

# Draft Minutes



## Greater Gwent Cremation Joint Committee

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Date: 4 December 2019

Time: 2.00 pm

Present: Councillors Councillor R Jeavons (Chair), S Evans and K Williams

Gareth Price (Head of Law & Regulation), Joanne Hazlewood, Paul Dundon, Karen Sansom and Meryl James (Governance Officer)

In Attendance:

Apologies: Councillors D Davies, J Simmonds and J Taylor

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### 1 **Declarations of Interest**

None

### 2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

### 3 **Budget Monitoring Report**

1. The financial summary presented indicates there could be a shortfall of around £45k shortfall in the distribution of £950k, this is mainly due to increased external maintenance work, the one-off replacement ductwork maintenance carried out in July and a reduction in income due to a fall in cremation numbers. During the September meeting, Committee agreed to withhold 20% of the total distribution of £950,000 (£190,000) until year end out-turn had been confirmed. The Committee had the option of meeting the small shortfall from reserves or reducing the distribution accordingly.

#### **Resolved:**

- (a) To meet the distribution of £950k and draw the shortfall of £45k from the reserves.

To postpone the next scheduled meeting in March until April 2020, to confirm the actual budget out-turn position and to confirm the available distribution.

### 4 **Revenue Estimates Report**

1. The Committee were presented with supporting information to enable them to undertake a review of fees and budget proposals for 20/21  
Committee were asked to agree a 7.5% fee increase, to meet the 2 year MTFP proposal put forward by Newport City Council, which could generate an additional £125,000, to be distributed across all constituent authorities.  
Figures provided were based on projected cremation numbers for 2019/20, however, if numbers continue to fall, and income levels are not achieved, it would require a further use of reserves, to obtain the proposed additional income.

The Committee approved the draft budget proposals, with a 7.5% fee increase, which, if cremation numbers remain stable, could provide the Committee with an additional £125,000 distribution at the end of 2020/21. However the on-going sustainability cannot be guaranteed and the Committee may need to approve lower surpluses in the future, if numbers of cremations continue to fall in the light of competition from private crematoria.

**Resolved:**

To increase fees by 7.5% fee with effect from 01 April 2020, and to approve the draft budget proposals for 2020/21.

## 5 Facilities Management Norse Update

1. The Norse Representative reported he and the Superintendent Registrar walked around the Crematorium to see what need to be repaired and improve facilities where possible. The roof needs repairing with an estimated cost of £50k, £13k for lighting and £2k to improve the steps - Total estimated cost approx £155k.

The Committee agreed to undertake the following essential repair work:-

Roof repairs at an estimated cost of £50k

Chapel repairs at an estimated cost of £11k

Replacement of 20 broken slabs– estimated costs still awaited

Other items postponed to next year

Cushions x 26 = £4,200

Additional estimates required from PD for the other items

Flower display area – postponed until next year

The Committee asked for a detailed survey be carried out on the Cremation and would like to see the costs.

**Resolved:**

To carry out the essential repairs set out above and to postpone all other items of repair until next year, subject to costings, and to conduct a detailed repair survey of the premises.

## 6 Funeral Director's Report

1. PD reported nothing had been received from the Funeral Director's representative to present to the Committee

## 7 **Managers Report**

The manager reported that there had been approximately 18,000 views on the website during the past 28 days.

Lease renewals are due now as the vaults are 20 years old.

Although trading figures for September and October show an upturn on the same months in 2018, the cremation totals for the first 10 months of the calendar year are still 144 lower than in 2018

The meeting terminated at Time Not Specified