

Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee



30 January 2019

Quarterly Performance and Operational Report



Report of Graham Harrison, Bereavement Services Manager

Purpose of the Report

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

Performance Update - Number of Cremations

2. The table below provides details of the number of cremations for the period 1 September to 31 December 2018 inclusive, with comparative data in the same period last year:

	2017/18	2018/19	Year on Year Difference
September	171 + 2*	181 + 2*	+ 10 + 0*
October	190 + 0*	195 + 3*	+ 5 + 3*
November	176 + 1	207 + 2*	+ 31 + 1*
December	197 + 0*	173 + 2*	- 24 + 2*
TOTAL	734 + 3*	756 + 9*	+ 22 + 6*

* = Non-Viable Foetus (NVF) ** = Stillborns (STs) *** = Body parts

3. The full profile of where families came from can be seen in Appendix 2. In summary 252 came from Durham, 34 came from Spennymoor and 470 from outside of these areas. There have been 9 NVF cremations undertaken for the period covered by this report compared to 3 in the comparable period last year. There were 22 more cremations undertaken in the period September to December 2018 compared to the same period last year.

Memorials

4. The table below outlines the number and value of the memorials sold in the period September to December 2018 compared to the same period the previous year.

	(Sept-Dec)	2017/18	(Sept-Dec)	2018/19
	Number	£	Number	£
Vase Blocks	6	3,316	4	2,454
Large Plaques	18	9,266	18	7,446
Small Plaques	6	1,566	6	1,566
Niche	1	1,230	4	5,016
Renewal	32	4,528	24	3,982
Total	63	19,906	56	20,464

5. In overall terms the number and value of memorials sold 56 / £20,464 compares to 63 / £19,906 in the same period last year, which is a year on year decrease of 7 memorials sold, but a slight increase of £558 in terms of revenue generated.

Operational Matters

Staffing

6. Members may be aware that one of our crematorium attendants, John Willis sadly passed away on the 10 December 2018 and his funeral took place at the crematorium on Thursday 20 December 2018. John was employed with the Council since 1978 and worked at the crematorium from November 1998.
7. A recruitment exercise will begin shortly to fill the vacant Crematorium Attendant post, which will be advertised internally within Durham County Council and Spennymoor Town Council initially.

Wi-Fi Connectivity

8. Members may recall that it was agreed at the January 2018 meeting to provide Wi-Fi connectivity to the crematorium.
9. It has been determined that there will be several access points required and it was envisaged that the installation was to be carried out before Christmas, however due to the availability of the contractors, this will be undertaken in the New Year.

Green Flag Award

10. Members may recall from the September 2018 meeting that the Central Durham Crematorium was successful in retaining its Green Flag award for the seventh year running.
11. An application will be submitted for the 2019 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

12. Members may recall from the September 2018 meeting that the crematorium had received a cheque for the recycling of metals from the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management to the sum of £5,000 for Solan Connor Fawcett Family Cancer Trust.
13. Arrangements were made for the cheque to be presented to Solan Connor Fawcett Family Cancer Trust by the Committee Chair and Vice Chair and a photograph of the presentation is attached at appendix 3.
14. The recycling of metals scheme has again produced a surplus nationally.
15. Members may recall that a list for future nominations was produced and Great North Air Ambulance have been selected for the next available distribution of funds. This nomination has been submitted and I am currently awaiting a response.

Audit Recommendation – Supplier for Book of Remembrance Entries

16. The Internal Audit report earlier this year found that all entries into the Book of Remembrance are completed by one supplier due to the specialism of the work required. It was recommended that a procurement exercise be explored with the Procurement Team in order to ensure value for money whilst maintaining the quality of the Book of Remembrance.
17. The tender documents have been drawn up by the Procurement Team and will soon be advertised on the procurement portal.

Audit Recommendation - Document Retention

18. The Internal Audit report also found that documents were being retained for the required 15 years in paper form, however this requires a large amount of storage space. There is currently no scanning undertaken, but should this commence then the hard copies would only need to be retained for a year prior to disposal.
19. The Procurement Team commenced an exercise to look at the possibility of scanning all documentation, which would then be attached to BACAS and Members are provided with the following four options to consider.

