

**Central Durham Crematorium Joint  
Committee**

**1 February 2022**



**Quarterly Performance and Operational Report**

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**Report of Graham Harrison, Bereavement Services Manager &  
Registrar**

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide

**Purpose of the Report**

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

**Executive summary**

- 2 This report provides Members of the Central Durham 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 Central Durham 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 revised changes to opening times.
  - e) Consider and approve the SLA with regards to the cleaning of the crematorium.
  - f) Consider and approve the SLA with regards to the cleaning of the water fountains at the crematorium.

- g) Agree to St Cuthbert's Hospice providing a Christmas tree again in 2022.

## Performance Update - Number of Cremations

- 4 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	173 + 2*	161 + 1*	206 + 0*	+ 45 - 1*
October	213 + 2*	184 + 2*	200 + 2*	+ 16 + 0*
November	204 + 0*	191 + 0*	231 + 4*	+ 40 + 4*
December	207 + 1*	199 + 0*	204 + 0*	+ 5 + 0*
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>797 + 5*</b>	<b>735 + 3*</b>	<b>841 + 6*</b>	<b>+ 106 + 3*</b>

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

- 5 The full profile of where families came from can be seen in Appendix 2. In summary 267 came from Durham, 35 came from Spennymoor and 539 from other areas. There have been 6 NVF cremations undertaken for the period covered by this report compared to 3 in the comparable period last year. There were 106 more cremations undertaken in the period September to December 2021 compared to the same period last year.

## Memorials

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

	Sept-Dec 2020/21	Sept-Dec 2021/22
	Number	£
Vase Blocks	6	3,990
Large Plaques	16	6,781
Small Plaques	4	1,044
Niche	3	3,935
Renewal	40	6,874
Leaf plaques	3	300
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>22,924</b>

- 7 The number and value of memorials sold 88 / £22,591 compares to 72 / £22,924 in the same period in 2020/21, which is an increase of 16 memorial sold, however a small decrease of £333 year on year.

## **Operational Matters**

### **Staffing**

- 8 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.
- 9 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 Award**

- 10 Members will recall from the September 2021 meeting that the Central Durham Crematorium was successful in retaining its Green Flag award for the tenth year running.
- 11 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**

- 12 Collections in 2021 have resulted in two rounds of nominations being made available, therefore we nominated Chyrelle Addams Cancer Support Trust and we received a confirmation of a BACS payment for £15,000 to Chyrelle Addams Cancer Support Trust on the 16 December 2021.

### **Crematorium Opening Hours**

- 13 A review of the opening hours of the crematorium on a weekend has concluded that the hours should be reviewed to improve customer access especially on a Sunday and Bank Holidays.
- 14 The current opening hours of the crematorium outside the core hours are:
  - a) Saturday 8.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon
  - b) Sunday 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.
  - c) Bank Holidays 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon

- 15 It is proposed that Sunday and Bank Holiday opening times at Durham Crematorium are changed in line with those on a Saturday, to be introduced immediately if agreed by Members.

### **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 £9,846 per year commenced on 1 April 2020 and expires 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 £10,205 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 3). 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 £6.88 per week.

### **Water Fountain Maintenance SLA**

- 18 For many years the crematorium has had its own staff carry out the maintenance to the water fountains situated in the memorial gardens, however following an inspection from our Health and Safety team, they have expressed concerns regarding unqualified staff undertaking this operation. We have tried to get staff to undertake this qualification, however the course is more specific to pool plant maintenance.
- 19 Most of the operations include weekly backwashing of the filter, cleaning the pump strainer, filling the bromine tablet feeder and testing the water. This require two engineers who will be in attendance due to the access hatch and enclosed spaces requirements.
- 20 Durham County Council's Commercial services team can provide the service by way of a Service Level Agreement (SAL) to assist with the cleaning duties. The price quoted is £10,943 per year (SLA attached at Appendix 4) and includes all labour and materials required to carry out the activities identified. However, it only includes one fountain as only one has the necessary circulation plant. The other fountain doesn't have any pool water treatment kit and they would not be able to maintain

good water quality so it will be left for the Crematorium staff to undertake the cleaning of this fountain. The additional cost has been factored into the 2022/23 budget.

## Christmas Tree

- 21 St. Cuthbert's Hospice has requested that they be allowed to continue to provide a Christmas tree again in 2022. 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.

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**Contact:**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications associated with this report

### **Finance**

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

### **Consultation**

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

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

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

### **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**

As identified in the report.

### **Accommodation**

There are no accommodation implications associated with this report.

### **Risk**

As identified in the report.

### **Procurement**

There are no procurement issues associated with this report.

### **Climate Change**

There are no climate change issues associated with this report.

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## Appendix 2: Breakdown of Figures

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	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
DURHAM	72	57	69	69	267
BARNARD CASTLE	1			1	2
BILLINGHAM			2		2
BISHOP AUCKLAND	3	7	7	2	19
BISHOP MIDDLEHAM	1	1			2
BLACKHALL	1	2	2	4	9
CHESTER LE STREET	14	14	13	17	58
CHESHIRE	1				1
CHILTON	1	3		2	6
CONSETT	3	2	1	3	9
CROOK	4	2	3	5	14
DARLINGTON	2			1	3
EASINGTON	2	3	1	4	10
EAST RAINTON				2	2
ESH				1	1
ESH WINNING	3		3	5	11
FENCEHOUSES			2		2
FERRYHILL	9	5	4	5	23
FISHBURN			1		1
GATESHEAD	1		1		2
GREAT LUMLEY	3	1	2	1	7
HARTLEPOOL	3		4	1	8
HASWELL	2	1	1	2	6
HETTON LE HOLE	4	2	3	4	13
HORDEN	4	4	4	6	18
HOUGHTON	4	6	9	4	23
HOWDEN	1				1
LANCHESTER	1	2	2	1	6
LANGLEY PARK	4	3	7	3	17
MORPETH		1			1
MURTON	1	4	9	1	15
NEW BRANCEPETH			2		2
NEWCASTLE				1	1
NEWTON AYCLIFFE	3	6	2	2	13
NORTHUMBERLAND	1				1
NOTTINGHAM				1	1
PELTON				2	2
PETERLEE	12	14	7	9	42
SACRISTON	3	5	4	1	13
SCOTLAND	1				1
SEAHAM	10	8	13	10	41

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
SEDGEFIELD		2	2	3	7
SHILDON	2		2		4
SHOTTON	2	6	3	2	13
SOUTH HETTON	2		3	1	6
SPENNYMOOR	8	10	9	8	35
STANLEY	1	2	2		5
STATION TOWN				2	2
SUNDERLAND	1	3		1	5
SOUTHERN ENGLAND		2			2
THORNLEY		2	4	1	7
TOW LAW	1	3	1	2	7
TRIMDON	5		5	1	11
WASHINGTON		1	1		2
WEST AUCKLAND	1				1
WEST CORNFORTH		1	3	3	7
WHEATLEY HILL		3		2	5
WILLINGTON	2	6	3	2	13
WINGATE	1	4	9	1	15
WOLSINGHAM	1	1	1	3	6
WYNYARD	1				1
YORKSHIRE/LANCASHIRE	3	1	5	2	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>841</b>