

Agenda Item 3

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MERTON AND SUTTON JOINT CEMETERY BOARD

12 JUNE 2017

(2.45 pm - 3.45 pm)

PRESENT Councillor Agatha Mary Akyigyina (in the Chair),
Councillor Nick Emmerson, Councillor Richard Marston,
Councillor Graham Whitham, Councillor Jill West and
Councillor David Williams

ALSO PRESENT Doug Napier – Client-Side Manager
Zoe Church – Treasurer to the Board
Howard Joy – Surveyor to the Board
Mark Robinson – Registrar to the Board
Lisa Jewell – Clerk to the Board
Idverde Representative – Dennis Rice

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR 2017- 18 (Agenda Item 1)

RESOLVED

Councillor Agatha Akyigyina was elected Chair for 2017/18

And

Councillor Nick Emmerson was elected Vice Chair for 2017/18

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Trish Fivey, Councillor Geraldine Stanford and Councillor Nick Draper

3 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 3)

No declarations of Pecuniary Interest were received.

In the interests of openness and transparency Councillor Nick Emmerson declared that he is a Board Member of Sutton Housing Board, and that his wife used to keep a horse at Green Lane Stables.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 4)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February are agreed as an accurate record.

5 ABSTRACT OF ACCOUNTS 2016-17 (Agenda Item 5)

The Treasurer presented her report on the Annual Abstract of Accounts 2016/17.

She asked the Board to note a correction to Appendix H – MSJCB Risk Register. For the Risk No. MSJCB7a – Contracting out of Merton and Sutton Services, the section titled 'Comment Regarding Review' was changed to now read:

'Meeting to be scheduled for Autumn 2017 to review Operational Management, Income Position and Toilet Block'

In presenting her report, The Treasurer covered points including:

- There is a low risk from a pandemic at the current time
- A Further meeting required in Autumn 2017 to review how the idverde contract is working after the summer and to review and the mid-year financial position
- Precepts going back to 1974 are shown but full history back to 1949 can be shown if the Board wish.

Members asked a question about the equipment, vehicles and plant furniture that is currently listed as a long term asset on the balance sheet. The treasurer replied that the board would retain ownership of these current assets, but any new equipment, vehicles or plant furniture would be funded by idverde, and they would retain at the end of the contract. These current assets, and their depreciation, would be reviewed over the summer.

This meeting will review Operational Management, Income Position and the ongoing issues of the Toilet Block.
Cemetery Office

Members asked about some of the running expenses items in the revenue account, and noted:

- Legal expenses were incurred whilst setting up the new contract
- That the salary figure was split between the four Board Officers
- Officers to clarify what the charge for Rubbish Disposal covered
- Officers to clarify what the charge for Telephones and IT covered
- Information on the last two points to be circulated to Board Members.

The Board noted that burials and therefore income was reduced for 2016/2017, and that shared graves reduced income further. They commented that the number of burials can't be forecast, and noted that there is competition between cemeteries – MSJC is cheaper than Morden cemetery

Members asked about the contract with idverde and noted that at the moment accounts are based on a prudent estimates based on 2014/15 outrun and RPI. Interim accounts will be considered at the proposed Autumn meeting

RESOLVED

- A. To receive and approve the Draft Abstract of Accounts for 2016-17
- B. To approve the Annual Audit Return for 2016-17

- C. To review, amend and approve the Risk Register attached as Appendix H, noting the change detailed in these minutes
- D. To approve the revised revenue estimates for 2017/18 at Appendix I
- E. To arrange an autumn 2017 meeting to review the operation of the contract and review the budgetary position

6 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2016-17 (Agenda Item 6)

The Treasurer presented her report on MSJCB Annual Governance Statement 2016/17. The Board noted that as a small organisation, the Board utilizes the systems and procedures of the London Borough of Merton and as such utilises the work done by this organisation to demonstrate good governance.

The Board noted the two improvement actions have been identified by review:

1. A further review of the Financial situation in September 2017
2. A review of the roles and responsibilities. This will be driven by the Client Side Officer and will include a review of proposals relating to the Toilet block

An Autumn meeting of the Board is proposed to consider these two items.

Board members asked about the current Office/toilet block and what replacement was required. The Client Side Officer explained that he would be considering this question in his review and that he would be talking to idverde about new arrangements.

RESOLVED

That the annual governance statement be noted and agreed

An Autumn meeting is agreed for Tuesday 14 November at 2pm in Merton Civic Centre.

7 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda Item 7)

The Chair asked members of the Public to leave the meeting, and this included idverde employees. Before leaving the Chair asked the idverde representative for a quick update on the progress of the new contract and heard that it was working well.

RESOLVED: That the public are excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following report(s) on the grounds that it is (they are) exempt from disclosure for the reasons stated in the report(s).

8 EXEMPT MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 8)

RESOLVED: That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2017 are agreed as an accurate record.

9 UPDATE ON GREEN LANE STABLES (Agenda Item 9)

The Surveyor to the Board presented his update report on Green Lane Stables. The Board noted the details in the report regarding the leaseholder's request to re-assign their leases, and the details of the new leaseholder.

Members asked if there had been any attempt to market the site given the current very low rent collected from the site, but heard that the current leases would have to be ended to do this. It is the current tenant who is in control of the land; they would have to surrender the leases before any new leases could begin.

The Surveyor explained that any leases of this land would have to allow for future extension of the cemetery into the land, which is estimated to be required in approximately 25 years.

The Board noted the point in the report regarding drainage works.

Members asked the Surveyor to check if the new leaseholders were living on site.

Councillor Marston asked the Surveyor to investigate the effluent discharge onto the cycle path

RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the decision to authorise a licence to assign the leases of sites B and C on the terms contained within the body of this report be approved.

10 VERBAL UPDATE ON (I) MSJB CEMETERY LODGE AND (II) ISSUES ARISING FOR THE BOARD FOLLOWING THE TRANSFER TO IDVERDE (Agenda Item 10)

The minutes for this item are not for Publication

By Virtue of paragraph 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A

Of the Local Government Act 1972