

Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management

Report of the meeting of the board of directors held on 6th November 2009 at the Mercure Hotel, Gatwick.

Present: Martin Birch, Ken Dry, Alan Till, Bill Stanley, Alan Copeland, Steve Brown, Ian Quance, Tim Morris, Trevor Robson

1. Election of Chair

Ken Dry opened the meeting and called for the election of Chair and Vice Chair for the coming year.

Directors unanimously elected Martin Birch as Chair.
Alan Till was elected interim Vice Chair until after the next board meeting when the vacant professional seat will be filled.

Martin Birch proposed a vote of thanks for Ken Dry for his work as Chair for the previous year. Directors unanimously expressed their thanks to Ken.

2. Apologies for Absence

All directors were present.

Apologies were received from Charles Ward.

3. Declarations of Interest

Martin Birch declared that he might have an interest in certain matters regarding the Diploma as he is currently tutoring for SBS.

The Chief Executive declared that he has an interest with an item of other business regarding the Society of Bereavement Practitioners.

4. Minutes of the meeting of July 2009

The minutes were approved as a true record.

Matters arising:

Trevor Robson reported that the old SE branch account had now been closed.

The Chief Executive reported that the website structure is now in place with officers editing pages. The process had been slowed by the need to re-brand documents prior to uploading to the new site.

A meeting has been arranged with Assettrac for 20th November where Portal and electronic newsletter will be progressed.

The Chief Executive reported on a recent meeting of the BRAMM board where an agreement for the administration of the scheme was finalised with SLCC.

The Chief Executive asked Bill Stanley (in his capacity as S&NI branch secretary) if the branch had considered his letter offering assistance to produce policy and guidance for Scotland in relation to the issue of shallow graves and the Ombudsman's report. Bill Stanley stated that the branch had not yet discussed the letter

5. Member Review Panel Report

Directors discussed the report and in particular the areas surrounding the future of the committees.

It was agreed that the following be recommended to the membership:

- i) The committees be disbanded***
- ii) A single board directly elected on a 'first past the post' basis***
- iii) Term of office should be three years***
- iv) The board should comprise of eleven directors to be made up by eight plus the Deputy President, President and Immediate Past President***
- v) The board would put its recommendations to the membership with the alternative being to stay as is***
- vi) The Articles will be re-drafted with the document forming the information document on which members will vote***
- vii) Should members accept the recommendations, the current board would be disbanded with the exception of the Deputy President, President and Immediate Past President in office at that time and nominations would be sought for a ballot to fill the eight vacant seats***
- viii) The Chief Executive, in conjunction with the Company Solicitor will draft a paper for directors on the above***

6. Portfolios

The Chief Executive indicated that a portfolio vacancies exists by the departure of Sharon Herbert with the vacant professional seat to be filled at the next Professional committee meeting. Ian Quance had also joined the board as Deputy President.

The Chief Executive was requested to circulate a list of portfolios indicating holders and vacancies.

7. Report of the Finance & IT Manager

Item - Membership & Subscriptions

Membership at the 30/10/09 stands at 646 members this is an increase from 644 at the start of the year. It was noted that the number of deletions from membership had now been overtaken with the trend of rising membership continuing.

Corporate membership was reported as being at 367

Item – Significant Payments

In line with recommendations by Messrs Greenhalgh's and Co's audit cheques or bills paid over £5,000 since 10/07/09 were reported and noted by the Board.

Item – Effects of National Postal strike

The effects of the national postage strikes were described to Directors. ICCM was exposed due to ways it operates.

In 2008/9 ICCM received 31% of the volume of income from cheques. Following action we now receive 71% of our income via BACS – a small but useful increase.

For payments this year 51% in volume had been made by cheque and 49% electronically. In 2008/9 the figures were 56% for cheques and 44% for electronic payments.

Item 6 – Financial reporting for 2009/10

A complete breakdown of the financial information as background information was supplied to Directors. The expected position at the time of the AGM was a deficit of circa £29,000. The actual position while more favourable was skewed by event timing. The final quarter of the year is generally quieter which could have an effect.

In addition a number of costs were incurred this year without a financial return being generated.

Cost centres and variances in them were explained to Directors.

The report was noted and agreed by Directors.

8. Setting Fees for Events

The board received and considered a report from the Technical Services & Events Manager concerning the timing of events and the board making decisions of fees applicable. In order to give maximum time to promote events a request was made to give delegated authority to the Chairman, Chief Executive and Finance & IT Manager to set event fees.

