

**CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL
AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL
WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

MINUTES of the Meeting of the
CHILTERN CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE
held on **29 JANUARY 2018**

PRESENT: Councillor M Smith - Chairman
H Mordue - Vice Chairman

Councillors: P Martin
G Peart

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors D Barnes and J Ward

52 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 19 June 2017 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

54 FEE & CHARGES 2018/19

Members received a report to review the fees and charges to come into effect from 1 April 2018. The recommended fees and charges together with the current year charges for comparison purposes were at Appendix 1.

RESOLVED:

- **that the fees and charges as shown in Appendix 1 and in particular the level of the main adult cremation fee be approved.**

55 PRICING STRUCTURE

Members considered a report of the fees charged for babies and children, for cremation only and the first funeral of the day. It was noted that a survey of twenty neighbouring crematoria revealed that the majority of the crematoria no longer charged cremation fees for babies and children. For hospital arranged cremations it was agreed to continue to charge a reduced fee to cover the additional administrative work that came with these cremations. It

was proposed that the first funeral of the day price be reduced and a new cremation only fee be introduced to help address funeral poverty.

The Committee **RESOLVED** that:

- 1. the present pricing structure be amended with immediate effect in order**
 - **that a fee no longer be charged for babies and children whose age at the time of death was less than 18 years; and**
 - **that the fee for hospital arranged babies' cremations be retained.**
- 2. in line with national funeral trends to help address funeral poverty and an increasingly competitive environment an early morning cremation fee of £475 and a 'cremation only' fee of £358 be introduced with immediate effect.**

56 BIERTON CREMATORIUM STAFFING

The Committee considered a report seeking approval to appoint staff for the Bierton Crematorium earlier than initially anticipated to enable staff to be fully trained in their duties and certified to operate the cremator. The approved staffing structure for Bierton Crematorium was at Appendix 1.

RESOLVED:

- **that the crematorium attendants for Bierton Crematorium be appointed in May 2018 to give sufficient time for the necessary training and certification for operating the cremator.**

57 BUDGET REPORT 2018/19

Members considered a report detailing the forecast outturn for the current year and the proposed Chilterns Crematorium Revenue Budget for 2018/19. The impact that the Bierton Crematorium would have on the budget was unknown at present but by the time the 2019/20 budget was prepared officers would be in a better position to set a realistic budget for the operation. The report set out the following assumptions which included but were not limited to, the anticipated changes around staffing costs, and the fact that there was a predicted increase in the wholesale energy cost of between 12-14% once the utility fixed contracts were renewed at the end of 2018. The Committee were advised that there was a need to maintain a prudent level of reserves for the reasons set out in the report.

Members agreed that the Constitution would need to be revisited and an updated version brought before the Committee prior to the opening of the Bierton Crematorium.

RESOLVED:

- 1. that the Revenue Budget for 2018/19 be approved to yield a revenue surplus of £1,022,200; and**
- 2. that the capital expenditure of £4,127,330 be approved.**

58 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Members considered the proposed 5 year capital programme (including the forecast outturn for 2017/18), as well as an overview of the major projects in the coming year and anticipated spend up to 2021/22 at Appendix 1.

Members enquired as to the life span of cremators and it was noted that cremators had a life span of 30 years, and that the cremators at Chilterns Crematorium were 20 years old.

RESOLVED:

- that the proposed Capital Programme for 2017/18 to 2021/22 appended to the report at Appendix 1 be approved.**

59 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The report set out the forecast medium term financial position of the Joint Committee's activities to deliver its overall aims and objectives over a three year period. Assumptions were outlined in paragraph 3 and included the prudent expectation of a reduction in annual cremations once the other crematoriums were in operation, although this would be kept under review. The report also set out the risks in the medium term which included the demand of the new facility, demand on cremations generally and other potential capital costs in addition to those identified.

RESOLVED:

- that the Medium Term Financial Strategy forecast be noted.**

60 SERVICE PLAN 2018-2019

Members received an update on the service plan for 2017-18 and considered the proposed plan for 2018-19. The Crematorium Service Plan was at Appendix 1 and set out the key objectives of the crematorium, the key objectives and achievements over the last 12 months, as well as the key objectives for 2018-19 and the next 3 years.

RESOLVED:

1. that the Crematorium Service Plan for 2018–2019 attached to the report at Appendix 1 be approved.

61 COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS 2017

The report outlined details of the complaints received in 2017 and how they were resolved. For all cremations, a questionnaire is sent to an applicant for cremation and the analysis of the questionnaire results for 2017 was at Appendix 1. Recurring complaints received related to car parking provision at the Crematorium; it was hoped that the opening of the Bierton Crematorium would alleviate this issue but this would be kept under review. It was reported that the number of complaints received about the microphones had decreased. Members enquired as to whether the appropriate signage was in place to support people using equipment and it was confirmed that the appropriate signage was in place.

RESOLVED:

1. that the report for information be noted.

62 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 and description is indicated under the Minute heading.

63 CREMATORIUM STAFFING

By virtue of paragraphs 1, 2, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

Paragraph 1 – Information relating to any individual

Paragraph 2 – Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual

Paragraph 4 – Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority

The Committee received a report seeking approval to increase the number of hours of the post holder referred to in the report. The approved staffing structure was at Appendix 1.

RESOLVED:

1. that the post holder at the Chilterns Crematorium be increased from two to three days a week (from 16 up to 24 hours) for the reasons outlined in the report.

64 BIERTON CREMATORIUM PROJECT UPDATE REPORT

By virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

The Committee received a report providing an update on the Bierton Crematorium and risk register.

RESOLVED:

- **That the report be noted.**

The meeting ended at 5.11 pm