

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) Consider and approve the SLA with regards to the cleaning of the crematorium.
 - (e) Note the update with regards to cremator replacement.

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 2021 to 31 December 2021 inclusive, with comparative data in the same period for the last two years:

	2019/20 (Pre Covid)	2020/21	2021/22	Change from 20/21
September	116	125	116	- 9
October	124	121	123	+ 2
November	116	127	124	- 3
December	117	112	115	+ 3
TOTAL	473	485	478	- 7

- 6 In summary there were 478 cremations undertaken during the period 1 September 2021 to 31 December 2021, compared to 485 in the comparable period last year, a decrease of 7 cremations for this period.

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

Gateshead	130
Durham	272
Outside Area	77
Total	479

Memorials

- 7 The table below outlines the number and value of the memorials sold in period 1 September 2021 to 31 December 2021 compared to the same period the previous year.

	(Sept – Dec) 2020/21	(Sept – Dec) 2021/22
	Number	Number
Large Plaques	6	4
Small Plaques	21	14
Leaf Plaques	2	7
Total	29	25

	2020/21	2021/22
	£	£
Large Plaques	2,520	1,680
Small Plaques	5,796	3,864
Leaf Plaques	200	700
Total	8,516	6,244

- 8 The number and value of memorials 25 / £6,244 compares to 29 / £8,516 in the same period in 2020/21, which is a decrease of 4 memorials sold and £2,272 year on year.

Staffing

- 9 Members were informed at the last meeting of the current Covid 19 situation that staff are faced with on a daily basis and we continue to demonstrate the high level of service that we can to the bereaved.
- 10 The staff continue to cope with the demands and are an asset to the Crematorium and I thank them for their assistance during this difficult time.

Green Flag Application

- 11 Members may recall from the September 2021 meeting that Mountsett Crematorium was successful in retaining its Green Flag Award for the tenth year running.
- 12 An application will be submitted for the 2022 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

- 13 Collections in 2021 have resulted in two rounds of nominations being made available, therefore we nominated the British Heart Foundation.
- 14 A cheque presentation was undertaken by the Chair of the Joint Committee on 23 December 2021 for the sum of £15,000 and a photograph of the presentation and a letter of thanks is shown at Appendix 2.
- 15 A current list of nomination was produced several years ago (see Appendix 3), however any Member wishing to add any future nominations to the list may contact the Bereavement Services Manager & Registrar to have these included.

Cleaning SLA

- 16 The cleaner employed at the crematorium is part of Durham County Council's facilities cleaning team who provide the service by way of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to assist with the cleaning duties. The two year SLA which currently costs £7,722 per year commenced on 1 April 2020 and is therefore due to expire on 31 March 2022.
- 17 A high quality service has been provided over the last two years and Members are asked to consider and approve a revised SLA for the period April 2022 to March 2024, costing £8,164 per year (a 3.6%

increase on the recharges levied in 2021/22), which includes all labour and materials required to carry out the cleaning activities (SLA attached at Appendix 4). The applicable fee takes into consideration inflationary pressures such as the staff pay award. The standard hourly rate has increased from £15.15 to £15.70 resulting in an increase of £5.50 per week.

Mountsett Cremator Replacement

- 18 Members were informed at the last meeting of the current situation with regards to the cremator replacements at Mountsett Crematorium.
- 19 For Members information we still continue to run the temporary cremator which has been invaluable during Covid 19.
- 20 We now have the 2 new cremators with full abatement plant up and running with emission testing of cremator no 2 being undertaken early January.
- 21 A further emission test will be undertaken to cremator no 1 approximately 3 months later to ensure full compliance with our Environmental Health permit.



Contact: Graham Harrison,

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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

Appendix 2: Recycling of Metals Cheque Presentation.

Dear Graham,

It was lovely to meet you yesterday and thank you once again for your extremely kind donation of £15,000 made to the British Heart Foundation (BHF). 2021 was a year in which the world turned to science for answers. And, thanks to your amazing support, the BHF has been at the forefront of providing them for millions of people, including the 123,000 people in our County Durham community, who live with heart and circulatory diseases.

This year the BHF turned 60 and our researchers have continued to make incredible breakthroughs. This included the development of a new technique for undertaking heart transplants at Great Ormond Street Hospital that could double the number of children eligible for the life-saving surgery. It also included research that suggests a drug used to treat certain cancers could prove to be a ground-breaking heart attack treatment. Without your support, these life-saving discoveries, and many more, simply wouldn't be possible. Just 60 years ago, the treatment for a heart attack was bedrest and painkillers and the majority of babies born with a heart defect didn't make it to their first birthday. Today, thanks to our research, 8 out of 10 babies born with a congenital defect in the UK survive to adulthood and the number of people who die from heart and circulatory diseases has halved. BHF-funded research has given us machines that can restart hearts, the ability to fix arteries in tiny babies and the power to give someone a heart they weren't born with.

Your support will bring us closer to a world in which more people survive out of hospital cardiac arrests. In October, we launched the Circuit - the national defibrillator network, which connects defibrillators to NHS ambulance services across the UK so that in those crucial moments after a cardiac arrest people can get the vital help they need. We were also delighted that, after years of campaigning, CPR training was made mandatory for school children in Northern Ireland which means that CPR training will now be a feature of every child's education across the UK helping save countless lives in the future.

Because of your donation we can still be there for the millions of people who turn to our BHF Covid-19 Hub for information through this pandemic, and for the thousands of people who call our cardiac nurses through our Heart Helpline when they needed us most. We know this has been another tough year for so many people and their loved ones. People with heart and circulatory diseases have experienced unprecedented delays in diagnosis, treatment, and care across the UK's four nations, and we will not stop shining a light on this situation until people get the care they need.

Thank you so much for sending the pictures across from our cheque presentation, if there are any stipulations in me sharing these please do let me know. It was so heart warming to speak with you regarding the legacy people are leaving through the metal recycling scheme and I hope it brings peace to loved ones that they are helping such worthy causes. If there are any further ways we can work together in the future please do let me know.

Thank you once again for your incredible support and I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Best Wishes,
Leya

Leya Baksh

Fundraising Manager - North Yorkshire & County Durham
British Heart Foundation



Appendix 3: Recycling of Metals Current Nominations.

Willowburn

St Oswalds Hospice

Age Concern

If u Care Share Foundation

British Heart Foundation

Cancer Research North East

Childrens Cancer Fund

Cruse

Child Funeral Charity

Macmillan Cancer Support

Marie Curie Cancer Care

Derwentside Hospice Care Foundation

Sands

Coping with Cancer North East

The British Red Cross

Winston's Wish

The British Legion

North East Air Ambulance

Walking with the Wounded

Appendix 4: Cleaning SLA
