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MERTON AND SUTTON JOINT CEMETERY BOARD

27 FEBRUARY 2024

(2.00 pm - 2.45 pm)

PRESENT Councillor Sheri-Ann Bhim (in the Chair), Councillor Paul Cole, Councillor Agatha Mary Akyigyina, Councillor James Williscroft, Councillor Michael Paterson, Councillor Rob Beck and Councillor Sam Cumber

ALSO PRESENT Zoe Church (Head of Business Planning), Andrew Kauffman (Head of Parks Services), Mark Robinson (idverde), Ijaz Chuttun (Accounts) and Richard Seedhouse (Democratic Services Officer)

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR (Agenda Item 1)

The Board appointed Cllr SheriAnn Bhim to chair.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies were received from Cllr Hina Bokhari.

3 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 4)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

5 CLIENT REPORT (Agenda Item 5)

The Head of Parks Service introduced the report, highlighting in particular works underway and completed following storms.

It was RESOLVED that the Board noted the report.

6 WAITING ROOM AND WELFARE UPGRADE COSTED PROPOSAL (Agenda Item 6)

The Head of Parks Service introduced the report, highlighting the costings on building works, and internal requirements such as a false ceilings and lighting, along with requirements for the café. Will invite Mrs Clack to June meeting should the Board approve the work.

In response to questions it was confirmed that

- the urinals are a heritage feature, it's better and cheaper to clean rather than replace with new.
- Have consulted with conservation officers on the benefits of retaining the current structure rather than starting again.
- Work is expected to take 8 – 10 weeks once commenced.
- Getting to this stage has taken some time as the addition of works to the café came late in the day
- The false ceiling will be a metal framework, braced into the walls and then plasterboarded and rendered, which will allow spotlights to be inserted.
- Proposal is based on the contractors priced up with the facilities management team and can share that detail. Will send to committee members before the next meeting.
- The work will improve the environmental impact of the building.

It was RESOLVED that the Board noted and commented on the report

7 BOUNDARY PERIMETER RAILING AND INTEGRATED WALL LINE AND BRICK PIERS UPGRADE PROPOSAL (Agenda Item 7)

The Head of Parks introduced the report. Highlighting the outcome of the inspection which showed sections of the wall line were unsafe. There were two options considered, to take down remove, repair, galvanise and repaint and reinstall the existing railings (£335,000), or to remove existing railing for scrap and replace with newbuild mirroring existing structure (£134,800 +VAT).

There are interim measures in place, but the work will need to be completed in the future.

In response to questions it was confirmed that:

- The lifespan of option 2 is likely to be the most cost-effective proposal.
- The potential scrap value of the existing railings would be beneficial as well.
- We await comments from the Heritage Officer.
- Works in option 2 should take around 12 weeks once commenced. There are three sections with slightly different requirements. Option 1 could take twice as long.

It was RESOLVED that the Board noted and commented on the report

8 CONTRACTOR REPORT (Agenda Item 8)

Idverde introduced the report, noting in particular work ongoing to resize graves.

In response to the questions it was confirmed that

- There are signs in the cemetery alerting families to works, families are written to, and they are handled as sensitively as possible.
- There is a lot of literature available for families before graves are established.

It was RESOLVED that the Board noted the contents of the report.

9 BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24 AND REVENUE ESTIMATES 2024/25
(Agenda Item 9)

The Assistant Treasurer introduced the report. Highlighting the costings for two Board meetings per session and three meetings per session. The Assistant Treasurer also drew the Board's attention to the income forecast and the expected costs of the toilet block work. The report also provides updates on recommendations to amend the risk assessment.

It was RESOLVED that the Board

- noted the current budgetary position for 2023/24 based on the end of January 2024 shown in Columns 1 to 5 of Appendix A.
- agreed to defer a decision on whether they wish to adopt 2 or 3 meetings per annum and approve Revenue Estimates for 2024/25 shown in Column 6 or 7 of Appendix A as appropriate until the next meeting
- agreed that the precepts for the financial year ended 31 March 2025 be set at zero.
- Approved a price increase of 5% on Fees and Charges from 1 April 2024 as detailed in Appendix H1
- reviewed and approved the Risk Management Strategy and Risk & Issues Register (as at February 2024) attached as Appendix I