

Chilterns Crematorium Joint Committee

Tuesday, 24th January, 2012 at 2.30 pm

**The Meeting Room, Aylesbury Vale District Council, The Gateway, Gatehouse
Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF**

A G E N D A

- 1 Evacuation Procedures
- 2 Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 1 - 6*)
To sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2011.
- 3 Apologies for Absence
- 4 Declarations of Interest
- 5 Open report (and appendices) of the Clerk and Superintendent to the Joint Committee:
 - 5.1 Annual Conference (*Pages 7 - 8*)
 - 5.2 Liaison Meeting with Persons Taking Services and Funeral Directors (*Pages 9 - 10*)
 - 5.3 Complaints and Complements 2011 (*Pages 11 - 16*)
 - 5.4 Additional Funeral Service Time (*Pages 17 - 18*)
 - 5.5 Milton Funeral Chapel: Replacement of Floor (*Pages 19 - 20*)
- 6 Open report (and appendices) of the Treasurer to the Joint Committee:
 - 6.1 Capital Programme 2011/12 to 2015/16 (*Pages 21 - 22*)
Appendix 6.1 (Pages 23 - 24)
 - 6.2 Review of Fees and Charges (*Pages 25 - 26*)
Appendix 6.2 (Pages 27 - 30)

6.3 Revenue Budget Revised 2011/12 and Original 2012/13 (Pages 31 - 34)
Appendix 6.3 (Pages 35 - 36)

6.4 Medium Term Financial Strategy (Pages 37 - 38)

7 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Members are asked to bring their diaries to the meeting for this item.

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

8 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

9 Site Search: Aylesbury Crematorium (*Verbal Report*)

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

Councillor Brian Roberts (Vice-Chairman)	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Councillor David Thompson	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Councillor Nick Rose	Chiltern District Council
Councillor Michael Smith (Chairman)	Chiltern District Council
Councillor David Carroll	Wycombe District Council
Councillor Mrs Jean Teesdale	Wycombe District Council

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CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the
CHILTERN CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE
held on **21 JUNE 2011**

PRESENT: Councillor M R Smith - Chairman
 " B Roberts - Vice Chairman

Councillor: N M Rose

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors D Carroll (Wycombe District Council), Mrs J Teesdale (Wycombe District Council) and D Thompson (Aylesbury Vale District Council).

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was moved by Councillor N Rose, seconded by Councillor B Roberts and

RESOLVED -

That Councillor M Smith be elected as Chairman of the Joint Committee for 2011/12.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was moved by Councillor M Smith, seconded by Councillor N Rose and

RESOLVED -

That Councillor B Roberts be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Joint Committee for 2011/12.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 27 January 2011 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5 SERVICE PLAN 2011 - 2012

The Joint Committee received a copy of the Crematorium's service plan for 2011/12, and after noting in particular the key projects that had taken place during the previous year, and those that would continue into the following year

RESOLVED –

That the Crematorium Service Plan for 2011/2012 be approved.

6 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2010/11

The Joint Committee received a report on the Financial Statements for 2010/11.

It was advised that as a result of the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2011, which applied to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2011, the Joint Committee fell into the category of "smaller relevant bodies", which permitted the preparation of simpler published accounts; less demanding procedural requirements; a less rigorous external audit; and, a lower audit fee.

The Joint Committee after endorsing the approach to opt for smaller relevant body status then approved the Small Bodies Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2011, which included:

- Accounting Statements
- Annual Governance Statement
- External Auditor's certificate and opinion; and,
- Annual Internal Audit Report

Members then noted the detailed set of financial statements, which would be submitted as supporting documents for the audit.

In response to a question regarding the appointment of the external auditors it was advised that Mazars LLP had been appointed by the Audit Commission to audit the accounts of the Chilterns Crematorium Joint Committee for a two year period. The appointment of the external auditors for future years was currently under review by the Government.

The Joint Committee then noted the General Fund balance as at 31 March 2011, and the apportionment between constituent authorities, and agreed that the Joint Committee retain the accumulated balance for future capital investment.

Members were also asked to consider an update report on the mercury abatement and heating projects that had progressed well during 2010/11. The system had almost been completed pending final commissioning which was anticipated to take place in August 2011, well ahead of the December 2012

deadline for 50% abatement. The Joint Committee was advised that since the last report it was now apparent that the site's incoming electrical supply needed to be upgraded, and this being dealt with within the existing approved budgets.

RESOLVED –

- 1. That the implications of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 be noted, and that the approach to opt for smaller relevant body status be endorsed.**
- 2. That the appointment of Mazars LLP as the appointed auditor and the audit fee for the 2010/11 audit be noted.**
- 3. That the Small Bodies Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2011 be approved and signed by the Chairman of the Joint Committee, the Clerk and Treasurer.**
- 4. That the accumulated revenue surplus be retained by the Joint Committee for future capital investment.**
- 5. That the report on abatement and heating projects be noted.**

7 56TH ANNUAL REPORT

In accordance with Standing Order 7 the Joint Committee received the Fifty Sixth Annual Report which covered a number of issues including:

- The number of cremations;
- Fees;
- Staff; and
- Maintenance of Buildings and Grounds

RESOLVED -

That the Fifty Sixth Annual Report of the Chilterns Crematorium Joint Committee be formally approved and adopted

8 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 I of Schedule 12A is indicated at the end of the Minute heading.

9 SITE SEARCH: AYLESBURY CREMATORIUM

The Joint Committee received a report providing an update on the progress made in identifying a site for a proposed Crematorium in Aylesbury. The search area had been widened following a meeting with the Chairman of the Joint Committee in February 2011, and the search in the extended area had proved fruitful with several additional possible sites being identified.

RESOLVED -

That report be noted.

