

Yeovil Crematorium & Cemetery Committee



**Town House
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The Meeting... Yeovil Crematorium and Cemetery Committee

The Time... 6.00pm

The Date... Wednesday 20th January 2016

The Place... Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil

The Committee will be discussing all the items listed overleaf

If you need this information in large print, Braille, audio or another language, please ring 01935 382424

Amanda Card
Clerk to the Committee

Please contact Amanda Card at the Town House for more information about this meeting

Yeovil Crematorium and Cemetery Committee

To: All Members of Yeovil Crematorium and Cemetery Committee

Bob Brookes

Roger Brown

Philip Chandler (Vice-Chairman)

Nigel Gage

Alf Hill

Graham Oakes

Manny Roper (Chairman)

Alan Smith

Clive Wakely (Funeral Directors' Representative - co-opted non-voting)

Peter Herridge (Humanist Celebrants' Representative - co-opted non-voting)

Vacancy (Clergy Representative - co-opted non-voting – awaiting nomination)

A G E N D A

Public Comment

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3. **MINUTES**

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21st October 2015 (previously circulated).

4. **IMPROVED MANAGEMENT AT YEOVIL CREMATORIUM**

To consider a report by Alasdair Bell attached at page 2

5. **CREMATORIUM MANAGEMENT**

To consider a report by Alasdair Bell attached at pages 3 to 6

6. **CEMETERY AND CREMATORIUM – WORKS PLAN**

To consider a report by Alasdair Bell attached at pages 7 to 15

7. **UPDATE ON CEMETERY EXTENSION PROJECT**

To consider a verbal report by Clive Miller

8. **UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE IN YEOVIL CEMETERY**

To consider a report by Chris Cooper attached at pages 16 – 19
(Annual Works Program circulated separately)

9. **EXTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS OF ACCOUNTS**

To consider a report by the Town Clerk attached at page 20

10. **STATISTICS OCTOBER 2015 – DECEMBER 2015**

To consider a report by Alasdair Bell attached at pages 21 to 22

11. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Proposed:
20 April 2016
20 July 2016
19 October 2016
18 January 2017

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

4 IMPROVED MANAGEMENT AT YEOVIL CREMATORIUM

Last year the management and operation of Yeovil Crematorium was taken over directly by SSDC from Yeovil Town Council. Alasdair Bell was brought in as senior manager to review the operation of the crematorium service (in a part time role on top of his other duties as Environmental Health Manager). He has since set about introducing a number of changes and improvements to the operation of the facility (see JCC committee reports Nov, December 2015).

During this time period Alasdair has reviewed the overall management of the site and has been considering future developments and operational needs. In doing this it has now become clear that in order to deal with a backlog of works and improve forward planning that more management time will be required. The current management structure has not and does not allow sufficient staff time to plan and see through changes that will be necessary to deal with the backlog of works and provide the improved level of service required in future years.

On the 13th October there was a consultation meeting with a group of our local funeral directors/celebrants to discuss how they thought the crematorium was being run and how we could improve the service provided. A questionnaire was also sent out to all the other funeral directors/celebrants who used the crematorium but could not attend the meeting to canvass their views. The majority of those consulted felt that various aspects of the service could be improved and that the level of service provided at Yeovil Crematorium was falling behind other crematoriums in the area. They expressed reservations about the level of customer service, the lack of modern technology and such things as lack of Saturday opening. The Portfolio Holder Peter Gubbins assured the funeral directors at the meeting that things would be done to deal with their concerns and that he was keen to see improvements made.

During the meeting such things as the need for a new/improved/extended Garden of Remembrance was discussed as were proposals for extending the chapel and other alterations. The question of succession planning of staff was also highlighted which is of real concern as several members of staff are reaching an age when they could retire and we need to ensure the continuity of good quality service. All such issues will require a good deal of work and careful planning to resolve.

