

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE held at the North Devon Crematorium, Barnstaple on Friday, 5th August, 2022 at 2.30 pm

Present: Representing North Devon District Council

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

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors P Pennington, J Gubb and P Christie

Officers

Crematorium Manager, Secretary, Treasurer, Accountant and J. Mann – Head of Housing, Planning and Health.

Also Present: T. Cunningham - Consultant

(a) APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Davis, Hurley, Inch and Lovering.

(b) MINUTES

- i. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2022 (previously circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- ii. Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.

(c) ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY

There were no items of urgency.

(d) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared.

(e) CREMATORIUM MATTERS

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

i) Staffing Matters

It was noted that no appointment had been made to the Bereavement Administrator post following interviews and would be re-advertised.

ii) Metals Recycling Charity Award

It was noted:

That Families in Grief had been awarded £12,000 and that North Devon Hospice were currently the next anticipated nominee.

All 'reserve list charities', previously on the award rota, had been written to seeking re-application requiring strong evidence of their bereavement support.

The current rota was:

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

Re-applications had been received from:

- Children's Holiday Foundation
- Over and Above –bereavement support unit.

It was agreed that:

- a) That no additions be made to the existing rota list.
- b) That further information/clarity be sought regarding the Over and above Bereavement support unit project.

iii) Crematorium Figures

The Cremation figures were noted.

iv) Garden Improvements

It was noted that the Rowan Exit Sails had been installed.

v) Damage to Crematorium

It was noted that 3 incidents had taken place over the space of 10 days which involved 5 skylights being broken, significant damage to the roof and an attempt to break into the gardener's shed – well over £20,000 of damage in total. A further incident a few days later did not cause any significant damage.

The use of anti-climb paint, additional security patrols, a roof alarm system and CCTV had brought a stop to the incidents. Police enquiries were in hand. An insurance claim would be made in relation to the damage and the CCTV/prevention works would be paid for from site maintenance budget.

The Committee recorded its thanks to the resident who contacted the Police.

vi) Larkbear Development – Traffic Management

It was noted that the Gratton Way/Old Torrington Road Bus Gate had been referred back to the North Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee on 27th June 2022. It was decided to implement the bus gate move as originally advertised, meaning all

traffic to and from the crematorium would be via Gratton Way once the order was implemented. The timescales for implementation were not known.

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

It was noted that following the Manager's update at the Joint Committee meeting on 4th February 2022 regarding the consultancy work and feasibility study, a planning application had been submitted. A copy of the 'Elevations Plan' had been previously circulated. It was proposed to include a 'hearse lay-by' at the entrance in light of the Larkbear Development bus gate decision, though this may result in the loss of a single disabled bay.

Once planning consent had been obtained it was intended to proceed in accordance with the Joint Committee's decision to tender on the basis of the 'minimum car-park works' option (c).

To date, expenditure (consultancy fees relating to design, feasibility, planning application, ground suitability assessment works and reinstatement) amounted to £17,271 plus vat.

To enable the tender timescales to be finalised (tender likely to completed before next meeting on 4th November as per programme tracker (previously circulated) approval was sought to proceed to award the contract to the best value compliant tender subject to the costs being within the budget (including fees and contingency costs).

It was agreed:

- A) That the expenditure on consultancy fees relating to design, feasibility, planning application, ground suitability assessment works and reinstatement of £17,271 plus vat be funded through the Phase B Reserves.
- B) That authority be delegated to the Crematorium Manager to award the contract to the best value compliant tender subject to the costs being within the budget (including fees and contingency costs).

viii) s106 Memorial Garden Works

It was noted that the crematorium had access to some North Devon Council S106 funds (£39,703.60) which could be used *'towards the purchase and layout of land to provide an extension to the memorial gardens and improvement and refurbishment of the memorial gardens at the North Devon Crematorium'*. The funds were available to use until July 2024.

If approved, Phase B works would involve the demolition of the garages at the entrance. This area would require landscaping and provided the opportunity to create an outside waiting area as well as improving the visual appearance as visitors arrive. Such works could provide seating, cover from inclement weather and perhaps a water feature to create a welcoming space for visitors whilst they waited for the service to start. An application had been submitted to release funds for garden improvements.

ix) Medical Referee

It was noted that the National implementation of the Medical Examiner role had been set for 1st April 2023, eliminating the Medical Referee Role. The Medical Referee role would, however, continue for an unspecified period on a consulting basis to iron out any 'teething issues'

(f) PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 1 2022/2023

The Joint Committee noted a report by the Treasurer (previously circulated) regarding the performance for quarter 1 April to June 2022/2023.

It was stated that in order to reduce electricity costs the provision of solar panels and battery storage should be investigated.

The Treasurer stated that there was a Government Public Sector Decarbonisation Grant Scheme to encourage energy efficiency and the decarbonisation of gas heating systems in public buildings.

(g) DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that the next meeting would be on Friday 4th November 2022 @ 2.30 p.m.

Chairman

The meeting ended at 15.18