



Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee

Date Monday 30 January 2023

Time 9.30 am

Venue Chapel - Mountsett Crematorium, Dipton

Business

Part A

**[Items during which the Press and Public are welcome to attend.
Members of the Public can ask questions with the Chairman's
agreement]**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Substitute Members
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 September 2022
(Pages 3 - 10)
4. Declarations of Interest, if any.
5. Performance and Operational Report (Pages 11 - 16)
6. Financial Monitoring Report 2022/23: Position at 31/12/22 with
Projected Outturn to 31/03/23 - Joint Report of the Corporate
Director of Resources / Treasurer to the Joint Committee and the
Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change
(Pages 17 - 26)
7. Provision of Support Services 2023/24 - Joint Report of the
Corporate Director of Resources / Treasurer to the Joint
Committee and the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and
Climate Change (Pages 27 - 40)
8. Fees and Charges 2023/24 - Joint Report of the Corporate
Director of Resources / Treasurer to the Joint Committee and the
Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change
(Pages 41 - 50)

9. 2023/24 Revenue Budget - Joint Report of the Corporate Director of Resources / Treasurer to the Joint Committee and the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change (Pages 51 - 58)
10. Such other business as in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.
11. Any resolution relating to the exclusion of the public during the discussion of items containing exempt information

Part B

Items during which it is considered the meeting will not be open to the public (consideration of exempt or confidential information)

12. Minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2022 (Pages 59 - 60)

Helen Lynch

Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
Durham
20 January 2023

To: **The Members of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee**

Durham County Council:-

Councillors: V Andrews, A Batey, J Charlton, C Hampson, A Hanson, P Heaviside, D Oliver, K Rooney and M Walton

Gateshead Council:

Councillors D Bradford (Vice-Chair), K Dodds, L Green, S Green and M Ord

Contact: Lucy Gladders

Tel: 03000 269 712

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee** held in **Chapel - Mountsett Crematorium, Dipton** on **Thursday 29 September 2022** at **9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor A Batey (Chair)

Durham County Council

Councillors V Andrews, A Hanson, P Heaviside, K Rooney and M Walton

Gateshead Council:

Councillors D Bradford (Vice-Chair), L Green, S Green and M Ord

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Charlton, C Hampson and D Oliver.

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitutes.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held 29 June 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5 External Audit Annual Review of the Return for the year ended 31 March 2022

The Joint Committee considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change and the Corporate Director of Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee which presented the External Auditors (Mazars LLP) Annual Review of the Joint Committees Return for the year ended 31 March 2022 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Finance Manager advised that the audit had now been completed and it had not highlighted any material weaknesses around the Joint Committees system of internal control and accounting statements and no exceptions to the Return had been reported.

Resolved:

That the Joint Committee approve the Joint Committees Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2022 including the External Report 2021/22 Certificate

6 Performance and Operational Report

The Joint Committee considered a report of the Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar which provided an update relating to performance and other operational matters (for copy see file of minutes).

In relation to performance, the Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar reported there were 354 cremations undertaken during the period 1 June 2022 to 31 August 2022, compared to 345 in the comparable period last year. There were nine additional cremations undertaken in the period June to August 2022 compared to the same period last year. The sale of memorial plaques had decreased, with eight fewer memorials being sold in comparison to the same period the previous year. It was noted that the first 10 year renewal for plaques, as agreed in 2012, had come forward, and was included in the memorial figures.

Mountsett Crematorium had successfully obtained the Green Flag Award for the eleventh year running and had been awarded Gold Star Status in the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management Accreditation. In relation to the Recycling of Metals Scheme, a cheque for £12,000 was presented to Children's Cancer North on 2 September 2022 by the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Joint Committee.

The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar noted the Service Asset Management Plan (SAMP) was attached at Appendix 3 to the report, setting out the four priorities of maintenance for the Crematorium: Priority 1; Priority 2; Priority 3; and longer-term works.

In response to a question from Councillor D Bradford relating to overtime, the Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar noted that there were still issues relating to staffing, with some casual staff required to ensure cover for sickness and holidays. Councillor D Bradford asked at looking at the cost of overtime to give a comparison, especially given the pressures on the existing staff. The Finance Manager, P Curran noted figures could be looked at, with the Chair noting it would be useful to have figures at the next meeting for the next few months.

Councillor M Walton noted that memorial sales were down and asked for any feedback on the decrease. The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar noted that there was the issue of cost of living crisis due to families not being able to afford plaques, with some families choosing not to renew plaques after 10 years as an example.

Councillor P Heaviside asked as regards resomation. The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar explained it was an alternative process to cremation that used alkaline and water to turn a shrouded body into ash, taking around 4 hours. He added that he would report back to the Joint Committee on progress in this area.

The Chair noted the honour in presenting the cheques from the recycling of metals scheme and asked as the promoting of the scheme and the benefits to local charities from the scheme. The Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar noted that conversations at ICCM Conference were ongoing in terms of promotion and splitting amounts into smaller contributions.

Resolved:

- (a) That the current performance of the crematorium be noted;
- (b) That the current position with regards to staffing be noted;
- (c) That the updated position with regards to the Green Flag scheme be noted;
- (d) That the updated position with regards to the recycling of metals scheme be noted;
- (e) That the content of the Service Asset Management Plan attached at Appendix 2, which will be factored into budget planning in 2022/23 and beyond be noted and agreed.
- (f) That figures relating to cost of overtime and staffing be brought to the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

7 Financial Monitoring Report - Position at 31/08/22, with Projected Outturn at 31/03/23

The Joint Committee considered a joint report of the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Climate Change and Corporate Director of Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee which provided details of the provisional outturn position for 2022/23 and the projected level of reserves and balances at 31 March 2023 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the April to August 2022 financial monitoring report and associated provisional outturn position at 31 March 2023, including the projected year position with regards the reserves and balances of the Joint Committee, be noted.

8 Risk Register Update 2022/23 Review 1

The Joint Committee considered a joint report of the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Climate Change and Corporate Director of Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee which provided details of the outcome of the half-yearly risk review in September 2022 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the contents of the report and updated position be noted.

9 Internal Audit Charter

The Joint Committee considered a report of the Chief Internal Auditor and Corporate Fraud Manager which sought agreement on the revised Internal Audit Charter to take immediate effect and to be applied to reviews undertaken as part of the Internal Audit Plan for 2022/23 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the Joint Committee note the content of the report and approve the Internal Audit Charter, as attached at Appendix 2 of the report.

10 Annual Review of the System of Internal Audit

The Joint Committee considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change and Corporate Director of Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee which provided details of the review of the effectiveness of the Durham County Council Internal Audit Service, which was carried out by Durham County Council's Audit Committee in July 2022 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the Joint Committee note the information provided demonstrates the efficiency and effectiveness of the Durham County Council Internal Audit Service.

11 Provision of Internal Audit and Risk Management Services 2023 to 2026

The Audit Manager presented the Joint Committee with proposals for the continued delivery of the Internal Audit and Risk Management Services by Durham County Council to cover the period April 2023 to March 2026 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

- (a) That the Internal Audit and Risk Management Services SLA with Durham County Council covering the next three financial years attached at Appendix 2 be approved.
- (b) That the Annual Audit Plan and fee set out in Schedule B of the SLA be approved.

