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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, 1ST NOVEMBER, 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 (Vice-Chair)

Representing Torridge District Council

Councillors Andrews, Cottle-Hunkin, Gubb, Harding and Inch (Chair)

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. To approve the correct record of the minutes of the meeting held on 2 August 2024 (Pages 5 - 8)
(attached)
 - (a) Matters Arising
3. Items brought forward, which in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered by the meeting as a matter of urgency.
4. 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).

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

PART 'A'

6. **Crematorium Matters** (Pages 9 - 10)
Report by the Crematorium Manager (attached)
7. **Performance Monitoring Qtr 2 2024/2025** (Pages 11 - 14)
Report by Treasurer (attached)
8. **Proposed Dates of Future meetings 2025/2026**
Recommended that the following dates be agreed:
 - Friday 6 June 2025 at 2.30 pm
 - Friday 1 August 2025 at 2.30 pm
 - Friday 7 November 2025 at 2.30 pm
 - Friday 6 February 2026 at 2.30 pm
9. **To note that the next Crematorium Joint Committee meeting will be on Friday 7 February 2025 at 2.30 pm**

PART 'B' (CONFIDENTIAL RESTRICTED INFORMATION)

Nil.

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

24.10.24



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.

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 North Devon Crematorium Joint Committee held at Crematorium Meeting Room - North Devon Crematorium on Friday, 2nd August, 2024 at 2.30 pm

PRESENT: Representing North Devon Council:

Councillors Cann, Denton, P Leaver, Lovering, and Walker (Vice Chair)

Representing Torridge District Council:

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

Officers:

Head of Customer Focus, Bereavement (Crematorium) Manager, Treasurer, Secretary, Senior Accountant, and Trainee Bereavement (Crematorium) Manager.

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Cottle-Hunkin, Haworth-Booth and Lovering.

12. TO APPROVE THE CORRECT RECORD OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7TH JUNE 2024 (ATTACHED)

- (i) RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7th June 2024 (previously circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- (ii) Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.

13. 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.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared.

15. CREMATORIUM MATTERS

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

i) Crematorium Figures- (excluding NVF)

The Cremation figures were noted. The Crematorium Manager reported that there had been 125 cremations in July.

ii) Crematorium Solar Panels

It was noted that North Devon Council had now use Devon County Council's procurement service. They were being consulted to identify the best method to design/procure panels for the crematorium and other NDC sites.

iii) Metals Recycling Charity Award

It was noted:

That Cruse had been nominated for the second 2023 award (due July 2024) had been delayed with a second award request expected before end of year

Rota for subsequent awards:

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

iv) Service Over-Run Charge

It was noted that an incident had occurred recently where the actions of a funeral director had led to the chapel being unavailable for about 45 minutes after their service.

It was agreed that the use of the Service Over-Run charge (£295) be used in such circumstances and that an additional cleaning charge be applied if necessary.

It was noted that such charges would apply to the funeral directors and not the families.

The Committee recorded its thanks to the staff for dealing with the situation in a professional and efficient manner.

v) Other matters

The Crematorium Manager reported that the cleaning contract was out for tender and that a third quote was awaited for the works to the garden area.

He also reported that there was currently no statutory inspection regime in relation to the services provided by funeral directors. The Ministry for Justice had in light of recent national incidents issued guidance for local authority visits of funeral directors and he would be attending such visits in the North Devon area.

vi) Service Improvement Plan

The Committee noted that a Service Improvement Plan which had been undertaken by the Trainee Crematorium Manager and had been consulted on with the Crematorium Team had been completed. The copies of the document for information and comment would be emailed to all Members.

16. PERFORMANCE MONITORING QTR 1 2024/2025

The Joint Committee noted a report by the Treasurer (previously circulated) regarding the performance for quarter 1 April to June 2024-2025.

17. TO NOTE THAT THE NEXT CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING WILL BE ON FRIDAY 1ST NOVEMBER 2024 AT 2.30PM

It was noted that the next meeting would be on Friday 1st November 2024 @ 2.30 p.m.

Chair

The meeting ended at 2.55 pm

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Friday 1st November 2024

Crematorium Matters – Manager’s Report

Staffing Update

A part-time gardener has retired after 20-years service. In line with the service improvement plan and the reduced post-autumn workload recruitment will be in the spring, probably via an apprentice/hybrid appointment.

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	158
June	141	124	125	125	120	124	108	131	128	111
July	105	123	138	129	125	135	122	110	138	125
Aug	106	112	120	105	122	116	111	133	132	104
Sept	123	118	124	103	111	119	129	136	134	111
Oct	137	125	133	130	125	117	119	119	129	125E
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	

Metals Recycling Charity Award

CRUSE has been awarded £11,600.

