

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

CENTRAL DURHAM CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of **Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee** held in **Committee Room 1A , County Hall, Durham** on **Wednesday 26 April 2023** at **2.00 pm**

Present:

Councillor N Foster (Chair)

Durham County Council:

Councillors J Chaplow (Vice-Chair), D Brown, S Quinn, K Robson, A Simpson, M Stead, C Varty and M Wilson

Spennymoor Town Council:

Town Councillors C Maddison and D Ranyard

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Blakey and K Fantarrow.

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute Members.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising:

The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar advised that he had visited the Resomation facility at Herrington Crematorium. It was expected that the facility would be completed and operational in May 2023 and he would make arrangements for Members to visit the facilities.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5 Quarterly Performance and Operational Report

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

The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar reported that there were 742 cremations undertaken during the period 1 January to 31 March 2023, compared to 664 in the comparable period last year, an increase of 78 cremations for the period. It was noted that 224 families were from Durham, 40 from Spennymoor and 478 families were from other areas. The total number of cremations in 2022/23 was 2,513 compared with 2,306 in 2021/22, an increase of 207 cremations.

The number and value of memorial plaques sold were 97 / £26,798 compared to 93 / £24,412 in the comparable period last year, an increase of 4 memorials sold and £2,386 in terms of income generated.

It was reported that the Joint Conference of the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities and the Cremation Society of Great Britain conference was being held at Southampton from Monday 26 June to Wednesday 28 June 2023. Arrangements were to be made for the Chair and Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar to attend the conference and represent the Joint Committee.

Referring to the Recycling of Metals Scheme, it was noted that ManHealth and the Teenage Cancer Trust each received a payment of £6,000 which was presented by the Chair in April 2023. It was noted that a new company was being trialled with regards to collection of metals for recycling which could increase distribution for charities.

Following queries from Town Councillors D Ranyard and C Maddison, the Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar explained how the Recycling Metals Scheme worked and noted that the new local company offered more monetary value for the metals which would be shared out from the Scheme to benefit local charities. He added that there had been a couple of occasions where requests had been made for metals to be returned to families.

Resolved:

- (i) That the current performance of the crematorium be noted;
- (ii) That attendance at the Joint Conference of the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities and the Cremation Society of Great Britain be noted;
- (iii) That the distribution of recycling income to the respective charities be noted.

6 Financial Monitoring Report - Provisional Outturn as at 31 March 2023

The Joint Committee received a joint report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change and the Corporate Director Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee that provided details of the provisional outturn position for 2022/23 and the projected level of reserves and balances at 31 March 2023 (for copy see file of minutes).

Town Councillor C Maddison noted the healthy reserve balance and asked if the donation to St. Cuthberts could be increased. The Chair explained that the donations were from members of the public from the sale of Christmas tree decorations provided by St. Cuthberts Hospice.

Responding to a query from Town Councillor D Ranyard regarding the chapel dome underspend, the Principal Accountant advised that capital spends were identified a year in advance and the cost previously reported was an estimate. The project had now been completed and final costs confirmed which was less than anticipated.

Resolved:

That the April 2022 to March 2023 financial monitoring report and associated provisional revenue and capital outturn positions at 31 March 2023, including the projected year position with regards to the reserves and balances of the Joint Committee be noted.

7 Risk Register Update 2022/23 Review 2

The Joint Committee received a joint report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change and Corporate Director of Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee that provided details of the outcome of the half-yearly risk review in March 2023 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the content of the report and the updated position be noted.

8 Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23

The Joint Committee received a report of the Chief Internal Auditor and Corporate Fraud Manager that provided an opinion which made conclusions on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Committee's Framework of Governance, Risk Management and Control (for copy see file of minutes).

The Audit Manager advised that the report provided a 'Substantial' overall assurance opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk management and internal control arrangements operating across the

Joint Committee in 2022/23 and the 'Substantial' opinion identified that there was a sound system of control.

Responding to questions from Town Councillor D Ranyard regarding the best practice recommendations, the Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar confirmed that the Business Continuity Plan review date had been corrected and the recommendations regarding purchase orders had been implemented.

Resolved:

That the content of the Annual Internal Audit Report and the overall 'Substantial' opinion provided on the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk management and control environment for 2022/23 be noted.

9 Any Other Business

Annual Meeting Date Change

The Chair suggested that the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee Annual meeting date be changed due to the Crematorium Conference and suggested that the meeting be held on Thursday 29 June 2023 at 2.00pm. The Committee Services Officer would notify Members when arrangements had been made.