To address the situation it is proposed that we increase management capacity to deal with this extra work by employing a new full time or part time manager on an initial two year contract. His/her remit would be, in consultation with Alasdair, to develop an action plan to see through all grounds/building improvements, to improve overall performance and to restructure the operation of the crematorium and put in place a robust management structure to run the place effectively for when his/her contract expires. He/she would need to provide improved business planning and marketing to take the service forward. It is important that we have a significant management presence at the site to bring about the changes required. This will cost approx. £52K per year, this money can be found from within the crematorium reserve budgets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the committee note the intention to appoint a new manager for Yeovil Crematorium on a two year temporary post at Grade 8 for a cost of £52k a year (including oncosts). Funding for the post to be taken from crematorium reserve budgets of SSDC that currently stands at 633K (89%=£46,28k) and Yeovil Without Parish Council that stand at £190K(11%=£5.72K).

*Alasdair Bell Environmental Health and Crematorium Manager
Tel 01935 462056, alasdair.bell@southsomerset.gov.uk*

5 CREMATORIUM MANAGEMENT

Since the last meeting the on-going review of all operational and managerial arrangements at the crematorium has continued. Members will recall that an extensive programme of works was outlined and much progress has been made although there is still a considerable amount to do. Recently a meeting was held with local funeral directors/celebrants to discuss their views on the service provided. This highlighted a number of areas that need addressing. This report will cover many of the points they raised.

The Crematorium buildings

1. Meetings have taken place with Wesley Systems with a view to providing an audio visual system for the crematorium that will allow the downloading of music. This will allow participants at funerals to choose any music they wish and will fall in line with all the other crematoriums in the area. It will also allow services to be filmed and shown in real time on smart phones etc. This will be of interest to the younger more technically aware generation. There will also be a screen in the chapel where slides and videos of the deceased person can be shown to those attending. In addition it is proposed to install a video screen in the reception area so that in the event of a large overflow service people can stand in the reception area and view the service in progress. The cost of this will be approximately £14K and be taken from crematorium reserve fund. There will be on going revue costs of approximately £9.5K a year to pay for the maintenance of this service which has been provided for as part of the revenue budget. See recommendations below.
2. Floors-the floor covering to the main toilets has been renewed and we are finalising arrangements to renew most of the carpeting in the main reception room and the room used by the pall bearers. The flooring in the staff canteen has also been renewed and the floors in the public toilets adjacent the pall bearer's room have also be renewed.
3. Redecoration-prices were obtained to redecorate all areas accessed by the public, including the toilets, the walls in the reception area and the room used by the pall bearers. Particular attention is being paid to the colours used for walls, floors etc to ensure a good overall appearance. The walls to the pall bearer's room has now been redecorated, along with the toilets and it is hoped to do the reception area shortly.
4. New pictures are being sourced from the Octagon to hang in the main public reception area. It is intended that these will be updated regularly to provide variety. These are to be provided once the room is redecorated.

5. The room used by the pall bearers is to be provided with a new table and a water dispenser/coffee machine.
6. New chairs have been ordered for the reception area. They will be coloured red to match the ones in the Chapel. It is hoped that these will be delivered shortly
7. A review of all documentation/literature available to the public is being undertaken with the view of updating and reprinting all literature. New photographs have been taken of the facilities for inclusion in the new literature.

Operational Equipment

8. Following the recent PPC inspection of the emission equipment on the cremators it became apparent that the monitoring apparatus on the stacks were not performing as required. On-going discussions are still taking place with the engineering manager and the equipment supplier in order to try and resolve the situation.

Grounds maintenance

9. Discussion is taking place with Chris Cooper, the manager of the Lufton Depot about providing an on-going grounds maintenance service to the crematorium. Extra funding has been built into the budget from next year to meet the cost. Quotes have been received and we are in discussion with Chris about costs etc.
10. Chris and his team have been instructed to undertake works in the pond area immediately behind the Cloisters. It is planned to fell some Leylandii trees behind the small pond and completely replant the area. Steve Fox the landscape officer has drawn up a scheme of works to provide a range of plants in the form of a Japanese garden (the Oriental scheme with cost of approximately £14.8K-see recommendations). New fencing will be erected behind the pond. Most of the work will be done at weekends with temporary fencing put up to shield the work from visitors to the crematorium. It is also planned to re-turf some banks near the car park. Further significant landscaping works to the front of the building are planned later in the year (the White and Grey scheme with a cost of approximately £13.7K –see recommendations) .
11. With the input of Councillor Manny Roper and the council's Horticultural officer it is intended to draw up a 5 year grounds management plan to cover all tree and flower planting and grounds maintenance. This is still yet to be done.
12. Plans are in hand to refurbish the pond in the Cloisters area. A specialist pond maintenance company has been contacted and a price has being obtained to drain

