

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee** held in Mountsett Crematorium Meeting Room, Mountsett Crematorium, Dipton on **Tuesday 27 June 2017 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor O Temple (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Durham County Council

Councillors A Batey, C Hampson, O Milburn, A Bainbridge, J Carr and J Charlton

Gateshead Council:

Councillors K Dodds (Vice-Chairman), Dave Bradford, L Green, J Lee and M Ord

1 Membership of the Joint Committee

The Chairman welcomed new members to the Joint Committee.

2 Apologies for absence, if any

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Charlton and D Davidson (Gateshead Council).

3 Declarations of Interest, if any

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Appointment of Chairman

Resolved:

That Councillor O Temple be appointed as Chairman of the Joint Committee for the ensuing year.

5 Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Resolved:

That Councillor K Dodds be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Joint Committee for the ensuing year.

6 Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 April 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7 Mountsett Crematorium, Joint Committee, Changes to Constitution/Terms of Reference

The Joint Committee considered a report of the Clerk which provided details of a review of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee's Constitution, in accordance with the Annual Governance Statement requirements (for copy see file of minutes).

The Solicitor advised that the review had not highlighted any requirements for change to the current constitution and therefore reaffirmed continuation of the existing Constitution and governance arrangements set out within.

Resolved:

That the Constitution as set out in Appendix 2 of the report be reapproved following a review being completed in accordance with Annual Governance Statement requirements.

8 2016/17 Annual Governance Statement

The Joint Committee considered a joint report of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Local Services and the Corporate Director Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee which set out details of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for the year April 2016 to March 2017 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Head Finance & Transactional Services advised that the AGS was presented for approval as part of the consideration of the Joint Committee's Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2017.

Resolved:

- i) That the content of the 2016/17 Annual Governance Statement be noted.
- ii) That the Chair and Treasurer approve and sign the 2017/17 Annual Governance Statement as part of the consideration of the Joint Committees Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2017.

9 Revenue Outturn & Joint Committees Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2017

The Joint Committee considered a joint report of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Local Services and Corporate Director Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee, which sought approval of the Joint Committees Annual Return for Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee for the financial year ended 31 March 2017. The report further included details of the final outturn position against the approved budgets for 2016/17 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Head of Finance and Transactional Services advised that the final outturn position was broadly in line with the provisional outturn reported to the Joint Committee on 28 April 2017. Details of significant variances by subjective analysis area were detailed within the report.

It was further reported that the retained reserves of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee at 31 March 2017 was £1,259,854, along with a General Reserve of £263,400, giving a total reserves and balances position of £1,523,254 at the year end. This represented an in year increase of £280,026.

Resolved:

- i) That the revenue outturn position as at 31 March 2017, including the yearend position with regards to the reserves and balances of the Joint Committee be noted.
- ii) That Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2016/17 of the Joint Committees Annual Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2017 be approved.
- iii) That Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2016/17 of the Joint Committees Annual Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2017 be approved.
- iv) That the Chair, Clerk and Treasurer sign the Joint Committees Annual Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2017.

10 Mountsett Crematorium Performance and Operational Report

The Joint Committee considered a report of the Bereavement Services Manager which provided an update relating to performance and other operational matters (for copy see file of minutes).

The Bereavement Services Manager advised that 206 cremations had been undertaken during the period 1 April 2017 to 31 May 2017, compared to 257 in the comparable period last year, a decrease of 51 year on year. It was reported that this could be contributed to the unusually high number of cremations undertaken during April and May 2016 during a short period of closure at Birtley Crematorium.

Regarding the sale of memorial plaques it was reported that 7 had been sold during the period (£2,250), compared to 2 (£652) in the same period last year, an increase of 5 (£1,598) year on year.

The Bereavement Services Manager then provided details regarding the next Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management ICCM Learning Convention and Exhibition which is to be held from 25 to 27 September 2017.

Further details were reported regarding the recycling of metals scheme and it was noted that the cheque for £5000 would be presented to Coping with Cancer North East in due course.

In conclusion an update was provided on the replacement of cremators and installation of mercury abatement plant. Members were advised that work was progressing well and the project was on track for completion by December 2017.

Councillor Temple in referring to the ICCM conference advised that he had now attended the conference many times with the Bereavement Services Manager and had always found it to be informative and interesting. He therefore queried whether other members would be interested in attending future sessions in place of the Chair or Vice-Chair and providing feedback to the committee. Councillor Dodds concurred with the comments made and

added that by allowing members the opportunity to attend would be beneficial to both authorities going forward. The Bereavement Services Manager also suggested that a briefing paper could be circulated to members following each conference.

Resolved:

- i) That the current performance of the crematorium be noted.
- ii) That the distribution of recycling income received to the respective charity be noted.
- iii) That the attendance of the Bereavement Services Manager and one other member of the joint committee to the Learning Convention and Exhibition be noted.
- iv) That the progress with regard to the cremator replacement programme be noted.

11 Forward Plan 2017/18

The Joint Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee which set out a suggested forward plan of meetings of the Joint Committee for the forthcoming year.

Resolved:

That the proposed schedule of meetings for 2017/18 attached at Appendix 2 be noted and approved.

12 Recognition of Service - G Harrison, Bereavement Services Manager

The Chairman advised that the Bereavement Services Manager had recently achieved 30 years of service and with such passed on his congratulations on behalf of the Joint Committee and its members.

Signed.....

Date.....