



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

Date: Monday 16th December 2024 (10.00 am)

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 the current operation of the crematorium
Recommendations	1. That the committee note the report

1.0 Background

The previous report was presented to the committee in January 2024. This report provides the committee with an update on progress since the last meeting.

2.0 Proposal/Options Considered and Reasons for Recommendation

2.1 Staffing

- 2.1.1 The proposed staffing restructure is ongoing with staff continuing to be consulted on the changes. The delay is because of queries raised during the consultation however this is likely to be resolved in the coming weeks.
- 2.1.2 1 x 0.41 FTE administration post has filled with the post holder starting in October.

2.2 Cremator and Ancillary Equipment

- 2.2.1 All three cremators are currently operational, and this allows for a daily capacity of 12 cremations with the use of the Holdover Policy to ensure that cremations are planned to reduce pressure of on the cremators and manage energy efficiency.
- 2.2.2 There are still some concerns over the wiring on all 3 cremators as it is old and brittle, some components on cremators 2 and 3 are no longer manufactured and once parts that are still available are gone we have no other options but to carry out a require and

have new programs on the cremators which is considerable cost. Railings where number 1 was removed needs to be installed for health and safety reasons as the cremator servicing engineers have raised this as a concern, Quotes are being sought from a fabrication company.

2.2.3 Number 3 cremator is was relined in September and was non-operational for a three-week period. While capacity for cremations was limited to 10 per day during this period, the cremation data from the last two years tells us that quarter three has either been the quietest or second quietest period during the year and therefore limits the impact on the annual cremation throughput.

2.2.4 Full servicing of the cremators took place following the reline of number 3, for a further week, in preparation for the busier period in the year.

2.3 Building Maintenance and Repair

2.3.1 The below details current concerns with the crematorium building that will need addressing in the new year, in the absence of a decision being made about the crematorium development.

2.3.1 Water Main/Internal Plumbing - On the 6th of December 2021 it was reported to the committee that the crematorium requires a new water supply from Derby Road to the main building, this is now becoming urgent as the water pressure and quality of water is becoming worse. A water quality test is being carried out in the next few weeks, the crematorium as 2 water filter points and these are being replaced on a fortnightly basis which costs around £120 to replace the 4 filters. In the past 12 months we have replaced 5 water heaters which cost around £700 including installation, this is due to the sediment in the water clogging the insides of the water heater and damaging the elements. Concern is that the water pressure will continue to reduce, and this will affect the public toilets with handwashing and flushing. While the spend was approved this was put on hold due to the outstanding decision on the development of the crematorium.

2.3.2 Roof/leaks – A number of repairs on the flat roofs have been made due to water ingress issues in Thoresby chapel, floral hall and near the old water room. These issues have had to be resolved due to structural integrity above public doorways of falling plaster and also water ingress near electrics and heating controls. While these have been fixed a few other issues have been highlighted around the floral hall roof, Newstead Chapel and Thoresby entrance. Water has been noted to be under the roofing felt.

2.3.3 Internal Electrics - Lightbulbs are having to be constantly being replaced and it is thought that this could be due to old fittings and wiring issues, National grid have been to investigate why we seem to have power cuts and dips in power that effects the lights dimming and the cremator fans powering down. NG have said although the tests have been in acceptable ranges that there is possibly that an underground fault but until an issue arises it's impossible to locate, if we did have a power outage and the fault could be fixed it would take 12 to 24 hours for the NG to install an emergency generator. This is in line with the Crematorium's Business Continuity Plan.

2.4 Environmental Permit Inspection

2.4.1 Emissions testing was carried out on the cremators, at the end of May, with no areas of concern. This was carried out as part of the annual requirements for the crematorium's environmental obligations. Following this, the Environmental Permit Inspection was carried out by Mansfield District Council. This was a successful inspection and identified that staff are fully and suitably trained, monitoring records are satisfactory and up to

date and that general housekeeping and cleanliness was of a really high standard. The report however did highlight and reiterate the requirement for abatement equipment to be fitted by 2027 but also recognised that there were ongoing works in place, to achieve this target.