and clean the pond. It is also leaking and will need to be relined. The fountains also need to be cleaned and refurbished. It is intended to restock the pond with fish and provide new water plants and lilies. This work will take a week so it is planned to carry out this work next summer during the period when the crematorium is closed. Funding for this work has been agreed as part of the capital programme.

The Poppy Field

13. As part of the review of the crematorium grounds the future of the Poppy Field has been considered. With the agreement of the SSDC Portfolio Holder for the crematorium it has been decided that the Poppy Field will remain as is and not be used for burial purposes. We are looking to improve the maintenance and planting in the field and for instance to provide new poppies where lacking.

IT/Website

14. Work is in hand to link the crematorium's computer system to the main SSDC operational system. This will improve the operational ability of the system as well as back up and resilience. This should be done by the end of January. A review of the CAS booking system will also be undertaken as from the end of the year it is understood that the existing system will no longer be supported.

15. Website. A new separate website is currently being designed to allow easier access by the public. Work on this is underway.

16. A consultation event has taken place with the funeral directors/chaplains and other service users to establish their needs and wishes in order to improve service delivery. The results from this exercise are being used to influence future development plans.

As can be seen there is still a considerable amount to be done. It will be some months to fully plan and complete everything and regular updates will be presented to the committee at future meetings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the committee note all of the above and agree and note the following;

All expenditure mentioned above has been budgeted for with the exception of the following that will be paid for from the crematorium reserve budgets of both SSDC and Yeovil Without Parish Council (YWO). The cost for the installation of the Wesley audio visual system is approximately £14K and YWO is will pay approximately £1.54K towards the cost. The cost of the works to replant the pond area (the Oriental scheme) behind the Cloisters and to replant the beds in front of the crematorium (the White and Grey scheme) is approximately £28.5K and YWO will pay approximately £3.13K towards this. The reserve budget currently

held by SSDC stands at approximately £663K and the reserve budget held by Yeovil without parish council stands at approximately £190K. The agreement is that SSDC pays 89% of all costs and YWO pays 11% of all costs.

***Alasdair Bell Environmental Health and Crematorium Manager
Tel 01935 462056, alasdair.bell@southsomerset.gov.uk***

6 CEMETERY AND CREMATORIUM– WORKS PLAN

CEMETERY – WORKS PLAN

Details of the various ongoing planned and capital works are set out below. The spreadsheet detailing future works are included in the updated Ten Year rolling programme including 15/16 as attached.

Revenue

All identified works completed

Capital works

All identified works completed. However, there is a sum of money in this years' programme for the redecoration of the Main Chapel but these works are to be appraised and the need for the works revisited.

Potential Burial Ground at the Fiveways Site owned by SCC

Following the soils investigation works the laboratory test results and report have been received and the findings are that the site would be suitable for burial usage.

A report on the burial ground provision and the use of the Poppy Fields at the Crematorium is under a separate report within the agenda

The Committee is RECOMMENDED to note the above matters

(Garry Green, Property & Engineering Services Manager – 01935 462066)

CREMATORIUM - WORKS PLAN

Details of the various ongoing planned and capital works are set out below. The spreadsheet detailing future works are included in the updated Ten Year rolling programme including 15/16 as attached.

Revenue

The exit toilet has been decorated and new flooring laid (see manger's report for more detail)

The redecorating of the waiting room and lobby area along with new flooring is to commence at the end of January 2016. Once the works are completed an order will be placed for new seating and the existing removed.

