

Agenda



Greater Gwent Cremation Joint Committee

Date: Wednesday, 23 September 2015

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: Committee Room 4 - Civic Centre

To: Councillors V Delahaye, P Huntley, Dally, Morgan, White, George, Taylor, Davies, Jones and Williams

Item		Wards Affected
1	<u>Apologies</u>	
2	<u>Declarations of Interest</u>	
3	<u>Minutes of the Meeting</u> (Pages 3 - 6) Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2015	
4	<u>Budget Monitoring Report</u> Report to follow	All Wards
5	<u>Facilities Management</u> Oral Update	All Wards
6	<u>Funeral Director's Report</u> To consider any issues raised by the local Funeral Directors	All Wards
7	<u>Manager's Report</u> (Pages 7 - 10)	All Wards
8	<u>Motion Proposal at Torfaen County Borough Council</u> (Pages 11 - 12) Motion proposed by Councillor M Barnet at Council on 14 April 2015 to consider extending opening hours for funeral services during critical periods.	All Wards
9	<u>Date of Next Meeting</u> 25 November 2014 at 2pm in Committee Room 4.	

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Minutes



Greater Gwent Cremation Joint Committee

Date: 17 June 2015

Time: 2.00 pm

Present: Councillors Jones (Chair), V Delahaye, P Huntley, Taylor and Brookes

In Attendance: G Price (Honorary Secretary), P Dundon (Manager), J Hazelwood (Assistant Accountant), S Tom (National Association of Funeral Directors), A Jenkins (Democratic Services Officer)

Apologies: Councillors George and Davies

1 Appointment of Chair

Resolved

That Councillor B Jones (Monmouthshire County Council) be appointed as Chairman for 2015/16.

2 Appointment of Deputy Chair

Councillor N Davies was not in attendance at the meeting however Councillor S Brookes of Torfaen County Borough Council advised that future meetings of the Greater Gwent Cremation Joint Committee would clash with another committee within Torfaen. Councillor S Brookes therefore suggested that both councillors be appointed Deputy Chair to ensure the role was fulfilled.

Resolved

That Councillors N Davies and S Brookes (Torfaen County Borough Council) be appointed Deputy Chair.

3 Apologies for Absence

Councillors N Davies (Torfaen County Borough Council), N George (Caerphilly County Borough Council)

4 Declarations of Interest

None received.

5 Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2015

It was noted that Cllr K Williams was in attendance at the meeting in March although he was not recorded as present.

The Chair wanted it noted that the Committee thanked R Bailey, Democratic Services Officer who retired recently for all of his hard work and service to the Committee.

Resolved

That the minutes were recorded as a true record; subject to the above.
That a thank you letter be sent to R Bailey on behalf of the Committee.

6 Gwent Crematorium Draft Accounts 2014-15 - Financial Statement

The Assistant Accountant circulated the Draft Crematorium Accounts for 2014/15 to members of the committee.

Due to recent changes in the Accounts & Audit Regulations adopted by the Welsh Government there was no longer a requirement for preparation and audit of a full statement of accounts, which lead to difference in fees from £11,711 in 2013/14 to £920.

The Balance Sheet had shown a great improvement for this year.

Councillor Huntley referred to the payment of the balance which there was no commitment to pay earlier than the 15 years originally agreed.

It was considered however by the Committee that it would be preferable to pay the balance earlier than the allowed 15 years as and when funds were available.

The Assistant Accountant referred to the new format of the accounting statements which were in line with the Wales Audit Office on the last page of the report.

Resolved

That the Draft Accounts for 2014/15 be approved.

7 Facilities Management (Oral Update)

With no officer present to provide an oral report on facilities management, the committee moved on to the next item.

8 Funeral Director's Report

Mr S Tom advised that there was nothing to feed back to the Committee at present.

9 Manager's Report

Consideration was given to the Managers report providing statistical information on the number of cremation statistics, in light of a written enquiry from D Davies, MP for Monmouthshire as to the waiting times of Cremations. P Dundon responded to Monmouthshire MP's query with the permission of the Interim Head of Streetscene Environmental Services.

The cremation figures were higher by comparison than same period in 2014. March 2015 saw the highest figure of cremations ever recorded. The Crematorium were running at capacity during this period, which lead to a longer waiting time at funerals. The longest time was two working weeks for families.

Unfortunately the Easter period came into the fray, which therefore put the Crematorium back another week.

Measures had been taken however and the Manager of the Crematorium was due to meet with civil contingencies at Newport City Council and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board on 22 June 2015. This was due to the fact that when crematoriums and cemeteries were very busy there was a knock on effect at hospital mortuaries.

S Tom informed the committee that the main issue was members of the public preferring later time slots for cremations. Earlier appointments were available, such as 9-9.30am however for those that had a church service booked before the cremation the more popular times were later in the morning which gave an outward impression that the Crematorium was fully booked.

P Dundon reported the death of William "Bill" Stewart who was the Crematorium's Superintendent & Registrar from 1983 to 2000 who passed away on 26 May. A letter would be sent on behalf of the Committee to his family thanking him for his services to the crematorium.

Councillor Huntley informed the Committee of a Planning Application from Westerleigh Group for a proposed crematorium in Langstone. The company already has a crematorium in the Forest of Dean, the proposed design would be of a similar nature. The matter would be referred to Newport's Planning Committee for determination

10 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting to be held on 23 September 2015 at 2pm, Civic Centre.

