

Mountsett Crematoria Joint Committee29th January 2010**Report of the Superintendent Registrar**

Joint Report of Terry Collins – Corporate Director: Neighbourhood Services; Stuart Crowe – Corporate Director: Resources (Treasurer to the Joint Committee)

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present updates on the cremator replacement programme and Mercury Abatement issues.
2. To provide members with statistical information regarding cremation numbers carried out from April-November 2009 together with comparative figures for the previous year (Appendix 3).

Background – Cremator Replacement

3. During 2002 reports were presented to members by the Superintendent and the Treasurer relating to the asset life of the existing cremators and the options available to finance new cremators. Members were informed that the lifespan of the cremators was an estimated 15-20 years.
4. The options presented to members regarding the financing of the new cremators were as follows:-
 - To seek resources from the constituent authorities either in advance of the works on an annual bases, or at the time when the cremators needed to be replaced.
 - To establish a Cremator Replacement Reserve fund from surpluses generated by the crematorium to be built up over the next 15 years.
5. Members agreed on the second option. It was concluded that the first option would place demands on the authorities' capital programmes at a time when they would already be over subscribed
6. The Cremator Replacement reserve was established in 2003/04 with an annual contribution of £20,000 agreed to be met from the anticipated surpluses generated by the Crematoria.

Cremators/ Cremator Reserve

7. The reserve balance is forecast to be at £184,594 at 31 March 2010 and the remaining lifespan of the cremators is 15 years, this is based on a reline of one cremator in 2010/2011 and further relines every 6 years until replacement.
8. Assuming that transfers to the reserve remain static at £20,000 per annum over the next 15 years, the reserve balance in 2024/2025 would be in the region of £485,000. The estimated cost of replacing the cremators, excluding Mercury Abatement Technology in 2025 would be in the region of £479,000.

Mercury Abatement

9. In 2004 DEFRA issued guidelines to the cremation industry advising that at least 50% of all cremations should be mercury abated by the end of 2012. The intention being that the cremation industry could “self regulate” in order to meet this target nationally. Should this not be achievable, legislation would be introduced whereby all crematoria undertaking in excess of 1970 cremations during 2003 would be required to install abatement equipment.
10. The Federation of Cremation Authorities felt that rather than the cost of Mercury Abatement being met only by the busiest crematoria the cost should be shared around the industry and introduced the CAMEO scheme (a burden sharing scheme where those with abatement equipment would receive payment from those without, based on the numbers of cremations undertaken).
11. In 2003 Mountsett Crematoria carried out significantly less cremations than the threshold set out in the 2003 legislation (1,326) and is therefore not compelled to install the abatement equipment in line with legislation. The Central Durham Crematorium is above the threshold and therefore has plans in place to replace their cremators by 31 December 2012, which, by co-incidence, was the date at which they were for replacement in any event.
12. In consideration of this, members agreed at the time that Mountsett Crematoria should join the CAMEO scheme and burden share rather than install abatement equipment.
13. Whilst it is envisaged that the number of projected cremations will continue to be lower than the legislative threshold, there are strong environmental reasons why, when replacing cremators in the future, that they should be replaced with Mercury Abatement equipment.
14. There is currently an additional cost to consider in this regard, with replacement cremators, including full mercury abatement technology, are roughly double the price of non-abated cremators. However, it is uncertain whether, in 2024/25 (the date at which the existing cremators need replacing), purchasing unabated equipment would be possible.

Numbers of Cremations

15. Appendix 3 sets out details of the number of cremations undertaken by the crematorium in the period 1 April to 30 November 2009, together with comparison data for the same period in 2008. In summary there have been 807 cremations undertaken in the year to date, compared to 754 in the comparable period last year – an increase of 53, or 7% over last year.

Recommendations and reasons

16. It is recommended that members

- Note the report and support that in 2024/25, when new cremators are installed, that Mercury Abatement equipment is installed at the same time;
- Agree that in 2010/11 and in subsequent years, the budget makes additional financial provision for the replacement of the cremators in 2024/25, with Mercury Abatement equipment as part of the provision; and
- Note the number of cremations undertaken in the period 1 April to 30 November 2009.

Background Papers

Mercury Abatement , The Phoenix Partnership 22nd October 2005
Cremators-anticipated life span, The Phoenix Partnership 7th January 2010

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

The financial implications associated with this report are included within the detail of the report. The proposals will inform the medium term financial strategy in terms of budget setting and reserves and balances policies for the Joint Committee.

Staffing

There are no staffing issues associated with this report.

Equality and Diversity

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

Accommodation

There are no Accommodation implications associated with this report.

Crime and Disorder

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

Sustainability

The proposals set out in the report are in line will inform the financial strategy / business case developed for the cremator replacement, providing sufficient funding to sustain both the operating costs and asset management investment needs of the Mountset Crematorium over the short, medium and long-term.

Human Rights

There are no Human Rights implications associated with this report.

Localities and Rurality

There are no Localities and Rurality implications associated with this report.

Young People

There are no Young People implications associated with this report.

Consultation

Officers of Gateshead Council were consulted on the contents of this report.

Health

There are no Health implications associated with this report



THE PHOENIX PARTNERSHIP

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Mountsett Crematorium
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7th January 2010

For the Attention of Mr Ian Staplin - Superintendent & Registrar

Dear Mr Staplin

Cremators – Anticipated Life Span – Mountsett Crematorium

We would confirm that the ENVIRAC 850/2sec cremators installed at Mountsett Crematorium are in a good, serviceable and working condition. They are currently being maintained on a tri-annual basis by the original manufacturers. The predicted life span at this time is greater than 15 years. There are no components that are likely to be unavailable within this period. Indeed should there be an instance where a component is unavailable then the design of the cremator lends itself to be fitted with many alternative design parts. The supervising Authority at Mountsett has understood clearly the requirements that regular relining at 4/5 yearly intervals is essential. Thus, together with regular servicing, will ensure that the cremators do not fall below their expected performance levels as required by the Environmental Protection Act. The annual EPA testing of the cremators is carried out by an independent testing house (Catalyst Environmental Ltd) on behalf of the original manufacturers, thus ensuring plain English feedback and interpretation of the somewhat complex testing results to your Authority. All the recommended upgrading has been carried out on these cremators and we do not anticipate any major requirement in the near future other than servicing, relining and general emergency callout visits.

Should you require any further detailed clarification then please do not hesitate to contact us. In the meantime and as always, assuring you of our best intentions we remain.

Yours Sincerely,

Kevin Evans

Kevin Evans, 56 Friars Mount, Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 2BB

2008

	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	
BLAYDON	22	12	16	19	20	14	19	13	135
STANLEY	32	33	22	35	26	34	24	45	251
CONSEPT	17	18	23	18	14	23	29	26	168
WHICKHAM	6	4	7	6	2	8	8	6	47
OTHERS	11	19	18	23	14	16	32	20	153
	<u>88</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>110</u>	754

2009

GATESHEAD	32	39	37	40	24	17	38	34	261
DURHAM	60	54	60	56	52	54	57	53	446
OTHERS	15	11	14	8	16	13	14	9	100
	<u>107</u>	<u>104</u>	<u>111</u>	<u>104</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>109</u>	<u>96</u>	807