

Mountsett Crematoria Joint Committee

30 October 2009



Election of Treasurer and Forward Plan



Joint Report of Corporate Directors of Neighbourhood Services and Corporate Resources

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to set out details of the service management arrangements and consider the position of the Treasurer to the Committee, following the implementation of Local Government Re-Organisation (LGR) on 1 April 2009.
2. The report also sets out proposals with regards to a suggested forward plan of meetings of the Joint Committee for the remainder of 2009/10.

Background

3. Following the implementation of Local Government Reorganisation on 1st April 2009, Derwentside District Council has now demised, and its responsibilities in relation to Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee have been adopted by Durham County Council.
4. Mountsett Crematorium is part of Bereavement Services and falls within the responsibility of the Neighbourhood's service grouping of the new unitary authority. The service is strategically managed via the Head of Direct Services (Oliver Sherratt), and his Street Scene Area North Manager (Ian Holt). Day to day operational delivery has thus far remained largely unaffected by LGR.

Treasurer

5. The agreement between Derwentside District Council and Gateshead Council provided that.

"The Crematorium' Joint Committee may appoint or employ such officers and servants as may be necessary for the efficient management and conduct for the purposes aforesaid of the said Crematorium and may make regulations with respect to the duties and conduct of the said officers and servants and may pay them such reasonable salaries, wages or allowances as the Crematorium' Joint Committee may think proper"

6. Staffing arrangements at the crematorium were last reviewed in March 2003, at which time it was agreed that the duties of Treasurer be carried out on an unpaid honorary basis by the Director of Finance of Derwentside District Council.
7. Whilst the function of Treasurer to the Committee has continued to be supported by the former Director of Finance of the former Derwenside DC during the last 6 months, that officer will be leaving his position with the Authority in October 2009, and wishes to be released from his duties at the crematorium with immediate effect.
8. In accordance with Durham County Councils constitution, it is proposed that the Corporate Director: Resources is appointed as Treasurer to the Joint Committee. Day to day support to the Joint Committee will be facilitated through the Direct Services and the Finance, HR and Business Support teams within Neighbourhoods.

Forward Plan 2009/10

9. Members will be aware that the new authority has also taken on responsibility for the Durham City Crematorium (a Joint Committee with Spennymoor Town Council). Whilst this poses significant opportunities to build on the close working that previously existed it also results in a range of issues that will need careful consideration across the two facilities, not least of which harmonisation of fees and charges and a strategic approach to Mercury Abatement regulations.
10. It is proposed that the timing of meetings of the two Committees be harmonised, with regular meetings in year to monitor financial and other performance data. This will address specific concerns raised by the External Auditors in recent years.
11. It is also proposed that a full risk assessment be undertaken and regular update reports presented to the Committee throughout the year, this will address the other fundamental concern of the external auditor. A proposed schedule of meetings for the remainder of 2009/10, showing a forward plan of reports that will be presented, is attached at Appendix 2.

Recommendations and reasons

12. That members note the operational management arrangements post vesting day
13. That Durham County Council's Corporate Director: Resources is appointed as Treasurer to the Joint Committee; and
14. That members approve the proposed schedule of meetings as set out at Appendix 2.

Background Papers

Mountsett Crematoria Joint Committee

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

There are no financial implications associated with this report. Financial reports will be presented to future meetings in line with the forward plan attached at Appendix 2.

Staffing

As detailed in the report, it is proposed that the Joint Committee appoint the Corporate Director: Resources as Treasurer to the Committee.

Equality and Diversity

None

Accommodation

None

Crime and disorder

None

Sustainability

None

Human rights

None

Localities and Rurality

None

Young people

None

Consultation

Officers of Gateshead Council were consulted on the contents of this report.

Health

None

Appendix 2: Forward Plan : 2009/10 & 2010/11 Meetings

Meeting Date	Location	Reports to Consider	Report of
30/10/2009	Consett Civic Centre	Election of Treasurer and Forward Plan	Joint Report of Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Corporate Services
	Consett Civic Centre	External Auditors Report : 2008/09 Accounts	Joint Report of Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Corporate Services
	Consett Civic Centre	Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme	Joint Report of Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Corporate Services
	Consett Civic Centre	Financial Monitoring Report 2009/10: Spend to 30/09/09 and Projected Outturn to 31/03/10	Joint Report of Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Corporate Services
31/01/2010 (TBC)	TBC	Financial Monitoring Report 2009/10: Spend to 31/12/09 and Projected Outturn to 31/03/10	Joint Report of Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Corporate Services
	TBC	Mercury Abatement : Asset Management Proposals for Mountsett	Joint Report of Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Corporate Services
	TBC	Fees and Charges 2010/11 (Including Harmonisation with Durham City Crematorium)	Joint Report of Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Corporate Services
	TBC	2010/11 Revenue and Capital Budgets	Joint Report of Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Corporate Services
	TBC	Risk Assessment 2009/10	Report of Corporate Director Neighbourhood Services
31/03/2010	TBC	Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit	Report of Corporate Director Corporate Services
30/06/2010 (TBC)	TBC	Annual Governance Statement 2009/10	Report of Corporate Director Corporate Services
	TBC	Final Accounts 2009/10	Report of Corporate Director Corporate Services
31/07/2010 (TBC)	TBC	Financial Monitoring Report 2010/11: Spend to 30/06/10 and Projected Outturn to 31/03/10	Joint Report of Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Corporate Services
	TBC	Risk Assessment – Quarterly Update	Report of Corporate Director Neighbourhood Services