

30 January 2018

**Mountsett Crematorium Performance
and Operational Report**



Report of Graham Harrison, Bereavement Services Manager & Registrar

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 September 2017 to 31 December 2017 inclusive, with comparative data in the same periods last year:

	2016/17	2017/18	Change
September	118	102	- 16
October	118	119	+ 1
November	99	105	+6
December	110	96	- 14
TOTAL	445	422	-23

3. In summary there were 422 cremations undertaken during the period 1 September 2017 to 31 December 2017, compared to 445 in the comparable period last year, a decrease of 23 year on year. The profile of where families came from can be seen below:

Gateshead	125
Durham	229
Outside Area	68
Total	422

4. The total number of cremations undertaken in the 9 months to 31 December 2017 is 976, compared to 1,044 in the same period last year, a year on year reduction of 68 (6.5%).

Memorials

5. The table below outlines the number and value of the memorials sold in the period September to December 2017 compared to the same period the previous year:

	(Sept – Dec) 2016/17		(Sept – Dec) 2017/18	
	Number	£	Number	£
Large Plaques	2	840	9	3,780
Small Plaques	8	2,041	6	1,656
Total	10	2,881	15	5,436

6. In overall terms the number and value of memorials sold of 15 / £5,436, compares with 10 / £2,881 in the same period last year, an increase of 5 / £2,555 year on year.

WI FI Connectivity

7. There is no Wi-Fi connectivity currently available within the Crematorium building and we have received several requests from members of the public, funeral directors and clergy to have this installed, which would bring the building in line with other Council buildings.
8. The estimated cost of installing Wi-Fi connectivity is approximately £2,750, though the exact cost may change slightly depending on pricing from our suppliers and the contractors installation charges. Members of the Committee are asked if they wish for this service to be installed, which could be accommodated from within existing budget provisions.

Cleaning SLA

9. The cleaning at the crematorium is provided by Durham County Council's facilities management team, who provide the service by way of a Service Level Agreement.
10. The two year SLA, which currently costs £6,599 per year commenced on 1 April 2016 and is therefore due to expire on 31 March 2018.
11. A high quality service has been provided over the last two years and Members are asked to consider and approve a revised SLA for the period April 2018 to March 2020, costing £7,280 per year (a 10.3% increase on the recharges levied in 2017/18), which includes all labour and materials required to carry out the cleaning activities (SLA attached at Appendix 2). The applicable fee takes into consideration inflationary pressures such as the staff pay award. The standard hourly rate has increased from £12.69 to £14 resulting in an increase of £13.10 per week.

Green Flag Award

12. Members may recall from the September 2017 meeting that Mountset Crematorium was successful in retaining its Green Flag Award for the sixth year running in 2017.
13. An application will be submitted for the 2018 Award and progress will be reported back to future meetings. A management plan to maintain the required standards will be updated and any required works will be covered by existing budgets.

Dedicated Website Development

14. Further to the attendance of the Chair of the Joint Committee at the recent ICCM Conference 2017, enquiries have been made regarding Mountsett Crematorium hosting a dedicated website, which could provide up to date information about the crematorium and potentially hold the book of remembrance facility online etc.
15. A business case has subsequently been submitted to Durham County Council's Digital and Customer Services team. A dedicated website would incur a one off cost of £4,944 for design and site build and £578 per year in respect of annual hosting and maintenance costs. These costs have been factored into the 2018/19 budget.

Recycling of Metals Scheme

16. The Crematorium received a cheque from the recycling of metals from the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management to the sum of £5,000 for Stillbirth and neonatal death charity on 1 September 2017.
17. Arrangements were made for the cheque to be presented to SANDS (Stillbirth and Neonatal Death charity) by the Chair of the Committee on 20 November 2017. A photograph of the presentation and a Thank You letter received from the charity are attached at Appendix 3.

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

15. Members will recall that updates have been given at previous meetings regarding the installation of the two new cremators with Mercury Abatement equipment.
16. A separate progress report and updated costings is provided for Members in a later report.

Recommendations and Reasons

17. It is recommended that Members of the Mountsett Joint Committee:
 - Note the current performance of the crematorium.
 - Agree to the installation of WI-FI Connectivity at the crematorium.
 - Consider and approve the SLA with regards to the cleaning of the crematorium.
 - Note the application for the Green Flag Award 2018.
 - Agree to the development of a dedicated website.
 - Note the distribution of recycling income to the respective charity.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

As identified in the report. The report provides an update on performance in terms of cremations undertaken and sale of memorials. The report also includes proposals for a new SLA for cleaning and to establish a dedicated website for the Mountsett Crematorium, which has been factored into the 2018/19 budget.

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