10 CREMATORIUM BUILDINGS - THEFT OF COPPER AND LEAD

The Joint Committee received a report which explained that following a number of thefts of copper and lead from the Crematorium a series of additional security measures had now been put in place. The report detailed the estimated and actual costs of these repairs and of the security measures that were now in place at the Crematorium.

The Joint Committee then discussed the various options for additional longer term security at the Crematorium, including the indicative costs for such measures.

The Joint Committee felt that it was necessary for a comprehensive system of security measures to be put in place at the Crematorium to mitigate the risk of metal theft occurring in the future. It was noted that further technical assessments would be carried out, and a summary of these results would be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED -

That authority be delegated to the Clerk and Treasurer, in consultation with the Chairman, to approve expenditure for a range of comprehensive long term security measures to be put in place at the Crematorium to protect against metal theft.

11 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting was due to be held in January 2012, and the Joint Committee after noting that it may be necessary to hold an earlier meeting before then to discuss the Aylesbury Crematorium site search it was

RESOLVED -

That the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 24 January 2012 at 2.30 p.m. at The Meeting Room, The Gateway, Aylesbury Vale District Council.

The meeting ended at 5.38 pm

CHILTERN CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MEETING 24TH JANUARY 2012

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

5.1 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Contact Officer: Charles Howlett (01494) 724263

1.1 The next Annual Conference of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) will be held in October 2012.

1.2 It is usual for the Joint Committee to consider who should attend. In the current year, as has been customary, the Chairman and Superintendent were nominated, although in the event the Chairman was unable to attend due to ill health.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Chairman of the Joint Committee and the Superintendent be nominated to attend the 2012 ICCM Annual Conference.

Background Papers: None

CHILTERNS CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MEETING 24TH JANUARY 2012

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

**5.2. LIAISON MEETING WITH PERSONS TAKING SERVICES AND
FUNERAL DIRECTORS**

Contact Officer: Charles Howlett (01494) 724263

2.1 Liaison meetings have been held for many years on an annual basis. The meeting is normally in May, but in 2011 it was held on Tuesday 21st June to enable those attending to see the newly installed cremator filtration equipment. Members are asked to agree a date for the meeting in 2012.

RECOMMENDATION

That the next Liaison Meeting be held at the Crematorium at 6.45 p.m. on a date in 2012 be agreed at the meeting, to be preceded by refreshments at 6.00 p.m.

Background papers: None

CHILTERN CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MEETING 24TH JANUARY 2012

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

5.3. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS 2011

Contact Officer: Charles Howlett (01494) 724263

3.1 Service provision questionnaires are sent to the applicant for cremation for all cremations carried out. The majority of compliments, comments and complaints received come from this source. In 2011 from the 3,050 questionnaires sent out 245 were returned from people who were satisfied (some with added compliments) and 25 from people who were mostly satisfied but including comments about matters they thought could be improved. During the year 21 substantial complaints were received (compared to 10 the previous year). 'Substantial' is defined as either having been submitted in writing or, if verbal, considered being of sufficient gravity to warrant a reply from the Superintendent.

Changes proposed/made as result of comments

3.2 Any 'used' temporary cardboard ashes containers finding their way back into the Crematorium are destroyed immediately after the ashes have been taken out of them (to prevent them being used again with old labels left on), and extra checks are made before ashes are released from the office.

3.3 An additional checking procedure has been introduced before the ashes and commemoration information letters are printed to try to ensure they are correctly addressed.

3.4 A notice has been placed on the lecterns in both chapels reminding people taking the service of the need to project their voice and speak clearly, even in the Milton chapel where there is assistance from a public address system.

3.5 An email circulation has been sent to all funeral directors reminding them of the importance of observing the traffic light system, which indicates whether or not a funeral chapel is free, and explaining that if they do decide to pull up to the chapel entrance early to be aware of the need to keep noise levels down e.g. revving engines, banging car doors, loud talking, etc, to avoid disturbing a funeral service still in progress.

3.6 A recommendation has been made to the Joint Committee to allow extra funeral service time to be booked.

Actions taken in response to substantial complaints

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3.7 The following substantial complaints were received:-

Complaint 1: A person telephoned and complained that when she was visiting the Garden of Remembrance at the weekend there were dogs running around making a 'mess.'

Response: There is a notice at the gates which still says that only guide dogs are allowed, although in reality we have relaxed this rule. We explained that staff politely request that dogs are put on a lead when they are seen not to be, but at weekends in particular there are very few staff around and we have to rely on the public to cooperate.

Complaint 2: An applicant returned the service provision questionnaire commenting that she didn't get the version of the music she requested, played at the time she wanted it, and that the coffin wasn't carried into the chapel but was already in position on the catafalque when she arrived. She did however go on to write that the service went very well and was "appreciated by all."

Response: The coffin wasn't carried in because the family had arranged with the funeral director for it to be brought to the Crematorium and placed in position in advance of the service. The funeral director also said that the person seemed very upset/confused when the funeral arrangements were being made and, with this in mind and in view of her comments that overall she was very satisfied with the proceedings, the Superintendent decided it was probably better not to respond.

Complaint 3: A person wrote commenting that he had attended a number of funeral services over the last few months, in both chapels, and had difficulty in hearing. He suggested a notice be put on the lecterns reminding those taking the service of the need to project their voice. He also commented that he thought this was becoming more of a problem with family members giving a eulogy who were unused to and nervous about public speaking, and also emotional.

Response: The Superintendent took the gentleman up on his suggestion of a notice on the lecterns and wrote to tell him so, also explaining that both chapels have hard of hearing loops and that there is also a public address system in the Milton chapel, but not in the Hampden. He has heard back from the gentleman after he attended another funeral to say he was able to hear.

Complaint 4: A widow wrote complaining that the start of her husband's service was delayed because the funeral before was overrunning, and she thought the 45 minute time slots were not long enough.

