

Executive – 11 January 2018

Present: Councillor Williams (Chairman)
Councillors Beale, Berry, Mrs Stock-Williams and Mrs Warmington

Officers: Chris Hall (Assistant Director – Operational Delivery), Gary Bowles (Cemeteries and Crematorium Manager) and Richard Bryant (Democratic Services Manager)

Also present: Councillor Aldridge

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m.)

1. Apologies

Councillors Edwards and Parrish

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 29 November 2017, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and were signed.

3. Declaration of Interests

Councillors Mrs Stock-Williams and Mrs Warmington declared personal interests as Members of Wellington Town Council and Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone Parish Council respectively.

4. Capital Improvements – Cemetery and Crematorium

Considered report previously circulated, which sought support for capital improvement works to the waiting room and toilet facilities within the Chapel complex at Taunton Crematorium.

This work was necessary to support the increased volume of people who attended services and meet their needs in terms of accessible toilet facilities.

The current waiting room did not have the same capacity as the Chapel leading to frequent instances of the public having to wait outside until the prior funeral had come to an end. It also led to mourners from different services having to co-mingle.

The request was greater than just one of convenience for service users. The ability to manage the flow of people through the site was important especially where services had often to be planned back to back. There were approximately 2,000 services per year and around half of these services could not be fully accommodated within the waiting room without leaving people standing outside.

This situation would only get worse unless appropriate action was taken as there was an increasing trend towards greater numbers of mourners attending services. It was possible that unless the proposed improvements were introduced, the

Crematorium might begin to lose some of its current business to other local providers.

Noted that the changes would nearly double the amount of waiting room space available to the public.

The additional resources being requested took account of the need for out of hours working and the provision of temporary toilets and a temporary waiting room. This was necessary to ensure the impacts on services were kept to a minimum.

Reported that whilst the work had yet to be competitively tendered, the design had been drawn up by Stone and Partners along with a quantity surveyors assessment. The build timeline was estimated at five months with additional time for tendering.

The budget request might appear high as this was fundamentally a reuse of existing space. There were however a number of factors which would increase the costs but were considered unavoidable for operational purposes. These factors were set out in the report.

The Community Scrutiny Committee had considered this matter on 13 December 2017 and Members were generally supportive of the report progressing unchanged to the Executive. However, a number of specific points had been raised which together with the officer responses were circulated for the consideration of the Executive.

Resolved that Full Council be recommended to approve a supplementary estimate of £400,000 to be added to the Capital Programme. £20,000 of this sum to be reallocated from the Capital approval for the Cremator brickwork which was now being funded from revenue resources and another £20,000 for the Chapel roof which was no longer required in the Capital Programme. The residual Capital sum of £360,000 to be funded from borrowing.

5. **Executive Forward Plan**

Submitted for information the Forward Plan of the Executive over the next few months.

Resolved that the Forward Plan be noted.

(The meeting ended at 6.48 p.m.)