

For Publication

Bereavement Services Manager's Report

Meeting:	Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee
Date:	18 September 2023
For publication	

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To keep Members informed of matters relating to the day-to-day operation of the Crematorium.

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 2022/23 Financial Year.

	CBC	WEST	NEDDC	BDC	AV	OUTSIDE	TOTAL
Apr-Aug 2019	355	55	240	135	3	53	841
Apr-Aug 2020	477	59	336	112	13	110	1107
Apr-Aug 2021	399	66	258	128	4	56	911
Apr-Aug 2022	444	46	277	101	4	76	948
Apr-Aug 2023	376	50	250	113	6	59	854

2.2 Member's will note that the number of cremation services carried out between April and August 2023 is similar to the same period in 2019 (pre Covid-19 Pandemic). Looking at the data above, over the past 5 years, cremation service totals were highest in 2020 at the onset of the Pandemic, remaining higher than average during 2021 and 2022 but now appear to have fallen back to expected levels.

3.0 Annual Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey

3.1 Each year, the Service carries out an annual survey of it's Stakeholders (including Minister's, Celebrants, Funeral Director's and Stonemasons). The results of the 2023 survey are attached at Appendix 1.

3.2 Overall, the feedback and satisfaction levels are positive and reinforce the positive approach that the service has in terms of its relationship with stakeholders. There are some areas to reflect upon and consider.

4.0 **Break in and Burglary**

4.1 Member's will recall that at the June 2023 meeting the Manager reported on the April 2023 break in and burglary. Member's approved the estimated spend of £30,000 to replace stolen items.

4.2 All powered hand tools have been replaced at a cost of £5,500.00. The Manager is engaged in a procurement exercise to replace the Ride on Gator Buggy Vehicle. Initial quotes appear to be in the region of £25,500.00. Therefore it is expected that the total replacement cost of equipment will be around £31,000.00.

4.3 The wooden garage doors that were damaged have also been replaced with automated roller shutter doors at a cost of £5,000.00. However, those wooden doors were already scheduled to be replaced from the improvement reserves with funds available.

4.4 The Manager is still awaiting the outcome of the insurance claim, which would offset some of the costs.

5.0 **Service and Maintenance of Cremation Equipment Agreement**

5.1 The 5 Year Service and Maintenance agreement that started in 2018 is being renegotiated and the Manager is engaged in the procurement to renew this essential service for a further 5 years. The current estimate is £116,147 per annum, an increase on the current budget. The expected budget pressure and increase is due to higher than anticipated RPI increases along with the increase in costs (particularly materials) for the relining of the cremator refractories, all three of which are due within the next 5 year period.

6.0 **Project and Service Improvement Plan**

6.1 Member's will be aware that the Crematorium's Improvement Plan was heavily disrupted during the Pandemic but the Manager is pleased to report that there is a positive update on the backlog of projects.

6.2 Air Conditioning will be installed into Chapel over the weekend 15-18 September 2023 and costs are expected to fall within the £20k budget. Mourners will have a more comfortable experience in Chapel during the summer months from 2024 onwards. Members will note from the annual questionnaire, that air conditioning is requested by our service users; a great example of "You Said, We Did".

6.3 Quotes and proposals for CCTV and Lighting around the public car park area are also being received and those works expected to be completed by the end of the calendar year.

6.3 An order has also now been placed to improve the current ventilation system within the Crematory area with works expected to take place in Autumn.

6.4 Repairs and improvements to the building roofs, soffits and facias is also at the procurement stage with an order expected to be placed soon.

7.0 Apprenticeships

7.1 At the June 2023 meeting, it was agreed that members approve a maximum of £48,396 additional budget to cover the cost of one apprenticeship over 2 years. It was noted that the minimum cost would be £24,524 (all depending on the age of the successful candidate).

7.3 The Lead Authorities HR Department is currently sourcing the apprenticeship supplier and the advertisement for the post is expected to go out over Autumn 2023.

7.4 The Manager is currently looking into the feasibility of a second apprentice working across both the crematorium and Lead Authority Cemeteries, along with a review of current grounds maintenance arrangements.

8.0 Recommendations

8.1 That the report be noted.

Document information

Report author	
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Background documents These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
N/A	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix 1	Customer Satisfaction Survey