It was agreed that:

Delegated authority be given to the Chairman, Chief Executive and Finance & IT Manager to set event fees

9. Report of the Chief Executive

a) HNC in Cemetery & Crematorium Management

The Chief Executive reported that SBS had gained agreement with Edexcel that the Diploma course plus Thesis and Professional Development plan had been accepted as an accredited BTEC HNC in Cemetery & Crematorium Management.

A few minor adjustments are required however these will not affect current students.

It is intended to launch the qualification in January 2010.

It was agreed that:

- i. The full HNC qualification is adopted and members informed of the benefits***
- ii. The fee for the Research Project and Professional Development Plan is held at the current level of £590***
- iii. The full HNC be launched in January 2010***

It was further agreed that the Chief Executive will draft a timeline and newsletter for the launch and that Martin Birch will attend the next meeting with SBS.

b) Diploma – Exemptions

The Chief Executive reported that decisions had been made in 2003/2004 regarding acceptability of old qualifications and that occasionally a member will come forward wishing to take up studies after several and sometimes many years and request exemptions or acceptance of such old qualification. It was reported that SBS had recommended that qualifications over 5 years old should require conversion before acceptance for the Diploma. Whilst the Diploma is ICCM property it is the gift of the board to ultimately accept or reject old qualification however a consistent approach is required.

In order to clarify matters directors were asked to consider the situation in respect of a recent request made by a member.

It was agreed that:

- a) All old Intermediate qualifications require conversion to HNC standard***
- b) All qualifications received through SBS over 5 years ago require conversion***
- c) SBS is consulted in respect of every future enquiry with their opinion and advice being final***

It was further agreed that:

The member concerned is advised of the above requirements

10. CAMEO Steering Group

Ken Dry reported that he had been contacted by Sharon Herbert with a request that she be permitted to continue as ICCM representative at CAMEO.

It was agreed that:

Sharon Herbert could continue as ICCM representative and on the same remit as previously stipulated.

Ken Dry also informed directors that Sharon had requested that she be permitted to fill the vacancy on the board.

It was agreed that:

Sharon Herbert could fill the board vacancy only if the Professional committee does not fill the vacancy at its next meeting.

11. Other Business

a) Council of British Funeral Services

David McCarthy recently gave a paper at a meeting of the above organisation and was well received. Following this the Council has suggested that the Institute becomes a member. The Council's membership comprises organisations connected with the disposal of the dead.

It was agreed that:

The Institute should enrol as a member of the Council

b) Society of Bereavement Practitioners

The Chief Executive reported that he had been contacted by the Society and informed that they had taken the decision to award him with Fellowship of the society and as such should declare the same to the board for approval or otherwise.

It was further reported that following the paper given by the Society at the ICCM conference a meeting has been arranged between our organisations that have similar objectives. It was further suggested that the Institute should take up corporate membership of the society.

It was agreed that:

i) The Chief Executive accepts the fellowship

ii) The Chief Executive and Chairman together with the Technical Services & Events Manager attend the meeting with the Society

iii) Corporate membership of the Society be arranged

c) Northern Branch Meeting and Resolution

Ken Dry reported on his visit to the Northern branch and the lively and interesting discussions that took place with members especially in respect of the Charter review.

The Chief Executive reported that a resolution had been forwarded by the Branch secretary regarding the deletion of national ranking tables and replacement with Gold, Silver and Bronze awards so as to bring the process into line with awards systems and remove the elitist element of the Charter Assessment Process.

The resolution was well received by directors.

It was agreed that:

The resolution be forwarded to the Corporate committee representative tasked with the Charter review for consideration.

d) BCAG Memorials

The Chief Executive reported that the BCAG agenda for a meeting to take place in late November contains an item regarding a memorial survey carried out by the MoJ. Whilst it was known that a limited number of authorities had received a questionnaire the survey was not widespread. Directors requested feedback after the next BCAG meeting.

e) NAMM Initiative

Ian Quance informed directors that he had been approached by NAMM in respect of a proposed initiative regarding memorials for the future. Directors advised that they had no objection to the initiative.

f) Orthometals

The Chief Executive informed directors that Orthometals has sent an invitation to visit their new depot and sorting facility in Holland. Directors will send two representatives in the new year.

g) Next Corporate Committee Meeting

Alan Till proposed that the next Corporate committee meeting should take place at the national office on 9th December.

h) Next Board Meeting

It was agreed that the next board meeting would take place in January 2010.