

North Devon Crematorium Joint Committee

A virtual meeting of the above Committee will be held at the Crematorium, Barnstaple on

Friday, 7 August 2020 at 2.30 pm

Members: Representing North Devon Council

Councillors Bulled, Cann (Vice Chairman), Davis, Gubb, Lovering, Phillips and Walker

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors Christie, Gubb, Harding, A. Inch (Chairman) and Pennington.

AGENDA

1. Agenda (Pages 3 - 10)
NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

A virtual meeting of the above Committee will be held on **FRIDAY 7th AUGUST 2020 AT 2.30 p.m.**

Members: Representing North Devon Council

Councillors Bulled, Cann (Vice Chairman), Davis, Gubb, Lovering, Phillips and Walker

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors Christie, Gubb, Harding, A. Inch (Chairman) and Pennington.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 19th June 2020 (attached).
 - (a) Matters Arising
3. Items brought forward which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered by the meeting as a matter of urgency.
4. Declarations of Interest.

5. To agree the agenda between Part 'A' and Part 'B' (Confidential Restricted Information).

PART 'A'

6. Crematorium Matters. Report by the Crematorium Manager (attached)
7. Performance Monitoring Quarter 1 2020/21. Report by Treasurer (attached)
8. Dates of Future meetings:
Friday 6th November 2020 @ 2.30 p.m.
Friday 5th February 2021 @ 2.30 p.m.

PART 'B' (Confidential/Restricted Information)

Nil

NOTE: Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

In addition to any document specifically mentioned, reports included in this Agenda will have been prepared with reference to any or all of the following:

1. All relevant statutory provisions.
2. All relevant Government circulars and ministerial advice.
3. All relevant adopted policies of the Council.
4. Capital Works Programme.
5. Current Estimates.
6. Standing Orders
7. Consultants' opinion and advice.
8. Published works relevant to the subject of the report.

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE held on Friday 19th June 2020 at 2.30 p.m.

Present: Representing North Devon District Council

Councillors Bulled, Cann, Davis, Y.Gubb, Phillips and Walker

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors Christie, J.Gubb, Harding, Inch (Chairman) and Pennington

Officers

Crematorium Manager, Treasurer, Secretary and Accountant.

(a) APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Lovering

(b) MINUTES

(i) RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7th February 2020 (previously circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(ii) Matters Arising – There were no matters arising

The Chairman and Committee expressed their thanks to the Crematorium Manager and staff for their continued work during the current difficult times.

(c) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared

(d) CREMATORIUM MATTERS

The Joint Committee considered a report by the Crematorium Manager (previously circulated).

i) Solar Panels

It was noted that due to the Covid 19 crisis there had been no developments

ii) Achievements

It was noted:

- a) That the Aspen Flower area frame (not roofing) was completed on the day the Covid shutdown was announced. The contractor did some safety works (fencing and waterproof cover) to prevent damage. It was hoped works will be completed by mid-June.
- b) That both cremators were re-lined immediately prior to the Covid-peak. The Barnstaple Hotel provided free key-worker accommodation for the engineers after their hotel closed. Without their support the work would have been very difficult to complete.
- c) That the new logo caskets were now in use after the sourcing was switched to the UK (originally China). There had been increased costs.

iii) Staffing

It was noted:

- a) That the new technician had started work on 6th April.
- b) That a new lead Medical Referee (Dr Nick Relph) had been appointed by the Ministry of Justice. The previous post-holder (Dr Loveden) remained in a deputy role to support the crematorium during the Covid crisis.

iv) Covid Crisis Update

It was noted:

- That the uptake of Cremation services increased in April, returning to normal levels in May.
- That free webcasting was (and remains) available to mitigate the reduced mourner numbers. The Manager expressed his personal thanks to Councillor Walker who sought the Joint Committee's consent.
- That the Crematorium gardens were initially shut by legislation but re-opened when the Government guidance was relaxed.
- That only the Rowan Chapel was in use as its size allowed easy social distancing. At the time of writing this report the capacity is 18. The maximum possible whilst maintaining 2-metre social distancing was 33. Rowan's exclusive use was expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

- That the office was closed early in the crisis but its re-opening was imminent with screens, gel points, barriers and split receptions (enquiries at one, booked appointments at the other) all in place by mid-May.
- That the early ordering of safety equipment/materials and support of North Devon Council procurement ensured all equipment was available before and throughout the crisis.
- That the efforts of the staff had been the subject of much positive comment by Funeral Directors.

In answer to a question from a Member the Crematorium Manager stated that if there was a second Covid spike he was confident that the Crematorium would be able to manage and plans were in place.