Capital works

Specialist contractors have been appointed to look at the replacement and enhancement of the fishponds. This work has been deferred until next August when a closedown period is to be agreed

The DDA requirements following an audit are still ongoing and under review.

The allocated funds for the purchase of replacement parts for the cremators have been spent in part

Other identified works for 15/16 to be programmed and scheduled during the financial year.

There have also been underspends on various work items and provisions on previous completed works

Installation of PV Panels

Attached are the progress reports for October and November 2015

The system at the Crematorium is performing at 100.7% of the projected design output for 15/16 up to the end of November 2015. November was the worst month on record for the performance output for all the PV systems installed on Council owned property.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note the above matters

(Garry Green, Property & Engineering Services Manager – 01935 462066)

Crematorium Ten Year Plan

YB003

CAPITAL

Ref	Line No.	Location	Officer Comments	Estimated Spend 2015/16	Actual Spend	Year 4 Remaining Budget 2015/16	Commitments 2015/16	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
								2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Staff Room and WC													
11.5-6	1	Remove and replace kitchenette and flooring and redecorate	Flooring completed. Expenditure coded to revenue as it does not qualify as capital. Transfer residual of £293 to line 2.										
Sound Lock													
12.1	2	Replace acoustic tiling to sound lock	Order raised for quoted cost of £1800.00.	1,883		1,883							
Crematory													
	3	Replacement Parts		10,000	6,874	3,126							
	4	Replacement Hearth to Cremator No. 2						26,000	34,000				
14.4-6	5	Refurbishment of Crematory	Completed. Allocation of £4,453 rolled forward from 2014 15 but is no longer required.										
Structure													
	6	Tower Structure for emissions testing						25,000					
Fire and Intruder Alarms													
	7	Upgrade fire and intruder alarms						3,000					
Boiler Room													
	8	Remove and replacement of boiler						12,000					
Hall of Remembrance													
27.4	9	Remove and replace automated door and controls											4,000
Garden of Remembrance													
29.8-9	10	Fishpond replacement	Propose deferral to 2016/17					8,500					
Building													
	11	DDA requirements - upgrade doors	Still under review. Budget rolled forward from 2014/15	7,140		7,140							
Mechanical works													

Ref	Line No.	Location	Officer Comments	Year 4				Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
				Estimated Spend 2015/16	Actual Spend	Remaining Budget 2015/16	Commitments 2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	12	Cold water supply and associated works	Works completed. Provision made in previous year of £6,343 but is no longer required.										
	13	Upgrade ventilation plant - heat recovery units and	Heat recovery to Hall of Remembrance, completed. Final account to be agreed.	5,080	5,817	-737							
	14	Chapel air conditioning									9,000		
Rear Service Yard													
	15	Replace of garage roofs											
	16	Electric roller doors to garages		2,500		2,500							
Annual totals				26,603	12,691	13,912		74,500	34,000			9,000	4,000
Add VAT (20%)				5,321	2,538	2,782		14,900	6,800			1,800	800
Gross annual totals				31,924	15,229	16,695		89,400	40,800			10,800	4,800
Division of Funding													
South Somerset District Council				28,412	13,554	14,858		79,566	36,312			9,612	4,272
Yeovil Without Parish Council				3,512	1,675	1,836		9,834	4,488			1,188	528
				31,924	15,229	16,695		89,400	40,800			10,800	4,800

Cemetery Ten Year Plan

YB002

Capital	Project	Officer Comments	Year 4				Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			2015/16 Estimated Spend	Actual Spend to	2015/16 Remaining Budget	2015/16 Committed (Orders)	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
External												
1	Repairs to boundary walls (including Fencing)		3,000		3,000	3,650	3,000	3,000	3,000			
2	Resurfacing of footpaths/slabs								51,090			
Chapels												
4	Repairs to external stonework	Rolled forward from 2014/15.	3,150		3,150		3,480					
5	Renew gutters					4,660						
7	Redecorate main chapel	Works to be appraised.	13,400		13,400							
8	Reslate roofs					27,930						
Vehicles												
9	Dumper	Purchased in 2007								11,750		
10	Digger	Purchased in 2004						15,000				
Annual totals			19,550		19,550	36,240	6,480	18,000	54,090	11,750		
Add VAT 20%			117		117	217	39	108	325	71		
Gross Annual Totals			19,667		19,667	36,457	6,519	18,108	54,415	11,821		

