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North Devon Council
Brynsworthy Environment Centre
Barnstaple
North Devon EX31 3NP

K. Miles.
Chief Executive.

NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the North Devon Crematorium Joint Committee will be held in the Crematorium Meeting Room - North Devon Crematorium on **FRIDAY 7TH JUNE 2024 at 2.30 pm**

Members of the North Devon Crematorium Joint Committee

Representing North Devon Council

Councillors Cann, Denton, Haworth-Booth, P Leaver, Lovering, Renshaw and Walker

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors to be notified

AGENDA

1. Appointment of Chair 2024/25 (Torridge District Council Member)
2. Apologies for absence
3. Appointment of Vice Chair 2024/25 (North Devon Council Member)
4. To approve the correct record of the minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2024 (Pages 5 - 8)
(attached)
 - (a) Matters Arising
5. Items brought forward by the Chair
6. Declarations of Interest

Please telephone the Corporate and Community Services team to prepare a form for your signature before the meeting. Interests must be re-declared when the item is called. A declaration of interest under the Code of Conduct will be a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, an Other Registrable Interest or a Non-Registrable Interest. If the item directly relates to your interest you must declare the interest and leave the room for the item, save in the case of Other Registrable Interests or Non-Registrable Interests where you may first speak on the item as a member of the public if provision has been made for the public to speak. If the matter does not directly relate to your interest but still affects it then you must consider whether you are affected to a greater extent than most people and whether a reasonable person would consider your judgement to be clouded, if you are then you must

leave the room for the item (although you may speak as a member of the public if provision has been made for the public to speak) or, if you are not, then you can declare the interest but still take part).

7. To agree the agenda between Part 'A' and Part 'B' (Confidential Restricted Information)

PART 'A'

8. **Crematorium Matters** (Pages 9 - 10)
Report by the Crematorium Manager (attached)
9. **Outturn Report 2023/24** (Pages 11 - 14)
Report by Treasurer (attached)
10. **To note that the next Crematorium Joint Committee meeting will be on Friday 2nd August 2024 at 2:30 pm**

PART 'B' (CONFIDENTIAL RESTRICTED INFORMATION)

Nil

NOTE: Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

In addition to any document specifically mentioned, reports included in this Agenda will have been prepared with reference to any or all of the following:

1. All relevant statutory provisions.
2. All relevant Government circulars and ministerial advice.
3. All relevant adopted policies of the Council.
4. Capital Works Programme.
5. Current Estimates.
6. Standing Orders
7. Consultants' opinion and advice.
8. Published works relevant to the subject of the report.

If you have any enquiries about this agenda, please contact Corporate and Community Services, telephone 01271 388253

30.05.24



North Devon Council protocol on recording/filming at Council meetings

The Council is committed to openness and transparency in its decision-making. Recording is permitted at Council meetings that are open to the public. Members of the public that attend meetings must be aware that these meetings are open to the public and so therefore both individuals and the Council itself have the right to record the meeting. The Council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be filmed. The Chair of the meeting will make sure any request not to be filmed is respected.

The rules that the Council will apply are:

1. The recording must be overt (clearly visible to anyone at the meeting) and must not disrupt proceedings. The Council will put signs up at any meeting where we know recording is taking place.
2. The Chair of the meeting has absolute discretion to stop or suspend recording if, in their opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting or if the person recording is in breach of these rules.
3. We will ask for recording to stop if the meeting goes into 'part B' where the public is excluded for confidentiality reasons. In such a case, the person recording should leave the room ensuring all recording equipment is switched off.
4. Any member of the public has the right not to be filmed. We ensure that agendas for, and signage at, Council meetings make it clear that recording can take place – anyone not wishing to be filmed must advise the Chair at the earliest opportunity to allow them to be directed to an area in the room where they will not be caught on camera. Subject to paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 above, audio recordings shall be permitted at all times during public meetings.
5. The recording should not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or in a way that ridicules or shows a lack of respect for those in the recording. The Council would expect any recording in breach of these rules to be removed from public view.

Notes for guidance:

Please contact either our Corporate and Community Services team or our Communications team in advance of the meeting you wish to record at so we can make all the necessary arrangements for you on the day.

For more information contact the Corporate and Community Services team on **01271 388253** or email memberservices@northdevon.gov.uk or the Communications Team on **01271 388278**, email communications@northdevon.gov.uk.

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the NORTH DEVON CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE held at the Crematorium on Friday 2nd February 2024 at 2.30 p.m.

Present: Representing North Devon District Council

Councillors Cann, Haworth-Booth and Walker (Vice Chair)

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors Cottle-Hunkin (sub for Councillor Johns), Gubb and Inch (Chair).

