

North Devon Crematorium Joint Committee

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

Friday, 10 June 2022 at 2.30 pm

Members: Representing North Devon Council

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

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors Christie, Gubb (Vice Chair), Hurley, A. Inch and Pennington.

AGENDA

1. Appointment of Chair 2022/23 (North Devon Council Member)
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Appointment of Vice Chair 2022/23 (Torridge District Council Member)
4. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2022 (Pages 2 - 7)
 - (a) Matters Arising
5. Items brought forward which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered by the meeting as a matter of urgency
6. Declarations of Interest
7. To agree the agenda between Part 'A' and Part 'B' (Confidential Restricted Information)
8. Crematorium Matters. Report by the Crematorium Manager (Pages 8 - 9)
9. Outturn Report 2021/22. Report by Treasurer (Pages 10 - 12)
10. To note that the next Crematorium Joint Committee meeting will be on Friday 5th August 2022 @ 2.30 p.m.
11. **PART 'B' (Confidential/Restricted Information)**
There are no Part B items

Agenda Item 4

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE held at the Crematorium on Friday 4th February 2022 at 2.30 p.m.

Present: Representing North Devon District Council

Councillors Bulled, Cann, Davis, Y. Gubb, Walker (Chair).

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors Christie and Hurley.

Officers

Crematorium Manager, Secretary and Accountant.

(a) APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors J. Gubb, Inch, Lovering and Pennington and the Treasurer.

(b) MINUTES

- (i) RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 5th November 2021 (previously circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- (ii) Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.

(c) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared.

(d) EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS AND RESTRICTION OF DOCUMENTS

RESOLVED:

- (i) That under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended from time to time) namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information).
- (ii) That all documents and reports relating to the item be confirmed as 'Not for Publication'

(e) BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY: UPDATE.

The Joint Committee considered a report by the Crematorium Manager (previously circulated) regarding an update on a future development opportunity previously reported.

RESOLVED that the business opportunity be not pursued.

(f) RE-ADMITTANCE OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that the Public and Press be re-admitted to the meeting.

(g) CREMATORIUM MATTERS

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

i) Covid Crisis Update

It was noted:

That mourner numbers had been kept at 162 during the latest surge in cases and mask wearing strongly encouraged through on-screen messaging.

ii) Achievements

It was noted:

That the Music/Webcast system contract had been re-tendered as it had reached the 4-year term. One tender had been received from the existing contractor with no increase in price and had it been accepted.

iii) Metals Recycling Charity Award

It was noted:

That the Over and Above (Cancer & Wellbeing Centre) had been awarded £15,000, paid on 8th December 2021. A cheque presentation by Councillor Walker with associated press release was made on 13th December. As yet the next round of nominations had not opened.

RESOLVED:

(A) That the be current list of supported Charities be reduced to the following:

Families in Grief
North Devon Hospice
Cruse
Children's Hospice SW

- (B) That the following currently supported Charities be placed on a substitute list:

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

- (C) That the following new applications received for consideration be not added to the supported list of Charities. A strong connection to bereavement and North Devon needed to be demonstrated.

Alzheimer's Society – Devon & Cornwall Branch
Target Ovarian Cancer
Over and Above (Midwifery students, Midwives, Doctors and Maternity Care Assistants) specialist training.
North Devon Against Domestic Abuse (NDADA)
Young Lives Vs Cancer
SUDEP – Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy

- (D) That the list be re-considered in 2 years' time (February 2024).

iv) Crematorium Figures

The Cremation figures were noted.

v) Garden Improvements

It was noted that the Rowan Exit Sails had been ordered and the steel supports installed.

vi) Larkbear Development – Traffic Management

It was noted that following representations by the Crematorium Manager it had been agreed that the new camera-enforced bus gate in Old Torrington Road would be made 'one-way', permitting crematorium (all) traffic to approach using the existing route as well as Gratton Way whilst having to depart via Gratton Way only.

This was, however, subject to either traffic calming or a 20mph speed limit along Old Torrington Road being implemented. The funding status for the speed limit change or traffic calming remained unclear as was the consequence if funding was not made available by Devon County Council.

vii) Phase B works (garage store/memorial room)

It was noted that on 15th February 2019 the Joint Committee agreed to proceed with Phase B works (demolish garages and rebuild storage in bungalow garden).

However, staff changes combined with difficulties during Covid had delayed the works. The new Surveyor had reviewed the project. In light of the underground services within the works area he had proposed that the site for the new storage be within the existing bulk-materials area (upper carpark) and that the hearse waiting area be placed at the entrance using part of the ground cleared by the garage demolition.

A consultancy firm had been asked to report the likely costs and outline Proposals.

In the event there are residual funds, the Surveyor hoped to identify possible funding sources for a site survey for solar panels on Rowan Chapel roof and possibly grants towards the installation.

The Joint Committee considered three projected cost options (tabled).

