

CHESTERFIELD AND DISTRICT JOINT CREMATORIUM COMMITTEE

Monday, 26th September, 2022

Present:-

Councillor (Chair)

Councillors Blank

Councillors

Powell

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

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

No declarations of interest were received.

9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Innes, Ludlow, Mannion-Brunt and Renwick and Ian Waller.

10 MINUTES OF THE JOINT CREMATORIUM COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 MAY, 2022

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee on 24 May, 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

11 BEREAVEMENT SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT

The Bereavement Services Manager submitted a report on matters relating to the operation of the Crematorium.

Information on cremation totals, comparisons with national and regional data, and geographical information on which areas funerals had been received from in 2022/23 was provided in Section 2 of the officer's report.

The committee heard that the Chesterfield and District Crematorium had received the Green Flag Award for the 10th consecutive year for its green spaces. An internal audit had taken place, conducted by the internal audit consortium and an assurance level of substantial assurance had been given.

An update on projects was provided advising that;

- the new music system was operational and good feedback had been received
- work to clear out the pond and create additional memorial areas had been commenced
- the air conditioning project had been postponed during the pandemic but the system design and budget costs were being refreshed in order to progress the work
- the ventilation system work was with the procurement team and would go back out to tender in order to find the most suitable proposal

The Bereavement Services Manager explained the recent changes to death certification and the new Medical Examiner Scheme which would come into effect in April 2023.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the recent achievements in obtaining Green Flag Award and positive Audit report be noted as a reflection of the efforts of the Team.

REASON FOR DECISION –

To keep Members informed of matters relating to the operation of the Crematorium.

12 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - PERIOD 5

The Senior Accounting Technician submitted a report on the Period 5 Budget Monitoring position as at the end of August 2022.

It was noted that there was a favourable variance and the reasons were presented as follows;

- Over profile income due to a higher number of cremations
- The delays in the service improvement plan caused by the pandemic in turn creating an underspend
- Staffing costs were above profile due to re-deployment costs and pay increases.
- Four capital improvement schemes had originally been planned for 2022/23, however, only one had been completed; the new music system.

The overall outlook was cautious due to the significant number of repairs/improvements to undertake which were subject to inflationary pressures. A more reflective budget would be presented to the next meeting of the committee.

It was acknowledged that the impact of the rise in energy costs had not yet been felt. This was as a result of the current tariffs for gas and electricity being fixed until the end of March 2023. Discussion took place around the potential impact of a significant

price rise in the next financial year. The committee heard that this was an unpredictable situation and it was necessary to gather as much data as possible before any budget decisions could be made.

Members discussed the options for setting fees and charges for 2023/24 and factors that would need to be taken into consideration such as;

- The fast moving economic climate
- The fees of the Chesterfield and District Crematorium compared with the local and national averages
- The standard of the service provided
- The impact on communities of any potential price increase
- The timescale for agreeing fees and publishing them and the effects of any delays
- Whether fees need to be set for a full year in advance or could be adjusted in response to changes to costs

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS –

To keep the Joint Committee informed about the financial performance of the Crematorium.