

Report of the Executive Director

CREMATION NUMBERS AND MARKETING STRATEGY1. Purpose of Report

To provide the Joint Committee with an update on cremation numbers and the marketing strategy.

2. Recommendation

The Joint Committee is asked to NOTE this report.

3. Detail

In accordance with the Joint Committee's request shown below is a table detailing the number of adult cremations on a year by year basis. The number of adult cremations between April 2022 and January 2023 has increased by nineteen compared to the same period in 2021/22.

It should be noted that the death rate in our core & battleground areas between April 2022 and January 2023 has decreased by 9.7% compared to the same period in 2021/22. Despite the decrease in the death rate the overall market share in the core and battleground areas has increased by 11%. A more accurate report on the death rate and market share will be able to be ascertained at year end.

The overall growth in the cremation numbers and increase in market share can be attributable in part to the excellent work undertaken by employees at the crematorium and the activities which have been implemented as part of the marketing strategy.

Month	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
April	249	310	257	179	221	190	302	226	180
May	233	229	229	225	241	230	283	184	212
June	206	299	241	228	194	212	188	239	227
July	236	232	209	190	174	196	178	179	180
August	234	210	196	175	196	194	179	177	215
September	233	219	231	187	150	175	182	192	176
October	261	235	212	197	189	207	202	193	193
November	268	231	252	201	212	210	222	224	217
December	298	289	250	196	195	202	262	195	193
January	309	250	310	276	273	272	224	217	252
February	321	301	307	259	238	204	303	224	0
March	323	294	258	257	211	240	272	228	0
Total	3171	3099	2952	2570	2494	2532	2797	2478	2045

Further information relating to the breakdowns of the different service types are shown in the appendix.

Further information relating to the activities undertaken as part of the marketing strategy to increase the number of customers is also shown in the appendix.

4. Financial Implications

The comments from the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

Officers continue to monitor cremation numbers against the financial estimates as part of regular budget monitoring processes. Whilst the cremation numbers target for the year is expected to be achieved, income budgets are still under pressure. Members will recall that cremation fee income budgets had previously been based upon the legacy calculation of increasing the base budget by inflation only, rather than being more representative of the likely income levels based on actual services. This has been rectified for the 2023/24 financial estimates.

5. Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications that arise from this report.

6. Human Resources Implications

No comments

7. Union Comments

No comments

8. Data Protection Compliance Implications

No comments

9. Equality Impact Assessment

No comments

10. Background Papers

Nil

APPENDIX

Types of Services breakdown

The table below shows the different types of cremations which have taken place in 2022/23.

The key for the information in the table is show below:

Full Service: A normal 60-minute service and cremation.

Committal Service: The service was held at a church/chapel first then, a quick service and cremation.

Direct Service: A normal cremation but where there is no service.

Hospital Body: The cremation of a body received direct from the hospital.

Hospital Body Part: The cremation of a body part received direct from the hospital.

Low Cost Service: A normal cremation involving a 60-minute service only at 9:00am in the Serenity Chapel.

As is evident the majority of cremations are 'total cremations'. In 22/23 Directs have increased on the previous year, potentially highlighting a trend move in the market.

	Full Service	Committal Service	Direct Service	Hospital Body	Hospital Body Part	Low Cost Service	Cremations Total
2021/22	2227	133	58	15	36	9	2478
2022/23	1862	70	67	22	11	13	2045

Note: 2022/23 data is for April 2022 to January 2023.

Marketing

The following activities have been undertaken as part of raising the profile of the crematorium:

- Increased exposure and messages through social media channels
- Website migrated to new host and updates actioned to enhance the customers experience
- Partnered event with A W Lymn Funeral Directors and Broxtowe Women's Project to support the bereavement service wider community and other projects
- Treetops Hospice Community event attended by local Funeral Directors and crematorium team members discussing guidance and advice on the funeral industry
- Radio Nottingham interview covering the benefits of the metal recycling scheme and how money raised helps local charities

- Bereavement Services networking and charity event. This was a 5 A-side charity football tournament raising money and awareness for Portland College & Day Nursey. A charity which has huge relevance to the team on site at Bramcote Crematorium. All local Funeral Directors were approached and invited to submit a team. The Mayor attended the event to present the trophy to the winning team. The joint venture and event was promoted through the Councils social media channels to raise awareness of the charity and promote the good work being undertaken.