

CHESTERFIELD AND DISTRICT JOINT CREMATORIUM COMMITTEE**Monday, 18th December, 2017**

Present:-

Councillor Ritchie (Chair)

Councillors Gordon
KerryCouncillors Lilley
Murray-Carr

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

**16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations were received.

17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillors Austen and Bagley.

**18 MINUTES OF THE JOINT CREMATORIUM COMMITTEE HELD ON 18
SEPTEMBER 2017**

Members enquired as to when an update on the vacant Bereavement Services Manager post was to be provided to the Committee.

The Assistant Director – Commercial Services advised members that the post had now been filled following interviews that took place on 8 December.

The Committee noted that an early stage investigation carried out by Shirebrook Town Council into the plausibility of it providing cremation services, had concluded that this was not an option to be pursued at present.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Minutes of the previous meeting be amended to show Councillor Gordon as in attendance.
- 2) That the Minutes of the Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee on 18 September 2017 be approved as a true record, subject to noting the above amendment, and signed by the Chair.

19 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**RESOLVED –**

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting of the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

20 CHESTERFIELD CREMATORIUM FEES AND CHARGES 2018/19

The Assistant Director – Commercial Services presented a report recommending for approval a proposed increase in the Crematorium fees and charges for 2018/19.

The report provided a detailed service analysis, which included a benchmarking exercise with other local authorities across Derbyshire. The review identified that Chesterfield Crematorium had the second lowest basic fee of the nine crematoria that were looked at.

The Committee was informed of the financial pressure that the Crematorium is anticipated to face in 2018/19, including a 36 per cent rise in Business Rates and a potential future increase in repair costs to the Cremators.

Councillor Lilley moved that the recommended increase to the Crematorium fees and charges for 2018/19 be revised to the minimum level required to run the service without profit, and ensure the lowest costs to families of the bereaved.

The motion was not seconded.

Councillor Gordon moved that the recommended increase to the Crematorium fees and charges for 2018/19 be revised to 3.7 per cent, this figure being the minimum level required to account for the anticipated cost pressures noted in paragraph 5.1 of the officer's report.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Lilley and was carried forward to a formal vote of the Committee.

The Committee voted three to two against approving the proposed motion.

RESOLVED –

1. That the 2018/19 Fees and Charges as set out at Appendix 2 to the officer's report, be approved.

REASON FOR DECISION –

To secure sufficient funding to maintain high standards of service for the bereaved.

21 RE-ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC

That after consideration of an item containing exempt information, the public be re-admitted to the meeting.

22 ESTIMATES OF REVENUE EXPENDITURE FOR YEARS ENDING 31 MARCH 2018 ONWARDS

The Deputy Chief Accountant presented the Committee's revenue estimate for 2017/18 to 2020/2021.

The following points were outlined in the report:

- The revised forecast for 2017/18 and explanations for significant variances, resulting in an expected operating deficit of £45,110.
- Estimates for 2018/19, including an estimated surplus of £571,745 reported.
- Medium Term Forecasts for 2019/20 and 2020/21.
- The six reserves of the Joint Committee.
- The proposed re-distribution to constituent authorities.

It was noted that the wording in the first two bullet points in paragraph 4.1 of the officer's report should read as:

- The January 2018 fee increase.
- No increase in fees and charges from January 2019.

RESOLVED –

1. That the revenue estimates be approved, subject to the approval of the Fees and Charges.
2. That the Capital schemes detailed in paragraphs 3.4 and 6.7 of the report, be approved.
3. That pursuant to Minute No. 19 (Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee, 2016/17) approval is given to re-distribute funds to the total of £511,745 to the Constituent Authorities for 2017/18.
4. That the planned use of reserves detailed in section 6.0 be approved.

REASON FOR DECISION –

To enable the Crematorium to set a balanced budget and maintain adequate reserves for 2017/18 and in future years.

23 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED –

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting of the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

24 BEREAVEMENT SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT

The Assistant Director – Commercial Services presented a report on matters relating to the operation of the Crematorium. Information on cremations carried out during 2017/18, together with comparisons and trends from previous years was provided.

The report informed the Committee that the cremators are now in their seventh year, and that discussions had taken place to determine different potential future options for the repair and maintenance of the Cremators.

Members were made aware of two notable absences of sickness leave within the service. In order to provide cover and support over the traditionally busy winter period, the contract of the Seasonal Gardener had been amended and the position of a Bereavement Services Assistant (Clerical) post had been advertised.

It was planned for the Bereavement Services Assistant (Clerical) to provide administrative and clerical support to the service, as well as to commence the entry of the remaining cremation register records onto the digital BACAS Administrative System.

The report advised that estimated quotes of approximately £16,500 had been received for the block paving around the additional chapel exit. The report also detailed the different improvement projects ongoing at the Crematorium.

It was noted that the Crematorium had submitted an entry into the Green Flag Award for 2018.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.
2. That approval be given for expenditure of £16,500 for completing the additional chapel exit by means of block paving around the structure.

REASON FOR DECISION –

To keep the Joint Committee informed of matters relating to the operation of the Crematorium.