

CHESTERFIELD AND DISTRICT JOINT CREMATORIUM COMMITTEE**Monday, 12th December, 2016**

Present:-

Councillor Kerry (Chair)

Councillors Austen
Gordon
LudlowCouncillors Murray-Carr
Ritchie**16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations of interest were received.

17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bagley, Blank and A Diouf.

**18 MINUTES OF THE JOINT CREMATORIUM COMMITTEE HELD ON 10
OCTOBER, 2016**

That the Minutes of the Joint Crematorium Committee on 10 October, 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**19 ESTIMATES OF REVENUE EXPENDITURE FOR YEARS ENDING 31
MARCH 2017 ONWARDS**

The Bereavement Services Manager and Clerk and Treasurer presented the Committee's revenue estimate for 2016/17 to 2019/20.

The following points were outlined in the report:

- The revised forecast for 2016/17 and explanations of significant variances, resulting in an expected operating surplus of £322,320. When adjusted for the reserves and profit distribution below there was an expected deficit of £499,605.
- Estimates for 2017/18, with an estimated surplus of £503,950.

- Medium term forecasts for 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- Reserves – revenue reserve, mercury abatement reserve, equipment replacement reserve, organ reserve, cremator repairs reserve and capital improvement reserve.
- Proposed re-distribution to constituent authorities.

The Clerk and Treasurer advised the Committee that consideration would be given to reducing the capital improvement reserve in March 2017 via a one-off distribution so that the balance was appropriate to meet capital improvement needs based on the ten year service improvement plan.

RESOLVED –

1. That the revenue estimates be approved, subject to the approval of the fees & charges.
2. That the Capital schemes detailed in paragraph 6.7 of the report be approved.
3. That the redistribution of £821,925 to the constituent authorities in March, 2017 detailed in paragraph 7 (in accordance with their shareholding agreement) of the report be approved for 2016/17 and that in future years all surpluses are re-distributed each year, subject to surpluses being over £100,000 per annum.
4. That the planned use of reserves as detailed in paragraph 6 of the report be approved including a reduced contribution of £90,000 to the capital improvement reserve from 2017/18.
5. That the increased expenditure of £5,500 on the floral tribute area be noted.
6. That consideration be given to the future implications of increased business rates on the revenue estimates.

REASON FOR DECISIONS

To enable the Crematorium to set a balanced budget and maintain adequate reserves for 2016/17 and in future years.

RESOLVED –

That under Regulation 21 (1)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2000, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Paragraphs 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972' on the grounds that it contains information relating to financial or business affairs.

21 BEREAVEMENT SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT

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

The report included information on the number of cremations during April to September 2016, broken down into local authority area and compared against the total number of cremations and income received during the same period in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

The report referred to the events organised by the Stillbirth and Neonatal Death charity (SANDS) for Baby Loss Awareness Week in October which had culminated with the crematorium taking part in the international 'Wave of Light' event on 15 October, 2016. SANDS would hold their annual Christmas Memorial Service at the crematorium on 17 December, 2016.

An update was received on the chapel refurbishment which would see work commence in early 2017 to install the additional chapel exit followed by redecoration and refurbishment of the chapel area in March, 2017. Replacement windows had been installed in the chapel which helped to insulate the building and reduce noise disruption.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure the ongoing quality, cost effectiveness and safe operation of the service.

22 CHESTERFIELD CREMATORIUM FEES AND CHARGES 2017/18

The Bereavement Services Manager presented a report seeking approval for the implementation of fees and charges for the crematorium for 2016/17.

The report explained that during 2015 additional service times had been made available to provide an improved service and to help protect income to the crematorium; as a result user numbers during 2015 had increased. However, there remained a potential loss of income due to development of the new crematorium at Swanwick.

In order to enable the crematorium to develop sufficient funding to continue to meet the needs of the bereaved and address the possibility that the levels of cremations may fall, it was proposed to increase the fees for cremations by £40. The proposed fees and charges with effect from 1 January, 2016 were attached to the report.

RESOLVED –

1. That the 2017 Fees and Charges be approved as set out in the attached schedule.

REASON FOR DECISION

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

23 FUTURE MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

The Bereavement Services Manager provided an update on the progress made to establish a Council owned company to run the crematorium.

Financial advice had been sought following a report from accountancy firm Mazars LLP on the tax implications if the Crematorium was transferred out of Local Authority Control that was received at the meeting on 10 October, 2016.

Further advice would be sought on the employment contracts of staff working at the Crematorium as the employee position needed to be clarified before a report could go back to the Cabinets of the three constituent authorities.

The Bereavement Services managed sought approval to establish and register the new company in order to open bank accounts. This would be done with 1 director from Chesterfield Borough Council before 31 March, 2017. The Joint Crematorium Committee would still operate as the management of the Crematorium until the new company takes over.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That a company with one managing director be established in order to set up a registered company and open bank accounts.
- 3) That a detailed report be taken to the cabinets of the constituent authorities for the approval of the establishment of a Council owned company.

REASON FOR DECISIONS

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