RESOLVED that option 3 (Car Park only including turning area tarmac) be agreed to be put out to tender

viii) Children's funeral fund

It was noted that the cost of providing funeral services for the under 18s (including stillbirth) had been claimed from the Government Children's Funeral Fund and this year had resulted in a total of approximately £6,200 being recovered and another £2,300 pending (11 services).

The Joint Committee previously requested that this be reported for consideration regarding the most appropriate use of the income.

The lead gardener had identified modest enhancements to the children's area and the failing natural pond for consideration.

RESOLVED:

(A) That the following brief and quotation outlined in the tabled report be agreed:

Brief:

- Renovate the existing circular pond area to create a new pond with a diameter of approx. 6.5 – 7 m, with a natural rockery stone edge and a 1 m wide perimeter of grass.
- To create a natural 'rock island' in the middle of the pond by positioning a drilled rock, connected to the existing pump, to provide a babbling water feature.

Main pond works

To carry out the following:

- Protect the access paths with boards/sheets.

- Endeavour to catch as much of the pond fauna as is reasonably possible and transfer to a temporary storage tank
- Pump out the pond water and discharge to surround beds/drains.
- Use a mini digger to dismantle the existing pond and surrounding growth then carry out excavation and grading works to create the new pond form.
- To remove and dispose of all arisings from site.
- Supply and line the void with a protective membrane.
- Supply and install an EPDM pond liner.
- Fill the pond with water supplied by you.
- Place local natural rockery stones around the perimeter of the pond to hold the liner in place and help reduce the view of the liner during the seasonal fluctuation in water levels.
- Cultivate the surrounding soil and prepare to a finish, then supply and lay turf.

For the sum of £6354.00 + VAT

Rock island with drilled rock water feature

- Supply and position a drill rock (approx. 600 – 700 mm height), probably set on a few other stones.
- Connect the existing pump to the rock.

Guide price: £600.00 - £700.00 + VAT

- (B) That in future monies claimed from the Children’s Funeral Fund be allocated to the General Fund.

(h) PERFORMANCE QUARTER 3 2021/2022

The Joint Committee considered and noted a report by the Treasurer (previously circulated) regarding the performance for Quarter 3 April to December 2021/2022.

(i) 2022/23 BUDGET, FEES AND CHARGES.

The Joint Committee considered and noted a report by the Treasurer (previously circulated) regarding the budget, fees and charges for 2022/2023.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the basic Cremation charge for 2022/23 of £750 be approved as detailed in paragraph 6.1 of the report
- (ii) That the 2022/23 budget as set out in paragraph 3 of the report be approved.
- (iii) That the fees and charges for 2022/23 as detailed in paragraph 6.2 and appendix 2 be approved.

- (iv) That the distribution of surpluses for 2021/22 of £416,230 to the constituent authorities: £249,740 to North Devon Council and £166,490 to Torrington District Council be approved.
- (v) That the transfer of £100,000 to the Equipment Replacement Reserve be approved

(j) DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that the next meeting would be on Friday 10th June 2022 @ 2.30 p.m.

Chairman

The meeting ended at 3.38 p.m.

Agenda Item 8

Friday 10th June 2022

Crematorium Matters – Manager’s Report

Covid Crisis Update

Aspen chapel is now in use. No other active measures are in use other than signage/hand gel provision. Item will be deleted from next report unless significant changes implemented.

Staffing Matters

Bereavement Administrator - not appointed following interviews, to be re-advertised.

Lead Gardener – temporarily become part-time (3-day) role. Some of savings will be used to ‘buy-in’ extra help during peak workload periods.

Metals Recycling Charity Award

Families in Grief have been nominated for the next award (July).

All ‘reserve list previous charities’, previously on the award rota, have been written to seeking re-application strongly evidencing their bereavement support.

The current rota is shown below:

North Devon Hospice
Cruse
Children’s Hospice SW
Families in Grief

Cremation Figures

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
April	161	125	139	163	117	150	121	174	124	133
May	117	135	118	126	138	136	137	136	103	146
June	102	123	143	125	129	127	127	126	110	
July	121	106	111	126	142	133	128	136	123	
Aug	117	100	109	114	120	106	118	118	116	
Sept	107	122	127	121	127	106	114	121	131	
Oct	98	125	140	127	137	132	129	120	119	
Nov	96	120	108	157	135	127	115	149	131	
Dec	98	120	128	123	131	119	113	141	128	
Jan	164	142	131	158	182	169	147	176	140	
Feb	116	154	136	137	175	143	133	136	123	
Mar	127	157	151	162	164	145	143	141	159	
Total	1424	1529	1541	1639	1697	1593	1525	1674	1507	

Garden Improvements

- Rowan Exit Sails: Sails received, awaiting installation.
- Garden Pond: Works complete.

Larkbear Development – Traffic Management

Matter referred back for consultation as change agreed on following manager's representations considered too significant to be implemented without.

