

MERTON AND SUTTON JOINT CEMETERY BOARD
23 JULY 2009

(19:00 TO 22:00)

PRESENT: Merton
Councillors Patricia Lewis, Rod Scott and Ron Wilson.
Sutton
Councillors Cliff Carter, Ian Chapman, John Drage, Gerry Jerome and Peter Wallis.
Colin Millar (Clerk), Grant Miles (Treasurer), Mark Robinson (Registrar), Graham Masson (for Consultant Surveyor), Mark Humphries and Richard Ladbrook (LBM Facilities Management), Mark Waldron (Cemetery Supervisor)

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Margaret Brierly. Howard Joy (Consultant Surveyor)

- 1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR 2009-10 (Agenda item 1)
RESOLVED: That Councillor Patricia Lewis is appointed as Chair for 2009-10
- 2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 FEBRUARY 2009 (Agenda item 4)
RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2009 are agreed as a correct record.
- 3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR 2009-10 (Agenda item 5)
RESOLVED: That Councillor Peter Wallis is appointed as vice-Chair for 2009-10
- 4 INTERMENT STATISTICS (Agenda item 6)
Noted
- 5 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (Agenda item 7)
The number of members of the Board needed to be updated at section 3.2
RESOLVED: That the Annual Governance Statement for 2008/09 as amended is approved for signing by the Chair.
- 6 ABSTRACT OF ACCOUNTS 2008/09 AND BUDGETARY CONTROL 1ST QUARTER 2009/10 (Agenda item 8)

Members discussed the accounts and budgetary control with officers. The following points were raised:

- Auditing of accounts – the Audit Commission did not see this as a major item and approached it with a light touch

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- Ownership of Assets – the land was owned by the constituent councils
- Effect on the business of increasing fees – The Joint Cemetery, Merton and Sutton were amongst the lowest charges in the South West London area. Demand was not elastic in response to fee levels.
- The capital expenditure shown including the works associated with the new electrical supply to had been funded from the Board's capital fund.

RESOLVED: That the Abstract of accounts for 2008/09 and the budgetary control 1st quarter 2009/10 are approved.

7 CEMETERY EXTENSION INFLUENZA PANDEMIC PLANNING AND
PLANNED CEMETERY WORKS (Agenda item 9)

Members considered the options for proceeding with the extension of the cemetery. The constituent council's would need to be informed of the possible risk of a precept should the board be unable to meet the cost of repayment of the loan for the extension through its own income. Members would address the actual fee levels at its budget meetings. The Treasurer undertook to circulate the cash-flow projections to members but the bulk of the expenditure would be incurred in the second half of 2010 and would need to be addressed in the 2011/12 budget.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Board agrees to proceed with the cemetery extension and request the constituent councils to make provision for loan funding for the design and works;

(2) That officers are instructed to inform the Constituent Councils that it is the Board's intention that the repayments will be met through fee income requiring considerable increases in current fee levels but that there remains a risk that the Board may need to issue precepts should the expected fee income fall short of the expected levels;

(3) That the board agrees to the timetable for works in the report;

(4) That the board notes the issues in respect of influenza pandemic planning;

(5) That the board asks officers to examine options for funding the replacement of bearers and the replacement of the waiting room as part of the extension project and report back to the Board;

(6) That the Board agrees to defer any refurbishment of railings with sections being repaired as and when necessary.

RESOLVED: That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of an individual.

8 LAND HOLDING PROGRESS REPORT (Agenda item 10)

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The Board noted that negotiations with the tenant on area C were continuing and agreed that the surveyor could proceed within the parameters set out in the exempt report.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Board notes the position with regard to its land holdings;

(2) That the Board confirms that a rent stop be put in place on areas B, B1 and C;

(3) That the Board instructs the Treasurer and Consultant Surveyor to establish the financial situation of the occupier of areas B, B1 and C;

(4) That the Board instructs the Consultant Surveyor in consultation with the Treasurer to The Board to negotiate and agree terms with the occupier of areas B, B1 and C and to commence legal proceedings as outlined in the body of this report;

(5) That the Consultant Surveyor report to the next meeting of the Board on progress on items 2 to 4 above.