The Treasurer reported that Devon County Council was the responsible local authority for Covid planning and were producing in consultation with District Council's and Crematoria an Outbreak Management Plan by the end of June 2020 in case there was a second Covid spike.

v) Metals Recycling Charity Award

It was noted that Over and Above (maternity bereavement suite) had been nominated for the next award (July) as previously reported and the subsequent nomination list:

Clarity
 Calvert Trust
 Over and Above (Cancer & Wellbeing Centre)
 Families in Grief
 North Devon Children's Holiday Foundation
 North Devon Hospice
 Cruse
 Children's Hospice SW
 Over and Above (North Devon Hospital – Maternity Unit Bereavement Suite)

That no further additions would be considered prior to February 2022.

vi) Crematorium Figures

The Cremation figures were noted.

vii) Garden Improvements 2020/21

It was noted that the works had been suspended due to the Covid 19 crisis. The cover for the Rowan exit would be reviewed, as the long-term use of the chapel would make the works difficult unless weekend working could be secured.

vii) Larkbear Development

It was noted that there had been no developments and that enquiries were in hand regarding releasing a small strip of the frontage to Devon County Council to allow for a large footpath improvement scheme. The previous support of the Joint Committee would be communicated to the two authorities whose authority was required in matters of land acquisition.

(e) OUTTURN 2019/20

The Joint Committee considered the outturn report 2019/20 by the Treasurer (previously circulated).

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Outturn Report 2019/20 be noted.
- ii) That the following Reserves and Balances be approved:

	Capital Funding Reserve £	Equipment Replacement Reserve £	General Reserve £
Opening Balance 1 st April 2019	341,478	300,000	100,000
Contribution in year	0	100,000	0
2019/20 Revenue Deficit	(8,232)	0	0
Closing Balance 31 st March 2020	333,246	400,000	100,000

(g) DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates for future meetings were noted:

Friday 7th August 2020 @ 2.30 p.m.
Friday 6th November 2020 @ 2.30 p.m.
Friday 5th February 2021 @ 2.30 p.m.

Chairman

The meeting ended at 2.52 p.m.

14th August 2020

Crematorium Matters – Manager’s Report

Update from Previous Minutes

Solar Panels

No developments – project on hold due to covid crisis.

Achievements

The Aspen Flower Area has been completed and is available for use.

The crematorium now has 5 beehives, three of which are this year’s swarms.

Covid Crisis Update

The crematorium has not had any cases for 4-weeks (report submitted 22.7.2020).

Government advice regarding places of worship does not relate to the crematorium but did trigger a review of risk assessments. This resulted in retention of allowing singing as it was recognized the measures and facilities were sufficient to manage the risk.

The situation is constantly monitored and previous measures will be re-instated if necessary.

The current measures are likely to remain in place for the medium term and Aspen Chapel has been shown unavailable until the next financial year.

Metals Recycling Charity Award

A £10,000 award was made to Over & Above (Maternity Bereavement Suite) and the cheque presentation was made by Cllrs Inch and Lovering on 22nd July.

Clarity has been nominated for the next award (January 2021) as previously reported.

Subsequent nomination list:

Calvert Trust

Over and Above (Cancer & Wellbeing Centre)

Families in Grief

North Devon Children’s Holiday Foundation

North Devon Hospice

Cruse

Children’s Hospice SW

Over and Above (North Devon Hospital – Maternity Unit Bereavement Suite)

Clarity

No further additions to be considered prior to February 2022.

Cremation Figures

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
April	109	102	161	125	139	163	117	150	121	176
May	111	123	117	135	118	126	138	136	137	136
June	129	116	102	123	143	125	129	127	127	130
July	107	111	121	106	111	126	142	133	128	136
Aug	116	106	117	100	109	114	120	106	118	
Sept	88	104	107	122	127	121	127	106	114	
Oct	102	101	98	125	140	127	137	132	129	
Nov	116	129	96	120	108	157	135	127	115	
Dec	88	100	98	120	128	123	131	119	113	
Jan	143	159	164	142	131	158	182	169	147	
Feb	127	121	116	154	136	137	175	143	133	
Mar	132	144	127	157	151	162	164	145	143	
Total	1368	1416	1424	1529	1541	1639	1697	1593	1525	

The figure for July 2020 is provisional at time of report submission and may increase very slightly.

The average delay from death to service is currently 16 days.

Garden Improvements 2020/21

It is hoped to re-start the approved garden projects in the next few weeks as contractors resume working.

The cover for the Rowan exit will be reviewed as the long-term use of the chapel makes the works difficult unless weekend working can be secured.