2.5 FBCA Inspection

- 2.5.1 The Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities (FBCA) carried out the Crematorium’s periodic Operating Inspection on the 25th September. This takes place every three years and observes the operation of the facility to be able to reassure the Cremation Authority that its facility is operating in accordance with 3 key areas of compliance. The last inspection in March 2021 saw the crematorium achieve 100% compliance. The areas of compliance are The Cremation Regulations 2009, in relation to statutory documentation, The Defra/SEPA Process Guidance notes 5/12, relating to cremation and The Code of Cremation Practice, relating to all aspects of the service.
- 2.5.2 The inspection is designed to covers all aspects of the cremation service from initial administration through to memorialisation. It is split into 7 sections:
1. Cremation administration
 2. Ceremony facilities
 3. Cremation facilities
 4. Crematorium grounds and memorialisation
 5. Services and staff
 6. Premises and facilities
 7. Environmental Awareness Report
- 2.5.3 The inspection will took around six hours and following the visit a report setting out the results of the inspection against each of the seven areas determined the the Crematorium had an excellent level of service provision and did not feel it necessary to make any recommendations.

2.5.3.1 The overall score achieved of 95.1% from the inspection was made up of the following:

Scores by Section				
Section	Your Score	Max Score	Your Score %	Industry Average %
1. Cremation Administration	75	75	100	98
2. Ceremony Facilities	85	85	100	97
3. Cremation Facilities	120	135	89	94
4. Premises and Facilities	77	85	91	95
5. Grounds and Memorialisation	40	40	100	95
6. Service and Staff	50	50	100	95
Your Scores	447	470	95.1	95

2.5.4.2 While no recommendations were made, scoring was reduced in relation to the premises and facilities and the cremation facilities; areas of which have already been identified for improvement in the development project.

- 2.5.4 As part of the Federations response to the climate emergency that society is now facing, the National Executive Committee have recently introduced the Environmental Awareness Report which was undertaken at the time of the inspection. The purpose of the report is to highlight a range of environmental measures which crematoria are

currently adopting across the UK and advise the Cremation Authority of how many they have introduced. It is an advisory report and does not constitute part of the compliance inspection. However, while it was felt that the culture of the organisation encourages the adoption of environmentally aware initiatives and cremators are operated in an environmentally aware manner, the report has also identified a number of areas for improvement including the following:

1. No abatement equipment fitted
2. No NOx equipment fitted
3. No heat energy is recovered
4. No electric vehicle charging points are available
5. Rainwater is not harvested
6. There are no areas set aside within the grounds to encourage wildlife

2.6 Health and Safety Audit

- 2.6.1 Internal auditors attended the Crematorium in November to carry out a health and safety audit, the previous inspection carried out in October 2020 identified that the Crematorium was 75% compliant.
- 2.6.2 The final audit report is due to be published in the coming weeks and any recommendations will be actioned in line with appropriate time scales.

2.7 Events Calendar

- 2.7.1 Preparations are under way for the annual Christmas Service which will be held on 14th December. Several local civil celebrants are supporting with the delivery of the service with Blidworth Brass Band already confirmed to support with music on the day. The service is very well attended and receives excellent feedback, with families having the 669 chance to reflect at what is always a difficult time for the bereaved. In the first year following covid, the attendance at the Christmas memorial service was circa 50 attendees. The service in 2022 and 2023 saw figures of more than 230 attendees.
- 2.7.2 The Bereavement Café, run by a group of local celebrants and supported by the crematorium, takes place on the first Monday of every month in the floral hall. While still in its infancy, this has been a successful addition to the Bereavement Services events calendar. While only a small group can be accommodated at one time, the 'café' has seen around 15 attendees at each event and the feedback has been excellent. During the event attendees can be signposted to charities or support services or simply meet with others who have shared experiences. Consideration will be made to support additional events that take place on a Saturday, once weekend working has been reinstated, in line with feedback received from attendees.

2.8 Cremation Data

- 2.8.1 Cremation numbers have remained relatively static in relation to the same period in 2023/24.

While limited capacity continues to impact the service, the challenges with competing crematorium operators is also a contributing factor. It has previously been identified that within Q4 of 23/24 the numbers, the 15% decrease in cremation capacity was attributed to a reduction in excess deaths this is still not able to be quantified nationally as the cremation data is yet to be published nationally.

Year	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/25
Q1	565	745	533	576	561	469
Q2	505	511	558	595	476	469
Q3	579	640	607	512	521	
Q4	660	838	601	691	586	
Total	2309	2734	2299	2374	2144	

Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendation's 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 referred 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.

N/A