

**NORTH DEVON COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of North Devon Crematorium Joint Committee held at Crematorium Meeting Room - North Devon Crematorium on Friday, 9th June, 2023 at 2.30 pm

PRESENT: Members:

Councillor Inch (Chair)

Councillors Cann, Denton, Johns, Leaver, Lovering, Renshaw, Walker, Christie and Gubb

Officers:

Head of Planning, Housing and Health and Bereavement (Crematorium) Manager, Secretary and Accountant

**1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR 2023/24**

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

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

**3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR 2023/24**

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

**4. TO APPROVE THE CORRECT RECORD OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3RD FEBRUARY 2023**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 (previously circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

**6. ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD WHICH, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE MEETING AS A MATTER OF URGENCY**

There were no items of urgency.

**7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest declared.

**8. 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 24<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, from £550 to £350 for North Devon/Torrige residents.

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

<b>Direct Cremations</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
April	12	24
May	6	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>47</b>

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.

**9. OUTTURN REPORT 2022/23**

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.

Chair

The meeting ended at 3.07 pm