

For Publication

Impact of Covid-19 Update

Meeting: Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium
Committee

Date: 21 March 2022

Report by: Bereavement Services Manager

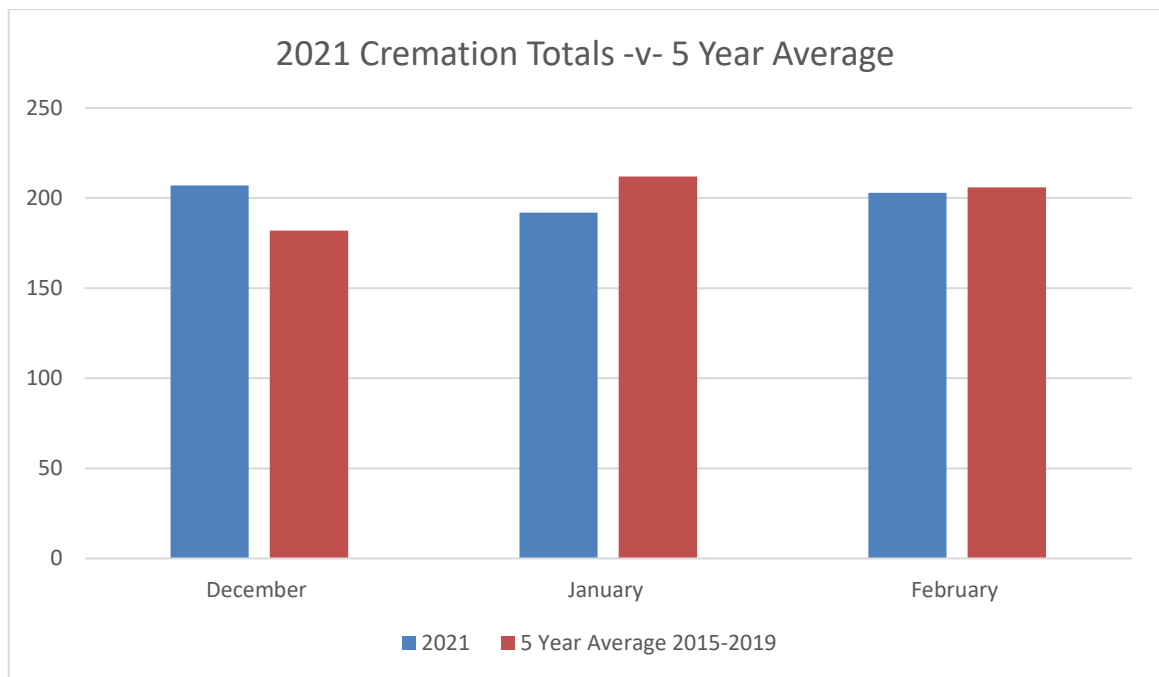
1.0 Purpose of Report

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 from November 2021

The table below shows the number of cremations by month since the last Committee Meeting (in blue) compared to the 5 year average (in red).



In summary, the number of cremation services that have taken place since the last Committee meeting are around the 5 year average with no excess to report.

3.0 Government Guidance

It is intended that this will be the final report to Committee on this matter as the Government set out plans for living with Covid and also removed the majority of domestic restrictions in England from 24th February 2022.

The latest Guidance for funerals and commemorative events during the Pandemic can be found in the link below and was last updated in line with the removal of self isolation regulations on 24 February 2022.

<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>

In summary, social distancing measures and face coverings are not currently required by law. The Guidance does still advise that good hygiene practices are followed, fresh air and ventilation are allowed for and that venue managers should give consideration to those who wish to keep a safe distance.

Therefore, the hand sanitisers at Chapel Entrance remain in place and windows are opened between services where practicable.

The chapel chair rows also remain spaced at over 1m with no standing room and will be managed within the service RAMS and Fire Risk Assessments for Maximum Occupancy.

Otherwise, the Manager can report a return to near normal service with no limitations on the numbers allowed to attend.

The Coronavirus Act 2020, which introduced easements to death certification processes and cremation forms, expires at midnight on 24 March 2022. Some changes have been retained on a permanent basis through other measures, and other processes revert to previous practice.

4.0 Staffing – Positive Cases and Isolation

At the December 2021 meeting of the Committee, Members approved for the Manager to activate a range of measures at their discretion including for example, redeployment of seconded staff, free of charge webcasting and the reintroduction of additional cleaning, should the need arise.

At the time of the December meeting, the potential impact of the Omicron variant was unknown. The Manager is pleased to report that none of those measures were reintroduced and although there were three positive Covid cases amongst staff,

the service was able to continue without disruption over the Winter Months.

5.0 **Recommendations**

5.1 That the report is noted.

6.0 **Reason for Recommendation**

6.1 To inform members on the current situation at the Crematorium.

Ross Fawbert
Bereavement Services Manager