
Report of Graham Harrison, Bereavement Services Manager

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee with the quarterly update relating to performance and other operational matters.

Executive Summary

2. This report provides Members of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee with a quarterly update of performance and operational matters at the crematorium.

Recommendation(s)

3. It is recommended that Members of the Mountsett Joint Committee:
 - a. Note the current performance of the crematorium.
 - b. Note the attendance at the Joint Conference of the Federation of Burial & Cremation Authorities and the Cremation Society of Great Britain.
 - c. Note the distribution of recycling income to the respective charities.

Background

4. This report provides Members of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee with an update of performance and operational matters at the crematorium since the last meeting of the Joint Committee.

Performance Update - Number of Cremations

5. The table below provides details of the number of cremations for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2024 inclusive, with comparative data in the same periods last year:

	2022/23	2023/24	Change
January	145	122	- 23
February	133	115	- 18
March	132	110	- 22
TOTAL	410	347	- 63

6. There were 347 cremations undertaken during the period 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2024, compared to 410 in the same period last year, a decrease of 63. The profile of where families came from can be seen below:

Gateshead	95
Durham	196
Outside Area	56
Total	347

7. The total number of cremations in 2023/24 was 1,370 compared with 1,445 in 2022/23, a decrease of 75.
8. The 2023/24 budget was set at a prudent assumption of 1,300 cremations during the year. The actual number of cremations undertaken was therefore 70 more than the budget position. This is reflected in an over achievement of cremation fee income of £32,290 in year, which is included in the budgetary control report.
9. The table below shows the comparative figures for the previous ten financial years:

Year	Cremations
2013/14	1,191
2014/15	1,320
2015/16	1,296
2016/17	1,439
2017/18	1,396
2018/19	1,331
2019/20	1,399
2020/21	1,758

Year	Cremations
2021/22	1,463
2022/23	1,445
2023/24	1,370
11 Year Average	1,401

10. For Members information, the table below provides details of the number of direct cremations, which are included in the totals above, for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, with comparative data for the same period last year:

	2022/23	2023/24	Change
Direct Cremation – Attended	0	0	0
Direct Cremation - Unattended	67	62	- 5
TOTAL	67	62	- 5

Memorials

11. The table below outlines the number and value of the memorials sold in the period January to March 2024 compared to the same period the previous year.

	Jan – March 2022/23		Jan – March 2023/24	
	Number	£	Number	£
Large Plaques	2	804	5	2,160
Small Plaques	10	2,610	8	2,304
Memorial leaves	5	500	7	700
Renewals	8	1,392	3	540
Total	25	5,306	23	5,704

12. In overall terms the number and value of memorials sold of 23 / £5,704 compares to 25 / £5,306 in the same period last year, a decrease of 2 memorials and a small increase in income of £398.

13. The table below identifies the total number and value of memorials sold during 2023/24 compared to 2022/23:

	2022/23 Total		2023/24 Total	
	Number	£	Number	£
Large Plaques	6	2,466	15	6,750
Small Plaques	53	14,388	54	15,294
Memorial leaves	31	3,100	51	5,100
Renewals	13	2,262	13	2,250
Total	103	22,216	133	29,394

Operational Matters

Staffing

14. As Members were advised at the last meeting, one of our casual relief

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

As outlined in the report.

Finance

As identified in the report.

Consultation

None, however, Officers of Gateshead Council were provided with a copy of the report and given opportunity to comment/raise any detailed questions on the content of the report in advance of circulation to members of the Mountseth Crematorium.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

There are no implications.

Climate Change

There are no implications.

Human Rights

There are no implications.

Crime and Disorder

There are no implications.

Staffing

As identified in the report.

Accommodation

There are no implications.

Risk

There is an ongoing risk with regards to the functioning of the new cremators.

Procurement

There are no implications.

Appendix 2:Cheque Presentation.



Cheque Presentation to Marie Curie



Cheque Presentation to Coping with Cancer North East