

The Chair and Members of
Chesterfield and District Joint
Crematorium Committee

Please ask for Amanda Clayton

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10 September 2021

Dear Councillor,

Please attend a meeting of the CHESTERFIELD AND DISTRICT JOINT CREMATORIUM COMMITTEE to be held on MONDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 2021 at 1.00 pm in the Council Chamber of North East Derbyshire District Council, 2013 Mill Lane, Chesterfield S42 6NG, the agenda for which is set out below.

AGENDA

Part 1(Public Information)

1. Declarations of Interest by Members and Officers relating to items on the Agenda
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of the Joint Crematorium Committee held on 24th May 2021 (Pages 3 - 6)
4. Budget Monitoring Report - Period 5 (Pages 7 - 10)
5. Bereavement Services Manager's Report (Pages 11 - 16)
6. COVID-19 Update (Pages 17 - 22)
7. Local Government Act 1972 - Exclusion of the Public

To move "That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act".

Part 2 (Non Public Information)

8. Chesterfield Crematorium Fees and Charges 2021/2022 (Pages 23 - 30)

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Smith', written in a cursive style.

Local Government and Regulatory Law Manager and Monitoring Officer
(Chesterfield Borough Council)

CHESTERFIELD AND DISTRICT JOINT CREMATORIUM COMMITTEE

Monday, 24th May, 2021

Present:-

Councillor Dooley (Chair)

Councillors	Holmes J Innes Ludlow	Councillors	Mannion-Brunt Powell Renwick
Ian Waller	Service Director	Helen Fox	Chief Finance Officer
Ross	Bereavement Services	Dave Corker	Accounts
Fawbert	Manager		

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

1 APPOINTMENT OF A CHAIR (TO BE APPOINTED FROM CHESTERFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL)

Councillor Ludlow was appointed Chair of the Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee for 2021/22.

(Councillor Ludlow then took the Chair.)

Councillor Dooley thanked officers for their support in her role as chair of the committee 2020/2021 under unusual circumstances. The Chair and members thanked Councillor Dooley for her commitment during her period as chair.

2 APPOINTMENT OF A VICE-CHAIR (TO BE APPOINTED FROM NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL)

Councillor Powell was appointed Vice-Chair of the Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee for 2021/22.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Kenyon, Parkin and Watson.

5 MINUTES OF THE JOINT CREMATORIUM COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 MARCH, 2021

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee on 22 March, 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

6 ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2021

The Senior Accounting Technician and the Bereavement Services Manager submitted a report on the final accounts of the Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee for the year ended 31 March, 2021, including the Revenue Account and Balance Sheet.

The report noted that at year end there had been a net surplus of £755,307 and outlined the areas where there had been variances from the approved budget including the significant increase in cremations as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Section 3.3 of the officer's report provided detail on the schemes that required carry forwards to 2021/22 which totalled £5,700.

The report noted that a redistribution of £700k had been made to the constituent authorities, the details of which were set out in paragraph 5.2 of the officer's report.

It was noted that due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic there had been increased contributions to the Mercury Abatement Fund and the Revenue Reserves. The £147k additional surplus would be retained in the Revenue Reserve until the medium term effects of the pandemic were fully known.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.

2. That the carry forward requests, as set out in paragraph 3.3 of the officer's report, be approved.
3. That the re-distribution to the three constituent authorities be approved.

REASON FOR DECISION

To ensure that the Joint Committee approves the Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 and that a balanced revenues budget is maintained for 2021/22.

7 BEREAVEMENT SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT

The Bereavement Services Manager submitted a report on matters relating to the operation of the Crematorium.

Information on cremation totals, comparisons with national and regional data, and geographical information on which areas funerals had been received from in 2020/21 was provided in Section 2 of the officer's report. It was noted that there was a 17% increase from the previous year on cremations taking place in the period from April to March.

Section three of the report included a request to extend the contract of the seasonal gardener with a plan to further upskill him as a Cremator Technician. This would increase the resilience of the service in preparation for any potential COVID-19 variants or other pressures.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted and approval given to extend the Seasonal Gardener Position over Winter 2021/22.