Phase B Works (Garage Store/Memorial Room)

Tender is being produced by the appointed consultants.

Medical Referee

The Government has stated that it hopes to introduce the Medical Examiner role in April 2023 removing the crematorium funded Medical Referee role (£18.50 per cremation).

This will:

- Remove the role of Medical Referee except for an unspecified transition period from April 2023.
- Require a new process to authorise cremations (previously Medical Referee role) to ensure application is lawful. Likely to become a Crematorium Registrar (manager) role.
- Bring financial savings (cost of Medical Referees approx. £29,000 per annum), subject to any additional payments for the transferred authorisation responsibility.
- Simplify and speed the application for cremation process (no medical forms to submit/check).
- Simplify the process of digitally storing cremation applications for 15 years rather than paper storage.

Agenda Item 9



North Devon Crematorium Joint Committee

Report Date: 10th June 2022

Topic: Crematorium Outturn 2021/2022

Report by: Treasurer

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report presents the Outturn figures for the financial year 2021/22.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. It is recommended that the Outturn Report 2021/2022 be noted.

2.2. It is recommended that the Reserves and Balances contained in 5.1 be approved.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. To inform Members of the actual financial performance for 2021/22.

4. REPORT

4.1. A summary of the revenue expenditure and income for the year is shown below together with the original budget and forecast as at 31st December. The actual for 2020/21 is also shown for information.

	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Original Budget	2021/22 Forecast as at 31 st December	2021/22 Actual
Premises	290,177	185,370	193,038	183,384
Transport	439	1,000	239	221
Supplies and Services	222,242	224,000	188,192	182,839
Support & Employees	308,642	316,430	307,717	308,286
Total Expenditure	821,500	726,800	689,186	674,730
Fees & Charges	1,216,507	1,147,700	1,122,153	1,151,906
Sales	83,892	90,680	78,250	74,495
Interest	517	650	220	225
CAMEO*	5,544	4,000	4,202	4,202
Miscellaneous	1,189	0	1,727	2,593
Total Income	1,307,649	1,243,030	1,206,552	1,233,421
Cont Equip Replace Res	95,480	100,000	100,000	100,000
Distribution NDC	208,608	249,740	249,740	249,740
Distribution TDC	139,072	166,490	166,490	166,490
Surplus/(Deficit)	42,989	0	1,136	42,461

*Crematoria Abatement of Mercury Emissions Organisation

4.2. Expenditure is £52k lower than the original budget and £14k lower than projected at Qtr 3. Income is £10k lower than original budget but £26k higher than projected at Qtr 3. The reasons for expenditure underspends have been reported in previous reports and include; maintenance, vacant posts, memorial purchases, non recoverable Vat and printing along with other smaller underspends. Income was still under the original budget but was higher than projected at Qtr 3 because the number of services increased in Qtr 4.

The net effect of the expenditure and income variances identified above is an increase in the additional surplus from £1k projected in December to £42k. This surplus has been transferred to a Budget Management Reserve which has been set up to help to mitigate the increase in fuel costs during 2022/23.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Reserves & Balances are detailed in the table below.

The Capital Funding Reserve was set up to accumulate funds for capital projects at the Crematorium. The balance will be available for Phase B (Garage/Memorial Hall).

The Equipment Replacement Reserve was set up to build up funds to replace the cremators and filtration equipment at the end of their useful life, and also to provide the funding for hearth replacements and cremator re-lining when required. It is anticipated that there will be sufficient funds available when required but this will be continually monitored.

The Budget Management Reserve was created this year and the funds will be available to help mitigate some of the increased fuel costs in 2022/23. The 2022/23 budget was set early in the year before the full impacts of inflation, energy costs etc were known and not factored into the budget. Therefore, it is prudent to set aside the available resources from 2021/22 rather than trying to manage overspend in year. If the reserve is not required at a later point then the Joint Committee can consider options for its use. Further details will be reported throughout the year within the normal quarterly budget monitoring reports.

The Working Balance has been maintained at £100,000, which is the level recommended taking into account of the financial risks associated with operating the Crematorium.

	Capital Funding Reserve	Equipment Replacement Reserve	Budget Management Reserve	General Reserve
Opening Balance 1 st April 21	384,267	495,480	0	100,000
Contribution in year	0	100,000	0	0
2021/22 Revenue Surplus	0	0	42,461	0
Closing Balance 31st March 22	384,267	595,480	42,461	100,000

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. There are no equality implications anticipated as a result of this report. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7.1. There are not any environmental implications as a result of this report, as the purpose of this report is to update members of the financial activity of the North Devon Crematorium Joint Committee for the 2021/2022 financial year.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

8.1. The North Devon Council and Torrige District Council Joint Crematorium Committee Agreement.

9. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

11. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The North Devon Council and Torrige District Council Corporate Priorities have been considered in the drafting of the report.

12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: Author Mark Knight Crematorium Accountant; Date 17th May 2022