

Report to: **Mansfield and District Joint Crematorium Committee**

Date: 12th December 2022

Director Lead: Mansfield District Council, Sarah Troman, Head of Neighbourhood Services, 01623 463036

Lead Officer: Mansfield District Council, Nada Colclough, Crematorium and Cemeteries Manager and Registrar, 01623 463882

Report Summary	
Type of report	Open Report
Report Title	Operations Report
Purpose of Report	This report seeks to provide an update on staff and the current operation of the crematorium
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That members note the report 2. That members review their nomination of each districts nominated charity and agree a review period of three years 3. That members agree to the purchase of a defibrillator

1.0 Background

Previous decisions taken at the last committee meeting:

Approval of works to crematory in the form of four contracts in order to minimise disruption to service provision while awaiting the new build crematorium

2.0 Proposal/Options Considered and Reasons for Recommendation

2.1 Staffing

- 2.1.1 Services continue to be stretched due to sickness absence, with two members of staff being on long term sick and this is being managed in line with policy

2.2 Cremator and Ancillary Equipment

- 2.2.1 The re-brick of cremator 4 is taking place over a number of weeks starting from 1st December. A cool down period is required prior to Monday 5th when the work starts. The work is anticipated to take 14 days but an additional 5 days post reline is required, in order for the cremator to dry out. During this period, the crematorium has to reduce the coffin size limit due to number 4 being the bariatric cremator. Funeral Directors have been notified. While the timing of the reline is not ideal during the winter period,

data is suggesting that the usual surges in death rates will be in the new year, as a result of the milder Autumn. In order to overcome any rises in death rates prior to the new year, Funeral Directors are able to book in additional services on the 2nd, 9th and 16th December and the cremation will be carried out on the Saturday of that week, This allows us to carry out more cremations without outing additional daily pressure on the cremators.

- 2.2.2** It has been identified that the wiring on all of the cremators is in a poor state or repair and with an estimated cost of circa £40-£50k per cremator for a re wire, with the need to replace EPAs at the same time at a cost of around £40k-60k. We have invited Matthews to work with us to explore a preventative maintenance plan for the next 3 years in order to minimise spend but ensure no disruption to operations.

2.3 Charitable Donations

- 2.3.1** In 2013 the committee agreed to support the following charities, with money being donated from the Metal Recycling Scheme and the annual Christmas Service:

Rotation	Local Authority	Nomination
1	Ashfield District Council	John Eastwood Hospice
2	Mansfield District Council	John Eastwood Hospice
3	Newark and Sherwood District Council	Beamond House Hospice

- 2.3.2** The last donation made was in September to Beamond House for £12,000. Proceeds from the Christmas Service in December will be allocated to the same charity. £115 raised from the Christmas Service last year is yet to be allocated but will be sent to John Eastwood Hospice on behalf of Mansfield District Council, in line with the rotation.
- 2.3.3** It would be advised to review each nominated charity every three years, following a full rotation for each district.

2.4 First Aid Update

- 2.4.1** On Monday 21st November a gentleman attending a funeral service at the crematorium unfortunately suffered a cardiac arrest and subsequently passed away. Our thoughts are of course with the family and we send them our deepest condolences. While we were fortunate enough to have had people on site who were able to support with providing emergency first aid and the ambulance service arrived within minutes, our own first aiders were not on site due to leave and sickness.
- 2.4.2** Staff involved in supporting the gentleman and his wife have been offered any support that they may need, given how difficult the situation was.
- 2.4.3** While we have sufficient first aiders it has identified that the service would benefit from more and we are there for in the process of arranging for two more members of staff to become first aid trained.
- 2.4.4** The incident has also raised the need for us to have a defibrillator on site. The nearest accessible defibrillator is at West Nottinghamshire College and while having one on site may or may not have made a difference with the incident on the 21st November, we feel that it is important to have access to a defibrillator on site.
- 2.4.5** Anticipated costs of a defibrillator including spare pads is around £2.5k and can be purchased from existing budgets.

2.5 Project Update

- 2.5.1** Previously agreed contract work:
- 2.5.1.1** Contact 1 – identified water leak being investigated and repaired by Severn Trent.
- 2.5.1.2** Contract 2 – Fire doors, ducting removal, making good from old abatement system, partition wall to be erected, Thoresby chapel works and general works.

Works originally anticipated to be completed in November however there is a 12 week lead time on the fire door and this therefore now means that the doors and all works will be carried out in February

2.5.1.3 Contract 3 – Mezzanine Flooring – Work now completed

2.5.1.4 Contract 4 – Flue works – will be investigated at the same time as the re-brick on cremator 4

2.6 Energy Efficiency

2.6.1 It is anticipated that in line with national fuel price increases, the increased cost for electricity and gas for the next financial year will be £311k. This is an increase of around £214.5k. In order to try to alleviate some of the increase in spend the team at the crematorium are carrying out a number of cost saving exercises

2.6.1.1 The times at which the cremators are being turned on are in line with cremation times

2.6.1.2 Where possible, cremations are being held over, in line with the hold over policy, in order to ensure that fuel is being consumed in the most effective way possible. For example, on a day where there may be only 2 cremations, we will consider holding over to the following day, in order to not switch on a cremator. As the programme of savings is in its infancy, we do not have sufficient data to be able to detail how effective this is currently. Data will be presented at the next committee meeting.

2.6.1.3 Sensors are being fitted to lights where this is appropriate, so that lights turn off automatically when not in use.

2.7 Funeral Poverty Initiative

2.7.1 Following approval of the funeral poverty initiative at the last committee meeting, the procurement pack is currently being reviewed by our legal services before the procurement process is undertaken.

2.7.2 A press release regarding the initiative has received some positive feedback on social media and Funeral Directors will be consulted with, once Ashfield have confirmed the extent of their involvement for cemeteries.

2.8 Cremation Data

2.8.1 Given the time of year, cremation numbers would normally have been on the increase at this point in the year, while bookings are now being made into December there is funeral availability within 7 days.

Year	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Q1	565	745	533	576
Q2	505	511	558	595
Q3	579	640	607	
Q4	660	838	601	
Total	2309	2734	2299	

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations officers have considered the following implications; Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding and Sustainability, and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

NIL