REASONS FOR DECISION –

1. To keep Members informed on the day to day operation of the Crematorium.
2. To develop the Crematorium Staff and provide further resilience over the Winter 21/22

8 COVID-19 UPDATE

The Bereavement Services Manager presented a report to the committee updating the members on the impact of COVID-19 on the Chesterfield and District Crematorium. The committee was given a summary of the number of excess cremations compared to the five year average, that had been carried out over the last year. A total of 424 excess cremations had been carried out since the beginning of the pandemic.

The decision taken in February to adjust service times to increase capacity proved to be the correct one and waiting times were kept to an acceptable level. Numbers permitted in chapel had increased from 30 to 38 mourners and witnesses to strewings of cremated remains had increased from 6 to 15.

The legislation that required the crematorium to remain closed outside of service times had been revoked but the Bereavement Services Manager had taken the decision not to reopen at this time to maintain the safety of staff and visitors. Most staff had received their second dose of the vaccine and were participating in Community Testing.

Additional cleaning and free web-casting service would continue and be reviewed in June. The Bereavement Services Manager highlighted that the second wave coincided with the typically most challenging months of the year but that staff had coped well and were now being encouraged to take their leave and make use of support services where needed. The committee agreed that the whole team had performed well and should be thanked for their efforts.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION –

1. To inform members on the current situation at the Crematorium, the changes from 17th May 2021 and for reassurance that services continue to be delivered in a Covid Secure manner

BUDGET MONITORING PERIOD 5

MEETING: CHESTERFIELD AND DISTRICT JOINT
CREMATORIUM COMMITTEE

DATE: 20th September 2021

REPORT BY: BEREAVEMENT SERVICES MANAGER
CLERK & TREASURER

FOR PUBLICATION:

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR PUBLIC REPORTS:

TITLE: Budget Monitoring Report Period 5

LOCATION: Accountancy Section

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report the budget monitoring position as at the end of August 2021.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the report be noted.

3.0 PERIOD 5 BUDGET MONITORING

3.1 The original budget was approved on the 14th December 2020 but does not include the carry forwards of £5,700 approved at the 24th May meeting.

3.2 There is currently a favourable profiled variance of £77,966, details of the variances from the profiled budgets are shown below:

- **Employee costs** are over profile by £1,251 this consists of:
 - Normal staffing budgets are underspent by £673
 - Overtime is underspent by £4,002 as due to national restrictions it has not been possible to have a member of staff on site at weekends when cremations are not taking place. Recent changes to guidelines mean that this will resume from early September.
 - Further additional spend of £4,982 on staff re-deployment due to Covid 19
 - There is a considerable amount of training to be undertaken this year resulting in an overspend of £734
 - Minor items - £210 overspend

- **Premises costs** are under profile by £28,789 this consists of:
 - Service improvement plan is underspent by £17,875 due to delayed starts on projects (i.e. improvements to the roof, entrance area etc)
 - General routine repairs – underspend £5,377
 - Cremator repairs - underspend £1,406.
 - General grounds maintenance – overspend of £1,922
 - Trees & shrubs – underspend £2,083
 - Utilities – underspend of £3,855 mainly on gas
 - Minor miscellaneous items – underspend £115.

- **Transport** costs are under profile by £868, mainly on car allowances and fuel for machinery.

- **Supplies & Services** costs are over profile by £8,950, this consists of:
 - Medical Referee Fees – overspent by £2,580 due to the excess number of cremations however this is offset by additional income (see below)
 - Service improvement plan – under spend of £430 as new mowers have not yet been purchased
 - There has been £8,138 of additional spend on Covid related items. So far this has mainly been caused by the

additional cleaning required to keep the chapel safe however this was curtailed in early July.

- The purchase of memorials is overspent by £4,611 however this is offset by additional income (see below)
- General Supplies & Services – under spend of £5,949.

➤ **Contracted Services** are under profile by £95.