12 Budget Strategy Report

The Joint Committee considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change and Corporate Director of Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee which provided details of issues to be considered by the Joint Committee as part of the medium-term financial planning for the Mountsett Crematorium.

The Finance Manager noted that the report set out the significant capital investment of over £4 million since Local Government Reorganisation in 2009, together with the list of further investments of over £1.5 million as set out within the SAMP previously discussed.

He explained that when comparing fees and charges, including noting the harmonisation of those fees and charges at Mountsett with those at Durham Crematorium, a proposed increase of £30 would still result in the lowest fee when compared to neighbouring facilities and also would be below the current regional average.

The Chair noted the ongoing cost of living crisis and that it had been a while to wait until September to look at fees. Councillor D Bradford agreed, and Councillor P Heaviside asked as regards when the Joint Committee looked at fees. The Finance Manager reiterated that fees and charges were harmonised with those at Durham Crematorium and explained that the financial monitoring reports were given each quarter. He added that there would be an impact upon forecasts and that the increase in costs had been recognised and a comfort margin had been built in, together with prudent estimates in relation to the number of cremations, noting pre-pandemic figures. Councillors D Bradford and M Walton noted they would wish for budget pressures to be reviewed every three months, all Members agreed.

Resolved:

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted;
- (b) That the proposed increase in the fees and charges, as identified in the report be agreed;
- (c) To review the budget strategy in September 2023 in preparation for the 2024/25 budget setting year.
- (d) To review budget pressures every three months.

13 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:

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 involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

14 Letter Regarding Potential Sale

The Joint Committee considered a report of the Neighbourhood Protection Manager relating to a letter regarding potential sale.

Upon discussion the Committee;

Resolved:

That the recommendations within the report be agreed.

This page is intentionally left blank

Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee

30 January 2023

Performance and Operational Report



Report of Graham Harrison, Bereavement Services Manager & Registrar

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide Members of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee with an 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 continued success with regards to the Green Flag Award.
 - (c) Note the updated position with regards to the recycling of metals scheme.
 - (d) Note and approve the increase in costs of energy improvement works.

Background

- 4 Update reports relating to performance and other operational matters are presented to the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee on a quarterly basis.

Performance Update - Number of Cremations

- 5 The table below provides details of the number of cremations for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 December 2022 inclusive, with comparative data in the same periods last year:

	2021/22	2022/23	Change
September	116	103	- 13
October	124	103	- 21
November	124	118	- 6
December	115	106	- 9
TOTAL	479	430	- 49

- 6 In summary there were 430 cremations undertaken during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 December 2022, compared to 479 in the comparable period last year, a decrease of 49 cremations for this period.

The profile of where families came from can be seen below:

Gateshead	131
Durham	222
Outside Area	77
Total	430

Memorials

- 7 The table below outlines the number and value of the memorials sold in period 1 September 2022 to 31 December 2022 inclusive, with comparative data in the same periods last year.

	(Sept – Dec)	2021/22	(Sept – Dec)	2022/23
	Number	£	Number	£
Large Plaques	4	1,680	0	0
Small Plaques	14	3,864	21	5,796
Leaf Plaques	7	700	13	1,300
Renewals	0	0	3	522
Total	25	6,244	37	7,618

- 8 The number and value of memorials 37 / £7,618 compares to 25 / £6,244 in the same period in 2021/22, which is an increase of 12 memorials sold and £1,374 year on year.

Green Flag Application

- 9 Members may recall from the September 2022 meeting that Mountsett Crematorium was successful in retaining its Green Flag Award for the eleventh year running.
- 10 An application will be submitted for the 2023 Award and progress will be reported back to future meetings. A management plan to maintain the required standards will be updated and any required works will be covered by existing budgets.

Recycling of Metals Scheme

- 11 Collections in 2022 have resulted in a second round of nominations being made available and further to requests from Members, it has been confirmed that we can now nominate two charities at a time. Therefore, Red Sky Foundation and Cancer Research UK have been nominated and we hope to have a response by the end of March.

Energy Improvement Works

- 12 Members may recall that a sum of £75,000 was allocated in the 2022/23 budget to carry out remaining energy improvement works to the building. However we have now received an updated quotation of £110,000 for this work which excludes cavity wall insulation. This would require an additional £35,000 in order to complete works to replace the roof lights, remaining doors, cladding of pipework and electrical works.
- 13 Members are therefore asked to consider and approve the increased quotation and decide if they wish to go ahead with the works due to the increase in costs for labour and materials. These works could be factored in to start in February 2023 and have been factored in to the financial monitoring report.

Contact: Graham Harrison,

Tel: 03000 265606

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 Mountsett Crematorium.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

There are no implications

Human Rights

There are no implications

Climate Change

There are no implications

Crime and Disorder

There are no implications

Staffing

As identified in the report.

Accommodation

There are no implications

Risk

There are no implications

Procurement

There are no implications

This page is intentionally left blank

Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee

30 January 2023

Financial Monitoring Report – Position at 31/12/22, with Projected Outturn at 31/03/23



Joint Report of

**Alan Patrickson, Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and
Climate Change**

**Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources and Treasurer to the
Joint Committee**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report provides Members of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee with details of the projected outturn position for 2022/23 and the projected level of reserves and balances at 31 March 2023.

Executive summary

- 2 This report sets out details of income and expenditure in the period 1 April 2022 to 31 December 2022, together with a forecast outturn position for 2022/23, highlighting areas of over / underspends against the approved budgets at a service expenditure analysis level.
- 3 The report also details the funds and reserves of the Joint Committee at 1 April 2022 and forecast final position at 31 March 2023, taking into account expenditure to date and forecasts to the year end.
- 4 The projected revenue outturn is a surplus (before transfers to reserves and distribution of surpluses to the partner authorities) of £61,755 against a budgeted surplus of £331,742, £269,987 less than the budgeted position.
- 5 In line with the MCJC Reserve Policy to maintain a General Reserve of 30% of the income budget, a transfer to the General Reserve of

£10,289 is required. An additional transfer of **£303,246** is required due to the forecast overspend in year. This results in a net transfer from the Cremator Replacement Reserve of **£313,535**.

- 6 The retained reserves of the MCJC at 31 March 2023 are forecast to be **£320,676** along with a General Reserve of **£318,975**, giving a forecast total reserves and balances position of **£639,651** at the year end.

Recommendation(s)

- 7 It is recommended that Members note the April to December 2022 financial monitoring report and associated provisional outturn position at 31 March 2023, including the projected year position with regards to the reserves and balances of the Joint Committee.

Background

- 8 Scrutinising the financial performance of the Mountsett Crematorium is a key role of the Joint Committee. Regular (quarterly) budgetary control reports are prepared by the Treasurer and aim to present, in a user friendly format, the financial performance in the year to date together with a forward projection to the year end. Routine reporting and consideration of financial performance is a key component of the Governance Arrangements of the Mountsett Crematorium

Financial Performance

- 9 Budgetary control reports, incorporating outturn projections, are considered by the Neighbourhoods and Climate Change Management Team on a quarterly basis. The County Council's Corporate Management Team also considers regular budgetary control reports, with quarterly reports being considered by Cabinet / Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The outturn projections for the Mountsett Crematorium are included within this report.
- 10 The figures contained within this report have been extracted from the General Ledger and have been scrutinised and supplemented with information supplied by the Bereavement Services Manager. The following table highlights the provisional revenue outturn financial performance of the Mountsett Crematorium.

