

MINUTES OF RUGBY AND DAVENTRY CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

7 JANUARY 2020

PRESENT:

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

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

9. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2019 were approved and signed by the Chairman subject to the name of the Vice-Chairman being amended from Councillor Robertson to Councillor Roberts.

10. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Simon Bowers (Daventry District Council).

11. FINANCIAL MONITORING AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS APRIL – NOVEMBER 2019

The Joint Committee considered a report concerning the finance and performance for the crematorium for the period April-November 2019 that was circulated prior to the meeting.

It was noted that the number of no service cremations had risen to 7% and the overall budgeted surplus was £310,000 to be divided equally. This would be divided equally between Rugby and Daventry with a profit share of £155,000 each. The depreciation charge would be deducted from Rugby's share.

The number of cremations was slightly higher than compared to previous years. There was a peak in July which could have been due to the exceptionally hot weather. The figure for December was expected to be around 90 cremations.

The reserve balances had been updated to include the additional £10,000 added to the CAMEO reserve.

The IPPC emissions were reported as being compliant and listed as 'low'. The permit was due in January. The CO₂ figure for December was still awaited.

A lot of work had been carried out to promote the crematorium including a successful funeral exhibition. It was noted that the facility had an excellent local reputation.

RESOLVED THAT – the report be noted.

12. CREMATORIUM OPERATIONAL UPDATE

The Joint Committee considered a report concerning the operational update. The Bereavement Services Manager presented the report to the Joint Committee. The key points included:

Rainsbrook Funeral Service

Due to a delay in relation to GDPR regulations the timetable had shifted, and the service was due to go out to tender on 10 January. It was anticipated that the contract would be awarded by 28 February and would formally commence on 1 April 2020. The promotional literature would be finalised once a funeral director had been appointed.

The tender process was based on price, health and safety, best practise and qualifications.

The service would be available to everyone, including for public health funerals.

All funeral directors were able to tender whether independent or part of a group and an excellent professional service would be guaranteed. The difference was in the additional costs, but this would not affect the standard of the main service elements.

Government had announced an increase in the Funeral Expenses Payment to £1,000 which was long awaited.

Car Park Expansion

The Joint Committee had previously agreed to extend the current car park and the next step was to explore what could be achieved within the budget agreed.

Lack of parking was the biggest comment from visitors. Staff do their best to manage parking but sometimes it was difficult to judge the size of funerals. There was some additional parking available at the adjacent rugby club.

New Memorial Area

The new kerb memorial area was due to be completed by the end of the financial year. The aim was to provide an affordable alternative memorial for

families. The cost would be in the region of £250 on a lease basis and there would be premium versions available.

The plaques would be attached to the granite kerbs and would be removable. The next step was to meet with the stonemason.

Internal Audit

The outcome of the internal audit carried out by Daventry District Council was positive with full assurance given and only two low risk controls to consider.

One of the recommendations related to the creation and maintenance of an inventory of equipment, furniture, fixtures and fittings. There was an inventory within the operational manual, so it was unclear whether a separate financial version was required.

A health and safety audit carried out had resulted in there being no issues reported.

Christmas Service

The service had been well attended and demonstrated the high regard held for the crematorium. A separate service for children was also held.

The services raised monies that were split between the Mayor of RBC and the Chairman of DDC's nominated charities.

RESOLVED THAT- the report be noted.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed the next meeting would be held at 2pm on Tuesday 21 April 2020.

14. 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.

15. RAINSBROOK CREMATORIUM BUDGET 2020/21 / FEES AND CHARGES

The Joint Committee considered private reports concerning the crematorium budget and the proposed fees and charges for 2020/21.

It was noted that the disposal of remains, arrangements in connection with disposal of remains and the services of an undertaker were exempt from VAT.

In line with a new CIPFA code of practice seeking local authorities to provide more detail in relation to reserves, it was agreed that a 3-year rolling forecast be introduced.

RESOLVED THAT-

- (1) the proposed budget for the crematorium for 2020/21 be approved, subject to further approval by the respect Councils;
- (2) the introduction of a 3-year rolling plan for reserves be approved; and
- (3) the proposed fees and charges for the crematorium for 2020/21 be approved.

CHAIRMAN