

MINUTES of the Meeting of the
CHILTERN CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE
held on **21 JUNE 2012**
at **CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

PRESENT:

Councillor	M R Smith	Chiltern District Council	- Chairman
Councillor	N M Rose	Chiltern District Council	

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors B Roberts (Aylesbury Vale District Council), D Thompson (Aylesbury Vale District Council), D Carroll (Wycombe District Council) and Ms K S Wood (Wycombe District Council).

1 QUORUM

In light of the absence of four Members of the Joint Committee, the meeting was inquorate. Due to the business under discussion, namely the Statement of Accounts and Risk Management Strategy and the timescales involved, it was agreed that the meeting proceed on an informal basis with any determinations being recommendations to the next meeting of the Chilterns Crematorium Joint Committee.

Note: Councillor M Smith presided as Chairman for the meeting.

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 24 January 2012 would be agreed at the next meeting.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4 SERVICE PLAN 2012-2013

Members considered the Crematorium Service Plan for 2012/13. After noting in particular the key projects that had taken place during the previous year, and those that would continue into the following year, Members

RECOMMENDED –

That the report be noted.

5 ADDITIONAL FUNERAL SERVICE TIME

At the Joint Committee meeting held on 24 January 2012 it was agreed to allow the Crematorium chapels to be booked for additional funeral service time for a fee of £150. In light of concern that demand for additional funeral time may impact on other bookings the Superintendent was given discretion to temporarily suspend bookings for additional service time if required. Members also requested that a review of the fee be undertaken at a forthcoming meeting.

Members noted that 10 bookings for additional service time had been made, and that these had not had a significant impact on booking availability. The Superintendent had therefore not found it necessary to suspend bookings for additional time.

RECOMMENDED –

That with the proviso that the Superintendent retains the discretion to temporarily suspend the availability of ‘additional time’ bookings, the fee charged for an additional 45 minutes remain at £150.00 until the next annual review of fees and charges.

6 DISABILITY ACCESS SURVEY

At the Chiltern Disability Focus Group meeting held on 12 March 2012, comments were made about access issues at the Crematorium. Following the meeting Nigel McAlister, a member of the Group, offered to assist in carrying out a survey. The Superintendent accepted the offer and a survey took place on 30 April 2012.

Members considered the report from the access survey. A number of suggestions would be implemented immediately. However, other suggestions would require further investigation to establish feasibility and costs. Some suggestions would require more detailed consideration because they would have significant financial implications and would require advanced planning.

Members were pleased to note the positive comments regarding staff and in particular their helpful attitude. As such, it was suggested that Members' thanks be expressed to the Crematorium staff, and also to Nigel McAlister for his input into the access survey. It was also suggested that Councillor M Smith send a letter to Nigel McAlister expressing thanks for his input into the Crematorium access survey.

RECOMMENDED –

That the report be noted.

7 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2012/13

In light of the meeting being inquorate, and the requirement for the completion and submission of an annual return which needed to be approved by the relevant body by 30 June 2012. The recommendations, as detailed in the report, were agreed by the Joint Committee, with absent Members responding electronically prior to the meeting, to enable the Small Bodies Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2012 to be approved and signed by the Chairman of the Joint Committee, the Clerk and Treasurer.

The Audit Commission was consulting on the appointment of external auditors for 2012/12 – 2017/18, and Mazars LLP had been awarded the grouping in Buckinghamshire.

It was advised at the meeting that the audit would be carried out under the Audit Commission's limited assurance audit approach. In line with the previous year the audit work would continue to be carried out remotely via the Small Bodies Annual Return and supporting documents. The audit fee for the Joint Committee for 2011/12 audit was anticipated to be £2,500.

Members considered the Small Bodies Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2012, which comprised of the following sections:

- Section 1 - Accounting Statements
- Section 2 – Annual Governance Statement
- Section 3 – External Auditor's certificate and opinion
- Section 4 – Annual Internal Audit report

The Joint Committee then noted the income and expenditure, balance sheet and cashflow for 2011/12, and the General Fund balance of £2.9 million as at 31 March 2012. It was agreed that the retention of the accumulated balance by the Joint Committee was necessary to meet the scheduled future capital investment.

In response to a question it was advised that the Crematorium's asset revaluation was carried out every 3 years. The most recent revaluation which took place on 1 April 2011 took into account the abatement work. It was also noted that the apportionment between constituent authorities was calculated on the basis of the total number of cremations to derive from each district.

RESOLVED –

- 1. That the Joint Committee, including those Members responding electronically, raise no objection to the appointment of Mazars LLP as the appointed auditor for future audits 2012/13 – 2017/18.**
- 2. That the Small Bodies Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2012 be approved and signed by the Chairman of the Joint Committee, the Clerk and Treasurer, following the agreement of the Joint Committee, including those Members responding electronically.**
- 3. That the Joint Committee, including those Members responding electronically, agree for the accumulated revenue surplus to be retained by the Joint Committee for future capital investment.**

8 57TH ANNUAL REPORT

The 57th Annual Report would be considered at the next meeting.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

Arrangements for risk management were in place at the Crematorium and these followed the policies and protocols of the lead authority. The Joint Committee last considered the Risk Management Strategy of the lead authority in February 2010. However, the lead authority had reviewed and updated its Risk Management Strategy in October 2011.

As such, the Joint Committee was required to formally adopt the updated strategy. In light of the meeting being inquorate and the urgent need ensure that the updated strategy was adopted. It was

RESOLVED –

That the Joint Committee, including those Members responding electronically, formally adopt the updated Risk Management Strategy of the lead authority.

10 SITE SEARCH: AYLESBURY CREMATORIUM

In light of the meeting being inquorate it was considered appropriate for the private report, Site Search: Aylesbury Crematorium, to be considered at the next meeting when representatives from the other partner authorities were present.

11 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

A further meeting would be arranged to enable the Joint Committee to consider the deferred items, and to enable the resolutions and recommendations of this meeting to be received and agreed.

Following the meeting and in light of Members' availability the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 18 July at 4.00pm (Chiltern District Council).

The meeting ended at 5.03 pm