

Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee

23 September 2015

Quarterly Performance and Operational Report



Report of Graham Harrison Bereavement Services Manager;

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members of the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee with the quarterly 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 June 2015 to 31 August 2015 inclusive, with comparative data in the same period last year:

	2014/15	2015/16	Change
June	185 + 3*	170 + 0*	-15 - 3*
July	172 + 1***	197 + 0*	+25 - 1***
August	141 + 2*	138 + 1*	-3 - 1*
TOTAL	498 + 5* + 1***	505 + 1*	+7 - 4* - 1***

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

3. The full profile of where families came from can be seen in Appendix 2. In summary 158 came from Durham, 21 came from Spennymoor and 326 from outside of the area. There has been 1 NVF cremation undertaken for the period covered by this report compared to 5 in the comparable period last year, which is a decrease of 4 NVF and an increase of 7 Cremations.

Memorials

4. The table below outlines the number and value of the memorials sold in the period June to August 2015 compared to the same period the previous year.

	(June – Aug) 2014/15		(June – Aug) 2015/16	
	Number	£	Number	£
Vase Blocks	13	7,151	6	3,797
Large Plaques	16	5,645	22	9,067
Small Plaques	1	322	2	522
Niche	1	1,050	1	1,150
Renewal	37	4,602	33	5,103
Total	68	18,770	64	19,639

5. In overall terms the number and value of memorials sold of 64 / £19,639 compares to 68 / £18,770 in the same period last year shows a decrease of 4 memorials sold but an increase of £869 in terms of revenue generated.

Operational Matters

Staffing

6. The cleaner employed at the crematorium remains on long term sickness and arrangements are still in place for Durham County Council's facilities cleaning team to assist with the cleaning until such time as the employee returns to work.
7. Members may recall that approval was given for the recruitment of a Technical Assistant post at the January 2015 meeting. Interviews for the post were held on 25 August and I can confirm that the Business Administration Apprentice currently working at the Crematorium was successful and is due to start on 23 September 2015.

Green Flag Award

8. The Green Flag Award recognises good quality parks and green spaces, and is a sign to visitors that sites are well maintained and managed with excellent facilities. Central Durham Crematorium once again made a joint bid with South Road Cemetery and was successful in retaining its Green Flag Award for the fourth year running, which is a great achievement.
9. This award is testimony to the dedication of the staff working at the Crematorium (and South Road Cemetery) and is in addition to the award of Gold Star Status by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management.

Recycling of Metals Scheme

10. The recycling of metals scheme produced a surplus of £350,000 nationally in 2014/15.
11. Members may recall that a list for future nominations was produced and Antenatal Results and Choices have been selected for the next available distribution of funds. This nomination has been submitted and I am currently awaiting a response.

Phase 3 Improvement Works

12. Since the start of the Phase 3 improvements on the 11 April 2015 there has been a considerable team effort to make the improvements to the chapel and associated facilities with as little disruption to our customers as possible. This phase sees the completion of the final stage of a programme of works that has transformed the site and takes the total spend to more than £3million over the last 5 years.
13. The majority of the work has been undertaken over extended weekends due to the very sensitive nature of the alterations and is now completed with only a few minor works (snagging) still to be finished. These improvements have already been well received by both funeral directors/visitors to the crematorium and more adequately meets the needs of larger services with better facilities for the future.
14. The costings for Phase 3 have been compiled by the project team and have a provisional outturn of £416,000, this includes all the works apart from the replacement of the existing canopies. As Members may recall, a provisional sum of £199,263 was included for the overall project for the replacement of these canopies and discussions have taken place with canopy manufacturers regarding the design and construction of these new canopies and several designs have been produced.
15. Discussions however with planners and English Heritage have indicated that these designs would not be in keeping with the aesthetics and heritage of the building or the surrounding area. Therefore Durham County Council's in house design team have produced a design which will be in keeping with the aesthetics of the building. This bespoke design (if agreed) would result in an increased cost of £51,343 to the total budget taking into account the underspend in phases 1 & 2 and the contingency sums available from phase 3.
16. It is proposed, subject to member approval, to complete the works in line with the bespoke design taking into account:
 - The fact that the site has a great deal of heritage and is included in the forthcoming heritage open days, celebrating architecture and history along with other facilities in Durham as part of a national event. All the works to date have taken this into consideration.
 - The fact that the works completed to date have improved the standard of the services to the customer and overall more than £3million has been spent making the additional @£51k a small percentage extra to complete the works in a way that finalises a significant improvement programme.
 - The Major Capital Reserves is currently forecast to be £546,541 at 31 March 2016, more than originally anticipated, boosted by the forecast underspend in 2015/16 and is considered to have sufficient resources to cover the works without taking any additional borrowing.