Response: The Superintendent wrote and apologised, explaining that overrunning services are often something over which we have little control, and that because the Crematorium currently carries out a relatively large number of funerals extending the time to an hour was unfortunately not an option.

Complaint 5: An applicant wrote to say he was 99% satisfied with our services except for the 'grumpy' attitude of the chapel attendant when an

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admittedly last minute request was made to use an electrical socket to enable a piano keyboard to be played.

Response: The Superintendent wrote and apologised and explained that the chapel attendant said that at first he misunderstood and thought he was being asked for the audio visual equipment, which needs time to set up (and for which a charge is made), but admitted this didn't excuse his grumpy response.

Complaint 6: A person wrote to complain that the re-gilding on her stone memorial was not satisfactory, and that her pot of pansies had been 'thrown away' which she later retrieved from the bin.

Response: The Superintendent agreed that the re-gilding was unsatisfactory and arranged for it to be done again. The Superintendent also apologised about the plant pot, but explained that from time to time the grounds maintenance staff clear around the stone memorials, including throwing away any plants which are dead. However, any pots or other paraphernalia removed is placed on a hard standing beside the tap and bin area from where it can be retrieved by the owners if required.

Complaint 7: An applicant complained that there should be better facilities for wheelchairs; in particular to prevent them having to be stuck out in the aisle during a service. More space was also needed to be able to move around in the floral tribute area. The funeral service in question took place in the Hampden chapel.

Response: The Superintendent made enquiries of both the chapel attendant and the funeral director, but neither was able to recall any particular problem. The Superintendent wrote an apology, explaining that some of the pews had been specifically replaced with chairs when the chapel was refurbished in 2006 so that they could be put aside to enable a wheelchair to be accommodated, and he was sorry this hadn't happened on this occasion. He also explained that the floral tribute area is normally more than big enough, but regrettably a degree of overcrowding can occur when a very large number of people attend.

Complaint 8: A person telephoned to complain that other family members were accusing him of moving paraphernalia from a stone memorial, which he hadn't done!

Response: The Superintendent explained that the grounds maintenance staff do clear around the stone memorials from time to time (see complaint 6 above), and wrote to all members of the family concerned explaining this procedure and apologising if any misunderstandings had arisen as a result.

Complaint 9: An applicant complained that, in response to an inquiry, Crematorium office staff had advised that it was alright for children and babies to be brought to a funeral service, instead of referring the inquiry to the main family. Other members of the family had decided not to bring their children which caused upset, and the baby cried in the service.

Response: The Superintendent wrote and apologised if the Crematorium had unintentionally caused a problem, but explained that we were simply

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clarifying the position that as far as we are concerned children of any age can attend a funeral.

Complaint 10: A family ordered a web-cast of a funeral service but at the critical moment the equipment didn't work! Subsequently it transpired that the camera was faulty (and was later replaced under warranty).

Response: A letter of apology was sent and a donation of £100 to the family's chosen charity, the Betty Callaway Fund for Young Ice Dancers.

Complaint 11: A person complained by email about the shock she and other relatives had felt on opening our cardboard ashes container and finding the ashes contained inside in a paper bag secured with sticky tape. Was this "common procedure"?

Response: The Superintendent apologised for any distress caused but explained this container, which we describe quite openly as our 'temporary ashes container', is commonly used to transport ashes away from the Crematorium. Often when ashes are handed to families the funeral director will have transferred them into a 'proper' urn, but if still in our temporary container then we are heavily reliant on funeral directors describing how the ashes are contained within it.

Complaint 12: This was potentially the most serious complaint of the year in terms of the gravity of the Crematorium's error. Ashes were released to a funeral director in one of our temporary containers, who subsequently released it to the family, labelled with the correct name but also with another name label with a different name. The family did not discover this until they had travelled 400 miles to Scotland to disperse the ashes.

Response: On investigating this incident the Superintendent quickly discovered that one of the crematorium attendants had picked up the lid of a used box left lying on a worktop in the ashes room and very carelessly, without noticing the original label on one end, stuck a new label on the other end. Unfortunately no one subsequently noticed this in the Crematorium office or at the funeral directors.

Fortunately the Superintendent was able to discover a sequence of events which proved conclusively that there was absolutely no question the family had taken anything other than the correct ashes to Scotland. A full report was sent to the family, with profuse apologies, which they accepted.

Obviously with a mistake of this calibre we reviewed our procedures and it was agreed that in future any boxes coming back into the Crematorium will be destroyed as soon as the ashes are taken out of them, and extra checks are made before ashes are released from the office.

Complaint 13: A person on the waiting list for commemorative benches complained that it was taking a long time to work through the list and she had noticed there was a particular space that hadn't had a bench on it for several months.

Response: The Superintendent wrote a letter of apology and explained that due to the long term sickness absence of a key member of the office staff this matter could not be attended to for the time being.

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Complaint 14: An applicant complained that he had been advised by people at the back of the (Hampden) chapel that they couldn't hear properly, and also that the quality of the sound reproduction for the music was poor "i.e. base not adjusted."

Response: The Superintendent wrote apologising for the incident, explaining that there isn't a public address system in the Hampden chapel and there is a notice on the lectern advising this. Regarding the music, ironically the system had been renewed just the day before (replacing a 20 years old system) and although the chapel attendant was unable to recall a problem he suggested maybe he hadn't quite got used to the new settings.

Complaint 15: An applicant complained that some people had been unable to hear because the hard of hearing loop had not been switched on.

Response: The Superintendent wrote and apologised. The chapel attendant was aware of his error and had apologised at the time (hence the reason why the person knew).

Complaint 16: A funeral director complained about another funeral director deliberately blocking the entrance to the chapel by leaving his hearse parked under the porte cochere whilst the service he was conducting was taking place in the chapel, and his "totally unprofessional" response when asked to move it.

