

NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the above Committee will be held at the Crematorium, Barnstaple on **FRIDAY 4th AUGUST 2023 AT 2.30 p.m.**

Members: Representing North Devon Council

Councillors Cann, Denton, Haworth-Booth, P Leaver, Lovering, Renshaw and Walker (Vice Chair)

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors Christie, Johns, Harding, Gubb and Inch (Chair)

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2023 (attached) (Pages 2 - 5)
 - (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) (Pages 6 - 7)
7. Performance Monitoring Quarter 1 2023/2024. Report by Treasurer (attached) (Pages 8 - 11)
8. To note that the next Crematorium Joint Committee meeting will be on Friday 3rd November 2023 @ 2.30 p.m.

PART 'B' (Confidential/Restricted Information)

Nil

Agenda Item 2

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE held at the Crematorium on Friday 9th June 2023 at 2.30 p.m.

Present: Representing North Devon District Council

Councillors Cann, Denton, P. Leaver, Lovering, Renshaw and Walker.

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors Christie, Johns, Harding, Gubb and Inch.

Officers

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

(a) APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR 2023/2024

RESOLVED that Councillor Inch be appointed Chair of the Joint Committee until re-appointments are made in the next municipal year.

(b) APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Haworth-Booth and Steve Hearse - Treasurer.

(c) APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR 2023/2024

RESOLVED that Councillor Walker be appointed Vice Chair of the Joint Committee until re-appointments are made in the next municipal year.

(d) MINUTES

- (i) RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2023 (previously circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- (ii) Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.

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

There were no items of urgency.

(f) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared.

(g) CREMATORIUM MATTERS

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

i) Staffing

It was noted that the part time bereavement administrator vacancy had been filled and the new team member had taken up the post on 24th April.

ii) Metals Recycling Charity Award

It was noted:

That Over and Above (Bereavement Family Room) had been awarded £12,000. North Devon Hospice would be the next nominee in line with the current rota:

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

iii) Crematorium Figures

The Cremation figures were noted.

iv) Phase B Works (Garage/Memorial Room)

It was noted that three compliant tenders had been received, with a significant variance in costs. Prime Build South West had been awarded the tender at a cost of £366,375 (£439,650 including VAT). Additional costs (consultancy, design, planning etc.) brought the total figure to approximately £500,000 including VAT. Currently available project funds were approximately £384,000 including VAT with any shortfall, as previously agreed by the Joint Committee, being covered by existing crematorium reserves.

v) Medical Referee

It was noted that the current situation whereby a Medical Referee (GP), authorised each cremation (funded by the crematorium) was due to be replaced with the National implementation of a Medical Examiner role. The implementation date had now been set for 1st April 2024, later than the earlier guided date. As funds had only been set aside for a 6-month period there would be a shortfall of about 50% in the budget allocation.

vi) Direct Cremations

It was noted that the Joint Committee had agreed to reduce the costs for direct cremations from 1st April 2023, from £550 to £350 for North Devon/Torrige residents.

The relevant cremation numbers for the 2-months of operation were:

Direct Cremations	2022	2023
April	12	24
May	6	23
Total	18	47

vii) Additional Projects

It was noted:

- A) That the Public Wi-Fi access hardware had been installed throughout the site. The internet installation, however, was still pending. This would bring benefits to visitors and provide operational resilience in the event of a failure of the council system.
- B) That the installation of a hot drink and snack machine had been agreed and was pending installation. This had been arranged on a zero-fee basis for the crematorium, funded by any operating profit the supplier received.

viii) Road Works

It was noted that due to the installation of the bus gate as from 18 July access to the Crematorium would be only through the Industrial Estate passed Sainsburys. Only Buses would be permitted access along Old Torrington Road.

ix) Office Burglary

It was noted that the suspect had pleaded guilty to the offence and had to pay the Crematorium £650 in damages and a curfew imposed for 10 weeks.

(f) OUTURN 2022/2023

The Joint Committee considered a report by the Treasurer (previously circulated) regarding the outturn for 2022/2023.

It was noted that due to the outturn position at the end of the financial year the additional funding for the Phase B works would not have to be met from the equipment replacement reserve.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the outturn report be noted
- ii) That the reserves and balances as outlined in paragraph 5.1 of the report be approved.

In answer to a question, it was stated that the provision of solar panels on the Rowan Chapel was part of an on-going North Devon Council project looking at the installation of solar panels on Council buildings.

Chairman

The meeting ended at 3.07 p.m.

Agenda Item 6

Friday 4th August 2023

Crematorium Matters – Manager’s Report

Metals Recycling Charity Award

North Devon Hospice has been nominated for the next award (probably December 2023), Cruse will be the next nomination:

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

Cremation Figures

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
April	125	139	163	117	150	121	174	124	133	150
May	135	118	126	138	136	137	136	103	146	156
June	123	143	125	129	127	127	126	110	134	131
July	106	111	126	142	133	128	136	123	110	142E
Aug	100	109	114	120	106	118	118	116	133	
Sept	122	127	121	127	106	114	121	131	138	
Oct	125	140	127	137	132	129	120	119	122	
Nov	120	108	157	135	127	115	149	131	132	
Dec	120	128	123	131	119	113	141	128	135	
Jan	142	131	158	182	169	147	176	140	179	
Feb	154	136	137	175	143	133	136	123	178	
Mar	157	151	162	164	145	143	141	159	171	
Total	1529	1541	1639	1697	1593	1525	1674	1507	1711	

Phase B Works (Garage Store/Memorial Room)

Works are underway and anticipated to complete in October 2023.

