

31 January 2013



**Mountsett Crematorium Performance
and Operational Report**

Report of Graham Harrison, Bereavement Services Manager

Purpose of the Report

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

Performance Update:-

Number of Cremations: for the period 1 September 2012 to 31 December 2012

2. The table below provides details of the number of cremations for the period 1 September 2012 to 31 December 2012 inclusive, with comparative data in the same periods last year:-

	2011/2012	2012/2013	Change
	Period [Sept - Dec]	Period [Sept- Dec]	
September	106	100	- 6
October	93	109	+ 16
November	102	144	+ 42
December	113	115	+ 2
TOTAL	414	468	+ 54

Gateshead	144
Durham	263
Outside Area	61
Total	468

3. In summary there were 468 cremations undertaken during 1 September 2012 to 31 December 2012, compared to 414 in the comparable period last year, an increase of 54.

Memorials

4. The table below outlines the number and value (exc. VAT) of the memorials sold in period 1 September 2012 to 31 December 2012 inclusive. Previous years comparisons are unavailable (members will recall the service being introduced during the last quarter of 2011/12).

	Period [Sept-December] 2012/2013	
	Number	£
Large Plaques	14	4592.00
Total	14	4592.00

Operational Matters

Staffing

5. The Superintendent & Registrar at Mountsett Crematorium has been absent from his post since March 2012. In line with the joint committee's constitution Durham County Council's Ill Health absence procedures have been followed resulting in the post becoming vacant from the 19 December 2012.
6. The Bereavement Services Manager is currently considering options regarding the replacement for the Superintendent & Registrar. The options being considered are:-
- Joint Manager Arrangements
 - Support via an SLA with DCC Bereavement Services
 - Replacement for the Superintendent & Registrar.
7. A report will be brought to the next meeting, where, following its consideration, any budget revisions will be considered.

Job Evaluation

8. As reported in previous meetings DCC have been undertaking a substantial exercise to harmonise pay and conditions across the authority with staff/union involvement and consultation this was signed off for implementation from 1 January 2013. The impact of this agreement has been factored into the Financial Monitoring report and 2013/14 Budget (to be considered further on the agenda).

Mountsett Crematorium Pre-Payment Cremation Bond

9. The D.C.C. Solicitor submitted the application for registration to the scheme on 1 August 2012. On 10 December we received confirmation from the FSA that they have accepted our application and have allocated a case number to the application. It is hoped that a working

proposal will be in place for consideration by the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee at the April meeting.

Joint Conference of Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities and the Cremation Society of Great Britain

10. The Joint Conference of Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities and The Cremation Society of Great Britain are to be held from 1 to 3 July 2013 at Stratford-upon-Avon. A proposal is made for the Bereavement Services Manager and Chair to the Joint Committee to attend this conference to represent the Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee at the event. The cost to attend this would be £495.00 per person.

Green Flag Application

11. As Members may recollect at the meeting held on 5 October 2012 it was reported that Mountsett Crematorium were successful in obtaining a Green Flag Award.
12. We are again submitting an application for the 2013 Award and will report back at a future meeting.

Recycling of Metals Scheme

13. Discussions with the Chair and Vice Chair have taken place and it was proposed to give the next tranche of money to St Oswald's Hospice, Gosforth; subject to seeking nominations from the Joint Committee on future charity nominations (see Appendix 2). If no future charity nominations are put forward then a solution could be to default to the Chairman's chosen charity for that year.

Mountsett Crematorium: Replacement of Cremators and Installation of Mercury Abatement Plant

14. Initial discussions have taken place between the Bereavement Services Manager and DCC Design Services in relation to the future replacement of the cremators and the installation of Mercury Abatement plant. Details of the feasibility study will be presented to the committee at a future meeting.

Service Asset Management Plan Update

15. As Members may recollect at the meeting held on 5 October 2012, members agreed the Service Asset Management Plan and approved that a number of schemes should be progressed subsequent works. Some of these works have now been completed namely:-
 - Internal decoration of crematorium
 - External decoration of crematorium

- Replacement windows to staff room
- Replacement of kitchen units in staff room
- Replacement of display cabinet in book of remembrance building.

16. Works currently programmed and scheduled to be completed by the end of March 2013 Include:-

- Provision of 1 additional accessible car parking bay
- Adjust paving to office entrance to overcome 30mm step
- Improve signage in the chapel lobby
- Assess means of escape strategy
- Provide additional seating with arm rests and differing heights within public and clergy rooms
- Remove timber threshold on exit route doors
- Provide accessible WC for public that can be accessed internally
- Upgrade existing ambulant WC's with contrasting grab rails
- The installation of the BACAS computer software system.

Recommendations and Reasons

17. It is recommended that Members of the Mountsett Joint Committee consider and agree:-

- The content of this report with regards to current performance of the crematorium
- The current situation with regards to the sale of Memorial Plaques
- Note the current situation with regards to Job Evaluation
- Note the current situation with regards to the Pre-Payment bond and progress working with DCC legal team
- To agree to the attendance of The Bereavement Services Manager and Chair at the yearly Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management Conference
- Note the future submission with regards to the Green Flag
- In the absence of nominations for future recycling income that the chairman's charities will benefit from money generated
- Note the progress with regards to the Feasibility Study to look at all options with regard to the cremator replacement
- Note the works currently underway with regards to The Service Asset Management Plan.

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

As identified in the report.

Staffing

There are no implications.

Risk

The details of the SAMP works highlighted within the report have been scrutinised with costs taken into consideration within the 2012/13 outturn. These together with information supplied by the Bereavement Services Manager should mitigate any risks with regards to challenge and review of the Joint Committees financial position.

Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty

Equality Impact Screenings have been undertaken with regards to the SAMP works.

Accommodation

There are no implications.

Crime and Disorder

There are no implications.

Human Rights

There are no implications.

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.

Procurement

There are no implications.

Disability Issues

There are no implications.

Legal Implications

As outlined in the report.

Appendix 2: Possible Charity nominations

Age Concern

Barnardo's

British Heart Foundation

Cancer Research North East

Children's Cancer fund

Coping with Cancer North East

Derwentside Hospice Care Foundation

Derwentside Mind

Macmillan Cancer Support

Marie Curie Cancer Care

The British Red Cross Society