Response: This is a long running saga which goes back before the Milton chapel was built in 2005, when funeral directors who ignored the traffic light system and pulled up in front of the chapel before the previous funeral had finished could potentially cause a disturbance. The design of the Milton chapel entrance and the re-design of the Hampden chapel entrance has all but eliminated the chance of a disturbance occurring, but the old feuds simmer on. The Superintendent wrote a conciliatory but firm letter to the offending funeral director advising that if one of his funeral services was genuinely disturbed by a cortege pulling up prematurely then he would take the matter up with the funeral director concerned, but in the meantime his practice of taking unilateral action and using his hearse as a blocking mechanism must stop.

Complaint 17: A person telephoned to complain that, despite previous promises not to do so in future, "once again" we had removed his British Legion wooden remembrance cross from the rose bed before Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday.

Response: Inquiries revealed that the Ground's Supervisor had actually reminded his staff three weeks earlier not to move the crosses and the gentleman was advised that, although we were sorry his cross had been moved, this time we were not responsible.

Complaint 18: An applicant emailed complaining that at the committal the curtains weren't closed as she had expected, and that the music she had requested at the end of the service was delayed and didn't start playing until after she had left the chapel.

Response: The Superintendent's inquiries revealed that the decision not to close the committal curtains had been taken unilaterally by the minister.

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Regarding the music, although none of the 'officials' involved could remember it being delayed, the only possible explanation was that the funeral director had shown the family out relatively quickly at the end of the service, which the lady accepted in her response to the Superintendent's apology/explanation.

Complaint 19: A person complained that having received exemplary service on the day of the funeral service, when she returned the next day to scatter her father's ashes she felt we were unprepared for her arrival and found the attitude of the members of staff "completely inappropriate".

Response: The Superintendent telephoned the complainer to discuss what had happened. In essence it appeared largely to be a wrong judgement call on the part of the staff who, the lady felt, had been too 'talkative' in their efforts to ease the tension of the occasion, when she would have preferred more solemnity. The Superintendent apologised, and gave this feedback to the staff concerned.

Complaint 20: A person complained about the way she and her companions had been spoken to by the chapel attendant when they wished to enter the chapel before the start of a funeral service.

Response: The chapel attendants often have to politely advise mourners who drift into the chapel between services that it is traditional for everyone to wait until the appointed time and then follow in behind the coffin. In any event there are good reasons why it is better if mourners are not in the chapel at this point when they could witness clearing up tasks after the previous funeral and/or preparations for the next. In the case in question the cortege had just arrived and so everyone was about to go into the chapel anyway; there was certainly no intention to cause any offence and in his reply the Superintendent explained the procedure and expressed his regret for the incident and any misunderstanding which had arisen.

Complaint 21: A widower complained that a letter had been sent to him after his wife's funeral addressed 'Mrs' instead of 'Mr'.

Response: The letter in question about ashes and commemoration is generated automatically by the cremation administration system after a funeral, and the mistake was down to human error during the data input process. Unfortunately it has happened before. The Superintendent apologised and explained how it had occurred and that an additional check had been introduced to try to prevent a recurrence.

3.7 This item is included for information.

Background Papers: None

CHILTERN'S CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MEETING 24TH JANUARY 2012

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

5.4. ADDITIONAL FUNERAL SERVICE TIME

Contact Officer: Charles Howlett (01494) 724263

4.1 Increasingly requests are being received for additional service time i.e. 90 minutes instead of the normal 45 minutes. Many crematoria allow this and charge a fee for doing so.

4.2 Historically the policy at Chilterns has been not to allow additional service time because of the potential to restrict availability for cremation services, causing unacceptable delays between the time of death and the funeral. This was particularly pertinent before the Milton chapel was built, prior to which the Chilterns Crematorium had for many years been the busiest in the UK with only one funeral chapel. With the extension of the service times from thirty to forty five minutes when the Milton chapel opened in 2005 there was little consideration of needing even more time and so the policy remained unchanged. However, as has been reported since, during the intervening six years funerals are changing with a number of consequences, one of which is that even forty five minutes is sometimes not long enough.

4.3 In response to the level of requests being received the Superintendent has reviewed the situation and decided that with two chapels making more service times available there is no reason not to allow additional service time, with the proviso that the Superintendent be given the discretion to temporarily suspend bookings for additional time during periods of peak demand for cremation, as was similarly agreed when allowing the chapel to be used for burial services (Minute 21, meeting on 24th February 2010 refers).

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the Joint Committee allow the Crematorium chapels to be booked for additional funeral service time.**
- 2. A fee of £150.00 is charged for an additional 45 minutes.**
- 3. The Superintendent be given discretion to temporarily suspend bookings for additional funeral service time during periods of peak demand for cremation.**

Background Papers: None

CHILTERN CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

MEETING 24TH JANUARY 2012

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

5.5 MILTON FUNERAL CHAPEL: REPLACEMENT OF FLOOR

Contact Officer: Charles Howlett 01494 724263

5.1 At the meeting on 27th January 2011 an update report was submitted about the defect to the Milton chapel floor necessitating its replacement (Minute 32 refers). The contractor had accepted responsibility for replacing the floor, but the extent of the works and the amount of time needed to carry it out were not known. In particular the Joint Committee was concerned about potential loss of income if this was a lengthy period. It was stated that a further report would be submitted to the next meeting.

5.2 The work was planned for summer 2011 but at the time of the Joint Committee meeting a final decision had not been reached between the various parties involved as to the extent of the works to be carried out. Subsequently it was decided that it was possible to re-screed and lay a new tiled floor without also having to replace the heating pipes, and that the carpeted area would not be affected. This being the case then the closure period would be no longer than when all the defective woodwork on the underside of the walkways was overlaid in 2008 (about two months) which resulted in minimal, if any, loss of income.