Subjective Analysis (Type of Expenditure)	Base Budget 2022/23 £	Year to Date Actual April – December £	Forecast Outturn 2022/23 £	Variance Over/ (Under) £
Employees	201,198	144,121	219,289	18,091
Premises	400,670	292,173	728,486	327,816
Transport	2,481	322	490	(1,991)
Supplies & Services	89,530	71,757	108,965	19,435
Agency & Contracted	7,039	5,694	7,441	402
Capital Charges	0	0	0	0
Central Support Costs	30,590	30,590	30,590	0
Gross Expenditure	731,508	544,657	1,095,261	363,752
Income	(1,063,250)	(828,758)	(1,157,015)	(93,765)
Net Income	(331,742)	(284,101)	(61,755)	269,987
Transfer to / (from) Reserves				
- Repairs Reserve	15,000	0	15,000	0
- Cremator Reserve	(33,258)	0	(303,246)	269,987
- General Reserve				
Distributable Surplus	(350,000)	0	(350,000)	0
65% Durham County Council	227,500	113,750	227,500	0
35% Gateshead Council	122,500	91,875	122,500	0

Mountsett Crematorium Earmarked Reserves	Balance @ 1 April 2022 £	Transfers To Reserve £	Transfers From Reserve £	Balance @ 31 March 2023 £
Repairs Reserve	(99,370)	(15,000)	0	(114,370)
Cremator Reserve	(519,840)	0	313,535	(206,306)
General Reserve	(308,686)	(360,289)	350,000	(318,975)
Total	(927,896)	(375,289)	663,535	(639,651)

Explanation of Significant Variances between Original Budget and Forecast Outturn

- 11 As can be seen from the table above, the projected revenue outturn is indicating a surplus (before transfers to reserves and distribution of surpluses to the partner authorities) of £61,755 against a budgeted surplus of £331,742, £269,987 less than the budgeted position.
- 12 The following section outlines the reasons for any significant budget variances by subjective analysis (type of expenditure) area:

12.1 *Employees*

The outturn shows an overspend of **£18,091**, in relation to employee costs. The reasons for this are identified below:

- Staffing costs are forecast to overspend by **£18,091** mainly due to the national pay settlement for 2022/23.

12.2 *Premises*

The outturn shows a forecast overspend of **£327,816** in relation to premises costs. The reasons for this are identified below:

- One off SAMP budgets relating to energy improvements in 2020/21 were unspent due to project delays. It is therefore forecast to overspend by **£13,116** in 2022/23.
- One off SAMP budgets relating to additional energy improvements are forecast to overspend by **£34,582** as mentioned earlier in the Quartely Performance Report.
- One off SAMP budgets relating to redecoration works in 2021/22 were delayed until the current year and it is therefore forecast to overspend by **£15,837**.
- The cremator replacement budget underspent in 2021/22 by £346,267 due to the completion of the project overlapping financial years into 2022/23. Current estimates forecast that the remaining costs in 2022/23 will be **£217,900**.
- Energy budgets are forecast to overspend by **£42,340** due to the global increase in the cost of gas and electric.
- Other premises costs such as grounds maintenance, general repairs and cremator repairs are forecast to overspend by **£4,041**.

12.3 *Supplies and Services*

The outturn shows a forecast overspend of **£19,435** in relation to supplies and services costs. The reasons for this are identified below:

- Due to the projected increase in cremations (highlighted later within the income section of the report), medical referee expenditure is projected to overspend by **£4,055**.
- Purchasing of webcasts is forecast to underspend by **(£3,700)**.
- General office costs are forecast to underspend by **(£1,050)**.
- Mercury abatement costs to CAMEO are forecast to overspend by **£20,130**. This is due to the temporary cremator not abating mercury omissions and also in part to the new cremators not abating during early installation in 2021.

12.4 Income

An increase in income of **(£93,765)** from the 2022/23 budget is included within the outturn forecasts. The reasons for this are identified below:

- The outturn includes an increase of 153 cremations compared to the budget, totalling increased income to budget of **(£96,703)**. The outturn allows for a total of 1,453 cremations against a budgeted 1,300 during 2022/23.
- Miscellaneous sales and Book of Remembrance entries are expected to be lower than budget resulting in a loss of income of **£9,288**.
- Interest received is forecast to overachieve by **(£13,100)** due to rising interest rates.
- CAMEO income is forecast to underachieve by **£6,750** due to the unabated cremations during 2021 mentioned earlier in the report.

13 Earmarked Reserves

In line with the MCJC Reserve Policy to maintain a General Reserve of 30% of the income budget, a transfer to the General Reserve of **£10,289** is required. An additional transfer of **£303,246** is required due to the forecast overspend in year. This results in a net transfer from the Cremator Replacement Reserve of **£313,535**.

The retained reserves of the MCJC at 31 March 2022 are forecast to be **£320,676** along with a General Reserve of **£318,975**, giving a forecast total reserves and balances position of **£639,651** at the year end.

Contact: Philip Curran

Tel: 03000 261967

Ed Thompson

Tel: 03000 263481

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The outturn proposals contained within this report have been prepared in accordance with standard accounting policies and procedures.

Finance

Full details of the year to date and projected outturn financial performance of the Mountsett Crematorium are included within the body of the report.

Consultation

None. However, Officers of Gateshead Council were provided with a copy of the report and given opportunity to comments / raise any detailed queries on the contents of this report in advance of circulation to members of the MCJC.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None.

Climate Change

None.

Human Rights

None.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

The figures contained within this report have been extracted from the General Ledger, and have been scrutinised and supplemented with information supplied by the Bereavement Services Manager. The projected outturn has been produced taking into consideration the spend to date, trend data and market intelligence, and includes an element of prudence. This, together with

the information supplied by the Bereavement Services Manager, should mitigate the risks associated with achievement of the forecast outturn position.

Procurement

None.

This page is intentionally left blank

Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee

30 January 2023

Provision of Support Services 2023/24



Joint Report of

Alan Patrickson, Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change

Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee

Electoral division(s) affected:
Countywide

Purpose of the Report

1. This report outlines the proposed Service Level Agreement (SLA) for Support Service provision by Durham County Council to the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee for the period April 2023 to March 2024.

Executive Summary

2. A formal Service Level Agreement for Support Services provided by Durham County Council to the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee has been considered and approved by the Joint Committee for the past eleven years. As part of the budget setting for 2023/24, Members are now requested to consider the Support Services requirements for the coming year.
3. This report sets out details of the proposed SLA for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 to cover the following functions:
 - Management Services
 - Financial Services
 - Administration Services (including Committee support)
 - Payroll Services
 - Human Resources Services

Recommendation(s)

4. It is recommended that members consider and approve the Service Level Agreement attached at Appendix 2 (including relevant schedule) for the year 2023/24.

