

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE held on Friday 6th November 2020 at 2.30 p.m.

Present: Representing North Devon District Council

Councillors Cann, Davis, Y.Gubb and Phillips

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors Christie, J.Gubb, 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 August 2020 (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) CREMATORIUM MATTERS

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

i) Solar Panels

It was noted that the North Devon Council surveyor working on Crematorium projects had left the authority and that this would cause delays in investigating this and other projects.

ii) Covid Crisis Update

It was noted:

- a) That the number of mourners was now set at 30 (statutory limit) which was unlikely to change in the near future.

- b) That Post-funeral events are limited to 15 people with a local decision that a maximum of 6 people are allowed for a witnessed burial of ashes (restrictions due to narrow paths).
- c) That Government legislation in early October allowed a person confirmed as having the Covid19 virus to travel to attend the funeral of a close relative. Following legal advice and having consulted with the Joint Committee chair, it was decided to decline access to the crematorium as it severely breached the entire safety regime of the site and placed the staff and elderly mourners in particular at great risk.
- d) That Screens had been added to the lectern and stand-alone (family eulogy) microphone to enhance the protection afforded by the current 2-metre distancing.
- e) That some internal staff distancing measures had also been introduced (additional computer, moving a shared printer, an additional rest room) to ensure that in the event a staff member tests positive the entire team would not be required to self-isolate.
- f) That currently any second wave was expected to peak in January/February, but the projected 'reasonable worst case' projections were comfortably within the crematorium's capacity.
- g) That the crematorium had not had any Covid related funerals for over 20 weeks.

iii) Achievements

That an entire site/building survey was being conducted in mid-November for the first time since 1966. This would assist with any future works.

iv) Metals Recycling Charity Award

That Clarity had 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

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

v) Crematorium Figures

The Cremation figures were noted.

vi) Garden Improvements 2020/21

It was noted that the path works would commence on 22 November. Half of the hedge removal works had been undertaken and the fencing works arranged.

vii) Larkbear Development – Traffic Management

It was noted that the Traffic order was being drafted but the road layout/restrictions associated with it were not known. Once published the manager would report to members of the Joint Committee and engage in the formal consultation process. The interests of mourners attending a service and the importance of the site as a local resident's resource would be uppermost in any representations.

viii) Cremators – Routine Service

The Crematorium Manager reported that during last week's routine maintenance of the cremators a problem occurred when the cremators were re-fired up with smoke being emitted causing the fire alarms to go off. The Engineer was unable to identify the problem and could not guarantee at the time that he could get them working. This affected 3 cremations. Two of the families agreed to hold the cremation/services over and the other relocated to East Devon. The problem, however, rectified itself and no complaints had been received.

(f) PERFORMANCE QUARTER 2 2020/2021

The Joint Committee considered and noted a report by the Treasurer (previously circulated) regarding the performance for Quarter 2 April to September 2020/2021.

(g) DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Resolved that the following dates for future meetings be agreed:

Friday 11th June 2021 @ 2.30 p.m.
Friday 6th August 2021 @ 2.30 p.m.
Friday 5th November 2021 @ 2.30 p.m.
Friday 4th February 2022 @ 2.30 p.m.

It was noted that the next virtual Crematorium Joint Committee meeting would be on Friday 5th February 2021 @ 2.30 p.m..

Chairman

The meeting ended at 2.55 p.m.