

MINUTES OF RUGBY AND WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT CREMATORIUM COMMITTEE

2 FEBRUARY 2023

PRESENT:

Members of the Committee:

Rugby Borough Council - Councillor Poole and Ms Robbins
West Northamptonshire Council - Councillor James

Officers:

Rugby Borough Council - David Burrows (Chief Officer – Regulation and Safety), Lorraine Marley (Acting Bereavement Services Manager), Lisa Marshall (Finance Business Partner), Satwinder Chandler (Lead Accountant) and Linn Ashmore (Democratic Services Officer)

West Northamptonshire Council - Peter Hackett (Environmental, Countryside & Parks Manager) and Ian Watkins (Finance Business Partner)

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED THAT – Councillor Gilford (West Northamptonshire Council) be appointed Chairman for the remainder of the 2022/23 municipal year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED THAT – Councillor Ms Robbins (Rugby Borough Council) be appointed Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the 2022/23 municipal year.

In the absence of the Chairman, Councillor Ms Robbins took the Chair for the meeting.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2022 were approved and signed.

4. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gilford (West Northamptonshire Council).

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

6. FINANCIAL MONITORING AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 3 APRIL – DECEMBER 2022

The Joint Committee considered a report concerning the anticipated 2022/23 year-end financial position for revenue and capital based on Quarter 3 data. It also looked at various Key Performance Indicators.

It was noted that an overall surplus of £296,000 was anticipated for the 2022/23 year end which would result in a financial return of £148,000 for equal distribution to Rugby Borough Council and West Northamptonshire Council based on the 50/50 profit sharing agreement. This figure was £5,000 less than the predicted budget.

It was noted that there had been 16 complaints received during April to December 2022 and the Joint Committee requested that information about complaints be provided for the next meeting.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the financial position and performance information for Quarter 3 2022/23 be noted; and
- (2) information on complaints be reported to the next meeting.

7. RAINSBROOK CREMATORIUM OPERATIONAL UPDATE

The Joint Committee considered a report concerning an operational update for the Rainsbrook Crematorium.

It was noted that since the report had been published a member of staff had resigned which had impacted further on resources. Agency staff had been employed to help cover and while the options for the working patterns and staff structure were explored. Staff were being fully engaged in the process.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the contractor had been unable to carry out the scheduled service on the cremators and cancelled the visit. Due to the short notice, it had not been possible to arrange another two-day period of non-operation and it was decided that the cremators would be serviced separately to ensure one was always in operation. This meant there was a slight restriction to the number of cremations possible, but it was not expected to have a significant impact. Under the contract, the cremators were serviced every five years.

The Joint Committee raised concerns about the impact of the significant increase in the cost of gas. The proposed actions to reduce gas usage outlined in the report were noted. Within the environmental policy in place, families were asked to agree to cremations being held over to the day after the service which would allow for only one cremator to be in use and would result in savings.

The inspection carried out by the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities (FBCA) went well but a few actions were identified, and these were being addressed. The next inspection was not due for a further five years.

RESOLVED THAT – the report be noted.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed the next meeting would be arranged by email to be held at the end of April 2023.

9. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED THAT - under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of information defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

10. RAINSBROOK CREMATORIUM 2023/24 BUDGET SETTING

The Joint Committee considered the private report concerning the proposed budget and fees and charges for 2023/24 fees.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the 2023/24 current revenue draft budget (as shown in Appendix 1 to the report) be approved by the Joint Committee, subject to further approval by the respective Councils and incorporated into Rugby Borough Council's Council Tax and Budget Setting meeting of Full Council in February 2023;
- (2) the proposed Fees and Charges (as shown in Appendix 2 to the report) be approved; and
- (3) the comparison table (as shown in Appendix 3 to the report) and reserves forecast (as shown in Appendix 4 to the report) be noted.

CHAIRMAN