Service Asset Management Plan

17. The updated Service Asset Management Plan (SAMP) was presented to Members on 24 September 2014 and has now been updated to provide further direction and highlight future budget pressures for the Joint Committee. The SAMP is attached at Appendix 3 and will need to be refined in line with any future decisions taken by Members.
18. The Service Asset Management Plan is split into 4 priorities of maintenance need and includes all of the completed and planned crematorium improvement works.
19. Urgent essential works for 2015/16 have all been included within the 2015/16 budget but are still awaiting completion and it is estimated that the sum of £243,903 is still required to complete these works. Some of the works include:
 - Replacement of curtains/blinds to chapel area
 - Redecoration works
 - Upgrade Wesley Music system
 - Upgrade Wesley Tribute system
 - Reline old concrete gutters
 - Upgrade cremator software
 - Replacement of copper roofing and canopies

Priority 2 works for 2016/17 have been estimated to total £249,600. Some of the works include:

- Re-tarmac roads and car parks
- Carry out Re-lining of cremators x 3
- Carry out Re-lining of hearths x 1
- Replacement of coffin charger
- Replacement of ride on grass cutter
- Replacement of litter bins
- Carry out construction of staff car parking area
- Replacement of curtain track system

Priority 3 works have now been costed to the sum of £13,450 and some of the works include:

- Re-Decoration Works x 1
- Carry out Re-lining of hearths x 3

Longer term works have now been costed to the sum of £127,640 and some of the works include:

- Carry out Re-lining of cremators x 3
- Carry out Re-lining of hearths x 2
- Re-Decoration Works x 1

Recommendations:

20. It is recommended that Members of the Central Durham Joint Committee:-
- (i) Note the current performance of the crematorium.
 - (ii) Note the continued long term sickness absence of the cleaner and the arrangements in place as a result.
 - (iii) Note the continued success with regards to the Green Flag Award.
 - (iv) Note the updated position with regards to the recycling of metals scheme.
 - (v) Note the progress with regard to the Phase 3 improvement works and agree to implement the bespoke design for the canopy replacement works.
 - (vi) Agree to the use the Major Capital Works Reserve to finance the forecast additional costs of the bespoke design for the canopy works.
 - (vii) Note and approve the content of the Service Asset Management Plan attached at Appendix 3, which will be factored into budget planning in 2016/17 and beyond.

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

As identified in the report with regards to the position of the Income and the crematorium improvement works.

Staffing

As identified in the report.

Risk

There are no risk implications associated with this report.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Accommodation

The development project will improve customer and staff accommodation.

Crime and Disorder

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

Human Rights

There are no Human Rights implications associated with this report.

Consultation

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

Procurement

There are no procurement issues associated with this report.

Disability Issues

There are no disability issues associated with this report.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Appendix 2: Breakdown of Figures

	Jun	Jul	Aug	Total
DURHAM	60	57	41	158
Alnwick		1		1
Berwick	1			1
BILLINGHAM	1			1
Birmingham	1			1
BIRTLEY	2		1	3
BISHOP AUCKLAND	9	3	6	18
BISHOP MIDDLEHAM		1		1
BLACKHALL	1	2	2	5
Boldon				0
CHESTER LE STREET	6	17	9	32
CHESHIRE				0
CHILTON	2	1	2	5
CONSETT	3	2		5
CORNSAY				0
OUNDON				0
CROOK	3	7	3	13
DARLINGTON		1	3	4
EASINGTON		2	8	10
ESH WINNING	2	2		4
East Rainton				0
FENCEHOUSES		2		2
FERRYHILL	3	5	3	11
FISHBURN	2	1		3
FROSTERLEY			1	1
GATESHEAD	1			1
GLOSSOP, DERBY				0
GREAT LUMLEY	2	3	1	6
HAMSTERLEY				0
HARTLEPOOL	2	3	4	9
HASWELL	3	3		6
HETTON LE HOLE	4	5	1	10
HEXHAM				0
HORDEN	3	5	2	10
HOUGHTON	5	5	3	13
HOWDEN				0
KEIGHLEY				0
KIMBLESWORTH				0
LANCHESTER	1	1		2
LANGLEY PARK		1	2	3

	Jun	Jul	Aug	Total
Lancs.				0
LONDON/KENT				0
LUDWORTH				0
Malta		1		1
MORPETH				0
MORROCCO				0
MURTON	2	1	5	8
NETTLESWORTH				0
NEW BRANCEPETH				0
NEWCASTLE		4	2	6
NEWTON AYCLIFFE		1	3	4
NORFOLK				0
Northumberland		1		1
Oxford		1		1
OUSTON				0
PELTON	1	3		4
PETERLEE	15	7	6	28
REDCAR				0
SACRISTON	2	3	3	8
SCARBOROUGH				0
SEAHAM	5	10	3	18
SEDFIELD	2	3	2	7
SHILDON				0
SHINEY ROW				0
SHOTTON	1	5	2	8
SOUTH HETTON	2		1	3
SOUTHERN ENGLAND			2	2
SPENNYMOOR	5	10	6	21
STAINDROP				0
STANHOPE			1	1
STANLEY	1	2		3
STATION TOWN				0
STOCKTON				0
SUNDERLAND	2			2
SUNNYBROW				0
SCOTLAND			1	1
SWINDON				0
THORNLEY	3	2		5
TOW LAW				0
TRIMDON	6		3	9
WASHINGTON	3	3	1	7
WEST AUCKLAND		1	1	2

	Jun	Jul	Aug	Total
WEST CORNFORTH		3		3
WHEATLEY HILL		4	1	5
WILLINGTON	3		3	6
WINGATE		1		1
WOLSINGHAM		1		1
Yorkshire				0
TOTAL	170	197	138	505