



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

Date: 27th February 2023

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 report2. That members agree to the purchase of 'Lecturn Touch' at a cost of £4,827.00 which has been reflected in the Q3 monitoring report. |

1.0 **Background**

Previous decisions taken at the last committee meeting:

Approval of purchase of Defibrillator

Nominated charities to remain the same but will be reviewed every three years

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

2.1.2 A staffing restructure is being finalised, before entering into a consultation period with staff. The purpose of the restructure is to provide further resilience with a focus on efficiency. An example of this is that currently staff are required to man the chapels during services to control the music, which can result in a lot of down time, with staff not able to use their time productively while services are taken place. We would like to purchase 'Lecturn Touch' which would allow for celebrants and ministers to control their own music, resulting in less unproductive time for crematorium staff. This is common practice among other crematoriums and through initial discussions with

celebrants and ministers, they would like to have ownership of their own services. We would implement this through a phased pilot and roll out, ensuring that celebrants and minister are comfortable with the technology, before we leave them to be solely responsible. The cost of the new software to be installed in both chapels is £4,827.00

- 2.1.3 The administration team have expressed an interest in completing the cremator technician qualification, which will further allow flexible working arrangements to accommodate the changing needs of the service and cover absences. Four staff members will be enrolled in the coming months.

2.2 Cremator and Ancillary Equipment

- 2.2.1 The re-brick of cremator 4 has now been completed.
- 2.2.2 Cremator 2 re-brick is needed in line with original maintenance plans. The existing annual maintenance budget will be utilised for this work
- 2.2.3 Following a meeting with Matthews, we had opted to have a full system suction survey completed and this was being carried out over the 8th and 9th February. This was to determine the suction issues that have resulted in the recent breakdowns along with historical concerns. Unfortunately during the survey an additional concern was raised with cremator number 2 and subsequently had to be shutdown and flue works carried out before this could be operational again. The same works were then needed on number 4 which are being carried out on the 18th and 19th February. The suction survey will be completed once the flue works have taken place on number 4. Due to the results from the suction survey determining the long term, maintenance plan, these costs are not yet available but will be presented to the committee in due course.
- 2.2.4 £198,000 is currently held in general reserves for the purposes of temporary cremators. Once the maintenance plan has been fully costed the committee may wish to consider repurposing this to utilise for cremator repairs.
- 2.2.5 A crack in the chimney stack is currently being investigated and costs for repair will be presented to the committee as soon as they are available

2.3 Grounds Projects

- 2.3.1 The columbaria memorial area is currently being developed to enhance the area aesthetically, but also to overcome accessibility issues . There are a number of trees being removed in order to allow for accessibility around the whole memorial area. Currently there are trees blocking pathways and the path is currently gravel, therefore making it difficult for visitors who are wheelchair users or who have limited mobility to access to the memorial ash vaults. More appropriate trees for the area will be planted once the path has been re-laid. Families who have vaults in the area have already been written to, to notify them of the work that is being carried out. Feedback from families has been positive.
- 2.3.2 The pond area is also currently being developed. Initially a water feature was going to be made of the pond, however in light of the crematorium development project we will fill in the existing pond, grass the area and place some additional benches for families to lease, should they wish.

2.4 First Aid Update

- 2.4.1 The defibrillator has now been purchased at a cost of £1135. The family are being consulted with to identify suitable wording for a plaque to be displayed alongside the defibrillator, in the main crematorium reception

2.5 Project Update

- 2.5.1 Previously agreed contract work:

- 2.5.1.1 Contact 1 – identified water leak has now been identified and repaired by Severn Trent. Progress has halted on the installation of a new water pipe as we need to understand the capacity requirements for the new development and carry out this work all at once, in order to reduce costs and disruption.
- 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. We are awaiting a project start date and this is anticipated for the beginning of March
- 2.5.1.3 Contract 3 – Mezzanine Flooring – Work now completed
- 2.5.1.4 Contract 4 – Flue works – This work is on hold until we have had the suction survey completed on 8th and 9th February. The delay is because we anticipate completed all cremator works together, as much as possible, in order to minimise the cremators down time as much as possible.

2.7 Funeral Poverty Initiative

- 2.7.1 The initiative is currently with Nottingham City for procurement.

2.8 Cremation Data

- 2.8.1 Cremation numbers fell during the last quarter. This is attributed to the reduced service numbers because of the re line of cremator four and the breakdowns, resulting in cremations being transferred to other crematoriums locally. Anticipated numbers for the year end are circa 2300.

| Year | 2019/2020 | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 | 2022/2023 |
|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Q1 | 565 | 745 | 533 | 576 |
| Q2 | 505 | 511 | 558 | 595 |
| Q3 | 579 | 640 | 607 | 512 |
| Q4 | 660 | 838 | 601 | |
| Total | 2309 | 2734 | 2299 | 1683 |

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