Service Level Agreement (SLA)

5. The SLA established for the provision of Support Service functions to the Joint Committee provides a commitment for both parties over the medium term. This includes the provision of Management advice and attendance at Joint Committee Meetings by the Finance Manager: Neighbourhood and Climate Change, in addition to Accountancy, HR, Payroll and Administration Services.
6. The proposed SLA, attached at Appendix 2, has been developed in consultation with the Finance Manager: Neighbourhood and Climate Change under the delegated responsibility of the Treasurer to the Joint Committee and reflects the nature of the current partnership, the services to be provided, the period of agreement and total estimated annual budget.
7. As in previous years, all work carried out directly on behalf of the Joint Committee will be recharged and the resultant budget requirement for Support Services is set out in the SLA. Details of all work to be carried out will be itemised so that costs are more transparent.
8. The proposed SLA considers the proportion of time spent by key staff undertaking the requirements of the Joint Committee. The proposed charge for 2023/24 is £24,940, a 5% increase on the recharges levied in 2022/23. The applicable fee takes into consideration the impact of pay and price inflation.
9. The Support Service SLA is attached at Appendix 2 for consideration and approval by Members. Schedule 1 to the Appendix, as attached, provides a more detailed breakdown of the following functions and responsibilities:

Management Services

- Overall Support Service Management and attendance at Joint Committee Meetings.

Financial Services

- Preparation and Production of Revenue Budget
- Budget Monitoring and guidance
- Preparation and production of the Joint Committees Annual Return
- Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit
- Creditor payments and day to day cash flow management.
- Financial Appraisals and budget monitoring of Service Asset Management Plan works

Administration Services

- Committee and Secretarial services including the remit of Clerk to the Joint Committee (providing advice and guidance to Members).

Payroll Services

- Employee crematorium salary processing.

Human Resources Services

- Provision of Health & Safety advice and guidance in compliance with relevant Health and Safety legislation.
- Management and co-ordination of arrangements regarding employee relations and interaction with trade union officials.
- Delivery and facilitation of staff training, recruitment and selection processes.

Author(s):	Philip Curran	03000 261967
	Ed Thompson	03000 263481

APPENDIX 1 – Implications

Legal Implications

The services outlined within this report will be provided in accordance with the guidelines and legislation relevant to each function.

Finance

With the approval of a service level agreement costs in respect of the support service will be agreed in advance for the forthcoming year (subject to any agreed inflationary increase) and will cover a number of specified functions. This means that the cost of the service is more transparent and the committee has more control over the work areas covered. Details of how costs will be factored into the Joint Committee budget and how they will be recharged are shown in the Service Level Agreement.

Consultation

None. However, Officers of Gateshead Council were provided with a copy of the report and given opportunity to comment / raise any detailed queries on the contents of this report in advance of circulation to members of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee.

Equality and Diversity/ Public Sector Equality Duty

There are no Equality and Diversity implications associated with this report.

Climate Change

None

Human Rights

There are no Human Rights implications associated with this report.

Crime and Disorder

There are no Crime and Disorder implications associated with this report.

Staffing

There are no staffing implications associated with this report. All staff are provided from within the various functional areas of Durham County Council.

Accommodation

There are no Accommodation implications associated with this report.

Risk

Many tasks considered within the SLA must be completed within statutory deadlines and in line with changing guidance. By ensuring such tasks are delivered by staff who are appropriately experienced, qualified and competent and who receive adequate training and supervision, any relative risk will be minimised.

Procurement

None

APPENDIX 2



Service Level Agreement

for the provision of Support Services to

**MOUNTSETT CREMATORIUM JOINT
COMMITTEE**

AGREEMENT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES

THIS AGREEMENT is made the [30th] of [January] **two thousand and twenty three**
BETWEEN DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL (“the Council”) and **MOUNTSETT**
CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE (“the Partnership”)

1. PROVISION OF SERVICES

- 1.1. The Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee engages the Council to provide Support Services as set out in Schedule 1 and in return for the payments as set out in Schedule 2.

2. DURATION

- 2.1. This agreement will be effective 1st April 2023 and will continue until 31st March 2024 (“the Term”)

3. THE COUNCIL’S OBLIGATIONS

3.1. Services

- 3.1.1. The scope of the Support Services available to the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee is summarised in Schedule 1.

- 3.1.2. The Council will provide Support Services with all reasonable skill and care and in compliance with:

- The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as amended by The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006, 2011 (Regulations)
- The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom
- All other relevant CIPFA guidelines, best professional practice and legislation
- The Local Government Act 2000 and other associated legislation
- All appropriate Employee and Health and Safety legislation
- The Joint Committee’s relevant policies, rules, standing orders, procedures and standards. (These are the policies, rules, standing orders, procedures and standards of Durham County Council adopted by the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee)
- The terms and conditions of this agreement.

- 3.1.3. To ensure that the Services are delivered by such staff who are appropriately experienced qualified and competent and who receive adequate training and supervision.

- 3.1.4. To submit to the Joint Committee, a reconciliation of the charges for services provided during the year to be recharged to the Joint Committee in accordance with Schedule 2.

3.2. Accommodation

- 3.2.1. To provide at its own cost its own office accommodation, administrative support and services as may be necessary for the provision of Support Services.

3.3. Insurance

- 3.3.1. To ensure that adequate insurance cover is affected and maintained in respect of any property held by it for the purposes of this agreement, employee liability, public liability and liability for professional negligence.

4. THE JOINT COMMITTEE'S OBLIGATIONS

4.1. Support Services Fee Provision

- 4.1.1. To make available such Support Services provision as set out in Schedule 2 for the provision of agreed services for the year 2023/24 notwithstanding the contents of Schedule 2, the Support Services provision will be the subject of regular review and agreement by both parties as part of the Joint Committee's normal budget timetable. Final confirmation of the Support Services provision must be agreed no later than the 31st January in each year.
- 4.1.2. Both parties intend that the annual Support Services fee provision will be set at such a level as to cover the costs incurred by the Council in delivering the Central Support Functions.
- 4.1.3. The parties agree that, without affecting the annual Support Services fee provision and the principles set out in Schedule 2, at the Joint Committee's request;
- The percentage split between the service elements to be provided can be varied up to 10% provided always that the maximum number of days per element specified in Schedule 2 is not exceeded
 - Crematorium Joint Committee being satisfied that any such changes will not have an adverse impact on the delivery of the service provision.
- 4.1.4. The parties agree that all variations, other than those referred to in the clause 4.1.3 above, require the expressed written consent of both parties.
- 4.1.5. To pay the Council annually the payments as set out in Schedule 2. The payment principles set out in Schedule 2 will apply for the purposes of determining the payments paid to the Council by the Joint Committee.

4.2. Service Delivery

4.2.1. The Joint Committee is required to make arrangements for:

Allowing Council staff access to the Joint Committee's business premises if necessary at reasonable times for the provision of the Support Services.

4.2.1.1. The provision of suitable accommodation for the use of the Support Services on the Joint Committee's business premises, at its own cost, as may be necessary.

4.2.1.2. Agreed adherence to Durham County Council's Members Code of Conduct and Constitution.

4.2.1.3. Allowing Council staff access to all relevant assets, records (including those belonging to third parties, subject to the Joint Committee having lawful authority to do so) documents, correspondence, electronic files, software and other systems as may be necessary for the provision of the Service.

4.2.1.4. Allowing and facilitating where necessary direct access by the Finance Manager: Neighbourhood and Climate Change / Principal Accountant: Environmental Services, to the Chair of the Joint Committee and the Treasurer (or his nominated representative) for the purpose of delivering the relevant services.

4.2.1.5. Approving the Joint Committees Annual Return, Annual Governance Statement, Revenue Budget and all other Financial Reports.

4.2.1.6. Taking whatever action it considers necessary as a result of issues highlighted by the Finance Manager: Neighbourhood and Climate Change.

