

28 April 2017

**Quarterly Performance and Operational
Report - Position to 31
March 2017**



Report of Graham Harrison, Bereavement Services Manager

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members of the Mountsett 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 January 2017 to 31 March 2017 inclusive, with comparative data in the same period last year:

	2015/16	2016/17	Change
January	115	139	+ 24
February	116	122	+ 6
March	118	134	+ 16
TOTAL	349	395	+ 46

3. There were 395 cremations undertaken during the period 1 January 2017 to 31 March 2017, compared to 349 in the comparable period last year, an increase of 46 year on year. Funeral Directors are experiencing similar trends with regards to the increase in the death rate despite the mild winter period. The profile of where families came from can be seen below:

Gateshead	101
Durham	218
Outside Area	76
Total	395

4. The total number of cremations in 2016/17 was 1,439 compared to 1,296 in 2015/16, a year on year increase of 143.
5. The 2016/17 budget was set at a prudent assumption of 1,300 cremations during the year. The actual number of cremations undertaken was therefore 139 more than the budgeted position. This is reflected in an over achievement of cremation fee income of £90,295 in year, which is included in the budgetary control report.
6. The table below shows the comparative figures for the previous seven financial years:

Year	Cremations
2010/11	1,188
2011/12	1,258
2012/13	1,404
2013/14	1,191
2014/15	1,320
2015/16	1,296
2016/17	1,439
7 Year Average	1,299

7. The 2017/18 budget assumes that 1,300 cremations will be undertaken in the coming year.

Memorials

8. The table below outlines the number and value of the memorials sold in the period January to March 2017 compared to the same period last year.

	Jan – March 2015/16		Jan – March 2016/17	
	Number	£	Number	£
Large Plaques	4	1,563	5	2,010
Small Plaques	0	0	8	2,088
Total	4	1,563	13	4,098

9. In overall terms the number and value of memorials sold of 13 / £4,098 compares to 4 / £1,563 in the same period last year, an increase of 9 / £2,535 year on year.
10. The table below identifies the total number and value of memorials sold during 2016/17 year compared 2015/16:

	2015/16 Total		2016/17 Total	
	Number	£	Number	£
Large Plaques	22	8,575	13	4,972
Small Plaques	0	0	24	6,397
Total	22	8,575	37	11,369

Operational Matters

Staffing

11. The trainee crematorium operative has been in post since December 2014 and has seamlessly stepped into the role whilst also successfully passing the cremating exam. He has indicated that he is willing to enrol on the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management Diploma Course.
12. The course provides an opportunity to build skills within the team and provide greater resilience during busy periods. The cost of the diploma course is £90 per year to enrol as an Associate Member of the Institute and £2,380 in order to

achieve an I.C.C.M. certificate within two years. The 2017/18 budget includes £1,000 for staff training and any costs above this could be offset by any underspends that arise within other budgets.

13. Members are also asked to note that on the 5 May 2017 the Bereavement Services Manager will have worked in the bereavement services industry for 30 years. Members may wish to formally recognise this long service achievement at the next meeting of the committee e.g. presentation of a certificate of achievement.

Cremation & Burial Conference & Exhibition 2017

14. As in previous years, the necessary arrangements have been made for representation at the Joint Conference of the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities and the Cremation Society of Great Britain, which is to be held at the Stratford Manor Hotel, Stratford-upon-Avon from Monday 3 to Wednesday 5 July 2017. The Bereavement Services Manager will be attending and will also be representing the Central Durham Crematorium Joint Committee

Recycling of Metals Scheme

15. The Crematorium has received a further cheque relating to the recycling of metals scheme from the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management to the sum of £5,000 for Coping with Cancer North East and arrangements are to be made for the presentation to the charity.

Replacement of Cremators and Installation of Mercury Abatement Plant

16. At the January 2017 meeting Members were given a progress update regarding the procurement of the replacement cremators and associated extension works to the crematorium.
17. Site mobilisation was anticipated at the beginning of February 2017, but unfortunately this had to be cancelled following discussions with the Coal Authority, which concluded that ground stabilisation (void grouting) was required.
18. A tender was drawn up for this specialist work and the contract has recently been awarded.
17. The revised project plan / key milestones are set out below.
 - 1 April 2017 - Site mobilisation for extension works
 - April to June 2017 – Crematorium closed for 6 – 8 Mondays to allow for earthworks, concreting and steel erection on weekends
 - July to September 2017 – Construction works for extension
 - October to November 2017 – Installation of new cremators and decommission of old cremators
 - November to December 2017 – Internal building adaptations following removal of old cremators.

Recommendations and Reasons

18. It is recommended that Members of the Mountsett Joint Committee:

- Note the current performance of the crematorium.
- Agree to enrol a member of staff on the I.C.C.M. Diploma course.
- Discuss the recognition of the 30 year long service.
- Note the attendance at the Burial and Cremation conference.
- Note the distribution of recycling income to the respective charity.
- Note the progress with regards to the cremator replacement.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

As identified in the report.

Staffing

As identified in the report.

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