

Minutes



Greater Gwent Cremation Joint Committee

Date: 27 January 2021

Time: 10.00 am Virtual Meeting

Present: Councillors J Taylor (Chair), Councillor R Jeavons, S Evans, K Williams, Pratt and J Simmonds

Steve Tom, Gareth Price (Head of Law & Regulation), Meirion Rushworth (Head of Finance), Joanne Hazlewood and Paul Dundon

1 Apologies for Absence

Councillors C Meredith, M Moore, Councillor J Simmonds had technical difficulties and was unable to join the meeting
J Gossage, K Sansom

2 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 12 October 2020 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

4 Review of Fees and Budget Proposals 2021

Last year there was a 7.5% increase

2021/22 projecting a surplus of £471k prior to any distribution. Head of Finance recommends maintaining the budgeted distribution of £950k for 2021/22, which based on projections would require a £478k draw from reserves. This would leave £725k in reserves at the end of 2021/22

Going forward, if cremation numbers/income levels remain as projected, or decrease further, the proposal is to reduce the distribution for 2022/23 to £450k, however this will be reviewed when we have more certainty.

Committee voted to freeze current fees for 2021/22 and use reserves to cover any deficit for the budgeted distribution in the current financial year 2020/21, and 2021/22

Councillor Steven Evans proposed the motion to accept and was seconded by Councillor John Taylor. Voting was unanimous in favour.

Visual Display tributes

Councillor Jeavons raised the point that it had been discussed in a previous meeting about getting costings for visual display tributes to remain competitive in our offering, as Funeral Directors had listed it as one of the reasons families chose Langstone over Gwent Crematorium. Paul Dundon, said it would cost around £15k, the Committee voted and

agreed the proposal to go ahead and get them installed. The supplier is in the Midlands, so Paul Dundon will arrange for the works to be installed as soon as the company is able to so in view of Covid regulations.

Paul Dundon raised the issue that Langstone / Sirhowy are offering 40 minute services, compared to their 20 minute services. It was agreed that at the next meeting the Committee will look into changing the service times. Gwent Crem is currently running at 90% capacity.

5 **Funeral Director's Report**

To consider any issues raised by local Funeral Directors

S Tom stated they were grateful for hand sanitizers. The Public are asking could one be placed at the exit of the chapel. P Dundon to implement.
Langstone and Sirhowy crematoriums infection rate is dropping slightly

6 **Manager's Report**

P Dundon confirmed they maintained Gold Standard. EHO Torfaen fully compliant with no issues flagged. He is awaiting the report.
Cremation numbers up due to Covid 60-65 a week for cremations.

7 **Manager's Report January 2021**

In the past 28 days to date, there have been approximately 12,500 views of the crematorium web pages.

Charter for the Bereaved

The crematorium has retained its Gold Standard in the Institute of Crematorium and Cemeteries Management's national benchmarking scheme.

Annual Emissions Test

As well as having continuous emissions monitoring, the crematorium is obliged to arrange an annual independent emissions test. The results have been received, and confirm our compliance with our operating permit.

Annual Compliance Inspection

The annual inspection by Torfaen's Senior Environmental Health Office to ensure compliance with our operating permit took place on 8th December. Awaiting receipt of the full report, no issues were flagged on the day, therefore it is anticipated that full compliance will be confirmed in due course.

8 **Facilities Management**

K Donovan, from Norse stated the paving stones have been completed. He met with P Dundon and they looked around the Crematorium to see what could be improved to make it more attractive to the public. They will bring a few ideas to the next meeting. P Dundon said they would like to improve the waiting areas, the toilets and the Book of Remembrance. Cluster flies are a problem at the moment. K Donovan stated this will be looked at.