➤ **Income** is over profile by £58,415, this consists of:

- Cremation fees (inc. Medical Referees & Mercury Abatement) – over profile by £59,024 due to a higher number of cremations. However, this is partially offset by approximately £23k of additional expenditure necessary to maintain the Crematorium operational because of Covid.
- All Memorial Income – over profile by £4,867 due to increases in the number of people wanting to purchase a memorial; in particular the new types of memorial introduced a few years ago which are gaining in popularity.
- £9,865 of income has been forfeited because mourners have been given free access to the webcasting of services whilst restrictions on the number of people allowed to attend services have been in place. Now that restrictions have been lifted the Bereavement Services Manager has reviewed this policy and will recommence charging from September
- Other Income – over profile by £4,389.

3.3 In conclusion at this stage it is anticipated that the outturn for the year will be in line with the revised budget forecast.

3.4 There are two capital improvement schemes originally budgeted for this year, to replace the gutters, soffits & fascia's and install air conditioning in the chapel. This work has not yet commenced.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 That the report be noted.

5.0 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 To keep the Joint Committee informed about the financial performance of the Crematorium.

Decision information

Key decision number	
Wards affected	All
Links to Council Plan priorities	To provide value for money services

Document information

Report author	Contact number/email
David Corker	01246 936279 david.corker@chesterfield.gov.uk
Background documents	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
<i>This must be made available to the public for up to 4 years.</i>	
Annexes to the report	

For Publication

Bereavement Services Manager's Report

Meeting: Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee

Date: 20th September 2021

Report by: Bereavement Services Manager

For publication

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To keep Members informed of matters relating to the Operation of the Crematorium.

2.0 Cremation Figures

2.1 This part of the report details the cremation totals, comparisons to previous years and which constituent area funerals are being received from for the 2021/22 Financial Year to date.

APR – AUG	CBC	WEST	NEDDC	BDC	AV	OUTSIDE
APR – AUG 2019	355	55	240	135	3	53
APR – AUG 2020	477	59	336	112	13	110
APR – AUG 2021	399	66	258	128	4	56

	CJCC Cremations	Derbyshire Registered Deaths	England and Wales Registered Deaths
APR - JUN 2020	772	2,750	182,916
APR - JUN 2021	544	1,971	120,449
+/-	-228 - 30%	-779 -29%	-62,467 -36%

In summary, the death rates in England and Wales are considerably lower in 2021 compared to the corresponding months last year, due to the first wave of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

3.0 Management Plan and Works

Members will recall that a number of projects and improvements were delayed from the last Financial Year to allow a focus on responding to the challenges of the Pandemic.

Please note the following update on the larger projects along with others scheduled for 2021/22;

Chapel Air Conditioning – an initial survey and quotation has been received within the budget of £17,000. A full specification is currently being built and will be out to tender with works completed by the end of the current Financial Year.

Vestry Refurbishment – this work has now been completed.

Path Repairs – to take place in October 2021.

Roof Repairs, guttering, soffits, and fascias – specification and works out to tender in October 2021 for completion by end of current Financial Year.

Replacement Maintenance Vehicle – prices have been obtained, within the budget of £5,000 set aside for a replacement ride on brush cutter, to be purchased by end of November 2021.

3.0 Additional Projects Identified

The Woodland Walk area is an important area of the grounds since its development over the past 8 years, providing a natural area for the strewing of cremated remains and for people to spend time reflecting in a tranquil area.

The pond area is an important feature area and unfortunately, the bank of the pond has started to show signs of collapse. An initial quote of £8,253.13 has been obtained for the construction of a wall to retain the far bank. It is recommended that Members approve the allocation of funds from the Crematoriums Reserves to cover the costs of this work.

Another popular feature of the Woodland Walk is the flower bed set aside for Pond Markers. These memorials are made of marble with a void in which the cremated remains are placed with a commemorative plaque also fixed.

Those memorials have proved popular since being introduced and there is now very limited space left available. An area has been identified for the creation of another area where 70 new pond markers can be situated near to the pond and brook. A quotation of £12,117 has been obtained to create this area which would include foundation, walls and cobbles and access path. It is recommended that Members approve the allocation of funds from the Crematorium reserves to cover the cost of this work.

4.0 Temporary Closure of Nearby Crematorium

Sheffield City Council are temporarily closing City Road Crematorium, for a period of 6-7 months to proceed with planned cremator replacement works and additional necessary repairs to the building.