Portfolio Key Information



Portfolio Reference: SSDC

Reporting Period covered: 01 April to 31 October 2015

Number of Systems Included: 5

Total Portfolio Size (kWp): 167.9

October Performance

114.4%
of design output



October Portfolio Output

Energy Generated (kWh)	8,261.8
Design Output (kWh)	7,219.5
CO2 saved (kg)	4,465.8
October Income (£)	2,400.13

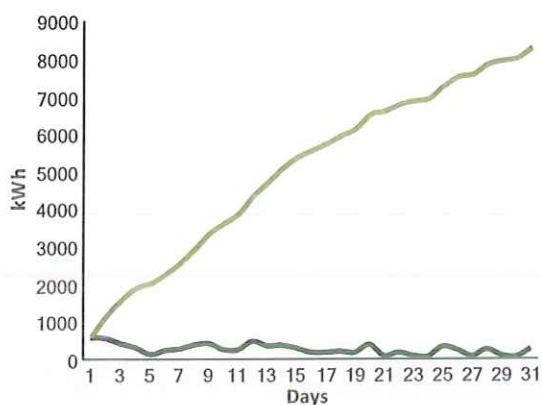
Performance Year to Date

125.1%
of design output

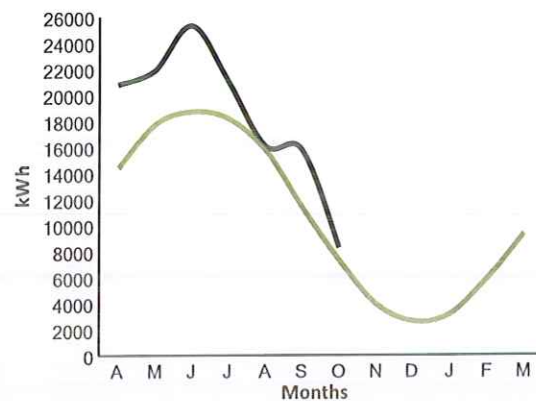


YTD Portfolio Output

Energy Generated (kWh)	129,197.0
Design Output (kWh)	103,270.2
CO2 saved (kg)	69,836.2
YTD Income (£)	37,867.02



— Daily kWh Generated — Cumulative Generation



— Monthly kWh Generated — Design kWh Output

Portfolio Faults Occurred in Month: **None**

Portfolio Faults Occurred in Year: **None**

Portfolio Faults Cleared in Month: **None**

Portfolio Current Active Faults: **None**



PORTFOLIO SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

SYSTEMS INCLUDED IN PORTFOLIO

URN	Post Code	Address	System Size (kWp)	Design Output Month	Design Output YTD	Fault Status
533	BA20 2HT	SSDC Council Offices	35.84	116.4%	129.3%	OK
1099	BA20 1AS	Petters House	24.84	111.8%	133.7%	OK
1100	BA22 8RP	Lufton Depot	49.68	104.7%	120.3%	OK
1839	BA20 2EJ	Yeovil Crematorium	7.99	100.1%	101.7%	OK
4410	BA9 9SP	Wincanton Sports Centre	49.56	127.1%	126.9%	OK

PORTFOLIO FAULTS OCCURRED IN OCTOBER 2015

PORTFOLIO FAULTS OCCURRED YEAR TO DATE

PORTFOLIO CURRENT ACTIVE FAULTS

END OF REPORT

Portfolio Key Information



Portfolio Reference: South Somerset District Council

Reporting Period covered: 01 April to 30 November 2015

Number of Systems Included: 5

Total Portfolio Size (kWp): 167.9

November Performance

75.9%
of design output



November Portfolio Output

Energy Generated (kWh)	2,965.3
Design Output (kWh)	3,906.9
CO2 saved (kg)	1,602.9
November Income (£)	848.96