5. MANAGEMENT OF THE SERVICE

5.1. The Finance Manager: Neighbourhood and Climate Change is responsible for the overall management and delivery of the support service functions and will (under delegated responsibility) in practice fulfil the role of the Treasurer for the Joint Committee. Any queries arising from financial and other relevant reports and any general day to day enquiries about the service should be addressed to the Finance Manager: Neighbourhood and Climate Change.

- In person at Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham
- E-mail: philip.curran@durham.gov.uk
- Telephone 03000 261967

5.2. The Finance Manager: Neighbourhood and Climate Change will report to the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Climate Change and to the Corporate Director of Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee and to the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee.

- 5.3. The Finance Manager: Neighbourhood and Climate Change and the Bereavement Services Manager will meet periodically to review performance on delivering agreed services and agree any changes to the delivery of the Service. Such meetings may be attended by other such persons as either party may wish.
- 5.4. The Corporate Director of Resources at the Council is ultimately responsible for the performance and effectiveness of services provided to the Joint Committee under this agreement. Any issues concerning any aspect of the delivery of the service or terms of this agreement that can not be satisfactorily resolved with Finance Manager: Neighbourhood and Climate Change should be referred to the Council's Corporate Director: Resources.

Contact details are:

Paul Darby, Corporate Director: Resources
Durham County Council,
County Hall, Durham
e.mail:paul.darby@durham.gov.uk
Telephone 03000 261930

- 5.5. The Principal Accountant: Environmental Services (under delegated responsibility) will meet with the Bereavement Services Manager each financial year to consider the support service fee for the following financial year. Such meetings will be scheduled in line with the Joint Committee's annual budget timetable (final confirmation of the support service fee provision must be agreed no later than the 31st January in each year) and be attended by such other persons as either party may wish.
- 5.6. The Bereavement Services Manager is responsible for ensuring:-
- Responses to reports are received within timescales specified
 - Information is provided to substantiate the implementation of any recommendations when requested
 - Co-operation with Support Services staff when required
 - Timely contact with the Finance Manager: Neighbourhood and Climate Change / Principal Accountant: Environmental Services
 - Compliance with relevant Codes of Conduct and Durham County Council Policies and Procedures.

6. INFORMATION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- 6.1. Each party will provide all information within its control necessary to enable the other to discharge its obligations under this agreement.
- 6.2. Neither party shall, without the written consent of the other party, make use of for its own purposes or disclose or allow to be disclosed to any person, (except as may be required by law or by an authorised body in evaluating the work undertaken e.g. external audit), this Agreement or any material connected with it.

7. DATA PROTECTION AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

7.1. Each party will:-

7.1.1. Comply with the Data Protection Act 1998

Maintain the confidentiality of personal data to which it has authorised access under the terms of this Agreement.

Take reasonable technical and organisational measures against the unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against the accidental loss or destruction of or damage to personal data (including adequate back up procedures and disaster recovery systems).

Provide such assistance and/or information reasonably required by the other in connection with any requests for information received by that party under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

8. TERMINATION

8.1. Either party may terminate the agreement before the 1 April 2023 by giving the other not less than 3 months prior written notice.

9. VARIATION

9.1. The terms of this agreement may only be varied by written agreement signed by both parties

AS WITNESSED

Signed by:.....

Duly authorised for and on behalf of **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

Date

Signed by:.....

Duly authorised for and on behalf of the
MOUNTSETT CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE.

Date

Schedule 1

The following Support Services will be provided.

Management Services

1. Monitoring and reporting of progress made in the delivery of agreed services to the Mounsett Crematorium Joint Committee.
2. Report review and presentation of all Financial and other Support Services reports to the Joint Committee.

Financial Services

3. Preparation and Production of the Annual Revenue Budget for approval by the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee.
4. Review and setting of the Annual Fees and Charges taking into consideration inflationary pressures; the potential impact of competition in terms of price and quality; trends in demand; results of customer surveys; budget targets; cost structure implications; impact on other service areas; alternative more effective charging structures and proposals for targeted promotions etc.
5. Revenue Budget Monitoring including the provision of sound financial advice.
6. Preparation of Monthly Payroll, Bank, Debtor and Creditor Reconciliations.
7. Production of the Joint Committees Annual Return for the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee and liaison with External Audit.
8. Timely processing and payment of all Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee purchase order and direct invoices in line with BVPI 8 Regulations and Durham County Council payment terms via the SAGE system.
9. Financial Appraisals and Budget Monitoring of Service Asset Management Plan works.

Payroll Services

10. Monthly processing of all directly employed Mountsett Crematorium employee salaries and allowances.

Human Resources

11. Provision of Health and Safety Advice and guidance in compliance with relevant Health and Safety guidelines and legislation.
12. Management and co-ordination of arrangements regarding employee relations and interaction with trade union officials.
13. Delivery and facilitation of the staff training, recruitment and selection processes.

Administration (including Committee support)

14. Distribution of Joint Committee Papers (including electronic distribution).
15. Provision of Committee and Secretarial Services including the remit of Clerk (providing advice and guidance on the constitutional issues and protocols) to the Joint Committee and processing any follow up requirements as appropriate.
16. Maintenance of Committee minutes and Indexing.

Advice

17. Provision of help and advice to the Bereavement Services Manager and other officers and nominated members of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee on all Financial, and other Support Service function matters.

BUDGET SCHEDULE

Support Service Area	2023/24
Management	
Attendance at Joint Committee Meetings	
Report Review and overall Management	
	4,420
Financial Services	
Budget Preparation including fees and charges setting	
Budget Monitoring including monthly reconciliations	
Production of the Annual Return (including liaison with External Audit)	
Financial Appraisals	
	13,300
Payroll Services	
Employee payroll processing	200
Human Resources	
Health and Safety support and guidance	
Employee relations and interaction with trade unions	
Training and development facilitation	
	2,280
Administration (including Committee support)	
Distribution of Committee Papers	
Committee and Secretarial Services	
Minute maintenance and indexing	
	4,740
Total	24,940

BASIS OF CHARGE

1. Charges in respect of the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 will be recharged to the Joint Committee using the existing methodology.
2. This SLA charge is in addition to the fixed term Audit SLA totalling £7,050 previously approved by members on 29 September 2022 for 2023/24.

In overall terms the Support Service charge represents 2.2% of the gross turnover of the Joint Committee.

This page is intentionally left blank

**Mountsett Crematorium Joint
Committee**

30 January 2023

Fees and Charges 2023/24



Joint Report of

**Alan Patrickson, Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and
Climate Change**

**Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources and Treasurer to the
Joint Committee**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report sets out details of the proposed fees and charges for the Mountsett Crematorium for 2023/24.

Executive summary

- 2 In reviewing existing charges or setting new charges, inflationary pressures; the potential impact of competition in terms of price and quality; trends in demand; results of customer surveys; budget targets; cost structure implications; impact on other service areas; alternative more effective charging structures and proposals for targeted promotions etc need to be fully taken into consideration.
- 3 Members of the Joint Committee will recall that following Local Government Review in 2009 the fees and charges at the Mountsett Crematorium were harmonised with the charges at Central Durham Crematorium. The cremation fees and charges were increased in 2022/23 by £25 (3.4%).
- 4 Background papers available

2022/23 Budget and Financial Monitoring Reports

2023/24 Budget Working Papers

Recommendation(s)

- 5 It is recommended that members of the Joint Committee note and approve the proposed fees and charges at Appendix 2 effective from 1 April 2023, which seeks to increase cremation charges by £30 (3.92%) per cremation from £765 to £795.
- 6 It is recommended that the proposed fees and charges are incorporated into the 2023/24 budget.