The City Council operates another Crematorium and there is also another Private Crematorium in the City. However, it is plausible that at times during the Winter months, the demand for cremation services may lead to Funeral Directors seeking the services of neighbouring Crematoria such as Chesterfield and District.

5.0 Annual Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey

Members will recall that each year, the Crematorium contacts all stakeholders including Funeral Directors, Ministers and Celebrants asking for their feedback, comments and suggestions on the services provided at the Crematorium.

The summary of responses from the 2021 Survey is attached at Appendix A.

6.0 Asbestos Removal Works

Over the summer the Manager received a recommendation from the Lead Authorities Health and Safety Advisor regarding the removal and sealing of asbestos on site within the buildings in two areas – the Grounds Maintenance Yard/Building and the Basement Area.

The recommendation was based on a revised review of the risk and works were authorised to make safe.

The work was authorised and completed in September 2021.
The cost of the work was £14,500.00.

7.0 FBCA Inspection

The Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities has a programme on inspection of the Crematoria in the UK.

An inspection took place on 9th June. It involved scrutinising 6 separate key areas of service delivery, through discussion and review of more than 80 points of interest.

A quote from the letter received from the FBCA after inspection said, *“the Inspector found an excellent level of service provision and did not feel it necessary to make any recommendations”*.

A compliance score of 96% or 430 points out of 450 was awarded.

8.0 Recommendations

- 8.1 That the report, including the results from the Annual Satisfaction Survey be noted.
- 8.2 That a total of £21,000 be approved for use from the Crematorium Reserves for the development and repair of the pond and woodland walk area.

9.0 Reason for Recommendation

- 9.1 To keep Members updated on the day-to-day operation of the Service.
- 9.2 To maintain the aesthetic value of the pond area for the future whilst preventing the collapse of the bank. The introduction of an additional pond marker area will

ensure that the crematorium can continue to provide popular options for the bereaved whilst creating an additional income stream.

Ross Fawbert
Bereavement Services Manager

For Publication

Impact of Covid-19 Update

Meeting: Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium
Committee

Date: 20 September 2021

Report by: Bereavement Services Manager

For Publication

1.0 Purpose of Report

Reports have been presented to the Committee at each meeting since June 2020 on the Impact of Covid-19 and the response from Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium.

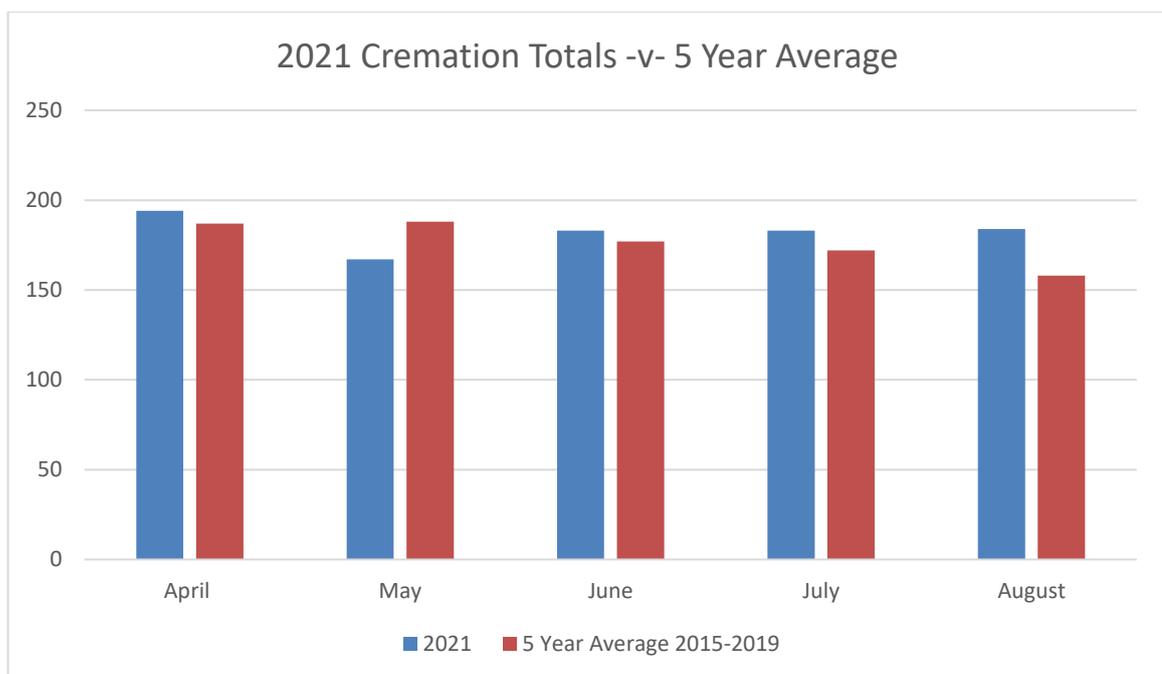
This report will update and inform Members on the current position with any key updates since the last meeting of the Committee.