5.3 In the event, despite persistent encouragement, the building contractor was unable to comply with the Crematorium's timing requirement i.e. that the work must be carried out during the summer months, and after much prevarication gave a start date of 16th October 2011 which had to be declined. The works are now planned for the summer of 2012.

5.4 In the meantime the remedial repairs carried out to the existing floor in summer 2010 continue to endure, although beginning to show signs of deterioration, and the condition of the floor has not caused any aesthetic or operational problems.

5.5 This report is included for information.

Background Papers: None

CHILTERNES CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE – 24 JANUARY 2012

REPORT OF THE TREASURER**6.1 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2011/12 TO 2015/16**

Contact Officers: Alison Howes (01494 732260) and Tina Pearce (01494 732233)

1. Details of the proposed Chilterns Crematorium Capital Programme covering the period 2011/12 to 2015/16 are shown in **Appendix 6.1**.
2. The following tables shows the proposed changes from the current approved Capital Programme position:-

	£
Current Approved Programme 2011/12 to 2014/15	5,036,135
<i>Underspend carried forward from 2010/11:-</i>	
Site Development	24,000
Schemes removed from programme or reduced provision	
Resurfacing Works	(102,800)
<i>Schemes added to programme or increased provision:-</i>	
Replacement Hearths	1,200
Relining cremators	98,760
CCTV	48,000
Abatement Project Approved Budget Adjustments over original estimates	(292,068)
Site Development	76,000
Proposed Programme 2011/12 to 2015/16	4,889,227

3. The following paragraphs give an overview of each of the capital projects included within the programme and the changes outlined above:-
 - a) Mercury Abatement and Heat Transfer/Recovery project

The project has moved into its 12 month warranty period with initial emission testing due imminently. The project is currently within approved budgets and will be the subject of a separate close out report by the Principal Engineer in due course.

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b) Relining Cremators

The rolling programme to replace the refractory bricks continues and the price increase reflects the current replacement cost of £33,500 plus VAT increased by 15% per annum in accordance with advice from the supplier.

c) Site Development

The consultancy costs have been rolled forward and the whole project value increased to take into account likely cost increases from the original feasibility study. The cost of this project within the programme is currently inclusive of VAT at 20%. Future VAT planning once the project progresses may negate a small amount of the VAT cost.

d) Roadway Resurfacing

The value placed in the programme last year was overstated and the costs have been reduced to better reflect the anticipated costs at this time.

e) CCTV

Following metal thefts at the Crematorium capital expenditure on a CCTV system was approved as part of a range of security measures. (Minute 10 of 21st June 2011)

RECOMMENDATION

That the Joint Committee agree the proposed Capital Programme for 2011/12 to 2015/2016.

Background Papers: None

Appendix 6.1

CHILTERNS CREMATORIUM

SCHEDULED CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

<u>ITEM</u>	Cost in Year Expenditure Incurred					Total Five year Cost Projection £
	2011/12 £	2012/13 £	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	
Relining Cremators (Gross)	40,200	46,230	53,160	61,140	70,310	271,040
CCTV	12,000	36,000	0	0	0	48,000
Replacement Hearth (Gross)	0	9,240	0	0	0	9,240
Second Chapel Project (Net)	0	20,547	0	0	0	20,547
Resurfacing/Structural Works (mixed)	0	47,200	0	0	0	47,200
Heating System (Gross)	4,951	21,600	0	0	0	26,551
Cremation Abatement & Heat Recovery System (Gross) Consultancy (Gross)	316,649	150,000	0	0	0	466,649
Site Development	24,000	672,000	3,304,000	0	0	4,000,000
TOTAL	£397,800	£1,002,817	£3,357,160	£61,140	£70,310	£4,889,227

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6.2 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES

Contact Officers: Alison Howes (01494 732260) and Tina Pearce (01494 732233)

1. The recommended Fees and Charges to come into effect from 1 April 2012 are shown in **Appendix 6.2** together with the current year charges for comparison purposes. An across the board increase in the region of 2% has been applied to the charges.
2. Last year the main cremation fee (excluding organists' fees) was increased from £450 to £470 (a 4.4% increase). From the table below it can be seen that the Chilterns Crematorium fee remains lower than surrounding crematoria, though West Herts fee was not that much greater. An increase of 3.2% to £485 is being proposed for 2012/13. At this level the fee will remain the lowest when compared with all neighbouring authorities, even using the current year values.
3. The table below shows the current year fees for Chiltern and neighbouring crematoria for comparison purposes, the four crematoria immediately below Chiltern in the table represent our main competitors.

The national average cremation fee in 2011 was £538 with the average total fee being £545. In 2011 Chilterns fee was ranked 225 out of 261 in the fee league table.

Crematorium	2011/2012 Fee £
Chilterns	470
West Herts	484
Slough	575
Ruislip	520
Oxford	660
Reading	500
Bracknell	609
Milton Keynes	610
Luton	575

4. The balances continue to accumulate and consideration of the Capital Programme including the mercury abatement project and the potential of additional capital requirements for any future strategic developments requires the Joint Committee to be mindful of these projects when agreeing the fee level. An increase of 3.2% to £485 is the minimum increase recommended to the Joint Committee. The impact of fee increases on income levels compared to 2011/12 revised figures, assuming the number of cremations at 3,000 is shown in the table below:-

Fee	Additional Income over 2011/12 revised levels
£475	15,000
£480	30,000
£485	45,000
£490	60,000
£495	75,000

RECOMMENDATION

That the Joint Committee determine the fees and charges as shown in Appendix 6.2 and in particular consider and approve the level of the main cremation fee.