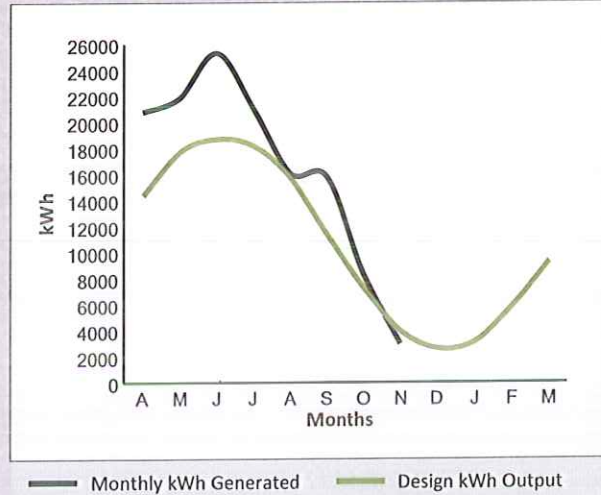
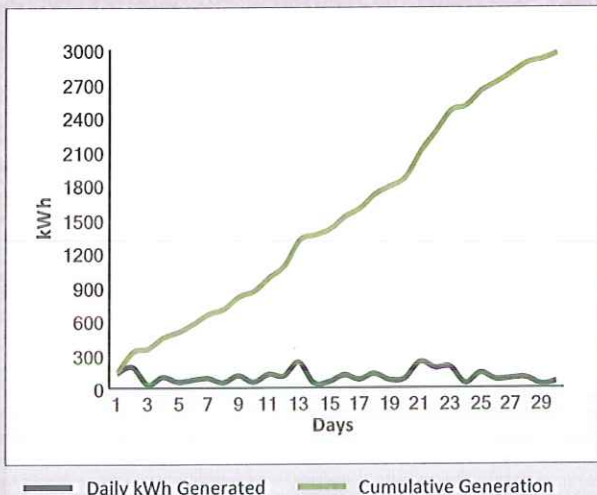
Performance Year to Date

123.3%
of design output



YTD Portfolio Output

Energy Generated (kWh)	132,162.4
Design Output (kWh)	107,177.1
CO2 saved (kg)	71,439.1
YTD Income (£)	38,715.97



Portfolio Faults Occurred in Month: **None**

Portfolio Faults Occurred in Year: **None**

Portfolio Faults Cleared in Month: **None**

Portfolio Current Active Faults: **3**



PORTFOLIO SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

SYSTEMS INCLUDED IN PORTFOLIO

URN	Post Code	Address	System Size (kWp)	Design Output Month	Design Output YTD	Fault Status
533	BA20 2HT	SSDC Council Offices	35.84	75.6%	127.5%	FAULT
1099	BA20 1AS	Petters House	24.84	64.1%	130.6%	FAULT
1100	BA22 8RP	Lufton Depot	49.68	68.6%	118.3%	FAULT
1839	BA20 2EJ	Yeovil Crematorium	7.99	67.5%	100.7%	OK
4410	BA9 9SP	Wincanton Sports Centre	49.56	92.4%	125.7%	OK

PORTFOLIO FAULTS OCCURRED IN NOVEMBER 2015

PORTFOLIO FAULTS OCCURRED YEAR TO DATE

PORTFOLIO CURRENT ACTIVE FAULTS

URN	Fault No.	Post Code	Address	Fault Date	Fault Type	Planned Visit Date
533	42916	BA20 2HT	SSDC Council Offices	09/12/2015	Reading Below Expected	
1099	42918	BA20 1AS	Petters House	09/12/2015	Reading Below Expected	
1100	42917	BA22 8RP	Lufton Depot	09/12/2015	Reading Below Expected	

END OF REPORT

8 UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE IN YEOVIL CEMETERY

Lead Officer: Glenn Ford Cemetery Foreman
Chris Cooper Streetscene Manager

Contact Details: glenn.ford@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 423742
chris.cooper@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462840

Purpose of the Report

To update and inform the Committee on the performance of the Cemetery team in the period October 2015 – January 2016

Recommendation

Members are invited to comment on the report

Report

The major focus of the service so far for this period, are listed below.