Officers

NDC Head of Customer Focus, Crematorium Manager, Treasurer, Secretary, Accountant and NDC Customer Feedback and Service Improvement Officer

(a) APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Christie, Denton, Harding, Johns and Lovering

(b) MINUTES

- (i) RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd November 2023 (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) Trainee Manager: Update

It was noted that as previously reported, the manager had indicated his intention to retire at the end of the 2024/25 financial year, facilitated by reducing working days over two years to enable recruitment of a trainee manager to take over from 1/4/2025. North Devon Council SMT had approved the business case to enable the process to move to the advertising of the post internally within both North Devon and Torridge Councils with the aim of the trainee post being filled by 1/4/2024. It was anticipated that the 'pay-back' for the associated costs would be within two-years (from 1/4/2025).

ii) Crematorium Figures

The Cremation figures were noted. The actual figure for January was 154.

iii) Direct Cremations

It was noted that the cremation numbers for the 9-months of operation were:

Direct Cremations	April 2022 – December 2022	April 2023- December 2023
Total	99	172

and that 9% were non-resident Direct Cremations

iv) Crematorium Organist

It was noted that the Crematorium Organist Contract had been awarded until February 2027 with an option to extend by up to additional 2 years. The new rate would be £25 per service.

v) Phase B Works (Garage/Memorial Room)

It was noted that the building works had been completed. A number of payments still remained outstanding (including the retention), but the final total was expected to be close to the projected budget.

vi) Medical Referee

It was noted that on 1st April 2024 legislation removed the need to scrutinise any medical information as part of the crematorium's application process. Despite this, the Medical Referee role had been unexpectedly retained whilst the Government consulted on how cremations would be authorised in the future. The absence of the need for medical scrutiny strongly suggested the Medical Referee role would be replaced by a process of 'non-medical' crematorium staff scrutiny and authorisation.

vii) Crematorium Solar Panels

It was noted that the Rowan chapel was constructed in 2015/16 with a sufficiently strong roof to permit the installation of solar panels. North Devon Council intended to investigate the installation of panels at the Brynsworthy Environment Centre. It was hoped to initially obtain a specification and anticipated cost through an engineer previously used by Torridge Council (report cost approximately £2,000 - £3,000).

It was agreed to undertake a survey to install panels at the crematorium using the same method and at a similar cost and that the funding thereof be met from the Budget Management Reserve to enable options and costs to be reported to the next Joint Committee meeting.

viii) Metals Recycling Charity Award

It was noted:

That North Devon Hospice had received an award of £14,000 and that Cruse would be the next nomination in line with the current rota.

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

The Joint Committee considered applications from the following additional charities seeking to be added to the rota:

- Huntington's Disease Association
- Child Bereavement UK
- Young Lives v Cancer
- Widowed and Young
- Stroke Association

It was agreed that It was agreed that no additions be made to the existing rota list.

(f) PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 3 2023/2024

The Joint Committee noted a report by the Treasurer (previously circulated) regarding the performance for quarter 3 April to December 2023/2024.

It was noted that the invoice for gas had just been received and was considerable higher than budgeted £6,000 per month at £9,000 per month. This would affect the budgeted figures for both financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

(g) 2024/2025 BUDGET, FEES AND CHARGES

The Joint Committee considered and noted a report by the Treasurer (previously circulated) regarding the budget, fees and charges for 2024/2025.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the basic Cremation charge for 2024/25 of £850 be approved as detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report
- (ii) That the 2024/25 budget as set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report be approved.
- (iii) That the fees and charges for 2024/25 as detailed in paragraph 4.6 and appendix 2 be approved.
- (iv) That the distribution of surpluses for 2023/24 of £416,230 to the constituent authorities: £249,740 to North Devon Council and £166,490 to Torridge District Council be approve.
- (v) That the transfer of £100,000 to the Equipment Replacement Reserve be approved

(h) DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that the next meeting would be on Friday 7th June 2024 @ 2.30 p.m.

Chairman

The meeting ended at 3.04 p.m.

Friday 7th June 2024

Crematorium Matters – Manager’s Report

Trainee Manager Update

The new Trainee Manager was appointed following interview on 1st March 2024. Jo Teasdale from North Devon Council was the successful candidate and she started on 1st April.

Cremation Figures (excluding NVF)

	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
April	137	161	114	146	119	172	122	132	149	137
May	114	123	136	131	137	131	100	146	153	158E
June	141	124	125	125	120	124	108	131	128	
July	105	123	138	129	125	135	122	110	138	
Aug	106	112	120	105	122	116	111	133	132	
Sept	123	118	124	103	111	119	129	136	134	
Oct	137	125	133	130	125	117	119	119	129	
Nov	104	153	132	125	113	145	130	132	135	
Dec	123	122	130	116	113	139	125	134	131	
Jan	131	152	179	165	144	172	140	178	154	
Feb	131	135	171	143	130	132	119	174	149	
Mar	150	160	160	137	136	139	157	171	140	
Total	1502	1608	1662	1555	1495	1641	1482	1696	1672	

Phase B Works (Garage Store/Memorial Room)

There are a few final invoices yet to be received but the project is essentially ‘on-budget’.