Option 1 – Supplier One Scanning Facility

The Supplier One scanning facility has produced a varying quote which depends on the quality and condition of the original documents and the table below shows the costs for both the least expensive scenario and the most expensive scenario. The costs provided will include the transport and logistics of the records, secure scanning, storage and destruction and also an encrypted storage device for the converted records.

Quality and Condition of Documents	No. of Documents	Cost per Document	Total Cost
Good (Best Case)	813,912	£0.030	£24,418
Poor (Worst Case)	813,912	£0.050	£40,696

The figures are based on 36,996 records of 22 sheets per record.

Option 2 – Supplier Two Scanning Facility

The Supplier Two scanning facility is based in the region and has been used by other services within Durham County Council to complete scanning projects. The costs provided include the transport and logistics of the records, secure scanning, storage and destruction and also the hardware in the form of an encrypted storage device for the converted records. The figures are based on the quality of the original document and prices may differ if quality is better or worse than expected.

Number of Documents	813,912
Cost Per Document	£0.040
Total Cost	£32,557

The figures are based on 36,996 records of 22 sheets per record.

Once the initial scan is complete bulk yearly scanning thereafter would incur an inflation related cost element per document. Supplier Two propose this to be an increase of £0.0025 per document per year and the annual cost per year based upon 2,300 records is shown below.

- 2019/20 – 50,600 documents x £0.0425 = £2,150
- 2020/21 – 50,600 documents x £0.0450 = £2,277
- 2021/22 – 50,600 documents x £0.0475 = £2,403
- 2022/23 – 50,600 documents x £0.0500 = £2,530

Option 3 – Supplier One Secure Storage

Supplier One are an Electronic Document Storage, Management and Shredding Company based in the region.

Advantages of using the Supplier One secure storage facility include:

- Secure barcoded scanning of each box from collection, during transit and into storage.
- Correct storage conditions for paper e.g. correct temperature, pest control
- Next day retrieval option. The retrieval cost stands at £10 per drop off and an 80p handling fee per box, collection is free to send boxes back into storage.

The one off initial costs to store all of the historic files are as follows:

Description	Cost
125 Boxes required, costing £19.40 per 10 boxes	£252.20
One off collection fee	£12.50
Handling fee, costing £0.80 per box	£100.00
Total One-Off Cost	£364.70

- Subsequent Years – working on the basis that each year a year's worth of storage will be out of retention and therefore destroyed and the current year will be entering storage, the following shows costs of destroying 'out of retention' box records onsite at the Supplier One facility and shows the storage of remaining boxes plus that of the new boxes entering storage. These figures are based on the approximate number of boxes each year and therefore the figures are likely to differ slightly based on exact yearly records. For the purpose of this exercise the amount of boxes out of retention and the amount of boxes newly entering will be based on the approximate average per year so it will show no change in the amount of boxes in storage based on a 'one in – one out' approach.

Description	Cost
Storage per box per year, costing £2.35 per box	£293.75
Box destruction, costing £3.20 per box	£25.60
Handling fee, costing £0.80 per box	£6.40
Total Annual Cost	£325.75

Option 4 – Secure Storage for Past Records and Scan Records Going Forward

Documents for the previous 15 years could be moved to the secure storage facility mentioned in Option 3 and forms relating to 2018/19 onwards could be scanned on an annual basis at the end of each financial year. The costs relating to this option are as follows:

Description	Cost
One off cost for secure storage	£365
Annual storage costs	£325
Annual scanning costs (50,600 documents x £0.030)	£1,518
Total Annual Cost	£2,208

Recommended Option

Due to the significant costs associated with scanning all of the documents relating to the last 15 years it is recommended that Members approve Option 4, which will move the previous records into secure storage and scan records on an annual basis from 2018/19.

Internal Audit have confirmed that this is an acceptable solution. The cost of £2,208 will be factored into the 2019/20 budget.