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Report

Greater Gwent Cremation Joint Committee

Part 1

Date: 23 September 2015

Item No: 7

Subject **Manager's Report**

Purpose To provide a quarterly update on the Manager's Report.

Author Paul Dundon, Manager, Gwent Crematorium

Ward Select this text and type in ward/s

Summary to present an update to the members of the Greater Gwent Cremation Joint Committee on the quarterly statistics, memorial sales and cremations at the Gwent Crematorium.

Signed

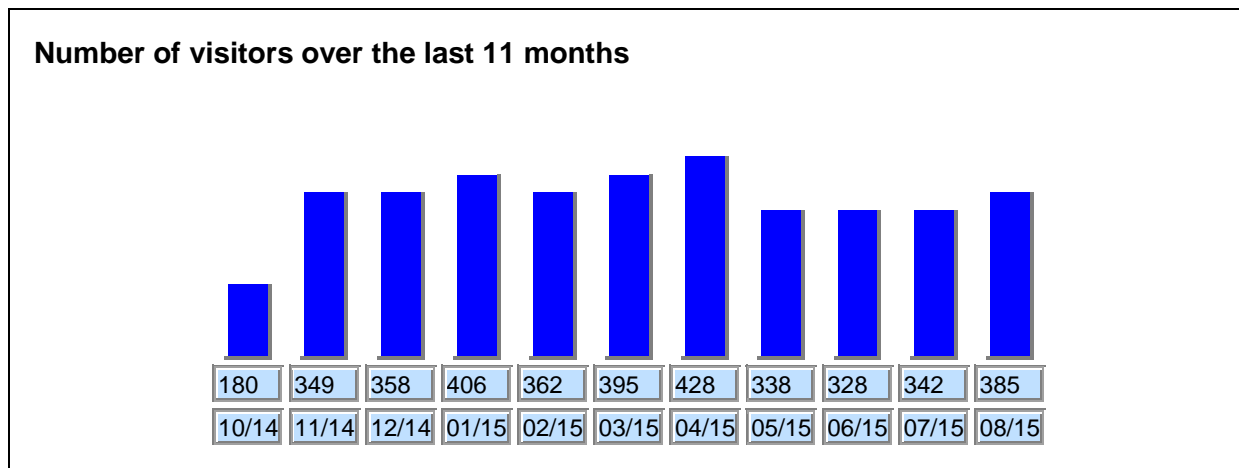
Manager's Report

Forthcoming Retirement

GW, one of the crematorium gardeners is due to retire on 6th November. During his ten years working for the crematorium, we have won a number of awards from the Cemetery of the Year scheme, including a special one for best floral displays. Likewise, we have achieved a first prize in the Wales in Bloom competition.

Statistics

Book of Remembrance Online



The overall number of different users viewing the Book of Remembrance is 14372 at the time of writing.

Memorial Sales

MONTH	VASE BLOCKS	SANCTUM 12	LEASE RENEWALS
July 2015	7	1	5
August 2015	1	1	1

Memorial sales show the usual Summer decline.

Cremations

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
January	262	278	220*	254	278	254	283	298	279	263
February	262	254	200*	268	256	226	262	227	239	225
March	287	241	267	279	249	235	253	218	250	241
April	245	222	268	237	193	229	222	246	227	227
May	230	234	274	270	232	198	204	236	224	226
June	241	239	218	193*	232	235	206	201	224	202
July	237	257	211	175*	204	208	205	206	247	202
August	187	206	183	168*	241	198	191	223	220	215
September		204	194	158*	221	218	204	210	211	211
October		243	234	186*	233	232	225	251	241	210
November		222	226	176*	220	219	212	200	225	217
December		248	200	182*	234	227	238	234	207	186
TOTAL	1941	2848	2695	2546*	2793	2679	2705	2750	2794	2625

**Figures marked with an asterisk are at times with reduced service provision due to the installation of mercury abatement plant.*

The cremation figures for the calendar year to August are 10 higher than for the same period last year.

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COUNCIL
14 APRIL 2015

MOTIONS ON NOTICE

SUBMITTED UNDER PARAGRAPH 4.18 OF THE CONSTITUTION

1. PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR MARY BARNETT

MOTION:

Torfaen County Borough Council asks the Gwent Cremation Joint Committee to consider extending opening hours for Funeral Services during critical periods, including the possibility of Saturday morning services. There has been a lengthy waiting list, sometimes of over four weeks for Cremation Services this winter; causing extra sadness for bereaved families and friends. Extended opening hours would help ease the anguish felt by the bereaved.

RATIONALE:

Although we have been fortunate to avoid any great influenza or other type of epidemic this winter, there has still been a long waiting period for bereaved families and an increase no doubt in pressures on the Crematorium Staff and local Funeral Directors and mortuaries. There are often critical periods during the year when death rates are higher than normal, including no doubt in very hot summers. With an increase in the numbers of Gwent residents requesting cremation rather than burial it would be prudent to ask the Gwent Cremation Joint Committee to consider extending opening hours during periods of increased demand. The Lead Authority for Gwent Crematorium is Newport City Council and Cllr Nigel Davies is our representative on the Committee.

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