

Agenda



Greater Gwent Cremation Joint Committee

Date: Wednesday, 13 June 2018

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: Committee Room 4 - Civic Centre

To: Councillors R Clark (Chair), Evans, D Davies, R Jeavons, Edwards, Jones, Williams, Simmonds, Taylor and Tom

Item		Wards Affected
1	<u>Apologies for Absence</u>	
2	<u>Declarations of Interest</u>	
3	<u>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</u> (Pages 3 - 6)	
4	<u>Facilities Management - Verbal Update</u> To receive an oral update from the Newport Norse representative	
5	<u>Final Draft Accounts 2017/18 - Report to follow</u>	
6	<u>Funeral Director's Report</u> To consider any issues raised by local Funeral Directors	
7	<u>Manager's Report</u> (Pages 7 - 10)	
8	<u>Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 12 September 2018</u>	

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Minutes



Greater Gwent Cremation Joint Committee

Date: 14 March 2018

Time: 2.00 pm

Present: Councillors Clark (Chair), R Jeavons, Edwards, Jones, Simmonds and Taylor

In Attendance: Gareth Price (Head of Law & Regulation), Joanne Hazlewood, Paul Dundon and Karen Crawley

1 Apologies for Absence

Councillors: D Davies (NCC), K Williams (MBC) and N Daniels (BG)
Officers/representatives: Karl Donovan (Norse) and S Tom (Association of Funeral Directors)

2 Declarations of Interest

None received.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 24 January 2018 were submitted.

The Chair Councillor S Evans and Councillor P Edwards were not marked as present.

The Chair noted that the declaration of interest was incorrect and that his partner's father worked for the funeral home.

4 Matters Arising

Item 4 Funeral Director's Report: The Nation Association of Funeral Directors representative S Tom discussed additional services and facilities during services, this included a slide show for relatives. The Superintendent Registrar obtained a cost estimate which was approximately £12.5K although it was expected to be closer to £15K. There would also be a charge per slide show of £35 by the suppliers, which would take a long time for the Crematorium to recoup.

After discussing the options the majority of councillors present considered that the equipment should be purchased as it would be a future proof investment which could prove popular in years to come.

The Superintendent Registrar also advised that the voile curtains were too thin and would be blown about in the wind tunnel due to the design of the room.

Item 5 Manager's Report: With reference to the on line booking facilities, there was a service redesign with Streetscene which meant that it was possible to integrate the on line system with the council's new software, with this in mind, there was a slight delay until all systems were in place.

The Honorary Secretary also mentioned that Newport City Council was also looking to replace the current Customer Relation Management system (CRM). If Newport City Council therefore used the software provided by the Shared Resources Service (SRS), customers could use a streamlined software that linked in with all the councils, therefore it was worth delaying the purchase of any equipment.

5 **Facilities Management**

A presentative of Newport Norse, N Porretta updated the committee on the following items:

There had been a number of notable completed works by Newport Norse since the last committee meeting:

- Removal of the spoil heap and a reconfiguration of the area to allow for an expansion of the Garden of Remembrance.
- Concrete bases were laid to allow for further sanctums in the memorial garden area.
- Most elevations of the main building were-rendered and decorated as required.

Outstanding works included:

- Re-rendering and decoration of the flower viewing area adjacent to the chapel.
- Renewal of two gates to the rear courtyard.

The Superintendent Registrar advised that there was a delay with the rendering because they were very busy.

6 **Manager's Report**

Due to the heavy snowfall recently, there were a lot of hits on the website. Memorial sales declined however, due to the bad weather. The Crematorium remained fully staffed with one staff on leave also coming in to help. There was a five day delay however due to postponed funerals. The Superintendent Registrar also thanked the gritting team at Torfaen who were excellent and Arthur Peake & Sons also helped out with transport.

Cremations had increased significantly in February compared to January's low figures. This was above the 10 year average for February and March was also showing strong figures and running at capacity for the month. The recent opening of the Llangstone Crematorium meant that the waiting time for cremations had diminished, which was better for customers.