2.0 Cremation Services after the Second Wave

Following the second wave of the Pandemic earlier in 2021, the number of cremation services that took place from 1st April 2021 to 31st August 2021 was 911.

This figure is 3.5% higher than the average number of cremations taking place in the same period over the 5 years (2015-2019). The average for those years was 880.

The table below shows the number of cremations by month in 2021 compared to the 5 year average in red.



3.0 Current Government Guidance

From Monday 12th July, all restrictions on funeral events were removed as the Government proceeded to Step 4 of the roadmap out of lockdown in England. The key points from the current Government Guidance for funerals during the coronavirus pandemic are;

- There are currently no legal limits on the number of people who can attend funerals or commemorative events.
- Social distancing measures no longer apply and mourners do not need to stay 2 metres apart at a funeral or commemorative event.

- Although not required to do so by law, the government expects and recommends that face coverings are worn in crowded areas.

A link to the current guidance, last updated on 27 August 2021 can be found here;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

4.0 **Funeral Services and Chapel from 12th July 2021**

The Manager can report a return to a near normal service resuming following the lifting of restrictions. For information, Members will note that;

- Chapel Capacity was increased from 38 to 98 from Monday 12th July 2021. All seating rows can now be used, however the rows have been spaced 1.1m apart, taking the length of the Chapel with no standing room available.
- The Waiting Room, with overspill facility, including screen and speakers was re-opened on 1st September 2021 with 18 seated capacity.
- Webcasting remained free of charge until 1st September 2021 as the service transitioned back to usual service. Since the beginning of the Pandemic, 1820 services have been broadcast.
- Outside speakers remain in operation for those who do not feel comfortable to enter a crowded space or if capacity is reached.
- The Public Toilets and Book of Remembrance Room reopened at weekends from 4th September 2021 with a member of staff on site. Arrangements with the Security Company to carry out weekend patrols has ended.
- Services are currently running at the usual 40 minute interval.

- Additional building cleaning support ended in July 2021, however Chapel Attendants continue to disinfect touch points and seating on a regular basis throughout the day.
- Hand sanitiser remains in place on entrance to public areas.
- Signage remains in place encouraging mourners to wear face coverings.
- Risk Assessments remain in place for staff to continue with caution. The latest risk assessment includes working from home where possible, instructs staff to continue wearing a face covering whilst moving around buildings, continue with good hygiene/hand washing/cleaning equipment and continue to maintain social distancing wherever possible (including staggered breaks, leaving chapel once services commences, and no sharing of maintenance vehicles).

5.0 **Staffing – Positive Cases and Isolation**

Since the beginning of the Pandemic, one member of staff has tested positive for Covid-19. This occurred in August 2021, whilst on annual leave, and had no major implications on the service.

There have been 6 isolations due to close contact with someone who has tested positive since the beginning of the Pandemic. Although support was available from the Lead Authority, each case was manageable due to the flexibility and multi skilled nature of the Team.

6.0 **Recommendations**

6.1 That the report is noted.

7.0 **Reason for Recommendation**

7.1 To inform members on the current situation at the Crematorium, the changes from 12th July 2021 and for

reassurance that services continue to be delivered in a Covid Secure manner for staff in line with Government Guidance.

Ross Fawbert
Bereavement Services Manager

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