

BRAMCOTE BEREAVEMENT SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2021

Broxtowe Borough Council:

Councillors R I Jackson
M Radulovic MBE

Erewash Borough Council:

Councillors C Hart (Chair)
M Powell

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hickton, Major and S J Carr.

12 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

13 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

14 **CHANGE IN COST OF DIRECT CREMATION AND INTRODUCTION OF A LOW COST CREMATION**

The Committee considered the change in cost for a direct cremation and the introduction of a low cost cremation.

The current price for a direct funeral is £500. As part of the emerging marketing strategy aimed at increasing the number of customers using Bramcote Crematorium it was proposed to reduce the fee for a direct funeral to £395 in line with the Crematorium's closest competitor.

RESOLVED that a change in cost for a direct cremation and the introduction of a low cost cremation be approved.

15 **CHANGE IN CREMATION SERVICE TIMES**

The Joint Committee considered a change to the cremation service times to 60 minutes.

Currently service slots are scheduled for 45 minutes. The standard time for the length of services within the local crematoria is 60 minutes. As part of the emerging marketing strategy aimed at increasing the number of customers using Bramcote Crematorium it is proposed to increase the cremation service time to 60 minutes.

RESOLVED that a change to a 60-minute cremation service time is approved.

16 EXTERNAL ADVICE ON CREMATOR REPLACEMENT

Members were updated on the proposal to use specialist external advice to assist with the cremator replacement process at Bramcote Crematorium.

It was noted that the cremators at Bramcote are ageing and in need of replacement. This is evidenced by the increasing expenditure required to keep them safely in productive operation. As they come up for replacement there was also a need to consider whether it is opportune / viable to switch from gas to electric cremators. This would allow the Crematorium to adopt what would become a carbon-neutral position once the nation's electricity supply was fully decarbonised.

RESOLVED to delegate to the Broxtowe Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee, the appointment of specialist advisors.

17 INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS -ESSENTIAL CREMATOR REPAIRS

The Joint Committee noted an update on the essential cremator repairs.

Within the budgets for 2021/22 there was £75,000 for the repairs to cremators. The cremators required essential repairs which were not within the scope of the original budget have had to be undertaken.

The repairs involved a complete reline of one of the cremators, which was essential to ensure business continuity over the short to medium term, and a repair to the extractor fan system due to excessive corrosion.

The costs of the repairs were £50,000 for the reline and £10,000 for the extractor repair. Assuming there was no other unplanned works needed the total spend for the year on the 'repairs to cremator' budget is likely to be in the region of £110,000 resulting in an overspend of £35,000 against the original budget projection.

18 SOFTWARE UPGRADE

The Joint Committee were provided with an update on the software systems upgrade.

The software system which is currently used by Bereavement Services was in the process of being replaced. The new system was initially due to 'Go Live' in October 2021 had delayed due to unavoidable employee absence.

19 CREMATION NUMBERS AND INFORMATION ON CREMATIONS

The Joint Committee were updated with the latest information on cremation numbers and information on the different types of cremations.

The first five months of 2021/22 highlighted that there have been 1020 cremations. Whilst this was below the numbers achieved for the same time period in 2020/21 it

was comparable with the numbers achieved in 2019/20. It was there anticipated that the target of 2450 cremations for the year 2021/22 would be achieved.

20 CHANGE IN PRICING STRUCTURE FOR THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY WESLEY MEDIA LTD

Members noted the change in the pricing structure for the services provided by Wesley Media Ltd.

As part of the funeral service experience families can live stream the service or have a recording of the service. These services were facilitated through Wesley Media Ltd.

Notification was received from Wesley Media Ltd that from 1 June 2021 they were changing their pricing structure and range for visual tributes, recording of service and a webcast. It was believed that the new pricing structure is more affordable for families.

21 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT 2021/22

The Joint Committee received an update on the performance levels for Bramcote Crematorium for the year-to-date 2021/22.

22 WORK PROGRAMME

The Joint Committee considered the Work Programme.

RESOLVED the work programme and schedule of meetings, subject to the below additional reports being added to the work programme, be approved.

- **6 Month Review of the Change Cremation Costs**
- **6 Month review of the Change in Cremation Times**
- **Charitable donations**

23 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

24 UPDATE ON SALE OF LAND

The committee noted the verbal update.