

## **NORTH DEVON COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE held at the Crematorium, Barnstaple on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at 2.30 p.m.

Present: Representing North Devon District Council

Councillors Edgell, Jones, Lane, Moores and Yabsley  
(Chairman)

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors A.Inch, S.Inch and Pennington.

Officers

Procurement and Service Delivery Manager, Crematorium  
Manager, Secretary and Accountant

Also Present:

Jean Watkins (NDC Lead Planning Officer) and Sarah-Jane  
Mackenzie-Shapland (NDC Planning Officer) for minute (d) only.

### **(a) APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Harrison and Langmead and Steve Hearse (Treasurer)

### **(b) MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2017 (previously circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **(c) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors A.Inch and Edgell declared interests as Devon County Councillors

Councillor Yabsley declared an interest as a Devon County Councillors and Member of NDC Planning Committee.

Councillor Lane declared an interest as a Member of NDC Planning Committee.

#### **(d) LARKBEAR PLANNING APPLICATION**

Jean Watkins (NDC Lead Planning Officer) and Sarah-Jane Mackenzie-Shapland (NDC Planning Officer) stated the following:

- (i) that the s106 monies from the Sandringham Gardens application had been secured for the purchase of the extension to the woodland.
- (ii) that the signing of the s106 agreement agreed on the outline application consent had not yet been signed due to issues with the land owning parties.
- (iii) the current full application was for 236 dwellings and should have replicated the terms and contributions of the outline permission. However, the submission changed the access plans which would have an impact on the Crematorium Memorial Garden. Following negotiations the access had now been moved back to its original location. It was imperative that the future of the woodland areas around the Crematorium were preserved.
- (iv) that upon completion of the 400<sup>th</sup> dwelling the access/junction onto the A361 (primary access) should have been completed. In the interim access to the Crematorium and Old Torrington Road for construction traffic and visitors to the Crematorium would be via Gratton Way. The Bus Gate would be removed and relocated in Old Torrington Road. It was proposed to re-locate the bus gate on the completion of the 100<sup>th</sup> dwelling but the Planning Committee had requested that it be re-located at the commencement of the development.

The Joint Committee was agreed that construction traffic should be routed via Gratton Way and that the bus gate should be removed to facilitate this.

The Committee raised the following concerns:

- (A) At the proposed bus gate being re-provided in Old Torrington Road as a straight replacement of the existing gate and that alternatives needed to be considered. It was considered that Gratton Way would not be a particularly dignified way for bereaved families in funeral corteges to approach the Crematorium nor would it have the capacity to take the level of traffic envisaged.
- (B) The length of time it would take before the alternative access onto the A361 would be provided would be excessive.
- (C) That the improvements to be made to Gratton Way to facilitate all of the traffic and the possible issues with the Sainsbury's mini roundabout be addressed. The mix of commercial and domestic traffic and potential for obstruction/road closure following accidents was also a great concern.

It was agreed:

- (i) That a time restricting traffic order be placed on Old Torrington Road similar to that along the Strand to restrict peak hour traffic rather than the provision of a Bus Gate.
- (ii) That improvements be made to Old Torrington Road (heavily pot holed) and the roundabout at the top of Sticklepath Hill.
- (iii) That in the longer term access be from the A361 via the Larkbear development via a direct and unrestricted route

#### **(e) UPPER CAR PARK – PHASE 2 SNAGGING UPDATE**

The Joint Committee noted a report (copies tabled) by the Andrew Wilson, NDC Surveyor regarding a number of snagging problems with SW Highways (the Contractor).

NDC currently held a retention of £24,944.81 + vat from SWH Ltd in relation to the contract and for works not yet satisfactorily completed.

The main issues yet to be resolved were:

Car Park Sub Base and Grids  
Car Park resin bonding  
Masonry Brick Slips  
Water egress/alarm contact issue

It was reported that the Car Park Sub Base would be completed by Christmas.

#### **(f) CREMATORIUM MATTERS**

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

##### **i) Staffing Matters**

It was noted that the Manager had been awarded the ICCM Diploma and Eikhoff medal for outstanding achievement in his studies.

The Joint Committee congratulated the Manager on his achievement.

##### **ii) Achievements**

It was noted:

That, the staff had managed a recent service, that had been attended by about 800 mourners. The crematorium had been chosen because of its facilities to deal with a large funeral. The careful preparations ensured that the service went extremely well with minimal disruption to car-parks and the preceding/following services.

### iii) Crematorium Figures

The Cremation figures were noted.

### iv) Metals Charity Recycling Award

It was noted:

- a) That the Chairman had presented a cheque for £5,000 to the North Devon Cancer Care Centre Trust.
- b) That the next charity to be submitted for an award would be Families in Grief.
- c) That the recent increase in awards had apparently been achieved through the increasing use of the scheme and the resulting efficiency savings of the operating company.

### v) Legislation – Changes to Medical Referee Post: Update

It was noted that the Crematorium Manager had visited the Gloucester pilot scheme with Harry Waters, one of our Medical Referees. This was one of two pilots and it was operating as a commissioned service from the NHS (effectively being run by the Gloucester General Hospital Bereavement Office).

During the visit it was recognised that the geographical area that scheme covered was determined by the Coroner's area of responsibility, raising the possibility the authority likely to be responsible would be Devon County Council rather than each individual council.

This issue was raised with Dr Judith Bernstein (the Ministry of Justice lead for Coroners, Burials and Cremations). She indicated that there was no decision yet regarding how each area would be set up geographically and similarly no decision had been made about which authority would be responsible. She also indicated that the Brexit negotiations and recent tragedies at Grenfell and terrorist attacks at Westminster Bridge and Manchester Arena had been occupying her team with the result that the implementation had been delayed by an undetermined period – at least 2019.

### vi) Grounds Improvement Update

It was noted that the next phase of works (new 'summerhouse' structure and Poet's area border edging/paths) all required tenders in view of the

expenditure. These were pending with a view to works being completed early in the New Year.

vii) Chapel Music System

It was noted that the music system had been running for over 2 weeks and there had been a period of 'dual running' the old and new systems. However all was working well and there had been no problems with web casting.

viii Sanctums

It was noted that the sanctums had been popular and were now all full. There was room to expand and each was leased for 10 years.

It was agreed that a further 6 sanctums be purchased.

ix Christmas Closure

It was noted and agreed that the Crematorium would be closed on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> December 2017

**(g) PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT – QUARTER 2 2017/18**

The Joint Committee considered and noted a report by the Treasurer (previously circulated) regarding the performance for April to September 2017/18

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Chairman

The meeting ended at 4.00 p.m.