

CENTRAL DURHAM CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee held in the Town Hall, Durham, on Wednesday 21 January, 2009, commencing at 5.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors R G Dickie, D E Jackson, Mrs S J Pitts, F Reynolds, D J Southwell, A L Thomson, N Van Zwanenberg, Ms C A Woods, J Marr, F Walker and Mrs J L Wood.

Councillor Ms C A Woods in the Chair

2237 MINUTES

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 October, 2008, were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2238 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT AND REGISTRAR

2239 CREMATIONS

The Superintendent and Registrar reported the number of cremations for the period 1 October 2008 to 31 December 2008. These were 548 (+ 9 NVF), a decrease of 74 (+ 3 NVF) on the same period in the previous year. The total of 548 (+ 9 NVF) included 310 from outside the area of the Joint Committee, with the remaining total being 238 for Durham City.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

2240 MEMORIAL GARDEN – SALE OF VASE BLOCKS AND PLAQUES

The Superintendent & Registrar reported that during the period 1 October 2008 to 31 December 2008, the following Vase Blocks and Memorial Plaques had been sold:

	<u>Nos Sold</u>
Vase Blocks	8
Large Plaques	26
Small Plaques	<u>10</u>
Total	<u>44</u>

Financial Information – (Net of V.A.T.)

Vase Blocks	£3,993.10
Large Plaques	£8,202.13
Small Plaques	<u>£2,005.84</u>
Total	<u>£14,201.07</u>

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

2241 CREMATION REGULATIONS (ENGLAND AND WALES) 2008

On 1 January, 2009, the Cremation Regulations (England and Wales) 2008, came into effect. These Regulations cover a good deal of detail but the fundamental effects are:

- (i) All Cremation Forms that have been in use, virtually unchanged since 1902, are now replaced by New Forms 1 to 13.
- (ii) The Applicant for Cremation (or a nominated representative) may now request to view the Cremation Certificates (Forms 4 and 5).

In such instances the Registrar must arrange a meeting with the Applicant for Cremation (or his/her representative) at the Crematorium. The Applicant may then request a meeting with the Medical Referee and, in some circumstances, it is possible that the Death concerned may be referred to the Coroner.

All such instances must be recorded by the Registrar and a report sent to the Department of Justice.

The Cremation Regulations (England and Wales) 2008, were only laid before Parliament on 3 November, 2008, and so there has been very little time to prepare for the new legislation. All new Cremation Forms 1 to 13, have had to be designed (using Statutory questions) ordered and printed. A series of seminars were arranged for Monday 12 January, 2009, at Mount Oswald Golf Club where the Medical Referees and the Registrar were to explain how the new Regulations would affect Funeral Directors and Doctors, and how possible problems would be resolved. A good number of Funeral Directors and Doctors were booked for the seminars.

The Ministry of Justice agreed a period of one month until 1 February, 2009, for the new system to be run alongside the existing one. Medical Referees will not be permitted to sign old style forms after 1 February, 2009.

The preparations for the implementation of the Cremation Regulations (England and Wales) 2008, had placed a considerable additional workload on the Crematorium Administrative Team, at an already busy time of year, and the Superintendent and Registrar expressed his thanks for their efforts.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

2242 INDEPENDENT TESTING OF CREMATORS

As a condition of the operating Licence, issued by Durham City Council, under the terms of the Environmental Protection Act (1990), the Cremators are due to be Independently Tested during the period 20-22 January 2009. The results of the tests will be reported to the Committee at the March meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

2243 STATUTORY DIRECTIONS TO ENGLISH LOCAL AUTHORITIES: REGULATIONS OF AIR POLLUTION FROM CREMATORIA

(Minute No. 2234, 22 October 2008 refers)

The report concerning progress towards the installation of Mercury Abatement Equipment that was agreed by the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee on 22 October, 2008, was sent to the Crematorium Regulator as required.

As a result of the report, a Variation Notice was issued to the Crematorium under the terms of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2007, Regulation 20.

The variations to the permit were as follows:

New condition 5.7 A general condition that the operator shall use the best available techniques for preventing or, where that is not practical, reducing emissions from the installation.

New condition 5.8 Requirement to provide information on Mercury Abatement.

The next Report to the Regulator is required in April 2009.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

2244 NATIONAL CREMATION STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 2008

The Superintendent and Registrar provided a copy of the Annual Cremation Statistics for the year 2008 which had been submitted to the Federation of British Cremation Authorities.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

2245 AUDITED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2007/08

The appointed auditor to the Crematorium, BDO Stoy Hayward LLP, had completed their audit of the 2007/08 Statement of the Accounts and had issued an unqualified opinion. The auditors had, however, made three recommendations to improve internal controls and working practices:

- that the body monitored the budget at least quarterly or more frequently if required and evidences this review in the minutes
- that the body minute specifically their acceptance of Section 1 – Statement of Accounts and Section 2 – Annual Governance Statement, and that the minutes record their specific answers to Section 2
- that the body review its risk assessment at least annually and before the end of the financial year and minutes this review.

A copy of the audited Statement of Accounts and the auditors report had been circulated to the Committee and the Treasurer asked members to note that these issues had not been raised in previous years by the Audit Commission (the previous appointed external audit).

RESOLVED: That the Committee agree the recommendations by BDO Stoy Hayward LLP in their report and note the unqualified opinion on the 2007/08 Statement of Accounts.

2246 RISK REGISTER

The Treasurer had circulated an update to the Committee on the development of the business risk register which also detailed the 3 highest risks that the Crematorium must monitor and manage.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- i) notes the progress made in developing a comprehensive risk register for the Crematorium
- ii) reviews, amends, if necessary, and approves the risk register for the Crematorium
- iii) endorses the current practice of managing the business risks of the Crematorium.

IN PRIVATE

That pursuant to Section 100.A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting during consideration of the items listed in column 1 below, being reports of the Officers mentioned in column 2 below, on the grounds that if members of the public were present during discussion of these items, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information (as defined in Section 100.1) of the description indicated in column 3 below:

<u>Column 1</u>	<u>Column 2</u>	<u>Column 3</u>
Revenue Estimates 2009/2010	Report of Treasurer	Para. 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).
Financial Report for the period 1 April 2008 to 30 November 2008	Report of Treasurer	Para. 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

2247 REVENUE ESTIMATES 2009/2010

2248 FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1st APRIL 2008 TO 30th NOVEMBER 2008

2249 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Clerk gave an update in respect of the impact on the Crematorium in relation to the Local Government Review process and answered a number of questions from Members.

RESOLVED; That the Clerk investigates whether it was possible to create a Trust to govern the future business of the Crematorium.

The meeting terminated at 6.25 pm.

Chairman