Christmas Tree

20. For the eighth year running it was agreed that St. Cuthbert's Hospice could provide a Christmas tree and baubles with a facility for visitors to write a personal message and place it on the Christmas tree with a bauble. This proved to be very popular again with visitors and a number of messages were placed on the tree with a substantial amount of money being donated to St. Cuthbert's Hospice.



21. St. Cuthbert's Hospice has requested that they be allowed to continue to provide a Christmas tree again in 2019. The Hospice supplies the tree and decorations at no cost to the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee.
22. No other requests have been received from any organisation to place a Christmas tree at the Crematorium.

Recommendations:

23. It is recommended that Members of the Central Durham Joint Committee:-
- (i) Note the current performance of the crematorium.
 - (ii) Note the advertising of the vacant Crematorium Attendant post.
 - (iii) Note the continued success with regards to the Green Flag Award.

- (iv) Note the updated position with regards to the recycling of metals scheme.
- (v) Note the updated position with regards to the Book of Remembrance tender.
- (vi) Note the options available for the document retention and approve Option 4.
- (vii) Agree to the provision of a Christmas Tree by St Cuthbert's Hospice in 2019.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

As identified in the report with regards to the position of the Income.

Staffing

As identified in the report.

Risk

There are no risk implications associated with this report.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Accommodation

The development project will improve customer and staff accommodation.

Crime and Disorder

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

Human Rights

There are no Human Rights implications associated with this report.

Consultation

Officers of Spennymoor Town Council were consulted on the contents of this report.

Procurement

There are no procurement issues associated with this report.

Disability Issues

There are no disability issues associated with this report.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Appendix 2: Breakdown of Figures

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total Oct-Dec
Durham	64	63	67	58	252
Billingham	1	1			2
Binchester				1	1
Birtley		1			1
Bishop Auckland	2	6	1	8	17
Blackhall		3	5	3	11
Berwick (Eyemouth)		1			1
Chester Le Street	14	12	13	14	53
Chester		1			1
Chilton	4	1	1	3	9
Consett	1		2	1	4
Crook	5	3	5	6	19
Darlington	1	1			2
Easington	7	3	6	2	18
Esh Winning			1	2	3
Fencehouses	1		1		2
Ferryhill	3	8	9	5	25
Fishburn		3	3	1	7
Gateshead				1	1
Hamsterley		1			1
Great Lumley	1	1	2	2	6
Harrogate	1				1
Hartlepool		1	2	2	5
Haswell	2	1		1	4
Hetton Le Hole	1	2	3		6
Hexham				1	1
Horden	7	5	3		15
Houghton	6	5	3	4	18
Kimblesworth	1				1
Kings Lynn	1				1
Lanchester	1				1
Langley Park	2	2	1		5
London/Kent		1			1
Manchester	1				1
Murton	5	8	5	4	22
Nettlesworth		1			1
New Brancepeth		1			1
Newcastle	1	2		5	8

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total Oct-Dec
Newton Aycliffe	2	2	4	3	11
Ouston		1	1	1	3
Peterlee	8	11	10	6	35
Sacriston	2	1	1	2	6
Seaham	7	10	9	9	35
Sedgefield		2	5	4	11
Shildon	1				1
Shotton	5	4	2	2	13
South Hetton	1	1	1	1	4
Spennymoor	9	6	11	8	34
Stanhope		1	1		2
Stanley	1		4	1	6
Station Town			1		1
Stockton	1	1	1		3
Sunderland		1	2	1	4
Sunnybrow		1			1
Thornley	1	1	2	1	5
Tow Law		1			1
Trimdon	4	2	4	2	12
Washington		2		2	4
West Auckland	1				1
West Cornforth	2	4	2	1	9
Wheatley Hill	1	2	6	2	11
Willington			3	2	5
Wingate	2	2	4	1	9
Wolsingham		1			1
Total	181	195	207	173	756

Appendix 3 Re-cycling of Metals Cheque Presentation



Cllr Jean Chaplow, Chair of Central Durham Crematorium Committee and Ian Machin Vice Chair, presenting a cheque for £5,000 to Mark Solan for Solan Connor Fawcett Family Cancer Trust.