Larkbear Development – Traffic Management

The manager reported concerns regarding the traffic measures to the Policy Development Committee on 16th July. A strong view was expressed that 2-route access to the crematorium must be maintained at all times as the single-route via Gratton Way was untenable. It was suggested that a time of day restriction on any Old Torrington Road measures would minimize rush-hour traffic whilst allowing mourner and hearse access during the day. The proposed access to the link road, which is some years from fruition, would create a second route and allow a review of the Old Torrington Road route.

The small strip of land that is needed by Devon County Council for their proposed pavement widening in the vicinity of the crematorium site is available to sell or transfer to their ownership once they apply.

Christmas/New Year

Subject to any pandemic developments it is expected to close on Christmas and New Year's Eves.

NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

7th August 2020

REPORT OF TREASURER

PERFORMANCE MONITORING QTR 1 2020/2021

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report presents the financial performance information for April to June 2020/2021.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. It is recommended that the performance for April to June 2020/2021 be noted.

3. REPORT

3.1. A summary of the Expenditure and Income for the period April to June is shown below together with the Original and Profiled Estimates. Also shown is the projected outturn and projected outturn variance.

3.2.

	Original Budget 2020/21	Profiled Budget (Apr-Jun)	Actual Apr-Jun	Variance (under)/over	Projected Outturn	Projected Outturn Variance
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Premises	285,740	71,435	75,084	3,649	286,398	658
Transport	1,000	250	161	(89)	643	(357)
Supplies & Services	188,630	47,158	74,823	27,665	201,411	12,781
Central Support/Employees	310,540	77,635	75,324	(2,311)	310,051	(489)
Total Expenditure	785,910	196,478	225,392	28,914	798,503	12,593
Fees	1,121,890	280,473	300,252	19,779	1,132,533	10,643
Sales	99,180	24,795	15,648	(9,147)	84,457	(14,723)
Interest	4,000	1,000	187	(813)	749	(3,251)
CAMEO*	4,000	1,000	0	(1,000)	4,000	0
Total Income	1,229,070	307,268	316,087	8,819	1,221,739	(7,331)
Cont to Equip Replacement Res	95,480	23,870	23,870	0	95,480	0
Distribution NDC	208,608	52,152	52,152	0	208,608	0
Distribution TDC	139,072	34,768	34,768	0	139,072	0
Surplus / (Deficit)	0	0	(20,095)	(20,095)	(19,924)	(19,924)

* Crematoria Abatement of Mercury Emissions Organisation

3.3. Qtr 1 is showing expenditure £28,914 over the profiled budget and income is £8,819 higher than the profiled budget giving a total net variance of £20,095 deficit. The projections for the year are predicting expenditure £12,593 over budget and income £7,331 lower than budget producing a net variance of £19,924 deficit.

3.4. The main budget variances are discussed below:

3.4.1. **Premises** – Spend in Qtr 1 is £3,649 over budget but it is expected to be virtually on budget for the full year. However, Qtr 1 does include £62k for the 2nd Cremator re-lining but these costs are offset by underspend on grounds repairs and maintenance as no work has yet been completed on the 2020/21 maintenance programme.

3.4.2. **Supplies & Services** – The Qtr 1 overspend of £27,665 relates, primarily, to Non Recoverable Vat and Music/Web system. The Non Recoverable Vat relates to the 2 cremator re-linings. Although the cost of one was in last year’s accounts and the other in this year, they were both paid in 2020/21 and the Vat gets accounted for when payment is made. The Music/Web system is that we pay an annual service charge in April for the year and then monthly payments. Also, during Qtr 1 we have been providing more web services which has increased the monthly charges.

3.4.3. **Income** – Income from cremation fees is higher than the profiled budget and full year projection. However, income from memorial sales is lower than the profiled budget and the full year projection. Interest receivable is lower due to the low interest rates.

3.4.4. The receipt from CAMEO has not yet been received for 2020/21 but it is anticipated that the budgeted £4,000 will be received.

3.4.5. If the projected outturn does materialise there will be a deficit of £19,924. This can be funded from either the Capital Funding Reserve or reducing the in year contribution to the Equipment Replacement Reserve. It is still relatively early in the year and this will be reviewed throughout the year.

3.5. Reserves and balances. The current amounts held by the joint crematorium committee and projected balances are:

	Capital Funding Reserve	Equipment Replacement Reserve	General Reserve
	£	£	£
Balance 31 st March 2020	333,246	400,000	100,000
Contribution 2020/21	0	95,480	0
Projected Balance 31st March 2021	333,246	495,480	100,000

The balance in the Capital Funding Reserve will be available for the Phase B project, demolishing the garage/memorial hall.

These reserve figures do not include the projected deficit identified in 3.2 above of £19,924.

Mark Knight
22nd July 2020