Background Papers: None

CHILTERNs CREMATORIUM**Table of Fees and Charges****1 April 2012**

		Present Fee from 1 April 2011 £	Recommended Fee From 1 April 2012 £
	Cremation		
	For the cremation of the body of:-		
(i)	a foetus born dead before twenty four weeks gestation	29.00	30.00
(ii)	additional foetus committed for cremation at the same time, per foetus (9.00 a.m. Chapel time only)	10.00	10.00
(iii)	a stillborn child or child/person whose age at the time of death was less than 18 years	41.00	42.00
(iv)	a person whose age at the time of death was 18 years or more	470.00	485.00
	For the cremation of body parts of:-		
(i)	a foetus born dead before twenty four weeks gestation	29.00	30.00
(ii)	a stillborn child or child/person whose age at the time of death was less than 18 years	41.00	42.00
(iii)	any person who was cremated at the Chilterns Crematorium	41.00	42.00
(iv)	a person who was not cremated at the Chilterns Crematorium whose age at the time of death was 18 years or more	65.00	67.00
	These fees include the Medical Referee's fee, use of the Chapel, provision of recorded music, the temporary storage of the ashes for a period not exceeding one month, the dispersal of ashes in the Garden of Remembrance, or provision of a temporary polythene container for ashes and a certified copy of the Registrar's Certificate for Cremation. Note: Certificates of the Cremation Society and the Cremation Friendly Society will be accepted at their encashable value.		

Appendix 6.2

Disposal of Cremation Ashes		
Temporary deposit of ashes (per month after the first month)	10.90	11.25
Dispersal of ashes in Garden of Remembrance when cremation has taken place elsewhere	28.45	29.30
Packing and despatch of ashes	*11.45	*11.80
Miscellaneous		
Use of Coffin Waiting for 24 hours or part thereof	21.85	22.50
Use of Wheeled Bier	6.60	6.80
Additional Service Time (subject to chapel availability)		150.00
Burial Service (subject to chapel availability)		200.00
Memorial Service – weekdays (subject to chapel availability)		200.00
Memorial Service (Saturday mornings only)	98.40	100.00
Webcast of Service	*50.00	*51.50
Audio Visual recording of Service on a DVD	*40.00	*41.20
- each additional copy		*16.00
Audio recording of Service on a CD	*35.00	*36.05
- each additional copy		*13.00
Use of Audio Visual equipment	*50.00	*51.50
Inscriptions in the Book of Remembrance		
Minimum 2 Line entry	*30.30	*31.20
5 Line entry	*55.15	*56.85
8 Line entry	*80.55	*82.50
Additional lines, per line	*15.15	*15.60
Miniature Book of Remembrance		
Purchase of Book, postage and Minimum 2 Line entry	*42.85	*44.05
5 Line entry	*55.20	*56.65
8 Line entry	*67.55	*69.25
Additional lines, per line	*4.10	*4.20
Miniature Book of Remembrance - Additional Inscriptions		
Minimum 2 Line entry	*15.15	*15.50
5 Line entry	*27.50	*28.10
8 Line entry	*39.85	*40.70
Additional Lines, per line	*4.10	*4.20

Appendix 6.2

Memorial Card		
Purchase of Card, postage and Minimum 2 Line entry	*15.15	*15.50
5 Line entry	*27.50	*28.10
8 Line entry	*39.85	*40.70
Additional lines, per line	*4.10	*4.20
Emblems, Badges, etc.		
Regimental badge or crest or floral emblems	*48.25	*59.70
Full Coat of Arms	*62.00	*73.85
Leather Memorial Plaques		
For the Right to a Leather Memorial Plaque in the Chapel of Remembrance for a period of 3 years	*51.30	*52.85
For the Right to a Leather Memorial Plaque in the Chapel of Remembrance for a period of 5 years	*85.55	*88.10
Provision and fixing of a Leather Memorial Plaque	*29.05	*39.90
Replacement Plaque for an additional inscription	*29.05	*39.90
Garden Memorials		
Provision & installation of Memorial Garden Seat	*475.30	*489.55
Plaque for Memorial Garden Seat up to 70 letters	*56.65	*58.35
Plaque for Memorial Garden Seat up to 115 letters	*98.35	*101.30
Right to have the seat in Garden of Remembrance for a five year period	*160.60	*165.40
Right to have the seat in Garden of Remembrance for a ten year period	*321.10	*330.75
For the Right to a Commemorative Plaque on the kerbing of a Rose Bed for a period of 3 years	*51.30	*52.85
For the Right to a Commemorative Plaque on the kerbing of a Rose Bed for a period of 5 years	*85.55	*88.10
Provision and fixing of plaques	*20.90	*21.55
Replacement Plaque for an additional inscription	*20.90	*21.55

Appendix 6.2

Stone Memorial Plaques		
For the Right to a Stone Memorial Plaque on a base for a period of 5 years	*93.85	*96.65
For the Right to a Stone Memorial Plaque on a base for a period of 10 years	*187.60	*193.25
Provision of a 7" x 12" inscribed plaque fixed on a sandstone base	*199.30	*205.30
Provision of a 9" x 12" inscribed plaque fixed on a sandstone or granite base	*289.15	*297.80
Provision of a 9" x 12" inscribed plaque fixed on a renovated sandstone or granite base (subject to availability)	*227.35	*234.15
Provision of a 9" x 18" inscribed plaque fixed on a sandstone or granite base	*393.65	*405.45
Provision of a 9" x 18" inscribed plaque fixed on a renovated sandstone or granite base (subject to availability)	*311.25	*320.60
Inscribed motif on a 9" x 12" or 10" x 18" plaque	*54.80	*56.45
Replacement 7" x 12" inscribed plaque for an additional inscription	*132.90	*136.90
Replacement 9" x 12" inscribed plaque for an additional inscription	*147.65	*152.10
Replacement 9" x 18" inscribed plaque for an additional inscription	*196.85	*202.75
Porcelain photo plaque with one portrait	*110.70	*114.00
Porcelain photo plaque with two portraits	*162.50	*167.40
Porcelain photo plaque with three portraits	*184.45	*190.00
Administration fee and provision of foundation slab for new application by monumental mason	*30.80	*31.70
Administration fee for additional work by monumental mason	*24.60	*25.35
* VAT to be added to all these figures		

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6.3 REVENUE BUDGET REVISED 2011/12 AND ORIGINAL 2012/13

Contact Officers: Alison Howes (01494 732260) and Tina Pearce (01494 732233)

1. This report sets out the details of the Chilterns Crematorium Revenue Budget for 2011/12 Revised and 2012/13 Original. The detailed Revenue Budget is attached at **Appendix 6.3**.
2. The table below shows the summary comparison between the revised and original budget for 2011/12 and the original budget for 2012/13.