Fees and Charges 2023/24

- 7 The inflationary and cost pressures facing the crematorium, along with the views of the Bereavement Services Manager with regards to the local market, customer impact from any proposed increase and benchmarking data on the charges levied in other neighbouring facilities, plus the fact that the crematorium has recently undertaken major redevelopments are key factors in considering any increases for 2023/24.
- 8 The projected number of cremations in 2022/23 is 1,453 which will be 10 less than the 1,463 cremations delivered in 2021/22 and 153 more than the budgeted position of 1,300. For 2023/24 budget setting purposes it has been assumed there will be 1,300 cremations next year. This is a prudent forecast.
- 9 The current 2022/23 fees and charges for crematoria across the region, including the average charges levied is attached at Appendix 3, which indicates an average cremation fee of £872 (inclusive of medical referees fees and environmental surcharge where appropriate). Increasing the current charges by £30 will mean that the overall cremation fee levied for Mountsett Crematorium in 2023/24 (inclusive of medical referee fees) will increase to £795, which is £77 below the average charges currently levied across the region. Once other crematoria apply their fee increases for next year, the proposed 2023/24 cremation fee of £795 will probably remain the lowest in comparison with all other neighbouring facilities in the region.
- 10 At the September 2022 meeting Members approved a £30 (3.92%) increase to the current crematoria fees and charges for 2023/24 as part of the Budget Strategy for the Joint Committee.
- 11 The table below indicates the additional income that could be received over and above the budget. The £30 increase for 1,300 cremations is budgeted to generate an additional £39,000 income.

No of Cremations	Increase in Fees £					
	£10	£20	£30	£40	£50	£60
1,300	£13,000	£26,000	£39,000	£52,000	£65,000	£78,000
1,350	£51,750	£65,250	£78,750	£92,250	£105,750	£119,250
1,400	£90,500	£104,500	£118,500	£132,500	£146,500	£160,500
1,450	£129,250	£143,750	£158,250	£172,750	£187,250	£201,750
1,500	£168,000	£183,000	£198,000	£213,000	£228,000	£243,000

- 12 In terms of the charging policy for child cremations, it is proposed to retain the NIL fee. Members will see from Appendix 3 that neighbouring crematoria charges range from £0 to £490.

- 13 It is proposed to increase the following fees from 2023/24:
- Cremation Services – Off peak increase by £30.
 - Cremation Services – Saturday increase by £30.
- 14 Urn boxes - Increase by £5 to cover additional purchasing costs.
- 15 Book of Remembrance, Memorial Cards and Miniature Books are proposed to increase between £14 and £17. These fees have not been increased since 2016/17.
- 16 Memorials are proposed to increase between £12 and £36. These fees have not been increased since 2015/16.
- 17 Memorial renewals for plaques, seats and columbaria are proposed to increase by between £4 and £254.
- 18 New charges for varying years of memorial renewals are being introduced.
- Seat lease 5 years - £432
 - Columbaria lease 15 years - £788
 - Columbaria lease 10 years - £525
 - Columbaria lease 5 years - £263
- 19 All other fees and charges at the Crematorium are proposed to remain at the same levels as 2022/23.
- 20 A full schedule of the proposed fees and charges for Mountsett Crematorium is shown in Appendix 2, with benchmarking comparison data shown in Appendix 3 for Members' information.

Author(s): Philip Curran

Tel: 03000 261967

Ed Thompson

Tel: 03000 263481

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None.

Finance

A detailed schedule of the proposed fees and charges for Mountsett Crematorium is included at Appendix 2. These proposals have been factored into budget proposals for 2023/24.

Consultation

None. However, Officers of Gateshead Council were provided with a copy of the report and given opportunity to comments / raise any detailed queries on the contents of this report in advance of circulation to members of the MCJC.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

The proposals set out in this report are based on a harmonised fees and charges policy with the Mountsett Crematorium and provide equity of treatment / access across County Durham. An equality Impact assessment screening has been undertaken which has revealed no issues.

Climate Change

None.

Human Rights

None.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

The sensitive pricing of services is essential to maintain the competitiveness and reputation of Mountsett Crematorium in the current economic climate. The proposed fees and charges next year will ensure that the charges remain

competitive in comparison with neighbouring facilities and this, together with a prudent assumption in terms of the number of cremations undertaken next year, plus the strong reputation of the MCJC, should ensure risk is minimised with regards to the achievement of the income budgets. Charging information will be publicised in advance and communication carefully handled.

Procurement

None.

APPENDIX 2
SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED MOUNTSETT CREMATORIUM CHARGES 2023-24

	2022/2023 incl VAT (where appropriate)	Proposed Charges 2023/2024 incl VAT (where appropriate)	VAT Status	Increase / (Decrease)	
				£	%
Cremation Charges					
Non-Viable Foetus	0	0	O	0	0.0%
Child - up to one month old	0	0	O	0	0.0%
Child - up to 18 years old	0	0	O	0	0.0%
Medical Referees Fees - Adult	30	30	O	0	0.0%
Medical Referees Fees - NVF or child	0	0	O	0	0.0%
Body Parts	9	9	O	0	0.0%
Adult - 18 years of age or over (Certificate of Cremation, urn and scattering of cremated remains included)					
Off Peak Service Times (if remainder of the day is full) - 09:00am & 09:30am	655	685	O	30	4.6%
Peak Service Times - 10:00am onwards, every 30 mins	735	765	O	30	4.1%
Saturdays	1,090	1,120	O	30	2.8%
Direct Cremation - Attended (No service)	630	630	O	0	0.0%
Direct Cremation - Unattended (No service)	490	490	O	0	0.0%
Surcharges					
Non Resident (Adult)	0	0	O	0	0.0%
Environmental surcharge	0	0	O	0	0.0%
Book of Remembrance					
2 line entry Book of Remembrance	53	68	S	15	28.3%
3 line entry Book of Remembrance	71	87	S	16	22.5%
4 line entry Book of Remembrance	89	103	S	14	15.7%
5 line entry Book of Remembrance	106	120	S	14	13.2%
6 line entry Book of Remembrance	124	139	S	15	12.1%
7 line entry Book of Remembrance	142	156	S	14	9.9%
8 line entry Book of Remembrance	159	174	S	15	9.4%
Crest, floral emblem, coats of arms etc.	74	89	S	15	20.3%
2 Line Memorial card					
2 Line Memorial card	23	38	S	15	65.2%
3 Line Memorial card					
3 Line Memorial card	24	39	S	15	62.5%
4 Line Memorial card					
4 Line Memorial card	25	40	S	15	60.0%
5 Line Memorial card					
5 Line Memorial card	26	41	S	15	57.7%
6 Line Memorial card					
6 Line Memorial card	27	42	S	15	55.6%
7 Line Memorial card					
7 Line Memorial card	28	43	S	15	53.6%
8 Line Memorial card					
8 Line Memorial card	29	44	S	15	51.7%
Crest, floral emblem, coats of arms etc.	74	89	S	15	20.3%
2 Line Miniature Book					
2 Line Miniature Book	33	47	S	14	42.4%
3 Line Miniature Book					
3 Line Miniature Book	34	49	S	15	44.1%
4 Line Miniature Book					
4 Line Miniature Book	35	51	S	16	45.7%
5 Line Miniature Book					
5 Line Miniature Book	36	53	S	17	47.2%
6 Line Miniature Book					
6 Line Miniature Book	37	54	S	17	46.0%
7 Line Miniature Book					
7 Line Miniature Book	38	55	S	17	44.7%
8 Line Miniature Book					
8 Line Miniature Book	39	56	S	17	43.6%
Crest, floral emblem, coats of arms etc.	74	89	S	15	20.3%
Memorials (including cost of plaque)					
Seat - Lease for 10 years	1,042	1,078	E/S	36	3.5%
Columbaria Unit - Lease for 20 years	1,240	1,276	E/S	36	2.9%
Small Plaques - Lease for 10 years	276	288	E/S	12	4.4%