Crematorium Solar Panels

The consultant who we hoped to use to assist with the design/costing of the solar panels at the crematorium is unable to assist due to workload. Enquiries are in hand to identify another local alternative.

Metals Recycling Charity Award

Cruse was nominated for the second 2023 award (due approx. July 2024). Children’s Hospice SW have been submitted for the first 2024 nomination (Due December 2024). Rota for subsequent awards:

**Families in Grief
North Devon Hospice
Cruse**

Maintenance Costs

An unexpected failure in the heat management system for the abatement equipment (removes pollutants) prevented cremations for over two days in April. As a result a single cremation was transferred to another crematorium with the knowledge and consent of the family as they needed certainty on the collection day for the ashes due to them being taken on a flight.

The cost of this repair and part replacements was approximately £17,500.

In addition, on the recommendation of the manufacturer, the filters in the same abatement equipment were replaced after 12-years use as part of preventative maintenance at a cost of £33,000.

Both works are outside the normal maintenance budget expectations and will be funded by a reserve fund.

Utility Costs

Our gas and electricity are provided through the Crown Commercial Service, a Trading Fund and an Executive Agency of the Cabinet Office, which pools local authorities to provide best value when procuring.

This has not entirely mitigated the extremely high charges businesses have incurred, resulting in some exceptionally high utility bills, particularly for gas.

Fortunately, from 1st April the gas charges have reduced to a third of their previous level and are now set for 12-months.



North Devon Crematorium Joint Committee

Report Date: 7th June 2024

Topic: Crematorium Outturn 2023/2024

Report by: Treasurer

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report presents the Outturn figures for the financial year 2023/24.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. It is recommended that the Outturn Report 2023/2024 be noted.

2.2. It is recommended that the 2023/24 surplus of £129,232 be allocated to reserves as detailed in 4.3.

2.3. It is recommended that the Reserves and Balances contained in 5.1 be approved.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. To inform Members of the actual financial performance for 2023/24.

4. REPORT

4.1. A summary of the revenue expenditure and income for the year is shown below together with the original budget and forecast as at 31st December. The actual for 2022/23 is also shown for information.



	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Original Budget	2023/24 Forecast as at 31 st December	2023/24 Actual
Premises	234,120	249,010	277,383	316,256
Transport	166	500	162	159
Supplies and Services	205,159	211,980	225,473	217,051
Support & Employees	316,985	366,610	348,559	344,143
Total Expenditure	756,430	828,100	851,577	877,609
Fees & Charges	1,348,546	1,254,650	1,324,288	1,384,617
Sales	76,537	79,680	63,350	90,181
Interest	5,511	7,000	24,442	25,186
CAMEO*	3,883	3,000	3,251	3,251
Insurance Claim	0	0	19,836	19,836
Total Income	1,434,477	1,344,330	1,435,167	1,523,071
Cont Equip Replace Res	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Distribution NDC	249,740	249,740	249,740	249,740
Distribution TDC	166,490	166,490	166,490	166,490
Surplus/(Deficit)	161,817	0	67,360	129,232

*Crematoria Abatement of Mercury Emissions Organisation

4.2. Expenditure is £50k higher than the original budget and £26k higher than projected at Qtr 3. Income is £179k higher than original budget and £88k higher than projected at Qtr 3. The reasons for higher expenditure costs relate to increased utility costs and have been reported previously on the quarterly budget monitoring reports. Income was significantly higher than the original budget and the Qtr 3 projections, this was due to the higher number of services. Sales and bank interest were also higher than budgeted. A payment of £19,836 has been received from the insurers in respect of the damage done to the roof of the Crematorium.

4.3. The outturn position is a surplus of £129,232. It is recommended the surplus be transferred to the Equipment Replacement Reserve £69,232 (some additional equipment costs will be incurred in 2024/25) and the Budget Management Reserve £60,000 (to provide protection for the increased utility costs).

4.4. During 2023/24 the capital scheme for the Phase B scheme (demolition of the garages etc) has been completed.



5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Reserves & Balances are detailed in the table below.

The Capital Funding Reserve was set up to accumulate funds for capital projects at the Crematorium. The majority has been used 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 to help mitigate some of the increased fuel costs. 2023/24 has seen increased utility costs. However, due to the increase in the number of services these funds have not been required in 2023/24. It is recommended to retain the funds in this reserve for the time being to help to mitigate any increased costs that may arise.

The Working Balance has been maintained at £146,000, which should be sufficient taking into account of the financial risks associated with operating the Crematorium.

	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
Capital Spend 2023/24	(476,081)	0	0	0
2023/24 Revenue Surplus	0	69,232	60,000	0
Closing Balance 31st March 24	7,411	864,712	102,461	146,000

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 Torrige 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 Torrige 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 23rd May 2024