Rota for subsequent awards:

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

Service Improvements

A survey has been circulated to Funeral Directors (with a response date of 20th October) seeking their views on current service delivery and ideas for improvements. A copy of the questions has been and the results will be tabled at the meeting.

Agenda Item 6

It is hoped that this will also help inform any decision making around pricing at the next Joint Committee meeting. To assist at this stage benchmarking information using national and South West crematoria statistics which will be tabled at the meeting.

Crematorium Solar Panels

Due to technical issues with Brynsworthy it has been recommended that the Crematorium be progressed as a stand-alone project. To assist, a preliminary single quote has been obtained based on current electricity costs which, whilst it incorporates some incorrect presumptions (such as use of the copper roof), does give an insight into costs and time to break even. The estimated cost for a basic 70KW system (no storage) is £61,500 with an annual electricity bill saving of £6,687, a payback period of 7 years 4 months and net savings over 20-years of £207,116.

The view of the Joint Committee is sought regarding identifying funds and cost limit (possibly the equipment reserve) and whether to proceed to a procurement process. The quote will be available at the meeting.

Projects

A 2.5 day closure for cremator servicing starts on 4th November. Previously we have not been required to close for 6-monthly servicing but enhanced safety protocols imposed by the service company have made this necessary. A number of projects have been timed to use this opportunity.

Peace Garden: Works starting 4th November to create a peaceful garden with seating, water feature and pergola on the old garage site. The noisy elements will be largely completed at this time. Funding source is a S106 payment. Completion of ground works likely in early Jan/Late Dec.

Tarmac repairs and the hearse bay marking will be completed at the entrance.

Drainage works: The ramp from the upper car-park by the Rowan Chapel frequently has an overflow of water when it rains. Drains are being installed to mitigate this unsightly (and risky in winter) flow of water where vehicles and visitors pass.

Cremator Maintenance

A number of costly repairs have already been carried out this financial period. It is anticipated that some additional expensive works will be required in the next few months: Flue perforation at base (fortunately the 'cold-side'), damper on one cremator, hearth replacement. These may require funding through the equipment reserve as anticipated for non-routine maintenance.



North Devon Crematorium Joint Committee

Report Date: 1st November 2024

Topic: Crematorium Performance Monitoring Qtr 2 2024/2025

Report by: Treasurer

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report presents the financial performance information for April to September 2024/25.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. It is recommended that the performance for April to September 2024/2025 be noted.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. To inform Members of the financial performance for April to September 2024/2025.

4. REPORT

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

	Original Budget 2024/25	Profiled Budget (Apr-Sep)	Actual Apr- Sept	Variance (Under) / over	Projected Outturn	Projected Outturn Variance
Total Expenditure	927,400	463,700	498,950	35,250	956,639	29,239
Total Income	1,443,630	721,815	688,686	(33,129)	1,435,476	(8,154)
Surplus/(Deficit)	0	0	(18,379)	(18,379)	12,607	12,607

*Crematoria Abatement of Mercury Emissions Organisation



- 4.2. Qtr 2 is showing expenditure £35,250 over the profiled budget and income is £33,129 lower than profiled budget, £50,000 is to be utilised from the Equipment Replacement Reserve to cover additional equipment costs giving a total net variance of £18,379 deficit. The projections for the year are predicting expenditure £29,239 over budget and income £8,154 lower than budget, also £50,000 is being utilised from the Equipment Replacement Reserve, producing a net variance of £12,607 surplus.
- 4.3. **Premises** – Spend in Qtr 2 and the projection for the year are both over budget. The overspend relates primarily to additional costs that have been necessary for repairs to the abatement equipment. This has been partly reduced by the gas invoices being lower than anticipated. The additional plant costs will be funded from the Equipment Replacement Reserve.
- 4.4. **Supplies and Services** – The overspend relates to higher music system costs and non recoverable VAT on the additional plant repairs.
- 4.5. **Central Support / Employees** – The underspend relates to a member of staff reducing to part time.
- 4.6. **Income** – Fees and charges are lower than budget due to the lower number of services in Qtr 2, although we expect this to recover somewhat during the remaining quarters. Memorial sales are higher than budget.
- 4.7. The receipt from CAMEO has not yet been received for 2024/25 but it is anticipated that the budgeted £2,500 will be received.
- 4.8. If the projected outturn does materialise there will be a small surplus of £12,607.

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 24	7,411	864,712	102,461	146,000
Contribution in year	0	100,000	0	0
Applied from Reserve 2024/25				
Closing Balance 31st March 25	7,411	914,712	102,461	146,000



5.2. The Capital Funding Reserve was set up to accumulate funds for capital projects at the Crematorium. £7,411 is the residual balance from the Phase B project (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, cremator re-lining and major repairs 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 2024/25.

The Working Balance will remain at £146,000. 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 2024/2025 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 14th October 2024