an estimated cost of up to £7,500.

32 MILTON FUNERAL CHAPEL: REPLACEMENT OF FLOOR

The Joint Committee received an update report regarding the defect to the floor inside the Milton chapel. As previously advised the building contractors admitted liability for the building fault and as such had agreed to rectify the defect flooring at the contractor's expense. Concerns were previously raised about the potential loss of income and was decided that litigation for loss of revenue would only be pursued as a last resort.

It was noted that since the last meeting there were now reasonably good indications that the carpeted areas were not affected and that it would be possible to re-screed and lay new tiled floor over the existing heating pipes. On the basis of this information the closure period of the chapel was not expected to exceed two months which would result in minimal, if any, loss of income.

RESOLVED -

That the report be noted.

33 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2010/11 TO 2014/15

The Joint Committee received a report setting out details of the proposed Chilterns Crematorium Capital Programme covering the period 2010/11 to 2014/15. The report, after setting out in a table proposed changes from the current approved Capital Programme position, went on to provide an overview of each of the following capital projects included within the Programme:

- Milton Chapel Project;
- Mercury Abatement and Heat Transfer/Recovery Plant;
- Relining Cremators;
- Replacement Analysers;
- Site Development;
- Roadway Resurfacing; and
- Structural survey.

It was noted that the structural survey of properties and infrastructure at the Crematorium still had to be returned and would be reviewed at that time. Concerns were raised regarding the large increase in costs to cover the

mercury abatement. It was advised that it was part of phasing for the upgrade project which had already been approved.

RESOLVED -

That the proposed Capital Programme for 2010/11 to 2014/2015 be agreed.

34 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES

The Joint Committee received a report setting out proposed fees and charges from 1 April 2011 based on a general increase of 3.3% over the current year charges.

With regard to the main cremation fee a question was raised about whether there had been a slight decrease in the number of people using the facility after an increase in fees and charges last year. It was noted that there were fewer cremations this year but this decrease was negligible and could be explained by the natural fluctuation in demand. It was agreed that the fee be increased to £470 with effect from 1 April 2011.

RESOLVED -

That the fees and charges for 2011/12 as shown in appendix 6.2 of the report be agreed and the main cremation fee be set at £470.

35 REVENUE BUDGET REVISED 2010/11 AND ORIGINAL 2011/12

The Joint Committee received a report setting out details of the Chilterns Crematorium Revenue Budget for 2010/11 Revised and 2011/12 Original.

The revised budget for 2010/11 showed an estimated revenue surplus, before capital expenditure, of £715,990 compared to an original projected surplus of £678,000. The original budget for 2011/12 showed an estimated revenue surplus, before capital expenditure, of £772,650 compared to an original base position in 2010/11 of a projected surplus of £678,000.

In response to a question regarding future audit fees it was advised that there may be a decrease in auditing fees for the current year as a result of the reduced level of auditing being undertaken.

After noting that the estimates for 2011/12 would need to be amended to reflect the approved fee increases made in Minute 34 and the cost of scanning manual records made in Minute 31 it was

RESOLVED -

That, subject to the figure for income being amended to reflect the decision made in Minute 31 above in respect of the main Crematorium fee, the 2010/2011 Revised and 2011/12 Original estimates be approved.

36 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Joint Committee received a report reviewing the financial position of the Chilterns Crematorium in the medium term from 2012/13 to 2014/15. The report set out in a table the forecast position for the next three years which showed that the Joint Committee was in a strong financial position.

RESOLVED -

That the Medium Term Financial Strategy forecast be noted.

37 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Joint Committee noted that a meeting would be held in the third week of June 2011 to approve the statement of accounts, and went on to agree that the actual date of the next meeting would be determined following the District Council elections.

38 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED -

That under Section 100(A)(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.

Note: The relevant paragraph number from Part 1 of Schedule 12A is indicated at the end of the Minute heading.

39 SITE SEARCH: AYLESBURY CREMATORIUM (PARAGRAPH 3)

At the last meeting the Joint Committee agreed to the appointment of an external consultant to help with the search for a suitable site for a proposed Crematorium in Aylesbury. The Joint Committee received a report providing an update on the progress made to date and were asked to note developments with two of the sites previously identified and the responses in relation to one new site.

