

For Publication

Apprenticeship at the Crematorium

Meeting:	Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee
Date:	5 June 2023
For publication	

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To consider the creation of an Apprenticeship Placement opportunity at Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium from February 2024.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That members approve the addition of a two year Level 2 Horticulture and Landscape Construction Operative to the establishment – see Appendix 1 for more details on the apprenticeship scheme.
- 2.2 That members approve a maximum of £48396 additional budget to cover the cost of the apprenticeship over 2 years.

3.0 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 At the last meeting of the Committee, the Manager highlighted the risk of loss of talent and ageing workforce within Bereavement Services. The introduction of an Apprentice now would be the right time to train and develop a member of staff to mitigate against that future loss of experience with a opportunity for career progression in future.
- 3.2 The recent Stress Risk Assessment Exercise, highlighted some concerns around workload pressures and expectations. For context, prior to the recent Pandemic, the recent average number of cremations undertaken at the Crematorium was 2110 per annum (2005 -2019). The last 3 years (2020-2022) has seen that number increase to an average of 2378 cremations per annum (13% increase).

Additionally, Funerals have changed dramatically over the past decade. Until relatively recently, most Funerals would have followed a similar format, led from The Churches Common Book of Funeral Services, often accompanied by an Organist. Many funerals are now unique celebrations of life with photographic tributes and recorded music, often recorded or streamed. To administer and usher funerals requires more resources now. Whilst often, one Chapel Attendant would be able to manage the arrival and ushering of a funeral service, two members of staff are almost always now required Chapel.

An additional staff member, primarily committed to the grounds would release other staff when required to concentrate on Funeral Services and relieve the stress placed upon the team. The Crematorium has 5.5 FTE equivalent's working on all aspects of the Chapel, Crematory and Grounds Maintenance. Three or often four members of staff are needed to safely and efficiently maintain the current number of cremation services. Given that is generally accepted that 20% of staff may be away absent on leave/sickness etc the grounds maintenance, we are often working at full capacity, with increasing demands and scarce resources to maintain the grounds to Green Flag Standard.

- 3.3 An Apprenticeship at the Crematorium would be an exiting opportunity for a person 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.
- 3.4 The addition of an apprentice would also add further resilience to the service during times of excess deaths and pandemic.

4.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

- 4.1 The cost of appointing an Apprentice, depends on the age of the successful candidate, if approved.

The maximum cost is approximately £48,396 based on the figures below;

	Salary	Super	Total
16 – 18	£10,159	£2,103	£12,262
18 to 20	£14,410	£2,983	£17,393
20 to 22	£19,586	£4,054	£23,640
23 & over	£20,048	£4,150	£24,198

Document information

Report author

*Bereavement Services Manager
c/o Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium*

Background documents

These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.

This must be made available to the public for up to 4 years.

Appendices to the report	
Appendix 1	Apprenticeship Description