	2011/12 Original £	2011/12 Revised £	Movement £	2012/13 Original £	Movement £
Revenue Expenditure	782,480	809,525	27,045	828,030	45,550
Income	(1,557,880)	(1,573,870)	(15,990)	(1,628,740)	(70,860)
Revenue (Surplus)/Deficit	(775,400)	(764,345)	11,055	(800,710)	(25,310)
Less Capital Expenditure	1,298,355	397,800	(900,555)	1,002,817	(295,538)
(Surplus)/Deficit for year	522,955	(366,545)	(889,500)	202,107	(320,848)

3. The revised budget for 2011/12 shows an estimated revenue surplus, before capital expenditure, of £764,345 compared to an original projected surplus of £775,400 i.e. a net increase in costs of £11,055 for the year.
4. The original budget for 2012/13 shows an estimated revenue surplus, before capital expenditure; of £800,710 compared to an original base position in 2011/12 of a projected surplus of £775,400 i.e. a net decrease in cost of £25,310 over the previous year's base.
5. The following table shows the budget variations that make up these increases.

	2011/12 Revised £	2012/13 Original £
Original Budget 2011/12 – Surplus	(775,400)	(775,400)
Add Additional Expenditure:-		
Maintenance of Buildings (note 6a)		25,000
Security (note 6b)	25,300	
Waste Disposal (note 6c)		2,200
Energy Costs (note 6d)		15,600
Rates (note 6e)	14,350	33,500
Consultant Fees (note 6f)	9,350	
Add Reduction in Income:-		
Book of Remembrance	3,980	3,480
Reduction in interest received (note 6g)	10,200	3,000

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Less Savings / Reduced Expenditure:-		
Reduction on Maintenance of Cremators (note 6h)	(15,900)	(16,900)
External Audit Fees (note 6i)	(9,400)	(8,900)
Books and Publications (note 6j)	(2,620)	
Less Increase in Income:-		
Increase in cremations (note 6k).	(23,500)	(68,500)
Balance of other minor variances	(705)	(13,790)
Revised Budget 2011/12 – Surplus	(764,345)	
Original Budget 2012/13 – Surplus		(800,710)

6. The following assumptions and points should be noted:-
- a) Various Internal and External painting and decoration works for Hampden Chapel, offices and Bungalows;
 - b) Security cost in respect of metal thefts;
 - c) Waste disposal includes the new ongoing costs of disposing of factivate from the abatement process;
 - d) Energy costs are subject to significant increases as the current contracts come to and end;
 - e) Rates have increased due to the removal of transitional relief, the valuation is subject to appeal but the issue is a national one;
 - f) Consultant fees includes a one off fee in respect of the structural survey report still being progressed;
 - g) Investment interest is governed by the continuing suppression of the bank base rate which remains at an all time low, current rates are not anticipated to make any significant improvement until 2015/16;
 - h) Maintenance of cremators has reduced due to removal of the cost of factivate and waste disposal. Servicing costs have been reduced initially due to the works carried out under the capital project;
 - i) External Audit fees have reduced significantly now the Crematorium has returned to Small Body status;
 - j) Service book replacement has been deferred to 2012/13 as they have not required replacement in the current year;
 - k) Cremation numbers have been increased to 3000 from 2950 for both years, and a fee increase for 2012/13 of 3.2%
5. Capital expenditure has been adjusted in accordance with the rolling nature of the projects and changes to the VAT liability.
6. For information the following table shows the forecast (surplus)/deficit allocation by Authority:-

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District Council	Actual Balance 31.3.2011 £	Apportionment 2011/12 Revised Budget £	Estimated Balance 31.3.2012 £	Apportionment 2012/13 Original Budget £	Estimated Balance 31.3.2013 £
Aylesbury Vale	(674,290)	(108,619)	(782,909)	59,891	(723,018)
Chiltern	(718,427)	(99,597)	(818,024)	54,916	(763,108)
Wycombe	(1,007,484)	(158,329)	(1,165,813)	87,300	(1,078,513)
Totals	(2,400,201) Surplus	(366,545) Surplus	(2,766,746) Surplus	202,107 Deficit	(2,564,639) Surplus

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Joint Committee approve the 2011/2012 Revised and 2012/2013 Original revenue budgets, subject to any revisions it wishes to make.

