

24 April 2015



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

- 2 The table below provides details of the number of cremations for the period 1 January 2015 to 31 March 2015 inclusive, with comparative data in the same periods last year:

	2013/14	2014/15	Change
January	123	134	+ 11
February	95	125	+ 30
March	107	129	+ 22
TOTAL	325	388	+63

3. The profile of where families came from can be seen below. In summary 100 came from Gateshead, 214 from Durham and 74 from outside of the area.

Gateshead	100
Durham	214
Outside Area	74
Total	388

4. There were 388 cremations undertaken during 1 January 2015 to 31 March 2015, compared to 325 in the comparable period last year, an increase of 63 year on year. The total number of cremations in 2014/15 was 1,320 compared with 1,191 in 2013/14, an increase of 129 year on year.
5. The 2014/15 budget was set at a prudent assumption of 1,150 cremations during the year. The actual number of cremations undertaken was therefore 170 more than the budgeted position. This is reflected in an over achievement of cremation fee income of £104,525 in year, which is included in the budgetary control report.

The table below shows the comparative figures for the previous four financial years:

Year	Cremations
2010/11	1,188
2011/12	1,258
2012/13	1,404
2013/14	1,191
2014/15	1,320

Members will recall that performance earlier in the year indicated that cremations were below target, however, in quarter three and four the numbers increased. Members will recall that a brochure was produced during the year to promote the various services available at Mountsett Crematorium and increase its market share. The increase in cremation numbers during the last year demonstrates that the crematorium has maintained a good reputation with good service provision.

Memorials

5. The table below outlines the number and value of the memorials sold in the period January to March 2015 compared to the same period the previous year.

	(Jan - March) 2013/14		(Jan - March) 2014/15	
	Number	£	Number	£
Large Plaques	9	3,622	4	1,610

6. In overall terms the number and value of memorials sold of 4 / £1,610, compared to 9 / £3,622 in the same period last year shows a decrease of 5 / £2,012 year on year. However, the number and value of memorials sold in 2014/15 of 32 / £12,206 compared to 25 / £8,870 in 2013/14 represents an overall year on year increase of 7 / £3,336.

Operational Matters

Staffing

7. Members will recall at the meeting held on 3 October 2014, approval was given for a replacement trainee Crematorium Attendant position to be advertised and an appointment was subsequently made. The new member of staff has settled in well, recently completed his training in cremator operations and is awaiting a test date in order to qualify as an operator.

Recycling of Metals Scheme

8. The Crematorium received a cheque relating to the recycling of metals from the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management to the sum of £4,487 for The Child Funeral Charity in March 2015.
9. The Child Funeral Charity (CFC) assists families financially in England and Wales who have to arrange a funeral for a baby or child aged 16 or under. Whilst many funeral directors, the clergy and most celebrants do not charge fees, there are other funeral related expenses that bereaved parents struggle to

find. Financial support is available from The Child Funeral Charity (CFC) to help with such funeral costs, together with practical advice and guidance.

10. Due to the location of the Charity, arrangements have been made for the cheque to be sent to The Child Funeral Charity (CFC) by the Bereavement Service Manager.

Mountsett Crematorium Car Park Extension

11. Road widening work has now been completed along the exit road from the crematorium car park to ease congestion. This has created an extra 12 car parking spaces and now allows for easier passing of stationary vehicles.
12. As agreed in the January meeting, design work will commence shortly to look at the creation of additional car parking facilities within the crematorium and once complete Members will be informed of the full construction costs at a future meeting.

Recommendations and Reasons

13. It is recommended that Members of the Mountsett Joint Committee:
 - Note the current performance of the crematorium and monitoring against budget.
 - Note the trainee crematorium attendant progress.
 - Note the distribution of recycling income to the respective charity.
 - Note the completion of the road widening works.
 - Note the progress with the design works for extending the car parking provision within the Crematorium.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

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

Staffing

There are no implications

Risk

There are no implications

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

There are no implications

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