Direct Cremations

Direct Cremations	2022	2023
April	12	24
May	6	23
June	5	20

July	6	15E
Total	29	82E

Additional Projects

- Public Wi-Fi access should be completed and working by 14th August.
- The installation of a hot drink and snack machine into the Aspen waiting room has been completed. There are no ongoing costs or maintenance requirements for the crematorium.

Larkbear Road Changes

The Gratton Way route is now the only access route to the crematorium. Old Torrington Road closed on 18th July, re-opening to buses only on 14th August.

Currently the new (permanent) access route is only signed with diversion signs pending the existing road signs being changed by 14th August.

Agenda Item 7



North Devon Crematorium Joint Committee

Report Date: 4th August 2023

Topic: Crematorium Performance Monitoring Qtr 1 2023/2024

Report by: Treasurer

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report presents the financial performance information for April to June 2023/24.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. It is recommended that the performance for April to June 2023/2024 be noted.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. To inform Members of the financial performance for April to June 2023/2024.

4. REPORT

4.1. A summary of the revenue expenditure and income for the period April to June is shown below together with the original and profiled budgets. Also shown is the projected outturn and projected outturn variance.

	Original Budget 2023/24	Profiled Budget (Apr-Jun)	Actual Apr-Jun	Variance (Under) / over	Projected Outturn	Projected Outturn Variance
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Premises	249,010	62,252	29,762	(32,490)	272,933	23,923
Transport	500	125	35	(90)	141	(359)
Supplies and Services	211,980	52,995	44,091	(8,904)	223,426	11,446
Support & Employees	366,610	91,653	87,476	(4,177)	355,696	(10,914)
Total Expenditure	828,100	207,025	161,364	(45,661)	852,196	24,096
Fees & Charges	1,254,650	313,663	352,437	38,774	1,293,425	38,775
Sales	79,680	19,920	23,735	3,815	83,495	3,815
Interest	7,000	1,750	4,501	2,751	18,004	11,004
CAMEO*	3,000	750	0	(750)	3,000	0
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Income	1,344,330	336,083	380,673	44,590	1,397,924	53,594
Cont Equip Replace Res	100,000	25,000	25,000	0	100,000	0
Distribution NDC	249,740	62,435	62,435	0	249,740	0
Distribution TDC	166,490	41,623	41,623	0	166,490	0
Surplus/(Deficit)	0	0	90,251	90,251	29,498	29,498

*Crematoria Abatement of Mercury Emissions Organisation

- 4.2. Qtr 1 is showing expenditure £45,661 under the profiled budget and income is £44,590 higher than profiled budget giving a total net variance of £90,251 surplus. The projections for the year are predicting expenditure £24,096 over budget and income £53,594 higher than budget producing a net variance of £29,498 surplus.
- 4.3. **Premises** – Spend in Qtr 1 is under budget but the projected full year is over budget by £23,923. The Qtr 1 underspend relates to no payments have yet been made for the new gas contract (but these are expected imminently) and the timings of carrying out some of the works to the building, grounds and equipment. However, the projected overspend for the year relates to an increase in the electricity costs over and above the increase to the budget and an increase in the cost of business rates due to the rateable value re-set in April 2023.
- 4.4. **Supplies and Services** – The underspend for Qtr 1 relates to various underspends and the timings of paying some annual invoices. The projected overspend for the year relates primarily to the costs of medical referree's. When setting the budget it was expected that the process would change from 1st April 2023 whereby the responsibility would be transferred to the NHS, but this has been delayed. We did, however, leave a residual budget for costs incurred by the Crematorium during the transfer.
- 4.5. **Central Support / Employees** – The underspend relates to a member of staff reducing to part time.
- 4.6. **Income** – Fees and charges are showing increased income, due to the higher number of services in Qtr 1. The interest received on the Crematorium bank accounts is higher than the budget due to the increase in interest rates since the budget was set.
- 4.7. The receipt from CAMEO has not yet been received for 2023/24 but it is anticipated that the budgeted £3,000 will be received.
- 4.8. If the projected outturn does materialise there will be a surplus of £29,497.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Reserves & Balances. The current amounts held by the Joint Crematorium Committee and projected balances are:

	Capital Funding Reserve	Equipment Replacement Reserve	Budget Management Reserve	General Reserve
	£	£	£	£
Opening Balance 1 st April 23	483,492	695,480	42,461	146,000
Contribution in year	0	100,000	0	0
Applied from Reserve 2023/24	(483,492)	0	0	0
Closing Balance 31st March 24	0	795,480	42,461	146,000

5.2. The Capital Funding Reserve was set up to accumulate funds for capital projects at the Crematorium. The balance is 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 in 2021/22 and the funds are available to help mitigate any increased costs in 2023/24 due to utilities, rates or medical referee's.

The Working Balance was increased to £146,000 last year, and it is anticipated it will remain at this level. This is at a suitable level taking into account the financial risks associated with operating the Crematorium.

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 2023/2024 financial year.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

8.1. The North Devon Council and Torridge 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 Torridge 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 19th July 2023