RESOLVED -

That the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 12.22 pm

CHILTERNS CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MEETING 21ST JUNE 2011

**OPEN REPORT OF THE CLERK TO
THE JOINT COMMITTEE AND THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Background Papers (if any) are specified at the end of each item

SERVICE PLAN 2011 - 2012

Contact Officer: Charles Howlett (01494) 724263

1 The service plan for the Crematorium has been updated for 2011 - 2012 and is included as *Appendix 7.1*

RECOMMENDATION

That the Crematorium Service Plan for 2011 – 2012 be approved

Background papers: None

**Chilterns Crematorium Joint Committee comprising
Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern and Wycombe District Councils
CHILTERN CREMATORIUM**

SERVICE PLAN 2011 – 2012

1.1 Key Functions

The Crematorium reports to the Chilterns Crematorium Joint Committee which comprises two executive members each from Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern and Wycombe District Councils.

The key functions of the Crematorium are:-

1. To provide facilities and assistance to facilitate the holding of funeral services and ceremonies.
2. The disposal of human cadavers by a process of incineration known as cremation.
3. To produce cremation ashes of guaranteed identity in granular form to facilitate the option of discreet disposal by scattering.
4. The provision and maintenance of a garden of remembrance as a suitable place for the scattering of cremation ashes and the placing of memorials.
5. To provide a choice of memorials for placing in the chapel or garden of remembrance and facilities to accommodate commemorative flowers.

1.2 Aspects of the Service which are a Statutory Requirement

There is no statutory requirement for a local authority to operate a crematorium although many local authorities in the UK are burial and/or cremation authorities. A cremation authority must adhere to the following statutory requirements:-

- a) Cremation applications and authorisations are in accordance with the requirements of The Cremation (England and Wales) Regulations 2008 made by the Parliamentary Secretary of State for the Ministry of Justice, under Section 7 of the Cremation Act 1902 and Section 10 the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1926, and all subsequent amendments to the Acts and Regulations.
- b) Cremations are carried out in accordance with the Secretary of State's Guidance for Crematoria, Process Guidance note 5/2 (04), for use under both Local Air Pollution Control established by Part 1 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and Local Air Pollution Prevention and Control established by the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999.

1.3 Service Objectives

The key objectives of the Crematorium are –

1. Providing an excellent customer friendly service and good quality facilities creating an appropriate environment and ambiance in which a funeral service can take place.
2. Providing an office administration which is efficient and customer friendly.
3. Carrying out cremations in accordance with the statutory requirements and recognised industry standards.
4. Ensuring the Crematorium grounds are maintained to a high standard as a suitable place for the scattering of cremation ashes and the placing of memorials.
5. Providing a good quality chapel of remembrance with facilities for the placing of flowers and memorials.
6. Providing a choice of memorials for placing in the chapel or garden of remembrance.
7. Ensuring that the Crematorium service continues to be self financing.

1.4 Key Achievements in the Last 12 Months

The following is a summary of the key achievements in the last twelve months:–

1. The £655,000 cremation filtration and heat recovery equipment installation was substantially completed but not commissioned.
2. An intensive search for a crematorium site at Aylesbury continued throughout the year. Due to lack of progress, expertise and officer time, a consultant with industry experience and a track record in finding sites was appointed during the year to assist. Unfortunately by the end of the year a site had still not been found.
3. A grant application to develop and implement a woodland management and conservation plan was successful and by the end of the year the appointed forestry consultant had commenced drawing up the plan.
4. An initial desk-top sales-literature based review of commemoration provision was of limited value in assessing possible alternatives and will be followed up in the coming year by visits to other crematoria to see for ourselves.
5. The Burial and Cremation Education Trust's (BCET) carbon footprint questionnaire, a scheme to compare the Chilterns Crematorium with other participating cremation authorities and also help identify ways of reducing the Crematorium's carbon footprint, was completed but the scheme has temporarily stalled due to the long term illness of the Trust's administrator.