- Routine grave digging and grounds maintenance
- Tree risk assessment and resulting works
- Reviewing work standards, schedules and methods of work
- Review of operational methods
- Started integration of operations with Streetscene
- Training and Staff appraisals
- Purchased new shoring equipment

Operational Works

Assessment of hedges & subsequent removal
Sweepers & chippers
hours of work
staff cover between services

Introduction to the cemetery

The cemetery covers an area of 15 acres approximately holding 25,400 internments and has been running since 1861.

The cemetery employs three full time members of staff and seasonal staff to assist with summer maintenance operations. External contractors are used to carry out specialist works such as arboricultural work, building maintenance and hard landscaping works.

The annual budget is projected at £105,580 (expenditure £162,360 & Income £56,780)

Current situation

Currently we have capacity of 103 grave spaces left including all designated areas for opening these include burying where currently there are original pathways and existing hedges. We are assuming there are no hidden problems such as major drainage or other underground services. We expect to excavate approximately 30 new graves a year.

This year so far we have carried out the following burial services;

- New Graves 14
- Reopeners 20
- Ashes internment 28
- Baby Graves 8

Based on an average of 30 new graves a year, we forecast that there is capacity for the next 3 – 4 years before maximum capacity is reached. With this in mind it is of the highest priority that additional suitable burial ground is acquired. Work is underway between the Town and District Councils to address this matter, with land at the Fiveways location being pursued with the County Council who are the current land owners. If this is acquired we project that this would extend the capacity of the cemetery for an additional 14 years approximately (based upon an average of 30 burials a year).

Should suitable land not be found in this timescale, the cemetery would retain active with pre-purchased plots, re-openers and ashes burials being accommodated. We project that this aspect of the service could continue for up to 60 years before the cemetery status would change to become a closed cemetery.

Our traditional levels of income generation have already been affected by the lack of capacity for both new burial graves and ashes sites as pre-purchasing of graves has been stopped. This equates to a drop in income of approximately 6% on previous years. The impact of this is that a pre-purchased grave costs £156 less per grave than a standard plot over 4 feet in length. We have also noted that the fees generally are lower in our cemetery than for the same services in our peer group and we believe that we should review these with a view to redress this situation for the financial year 2017/18 with members support and we would be happy to bring a report on this matter to the next meeting of the committee for discussion.

Following the retirement of Alan Tawse and agreement with the interim Town Clerk we have aligned the Cemetery team with the District Councils Streetscene Team and have started sharing equipment, ideas and making arrangements for staff cover when needed for holiday and sickness.

We have also over the last quarter, developed an annual work schedule which is appendixes to this document and we would appreciate members approval of the plan. This will be the basis of the scheduled operations that the team will carry out throughout the year – obviously this may change in line with funeral related work pressures and seasonal variations; however we believe it provides a clear expectation of when things will be carried out.

Currently we are completing a set of service standards that will accompany this schedule and explain to what standard the work will be delivered. These will form the basis for a performance monitoring system that we will introduce to measure how well the service is being provided. Ideally we would like members to become involved in this performance monitoring and expect to be able to present this work to the committee for the next quarterly meeting.

While looking into this aspect of the grounds maintenance it has become apparent that the mowing operations are the bulk of the work carried out by the team over 70% of the year, the collection of grass clippings is also generating both time and financial problems through disposal of the waste. Discussions between the teams have led us to consider the option of non-collection methods of mowing from the areas away from the main entrance of the cemetery.

This would be possible with a review of the current technique used to make safe the existing memorials. At the moment we stake and band unsafe headstones. Although this works, the stakes

need to be regularly tested and replaced and mowing around these 1000's of stakes takes an enormous amount of time as we have to strim around them all. An option available to us would be to introduce gluing or lying down / relocation of banded headstones as is common practice in other closed churchyards across the district. The implications of this change would be a saving of approximately two days labour each grass cut and £2,500 per year in skip hire. We are confident that the quality of the service provided will still be of a high standard. We would aim to use this saving to introduce selective weed and moss killing of the turfed hard standing and areas around the cemetery.