The Crematorium had recently had three funeral cancellations. This was because some funeral directors were booking the services with both Cwmbrian and Langstone Crematoriums for the same funeral. There were not however cancelling the Cwmbrian booking but were going ahead with the Langstone booking, which resulted in an immediate loss of revenue.

With this in mind it was advised that a cancellation fee should be imposed after 24 hours of a booking.

After lengthy discussion regarding when a fee should be imposed and at what cost, it was unanimously agreed that a fine be set with immediate effect.

Agreed:

That a cancellation fee of £300 be imposed on clients that do not cancel within 24 hours of booking. This however would be used with an element of discretion, due to some client's circumstances.

7 **Date of Next Meeting**

13 June 2018 at 2pm in Committee Room 4.

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Manager's Report

Statistics

Website

In the past 28 days to date, there have been approximately 13000 views of the crematorium web pages.

MEMORIAL SALES

MONTH	VASE BLOCKS	SANCTUM 12	LEASE RENEWALS
March 2018	4	5	3
April 2018	5	4	3
May 2018	0	3	3

CREMATIONS

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Jan	246	268	240	262	278	220*	254	278	254	283	298	279
Feb	254	258	243	262	254	200*	268	256	226	262	227	239
Mar	230	299	277	287	241	267	279	249	235	253	218	250
Apr	237	229	268	245	222	268	237	193	229	222	246	227
May	219	266	266	230	234	274	270	232	198	204	236	224
Jun		260	264	241	239	218	193*	232	235	206	201	224
Jul		219	211	237	257	211	175*	204	208	205	206	247
Aug		236	244	187	206	183	168*	241	198	191	223	220
Sep		228	228	232	204	194	158*	221	218	204	210	211
Oct		240	224	225	243	234	186*	233	232	225	251	241
Nov		251	239	249	222	226	176*	220	219	212	200	225
Dec		191	244	266	248	200	182*	234	227	238	234	207
	1186	2945	2948	2913	2848	2695	2546*	2793	2679	2705	2750	2794

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

The cremation totals for the first 5 months of the calendar year are 134 lower than in 2017. Whilst there are clear revenue implications, the lead-in time for funerals is considerably lower, which has positive effects on the public perception of the service.

Refurbishment of cremation plant

Works are on-going to provide a total re-bricking of cremator #1 and the replacement of the main hearth in cremator #3. This work was scheduled maintenance, and has not led to any disruption of services.

Grounds maintenance

Judging has taken place for the 2018 Green Flag Awards, with the results due later in the Summer. The timing of the judging visit coincided well with the best of the spring flowers in the grounds.

The gardeners are currently planting Summer bedding plants, brought in from Newport City Council's nurseries. We receive many compliments on the spectacular floral displays outside the chapel.

THE FEDERATION OF BURIAL AND CREMATION AUTHORITIES

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Secretary & Executive Officer: Brendan J. Day

Date: 5th June 2018

Ref: Visits/2018/Gwent



Will Godfrey
Chief Executive
Newport City Council
Civic Centre
Newport
South Wales
NP20 4UR

Dear Mr Godfrey

Visits to Crematoria

The National Executive Committee has a long-standing policy of visiting crematoria operated by Federation members. It is not possible to visit every crematorium as regularly as we would wish, and Gwent Crematorium has either not recently been included in the annual programme, or only visited some years ago.

A visiting team consisting of the President, Councillor Ted Latham, and 2 Federation Technical Officer's, would like to take the opportunity to visit Gwent Crematorium at 10.00 am on Wednesday the 4th July 2018.

The visit provides the opportunity at a strategic level for members of the Federation's Executive Committee to consult and exchange views with representatives of a member authority. This close association is of paramount importance in assessing the direction of national policies and the maintenance of high standards of operation. In addition, at a technical level the team are able to provide advice on any practical issues that may arise.

A written report will be sent to you in the format of a "Critical Friend Audit" after information gleaned by the team has been fully considered.

Since the President of the Federation will lead the party, it would be appreciated if an Executive Member or another Member with responsibility for the crematorium could be present at least during part of the visit.

Yours sincerely

Brendan J Day
Secretary & Executive Officer

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