	2022/2023 incl VAT (where appropriate)	Proposed Charges 2023/2024 incl VAT (where appropriate)	VAT Status	Increase / (Decrease)	
Outside Large Plaques - Lease for 10 years	420	432	E/S	12	2.9%
Outside Vase Block - Lease for 10 years	636	648	E/S	12	1.9%
Inside new Garden - Large Plaques - Lease for 10 years	450	462	E/S	12	2.7%
Inside new Garden - Vase Block - Lease for 10 years	690	702	E/S	12	1.7%
Memorial leaf - Lease 5 years	100	100	E/S	0	0.0%
Memorial Renewal					
Seat - Lease for 10 years	610	864	E/S	254	41.6%
Seat - Lease for 5 years	0	432	E/S	432	New
Columbaria Unit - Lease for 20 years	835	1,050	E/S	215	25.8%
Columbaria Unit - Lease for 15 years	0	788	E/S	788	New
Columbaria Unit - Lease for 10 years	0	525	E/S	525	New
Columbaria Unit - Lease for 5 years	0	263	E/S	263	New
Small Plaques - Lease for 10 years	96	100	E/S	4	4.2%
Outside Large Plaques - Lease for 10 years	159	180	E/S	21	13.2%
Outside Vase Block - Lease for 10 years	273	300	E/S	27	9.9%
Inside new Garden - Large Plaques - Lease for 10 years	174	200	E/S	26	14.9%
Inside new Garden - Vase Block - Lease for 10 years	300	320	E/S	20	6.7%
Memorial leaf - Lease 5 years	75	75	E/S	0	0.0%
Memorial Replacement					
Small Plaques - Replacement	110	110	E/S	0	0.0%
Outside Large Plaques - Replacement	128	128	E/S	0	0.0%
Outside Vase Block - Replacement	116	116	E/S	0	0.0%
Inside new Garden - Large Plaques - Replacement	128	128	E/S	0	0.0%
Inside new Garden - Vase Block - Replacement	116	116	E/S	0	0.0%
Visual Tributes (Wesley Music System)					
Webcast	48	48	S	0	0.0%
Recording - MP4 file	32	32	S	0	0.0%
Recording - MP4 inc visual tribute	48	48	S	0	0.0%
DVD	48	48	S	0	0.0%
DVD inc visual tribute	48	48	S	0	0.0%
Visual tribute - single image	16	16	S	0	0.0%
Visual tribute - slideshow 25 images no music	40	40	S	0	0.0%
Visual tribute - every additional 25 images no music	24	24	S	0	0.0%
Visual tribute - slideshow 25 images with music	72	72	S	0	0.0%
Visual tribute - every additional 25 images with music	24	24	S	0	0.0%
Family video file	16	16	S	0	0.0%
Downloadable MP4 video file	16	16	S	0	0.0%
DVD or USB	29	29	S	0	0.0%

Appendix 3

Proposed Mountsett 23/24	Cremation Fees £	2022/23											Proposed Durham 23/24 *	
		Coundon	Darlington	Gateshead	Middlesbrough	Hartlepool	South Tyneside	Sunderland	Newcastle	Stockton on Tees	Northumberland	Redcar & Cleveland		North Tyneside
765	Adult	911	875	691	902	714	698	850	759	805	850	930	822	765
0	Environmental surcharge	Inc above	58	50	Inc above	60	76	66	82	Inc above	Inc above	Inc above	Inc above	0
30	Medical Referees Fees	Inc above	22	42	Inc above	25	42	44	53	Inc above	Inc above	Inc above	32	30
795		911	955	783	902	799	816	960	894	805	850	930	854	795

Average of Benchmarking Group Cremation Fees £872

Proposed Mountsett 23/24	Other charges £	Coundon	Darlington	Gateshead	Middlesbrough	Hartlepool	South Tyneside	Sunderland	Newcastle	Stockton on Tees	Northumberland	Redcar & Cleveland	North Tyneside	Proposed Durham 23/24 *
0	Non-viable Foetus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0
0	Child - up to one month	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	Child - up to 16 years	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	175 - 490	0	0	0	0
795	Non Resident (Adult)	911	955	820	902	799	866	960	894	805	850	980	854	795
1,120	Adult - Saturday cremation	1,366	No Cremations on a Saturday	1,165	1,320	No Cremations on a Saturday	805	No Cremations on a Saturday	1,500	1,138	1,120			
630	Direct Cremation - Attended	675	0	0	0	681	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	630
490	Direct Cremation - Unattended	499	0	436	484	600	500	605	555	490	565	450	538	490
68	2 line entry Book of Remembrance	144	70	74	70	70	40	72	84	54	77	0	66	68
	Use of Chapel only:													
600	Between 10.15am and 2.45pm	455	100	0	100	118	165	160	175	125	0	385	90	600
200	Before 10.15am or after 2.45pm	455	100	0	100	118	165	160	175	125	0	385	90	200

* Subject to consideration by the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee 25th January 2023

This page is intentionally left blank

Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee**30 January 2023****2023/24 Revenue Budget****Joint Report of****Alan Patrickson, Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change****Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources and Treasurer to the Joint Committee****Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To set out for Members' consideration proposals with regards to the 2023/24 revenue budgets for the Mountsett Crematorium.

Executive Summary

- 2 The 2023/24 budget has been developed with the Bereavement Services Manager, taking into account the proposed Fees and Charges set out in the previous report, the 2022/23 forecast outturn position and known expenditure pressures in the coming year.

Recommendation(s)

- 3 It is recommended that Members of the Joint Committee note and approve the budget proposals contained within the report (as set out at Appendix 2) and that members note the forecast level of reserves and balances at 31 March 2024 (also set out at Appendix 2).

Budget Proposals 2023/24

- 4 The 2023/24 budget has been developed with the Bereavement Services Manager, taking into account the proposed Fees and Charges set out in the previous report, the 2022/23 forecast outturn position and known expenditure pressures in the coming year.
- 5 The proposed 2023/24 revenue budget is shown at Appendix 2, together with the forecast position with regards to the reserves of the Mountsett Crematorium at 31 March 2024. Members should note that the main changes from the 2022/23 budget are as follows:

Employees

- 6 The 2023/24 budget has been increased by **£26,484**. This takes into account the 22/23 and 23/24 pay awards and also the new structure which was approved by the Committee in 2022/23.