6. The alternative payment options for commemoration and necessary alterations to application forms, etc, have been implemented. Payment options for funeral directors are currently being considered. An electronic transaction process via the website has now been investigated and is not straightforward, but remains on the agenda as follow-on from similar work currently underway at CDC in developing their own electronic payment systems and websites. Implementation could sensibly coincide with the current computerised crematorium administration system being upgraded/replaced, at the latest in conjunction with the opening of the new crematorium at Aylesbury.
7. The remaining outstanding building works relating to the Milton chapel project were completed, with the exception of the defective chapel floor which is ongoing (for which the Builder has accepted responsibility).
8. Two members of staff were trained in undertaking equality impact assessments with a view to carrying out an Equalities Impact Assessment for the Crematorium in 2011-12.
9. A plastic recycling scheme was implemented.

1.6a Key Objectives for the Next 12 Months

The first six objectives will take priority.

The key objectives for the next 12 months are:-

1. Oversee the completion of the installation of the cremation filtration and heat recovery equipment.
2. Facilitate and oversee the works to replace the defective Milton chapel floor.
3. Assist the appointed consultant in searching for a crematorium site at Aylesbury and assist other agencies appointed/involved in connection with the proposals to gain outline planning permission once a site has been found.
4. Investigate, facilitate and oversee measures to improve the long term protection of the Crematorium buildings from further metal theft.
5. Work with CDC's Engineers in developing an asset management/maintenance plan for the Crematorium to assist with longer term business planning.
6. Carry out equality impact assessments for the Crematorium.
7. Assist the appointed consultant in developing the strategic plan for the management and conservation of the Crematorium woodland.
8. Complete the review of commemoration provision with a view to presenting a discussion document to the Joint Committee about possible options for improving quality and choice of memorials and also potentially increasing income.

1.6b Key Objectives for the next 3 years

1. To continue to search for a site for a crematorium at Aylesbury if not already achieved, or if a site has already been successfully acquired to move on to the development stages as part of the longer term implementation of the findings of the strategic business case for a new crematorium for Aylesbury.
2. Implementation of the woodland management and conservation plan.
3. Participation in CDC's Climate Change working group with a view to implementing measures to reduce the Crematorium's carbon footprint.

4. Investigate and implement where feasible/advantageous any opportunities for increasing electronic transaction capability e.g. completing an application and paying for a memorial via the Crematorium website, possibly in conjunction with the upgrading of the Crematorium computerised administration system in conjunction with the development of a new crematorium at Aylesbury.
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CHILTERNS CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

FIFTY SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT 1st APRIL 2010 – 31st MARCH 2011

CONSTITUENT AUTHORITIES AND REPRESENTATIVES

Aylesbury Vale District Council

Councillor David Thompson
Councillor Kevin McPartland

Chiltern District Council

Councillor John Warder (Chairman April 2010 – July 2010)
Councillor Michael Smith (Chairman from July 2010)
Councillor Nick Rose (from July 2010)

Wycombe District Council

Councillor A.R. Green
Councillor Katrina Wood (April 2010 – July 2010)
Councillor R. Scott (from July 2010)

Superintendent and Registrar

Charles Howlett DMS, F.ICCM(Dip)
Chilterns Crematorium
Whielden Lane
Amersham
Buckinghamshire

Clerk

Alan Goodrum

Chief Executive
Chiltern District Council
Council Offices
King George V Road
Amersham
Buckinghamshire

Treasurer

Alison Howes

Chief Financial Officer
Chiltern District Council
Council Offices
King George V Road
Amersham
Buckinghamshire

**CHILTERNS CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE
FIFTY SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT**

1) CREMATIONS

The following tables show the number of cremations from 1st April to 31st March for the past five years and their originating Districts:

District	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Aylesbury Vale	619	575	668	639	614
Chiltern	622	558	596	552	563
Wycombe	835	872	899	834	895
Other	874	925	1,004	911	973
Total	2,950	2,930	3,167	2,936	3,045

Comparative figures for the previous years are:

1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
3,161	3,169	2,967	3,021	3,104	3,065	3,010	2,989

The total number of cremations since opening until the end of March 2011 = 114,936.

The 3,045 cremations carried out in 2010/11 generated income of £1,395,077.00

In 2010 Chilterns Crematorium ranked at 8 in a league table in order of the number of cremations carried out at each of the 256 crematoria in the UK.

The proportion of cremations to burials first reached 70% in 1992 and in the 17 years since then it has only increased by a further 3%. By 1995 the actual number of deaths in the UK had risen to 650,000, but since then there has been a general downward trend, with the least number of deaths so far in 2009 when only 564,000 were recorded, 20,000 less than in the previous year.

2) DISPOSITION OF CREMATION ASHES

Nationally there has been a steady reduction in the number of cremation ashes being placed in the grounds of the crematorium where the cremation has taken place, with a higher incidence of ashes being removed from the crematorium for disposal elsewhere.

In 1970 approximately 86% of ashes remained at crematoria nationally (including about 15% being buried as opposed to scattered), but since then there has been a gradual decline and in 2004 the national figure was 40% (including 10% being buried).

At Chilterns (where ashes have only ever been scattered), in the 1970's around 80% of ashes were remaining in the garden of remembrance. By 2004 this was reduced to 35%. In 2006 approximately 32% of ashes were scattered in the garden of remembrance, 34% in 2007, 32% in 2008, 30% in 2009 and 28% in 2010.

The number of cremation ashes being taken away for disposal elsewhere is being offset to a degree by those being received from other crematoria for scattering at the Chilterns with an average of 61 being received over the past five years. 56 were received in 2010/11 generating an income of £1,517.00

Although the reduction in ashes being scattered is reflected in memorial sales, nevertheless the Garden of Remembrance remains an important feature helping provide an appropriate setting for the place of cremation and also acting as a focal point in the mourning process.

3) COMMEMORATION

An additional 92 commemorative plaques were added to the kerbing around the rose beds and the total number of plaques, after deducting those that were not renewed at the expiration of the lease period, is 2,749. Together with the income from renewals, the total income from rose bed commemorative plaques amounted to £43,524.

An additional 30 stone memorial plaques were sold, and the total number of plaques, after deducting those that were not renewed at the expiration of the lease period, is 727 since the scheme was introduced in 1994. Together with the income from renewals the income for the year amounted to £29,860.

An additional 23 leather memorial plaques were sold in the chapel of remembrance, and the total number of plaques, after deducting those that were not renewed at the expiration of the lease period, is 283 since the scheme was introduced in January 2001, with income for the year of £4,617.

A total sum of £1,225 was donated for the purchase of trees, shrubs and flowering plants and bulbs.

A further 392 inscriptions were entered in the Book of Remembrance and the income, including the sale of miniature replica books and memorial cards, amounted to £34,379.

4) FEES

The scales of fees were reviewed by the Joint Committee in January 2011. Increases of around 3% in line with the projected rate of inflation were approved in relation to the majority of the fees, effective from 1st April 2011.

The cremation fee was increased by 4.5%, from £450 to £470, an above inflation increase taking into account the rising cost of energy (gas and electricity) and to help build up reserves for the future capital programme to provide cremator abatement plant by 2013 (in compliance with new legislation) and the Joint Committee's wish to provide a Crematorium in Aylesbury Vale. However it should be noted that measures taken in recent years to operate the cremators more efficiently, notably the move away from the previous policy of carrying out all cremations on the same day as the funeral service, has achieved significant energy savings without which larger increases in the cremation fee would be necessary.

The national average cremation fee in 2010 was £505.62, and in a league table of the 256 crematoria in the UK, starting with the most expensive, Chilterns' cremation fee ranked at 203.

5) STAFF

There were no staff changes during the year.

A diagram showing the current staffing establishment at the Crematorium is included as *Appendix 1*.

6) CREMATIONS EMISSIONS ABATEMENT

Facultatieve Technologies Ltd, of Leeds, who won the contract for the installation of the cremations emissions abatement and heat recovery equipment, commenced work in November 2010.

Prior to the installation work commencing a tendering exercise was carried out by invitation to four suitable local building contractors to carry out enabling and other associated building works. The successful contractor was Clipfine Ltd of Holborn, London.

The work proceeded steadily over the winter months with minimum disruption to funeral services and by the end of March the installation phase was nearing completion, with commissioning of the equipment scheduled for May 2011.

The total projected cost of the project, including associated works (building works etc), is £655,000.

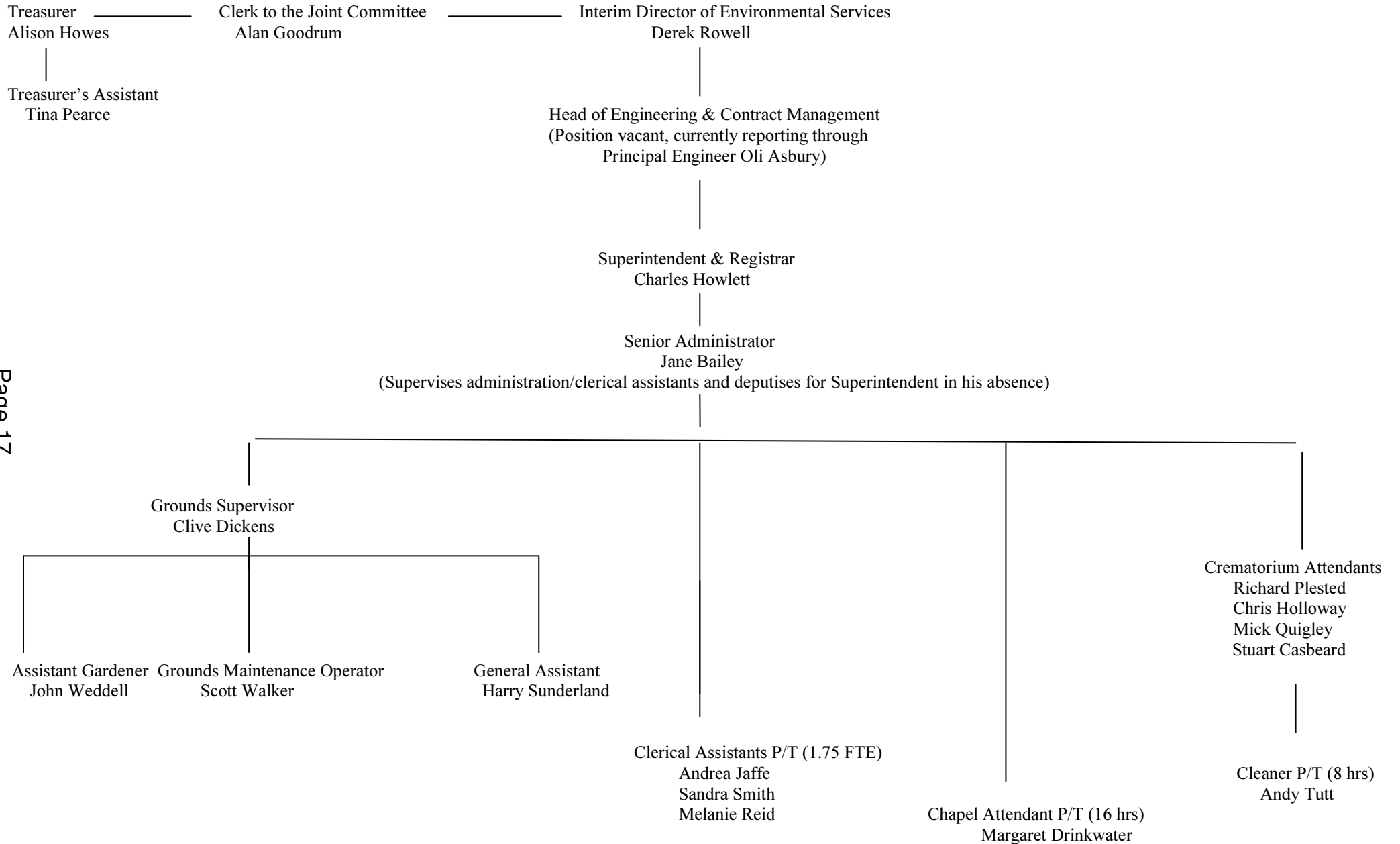
7) **PROPOSED CREMATORIUM: AYLESBURY**

By the end of the period covered in last year's Annual Report (2009/10) the CCJC had agreed to accept as a basis for action the findings of a feasibility study on a proposed crematorium for Aylesbury. The study confirmed the Chiltern Crematorium Joint Committee's (CCJC) previous conclusion that a new crematorium is needed. The CCJC also resolved to endeavour to provide the facility itself.

The Joint Committee resolved in September 2010 to engage the consultant, Chris Johns of Classic Cremation Partnerships, who had previously carried out the feasibility study and who also has considerable experience in finding crematorium sites.

This assignment had not been concluded at the end of the year but CCJC remains confident negotiations on a site will be concluded in 2011-12.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
CHILTERNNS CREMATORIUM



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