Background Papers: None

Appendix 6.3

CHILTERN CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE REVENUE BUDGET - REVISED 2011/2012 ORIGINAL 2012/2013				
Actuals 2010/11	Original Budget 2011/12	Expenditure	Revised Budget 2011/12	Original Budget 2012/13
£	£		£	£
		Employees		
356,278	365,000	Salaries, Wages & Associated Expenses	365,000	367,500
33,236	32,000	Medical Referees - Fees & Expenses	33,500	34,000
0	300	Organists' Fees	300	300
173	0	Child care Voucher Scheme	190	190
		Premises Related Expenses		
15,106	27,000	Maintenance of Buildings	25,000	52,000
2,629	3,100	Security	28,400	4,300
3,550	4,000	Waste Disposal	3,600	6,200
11,245	21,000	Maintenance of Grounds	21,000	16,000
29,054	35,900	Maintenance of Cremators, Plant & Equipment	20,000	19,000
11,474	12,960	Electric	13,620	16,050
34,455	35,640	Gas	35,640	48,150
74,181	76,500	Rates	90,850	110,000
1,203	800	Water	1,000	1,000
7,827	20,000	Furniture , Fittings & IT	20,000	6,100
2,889	3,500	Cleaning Materials & Equipment	3,000	3,000
11,844	12,500	Insurance	10,260	10,540
		Supplies and Services		
0	500	Asset Valuations	500	0
1,500	3,500	Consultants Fees	12,850	2,000
2,053	1,000	Vending Stock & Maintenance	1,000	1,030
1,206	1,100	Protective Clothing	1,100	1,100
3,680	3,700	Printing, Stationery	4,000	5,500
331	2,950	Books & Publications	330	3,000
3,109	2,800	Postages	3,100	3,200
3,018	2,700	Telephones	3,000	3,100
1,030	1,060	Conference Expenses	260	1,060
2,420	2,000	Course / seminars	1,000	2,000
669	660	Subscriptions	660	680
774	790	Registrations - EPA/ Data Protection	775	780
193	200	Open Day / Reception Charges	240	250
82	160	General Advertising	100	100
450	1,500	Refunds cdc avdc wdc crem costs	940	970
10,563	10,800	Plaques	10,800	11,000
3,501	3,500	Urns & Caskets	3,500	3,600
15,064	12,500	Book of Remembrance	15,000	15,000
1,343	1,000	Memorial Seats	1,000	1,000
9,372	12,000	Wesley Music Service	10,000	10,000
737	200	Sundry Expenses	200	200
9,400	11,900	External Audit Fees	2,500	3,000
37,221	27,000	VAT Provision	35,000	35,000
735	760	Bank Charges	800	800
27,000	28,000	Chiltern DC Recharges	29,510	29,330
96,811	0	Capital Charges (depn)	0	0
827,408	782,480	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	809,525	828,030

Appendix 6.3

CHILTERNS CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE REVENUE BUDGET - REVISED 2011/2012 ORIGINAL 2012/2013				
Actuals 2010/11	Original Budget 2011/12	Income	Revised Budget 2011/12	Original Budget 2012/13
£	£		£	£
		Fees & Charges		
1,358,291	1,386,500	Cremations	1,410,000	1,455,000
6,619	6,180	Coffin Waiting	6,180	6,300
1,115	2,500	Audio Visual Media	2,000	2,500
37,369	37,700	Commemorative Plaques leather/stone	37,700	38,450
43,525	39,650	Memorial Rose	40,400	41,200
34,379	33,480	Book of Remembrance inc cards/books	29,500	30,000
125	0	Telephone Costs Recovered	0	0
414	250	Carriage & Post	400	400
5,365	4,000	Miscellaneous Income	9,700	9,700
		Other Income		
1,225	900	Donations	1,350	1,350
12,461	43,000	Bank & Other Interest	32,800	40,000
1,229	1,180	Vending	1,300	1,300
2,541	2,540	Rent	2,540	2,540
1,504,659	1,557,880	TOTAL INCOME	1,573,870	1,628,740
(677,251)	(775,400)	NET COST OF SERVICE - (Surplus)/Deficit	(764,345)	(800,710)
96,811	0	Asset Management Reserve	0	0
531,560	1,298,355	Capital Expenditure funded from Revenue	397,800	1,002,817
(242,502)	522,955	ESTIMATED (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT FOR YEAR	(366,545)	202,107
		Distribution to Constituent Authority Accounts Pro-rata to no. of cremations in each district:		
(71,861)	161,504	Aylesbury Vale D.C.	(108,619)	59,891
(65,892)	144,097	Chiltern D.C.	(99,597)	54,916
(104,748)	217,354	Wycombe D.C.	(158,329)	87,300
(242,502)	522,955		(366,545)	202,107

Item 6.4

6.4 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Contact Officers: Alison Howes (01494 732260) and Tina Pearce (01494 732233)

1. The purpose of this report is to review the financial position of the Chilterns Crematorium in the medium term from 2013/14 to 2015/16.
2. The following assumptions have been made in arriving at the forecast figures:-
 - a) a 2% inflation factor has been applied each year to both expenditure and income items
 - b) interest rates are assumed to rise over the period from 1% in 2012/13 to 3.3% by 2015/16
 - c) the only capital expenditure factored into the forecasts is that currently shown in the proposed Capital Programme.
3. The following tables show the forecast position for the next three years:-

	2013/14 Forecast £	2014/15 Forecast £	2015/16 Forecast £
Revenue Expenditure	834,649	851,342	868,368
Income	(1,639,515)	(1,660,925)	(1,729,984)
Revenue (Surplus)/Deficit	(804,866)	(809,583)	(861,616)
Less Capital Expenditure	3,357,160	61,140	70,310
(Surplus)/Deficit for year	2,552,294 Deficit	(748,443) Surplus	(791,306) Surplus

Projected Overall Financial Position				
Year	Balance B/Fwd	Revenue Surplus	Capital Expenditure	Balance C/Fwd
	£	£	£	£
2013/14	(2,564,639)	(804,866)	3,357,160	(12,345)
2014/15	(12,345)	(809,583)	61,140	(760,788)
2015/16	(760,788)	(861,616)	70,310	(1,552,094)

4. From the above tables it can be seen that although there are currently significant balances held should the site development project come to fruition there is a potential for funding to be extremely tight based on the current cost projections in 2013/14, however at this stage this merely highlights that funds whilst significant will quickly be re-invested if the project proceeds.
5. The Joint Committee is in a strong financial position but in considering this report Members will need to be mindful of the long term financial strategy and future development opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Joint Committee consider and note the Medium Term Financial Strategy forecast.

Background Papers: None