Premises

- 7 The base budget has increased by **£132,805** from 2022/22. The main reasons for this are as follows:

- The repairs and maintenance budgets include provision for the scheduled works in 2023/24 as per the Service Asset Management Plan. The net result of the removal of the 2022/23 works schedule and the inclusion of the 2023/24 requirements is an increase in the base budget of **£40,336** year on year. Provision for the following works are included in 2023/24 budgets:

➤ Replace chapel curtains	£4,000
➤ Replace machinery container	£5,336
➤ Replace main chapel doors	£7,000
➤ Installation of second memorial tower	£5,000
➤ Installation of three small memorial towers	£4,000
➤ To replace remaining damaged fencing	£9,000
➤ Office improvements	£100,000

- Utility budgets have increased by **£65,947** to reflect the rising energy prices.
- Other premises budgets such as grounds maintenance, tree works and cremator repairs have increased by **£5,586**.
- The cleaning budget has increased by **1,736** due to increased staffing costs.

- Cremator servicing budgets have increased by **£19,200** as the free servicing covered by IFZW for 2 years following completion of new cremators is coming to an end.

Supplies and Services

8 These budgets have been increased by **£2,932** in 2023/24, the main reasons are:

- BACAS licence budget is increasing by **£3,467** due to ICT no longer supporting the programme.
- Other supplies and services budgets have decreased by **(£535)**.

Agency and Contracted

9 The Agency and Contracted Services budget has increased by **£78**.

Support Service Costs

10 The 2023/24 budget factors in the proposed increase of **£1,400** in the SLA for the provision of Support Services as detailed in previous reports.

Income

11 The income budget has been increased by **(£56,350)**. This is due to a combination of the following factors:

- An element of prudence has again been factored into the income budget proposal for next year. The projected outturn as at 31 December 2022 assumes an increase of 153 cremations against the 2022/23 budgeted number of cremations 1,300. In preparing the 2023/24 budget the estimated number of cremations has been kept at 1,300. Along with the proposal to increase the cremation charges to £795 the cremation fee income budget has increased by **(£39,000)**.
- The interest budget has increased by **(£15,000)** reflecting rising interest rates.
- Plaques, webcasting and urns are overachieving by **(£2,350)**.

12 Should cremation numbers be maintained in line with those estimated in 2022/23 then there would be an additional surplus generated again next year.

Surplus Redistribution

13 The 2023/24 allocations remain the same as 2022/23 and are as follows:

- Durham County Council - £227,500
- Gateshead Council - £122,500

Earmarked Reserves

- 14 The transfer to the Repairs Reserve next year is budgeted in line with the 2022/23 level at **£15,000**.
- 15 In line with the Reserves Policy, the surplus created after all of the above factors have been taken into account necessitates a transfer from the Cremator Reserve. The Reserves Policy requires a General Reserve equal to 30% of the Joint Committees income budget. This results in a required transfer from the Cremator Reserve to the General Reserve of **£16,905**. A contribution from the Cremator Reserve of **£139,526** is also required to fund the projected revenue deficit The forecast transfer from the Cremator Reserve is therefore budgeted to be **£156,431** in 2023/24.
- 16 The estimated total earmarked reserves and balances of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee at 31 March 2024, taking into account the 2022/23 Quarter 3 budgetary control report, the 2023/24 budget and the proposed transfers to / from earmarked reserves are as follows:
- General reserve of **£335,880**, an increase of £16,904 (5.3%) from 2022/23
 - Retained Reserves of **£179,245** a decrease of £141,431 (44.1%) from 2022/23
- The estimated total reserves as shown in Appendix 2 at 31 March 2024 are **£515,125**.
- 17 Members should note that the 2023/24 budget proposal incorporates £134,336 of one off expenditure requirements which will be removed in the 2024/25 budget setting round.

Background Papers

- 2022/2023 Budget and Financial Monitoring Reports
- 2023/2024 Budget Working Papers
- 2023/2024 Fees and Charges report.

Author(s):	Philip Curran	03000 261967
	Ed Thompson	03000 263481

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee is required to set a balanced budget and the budget proposals contained within this report have been prepared in accordance with standard accounting policies and procedures.

Finance

The proposed budget for the Mountsett Crematorium is included at Appendix 2, with an explanation of year on year changes set out in the body of 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 Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

The income proposals set out in this report are based on a harmonised fees and charges policy with the Central Durham Crematorium and provide equity of treatment/access across County Durham. An equality Impact assessment screening has been undertaken which has revealed no issues.

Climate Change

None.

Human Rights

None.

Crime and Disorder

There are no Crime and Disorder implications associated with this report.

Staffing

The employee budget provides for 6 members of staff.

Accommodation

There are no Accommodation implications associated with this report.

Risk

The budgets take into account the 2022/23 forecast outturn position and all known expenditure pressures and opportunities for efficiencies in the coming year. The budget also considers one off expenditure requirements for 2023/24. Knowledge of these requirements ensures that risk is minimised.

Pricing sensitivity is essential to maintain the competitiveness and reputation of the Mountsett Crematorium in the current economic climate. The proposed standstill in fees and charges next year will ensure that the charges remain competitive in comparison with neighbouring facilities, and this, together with a prudent assumption in terms of the number of cremations undertaken next year, plus the strong

reputation of the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee, should ensure risk is minimised with regards to the achievement of the income budgets.

Procurement

None.

MOUNTSETT CREMATORIUM 2023/2024 BUDGET				
2021/2022 Actual Outturn (Memo Info)	2022/2023 Base Budget	2022/2023 Projected Outturn (QTR3)		2023/2024 Base Budget
£	£	£		£
			EXPENDITURE	
188,480	201,198	219,289	Employees	227,682
451,922	400,670	728,486	Premises	533,475
823	2,481	490	Transport	1,400
94,981	89,530	108,965	Supplies and Services	92,462
4,843	7,039	7,441	Agency & Contracted	7,117
0	0	0	Capital Financing Costs	0
29,720	30,590	30,590	Support Service Costs	31,990
770,769	731,508	1,095,261	Gross Expenditure	894,126
(1,140,979)	(1,063,250)	(1,157,015)	INCOME	(1,119,600)
(370,210)	(331,742)	(61,755)	Net Income	(225,474)
			Transfer to/from Reserves	
15,000	15,000	15,000	- Repairs Reserve	15,000
5,210	(33,258)	(303,246)	- Cremator Reserve	(139,526)
0	0	0	- General Reserve	0
(350,000)	(350,000)	(350,000)	Distributable Surplus	(350,000)
57,712	122,500	122,500	35% Gateshead Council	122,500
107,178	227,500	227,499	65% Durham County	227,500

Actual Balance @ 31/03/22	Budget Earmarked Reserves Balance @ 31/03/23	Revised (QTR3) Forecast Balance @ 31/03/23	Reserve	Transfer to Reserve	Transfer from Reserve	Budget Forecast Balance @ 31/03/24
£	£	£		£	£	£
(99,370)	(114,370)	(114,370)	Repairs Reserve	(15,000)	0	(129,370)
(519,840)	(93,445)	(206,306)	Cremator Reserve	0	156,431	(49,875)
(308,686)	(318,976)	(318,975)	General Reserve	(366,905)	350,000	(335,880)
(927,896)	(526,791)	(639,651)	TOTAL	(381,905)	506,431	(515,125)

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank