

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee** held in **Mountsett Crematorium Meeting Room, Mountsett Crematorium, Dipton** on **Friday 14 June 2013** at **9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor O Temple (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Durham County Council

Councillors A Batey, C Hampson, I Jewell, T Nearney and W Stelling

Gateshead Council:

Councillors M Ord, P Ronan, D Davidson and J Lee

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Dearden, O Milburn and B Stephens (Durham County Council) and Councillors K Dodds, M Charlton and P Mole (Gateshead Council).

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

3 Membership of the Joint Committee.

Resolved:

That the Joint Committee's membership for the municipal year 2012/13 be noted.

4 Appointment of Chairman for the Ensuing year

Resolved:

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

5 Appointment of Vice-Chairman for the Ensuing year

Resolved:

That Councillors K Dodds be appointed as the Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

6 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7 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).

With regards to performance the Bereavement Services Manager advised that during the period 1 April 2013 to 31 May 2013, 215 cremations had been undertaken, which was the same number as in the comparable period 2012/13. The Bereavement Services Manager explained that there had been some down time at the Crematorium due to necessary building works, and this had resulted in some cremations not being able to be undertaken during the period.

Moving on the Bereavement Services Manager advised that during the same period, 3 memorial plaques had been sold. This was a reduction in 1 compared to the same period in 2012/13.

Details were then provided regarding the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management ICCM Learning Convention and Exhibition 2013 which was to be held on 30 September to 2 October 2013. The Bereavement Services Manager and Chairman of the Joint Committee would attend the event.

The Bereavement Services Manager then went on to provide an update in respect of staffing issues. He advised that following the previous meeting the job advert to fill the Superintendent and Registrar's position had been advertised internally, however would also be subject to an external advert prior to the position being filled.

It was reported that once the above position had been filled, further adverts would be placed for the Crematorium Attendant. The Business Administration Apprentice post was also due to be advertised shortly.

In conclusion the Bereavement Services Manager provided an update in respect of the Service Asset Management plan (SAMP). It was reported that all of the urgent / essential works identified had now been completed and details of those areas of work were contained within the report.

In addition to those areas of completed work, further SAMP related works were scheduled for completion during the year including:

- Repair to paths and external pedestrian paved areas
- Upgrade and paint handrail
- Renew South perimeter (main road) fence
- Renew hot water heaters
- Replacement of carpets throughout
- Replacement of curtains in chapel area
- Replacement of blinds
- Provide order of service from Wesley music system
- Provide tribute screen for services.

Resolved:

That the content of report and subsequent updates be noted.

8 Forward Plan 2013/14

The Joint Committee considered a joint report of the Corporate Director Neighbourhood Services and Corporate Director Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee which set out proposals with regards to a suggested forward plan of meetings of the Joint Committee for the municipal year 2013/14.

The Head of Finance (Financial Services) advised that the list of business to be conducted by the Joint Committee was not exhaustive and further items of business may be considered throughout the course of the year.

Resolved:

That the proposed schedule of meetings as set out in Appendix 2 of the report be approved.

9 2012/2013 Annual Governance Statement

The Joint Committee considered a joint report of the Corporate Director Neighbourhood Services and Corporate Director Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee which provided details of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for the year April 2012 to March 2013.

The Head of Finance (Financial Services) advised that the Internal Audit had provided Substantial Assurance on the Joint Committee's system of internal control as reported at the previous meeting held in April 2013.

Resolved:

That the Annual Governance Statement be approved for consideration within the Statement of Accounts and Annual Return.

10 Revenue Outturn Report for Year Ended 31st March 2013

The Joint Committee considered a joint report of the Corporate Director Neighbourhood Services and Corporate Director Resources which sought approval of the Small Bodies in England Annual Return and supporting Statement of Accounts for Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee for the financial year ended 31st March 2013. The report further included details of the outturn position against approved budgets for 2012/13 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Head of Finance (Financial Services) proceeded to run through the financial outturn position for 2012/13 advising that the final outturn position was broadly in line with the provisional outturn position. Details of significant variances were contained within the report and duly noted.

With reference to the Annual Return and Statement of Accounts it was reported that the documents had been prepared in line with CIPFA guidance and was a statutory document. The following report sought the approval and signing off of both documents.

Councillor Temple commented that there had been a huge turnaround in the finances of the cremator reserve over the last few years and he was happy to see that the Crematorium was in a much stronger financial position for future replacement of cremators.

Resolved:

That the April 2012 to March 2013 Income and Expenditure within the Revenue Financial Monitoring Report and subsequent year balance of reserves, be noted.

11 Small Bodies Annual Return and Statement of Accounts 2012/13

The Joint Committee considered the joint report of the Corporate Director Neighbourhood Services and Corporate Director Resources / Treasurer to the Joint Committee which sought approval of the Small Bodies Annual Return and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2013 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Head of Finance (Financial Services) explained that the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2013 required the signature of the Chairman on behalf of the Joint Committee following its approval. The Annual Return would then be submitted to the External Auditors.

Resolved:

- (i) That the Small Bodies Annual Return and Statement of Accounts 2012/13 be approved.
- (ii) That the Small Bodies Annual Return be signed by the Chairman of the Joint Committee.

12 Car Parking Passes

The Chairman reminded Members of the Joint Committee (Durham County Council only) to forward car registration details to L Stephenson, Committee Services Officer in order for car parking passes to be issued for meetings due to be held at Gateshead Council offices.