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The Chair and Members of  
Chesterfield and District Joint  
Crematorium Committee

Dear Councillor,

### AGENDA SUPPLEMENT

Please see attached the documents for the agenda item(s) listed below for the meeting of the CHESTERFIELD AND DISTRICT JOINT CREMATORIUM COMMITTEE to be held on MONDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2023, the agenda for which has already been published.

4. Bereavement Service Managers Report (Pages 3 - 6)
  - Report to follow

Yours sincerely,

Head of Regulatory Law and Monitoring Officer

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## For Publication

### Bereavement Services Manager’s Report

<b>Meeting:</b>	Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee
<b>Date:</b>	20 November 2023
<b>For publication</b>	

#### 1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To keep Members informed of matters relating to the day-to-day operation of the Crematorium and cremation numbers received from each constituent area.
- 1.2 To review the staffing structure for the team responsible for delivering Crematory, Chapel and Grounds Maintenance/Gardening functions.

#### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members approve in principle for the Seasonal Cremator Technician Gardener Post to be made Full Time Permanent after following the Lead Authorities Vacancy Control Panel Process. This post is currently 0.5 FTE.
- 2.2 That Members approve in principle to freeze the vacant Crematorium Gardener Post and not recruit. It is recommended that this vacancy is then reviewed at the end of Apprenticeship Contracts.
- 2.3 That Members approve in principle for the recruitment of a second apprenticeship in Horticulture at Bereavement Services after following the Lead Authorities Vacancy Control Panel Process.

#### 3.0 Reason for Recommendations

- 2.2 To ensure that the staffing structure is fit for purpose and to a capacity and resilience to deliver high quality bereavement services.

#### 2.0 Cremation Figures

- 2.1 This part of the report details cremation service totals, comparisons and from which constituent area funerals have been received from for the 2023/24 Financial Year.

	CBC	WEST	NEDDC	BDC	AV	OUTSIDE	TOTAL
APR–SEP 19	411	62	282	153	3	61	972

APR–SEP 20	552	71	372	130	14	120	1259
APR–SEP 21	464	85	325	155	4	67	1100
APR–SEP 22	528	62	325	118	24	76	1133
APR–SEP 23	444	59	293	136	6	71	1009

	CJCC Cremations	Derbyshire Registered Deaths	England and Wales Registered Deaths
APR – SEP 19	972	3,824	247,636
APR – SEP 20	1259	4,620	303,203
APR – SEP 21	1100	4,119	254,341
APR – SEP 22	1133	4,349	275,914
APR – SEP 23	1009	4,109	267,292

### 3.0 **Staffing**

- 3.1 The Crematorium currently has one vacancy following the resignation of a Full Time Gardener.

Including the vacant post, the Staffing Structure for Bereavement Services has a total of 5.5 FTE Posts dedicated to Crematory, Chapel, Music/Media and Grounds Maintenance tasks.

Staff currently working in those areas are trained and skilled in multiple disciplines. For example, the Chargehand Gardener is also a qualified Cremator Technician and Chapel Attendant.

At the June 2023 meeting of the Committee, Members approved for the appointment of a Horticultural Apprentice. This post is to be advertised before the end of the calendar year and an Apprenticeship Provider has been procured.

The apprentices would spend their time working between the Crematorium and Lead Authority Cemeteries, with a financial recharge to the Lead Authority as appropriate.

The Manager has reviewed the structure of the Gardening, Chapel and Crematory functions in light of the vacancy and has made the recommendations for several reasons.

In making the part time post of Cremator Technician/Gardener full time, resilience is added by having a fully trained team member on site permanently, capable of a wide range of duties at all times. A fifth full time position capable of Crematory/Gardening Duties would be extremely valuable at times of pandemic, excess deaths and Winter Pressures. It would be more valuable than a Full-Time Gardener position.

If the post of Gardener is frozen, then this could be reviewed at the end of the two-year apprenticeship programme and may become an opportunity at the end of the scheme.

To create a second apprenticeship at this time would be a second exiting opportunity for a person to receive high quality training in a rewarding and interesting service. Whilst the focus is on grounds maintenance, opportunities to learn about administrative, technical and front of house duties would be offered. The three constituent Council's are proactive in encouraging young people to take up traineeships and apprenticeships to gain the necessary skills, qualifications and experience to be ready for work.

#### 4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 If the recommendations are approved than an increase in staffing levels, from 5.5 FTE to 6 FTE's, would occur in this area over a two year period of apprenticeship programmes, to be reviewed in 2025/2026 (*n.b. 5 FTE's plus 2 Apprenticeships equals 7 FTE's however, 1 Apprentice would be working in Cemeteries each day on average, reducing to 6 FTE's*).

The cost implications of this proposal are as follows.

Two scenarios are offered depending on 'best' and 'worst' case scenarios depending on the age of the Apprentice. If the successful Apprentice was aged between 16-18 then a small saving of £2,290 p.a. would be realised. If the successful candidate was aged 23 or over, then the maximum cost would be £11,210 per annum.

	£
Conversion of Seasonal Cremator Technician/Gardener to Full Time Permanent	£16,400
Saving due to Recruitment Freeze of Vacant Crematorium Gardener Post	-£31,000
Recruitment of Apprentice Age 16-18	£12,310
TOTAL	- £2,290.00

	£
Conversion of Seasonal Cremator Technician/Gardener to Full Time Permanent	£16,400
Saving due to Recruitment Freeze of Vacant Crematorium Gardener Post	£31,000
Recruitment of Apprentice Age 23 and over	£25,810
TOTAL	+ £11,210

#### 4.0 Alternative Options

- 4.1 One option is not to recruit or replace the Vacant Grade 4 Seasonal Gardener Post at all. This would deliver a saving of approximately £31,000 p.a.

However, the standard of grounds maintenance would deteriorate significantly along with increased stresses placed on the remaining team. With a Crematorium expected to open in Bolsover District in the coming years, it is the Managers opinion that any drop in standards, could lead to financial losses greater than the cost of replacing this post, due to drop in standards.

- 4.2 Another option would be to keep the structure at 5.5 FTE's, not recruit a second apprentice but still increase resilience by making the Seasonal Crematorium Technician/Gardener Full Time, and replace the vacancy with a Seasonal Gardener. This would cost approximately £1,500 p.a.

**Document information**

<b>Report author</b>	
<i>Bereavement Services Manager c/o Chesterfield and District Crematorium</i>	
<b>Background documents</b>	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
N/A	
<b>Appendices to the report</b>	
None	