

MINUTES OF RUGBY AND DAVENTRY CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

28 JANUARY 2021

PRESENT:

Members of the Committee: Councillor Mrs Lomax (Daventry District Council)
Councillor Robertson (Daventry District Council)
Councillor Ms Robbins (Rugby Borough Council)
Councillor Roberts (Chair) (Rugby Borough Council)

Officers: Dan Green (Head of Environment and Public Realm)
Lisa Handy (Bereavement Services Manager)
Gemma Lister (Senior Finance Officer)
Linn Ashmore (Democratic Services Officer) - Rugby Borough Council
Martin Wilson (Contracts and Performance Manager) – Daventry District Council

9. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2020 were approved.

10. FINANCIAL MONITORING AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS Q3 2020/21

The Joint Committee considered a report concerning the finance and performance for the crematorium for the period April-December 2020 that was circulated prior to the meeting.

It was noted that the average income has increased since quarter 2 and the share of local deaths had reduced to 58.32%. The overall budgeted surplus was £35,493 and the predicted profit share between Rugby and Daventry was £171,010 each.

There were 736 cremations compared to 705 for the same period last year.

The main reason for the drop was reported to be due to the restrictions in the numbers permitted in the chapels. Other crematoria were following a lower one-metre distancing rule meaning they were able to accommodate more people resulting in these being a preferred choice for families arranging funerals.

The Bereavement Services Manager reported that the space available and layout of seating was being reviewed in consultation with Regulatory Services to see if any changes could be made to increase the numbers permitted.

It was noted that the advice from Public Health England was that people should stay two metres apart and this guidance is followed by Rainsbrook Crematorium. The current maximum number was sixteen people, excluding the celebrant,

organist and funeral director, and irrespective of whether people were in family groups or bubbles. The Joint Committee was supportive of this stating that health and safety should be the priority.

RESOLVED THAT – the report be noted.

11. CREMATORIUM OPERATIONAL UPDATE

The Joint Committee considered a report presented by the Bereavement Services Manager concerning the operational update.

The crematorium was currently averaging 8-10 bookings per day and numbers were increasing. The crematorium was booked up to the end of February. One reason for this was funeral directors were booking in advance due to not being able to fleet vehicles.

Figures were submitted to the Coventry and Warwickshire Resilience Forum on a weekly basis for both cremations and burials and the forum continues to monitor the statistics to ensure that capacity remains available to continue to operate.

The hearth and brickwork in cremator no 1 had been replaced. The normal cost would have been £20-£25,000 but due to issues with the maintenance contract earlier in the year it had been possible to negotiate a greatly reduced price. Cremator no 2 was also due to be replaced and this was anticipated to take place around the end of February.

It was confirmed this was ongoing maintenance work and the cremators remained in good working order.

There was a delay in the Bereavement Services staff receiving the vaccine. There was wide support for this to take place to protect staff and for general community resilience and pandemic management reasons. Priority groups were set nationally, and the case was being made at a local level for staff to be included. The delay was with local partner colleagues producing the lists and the associated processes involved in rolling out the programme. The Joint Committee was assured that the matter was in hand and it was hoped that the situation would be resolved in the next couple of weeks. Other front-line staff are also due to be included in the list.

The Committee placed on record its appreciation for the hard work and dedication of the bereavement team staff.

RESOLVED THAT- the update be noted.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed the next meeting would be arranged by email. This may be delayed slightly due to operational arrangements around Daventry District Council joining a unitary authority.

13. 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.

14. RAINSBROOK CREMATORIUM 2021/22 BUDGET SETTING

The Joint Committee considered the private report concerning the proposed 2021/22 revenue budget.

RESOLVED THAT- the 2021/22 current draft budget be approved, subject to further approval by the respective Councils.

CHAIRMAN