In addition to this area of maintenance work, following recent training of safe working at height, we have also started to reduce the height of a number of hedges through the cemetery which will both speed up the maintenance of these whilst retaining their purpose of screening.

Through coordination with Streetscene we have started to sweep the roadways around the site with available road sweepers which are saving time enabling us to look at other improvements to the site. We are also reviewing the locking up times and arrangements with the purpose of streamlining this operation to give regular locking up times using existing Streetscene staff who finish work later in the day than the current cemetery team. This prevents the need to return to work after staff have finished in order to simply lock up. Currently during the winter period the cemetery is locked up 4.30pm (mon – weds); 4.15pm (thurs – fri); weekends are covered by Atlas security who lock up at 5pm. Following this change, gates will lock at 5pm every day throughout the winter period (Oct – April) during the summer; the cemetery will continue to be locked up at 7.30pm by the Cemetery Team.

In addition to the routine maintenance, we have focussed on the removal of tree stumps and crown lifting of the tree stock which has also been risk assessed. We were pleased to note that no tree damage occurred during the recent storms following the remedial arboricultural works that were carried out during previous months.

Other areas of risk management that we are now looking at include reviewing and digitalising our operational, site and fire risk & COSHH assessments. We will continue to focus on this aspect of managing the service over the coming year and making changes as required.

Linked to this work, we have also carried out a wide range of staff training, covering topics such as manual handling, first aid, machinery operation and staff management training. This has been linked through staff appraisals and we are already seeing the benefits of this investment.

The cemetery is currently updating its equipment used for shoring up of graves, following the guidance of 'Teleshore' who we purchased the equipment from we are confident that we are working in line with best industry practice.

In the coming financial year we will be sending the team for a four day on site accredited grave digging course which will ensure that we are compliant with current HSE guidance. We will include a member of the Streetscene team on this training to provide service resilience in the future.

What's coming next?

*We have discussed working hours with the team and have agreement with the team to a change of hours from the regular 37 per week across the year to a 39 hour summer week and 35 hour winter week (+2.5 day TOIL accrued during summer to take during the winter period) This will enable us to meet seasonal workloads and reduce down time.

*Removal of hedges in Willow Road & Westfield sections

*Review of risk assessments COSHH assessments and fire risk assessment

* Purchase additional shoring equipment to enable us to manage up to three graves at any one time as we can currently only deal with two at the present time. The cost of this is approximately £1600 however we are exploring opportunities to market this equipment with other local service providers.

*Review of grave digging equipment – cones, earth boxes, side panels, running boards, etc

*Review of practices with other cemeteries in the area

*Introduction of performance monitoring system

Financial Implications

All of the matters highlighted in the report have been achieved within service budgets.

Implications for Corporate Priorities

**Continue to deliver schemes with local communities that enhance the appearance of their local areas.*

Background Papers

Progress report to the Committee on the Performance of the Cemetery Service

9 EXTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR JOINT COMMITTEE 2015/16

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the committee of changes to the external audit requirements for Joint Committees effective for 2015/16 annual accounts.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Joint Burial Committee select Darkin Miller to audit the 2015/16 accounts.

Background

The Audit Commission Act 1998 required joint committees to produce an annual set of accounts to be audited. The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 has resulted in the closure of the Audit Commission.

The notification we have received has stated that Joint committees may voluntarily decide to continue to prepare accounts and arrange for their own audit.

As local taxpayers expect the Joint Burial Committee to be open and transparent about how public money is handled. It is considered best practice that the accounts have been independently scrutinised and I have therefore approached two organisations and invited them to quote the Joint Burial committee for the cost of an annual audit, details as provided below:-

Darkin Miller – Chartered Accountants

Darkin Miller previously worked for the Audit Commission and has extensive knowledge and experience in relation to Town and Parish Councils accounts and currently provides her services to Crewkerne and West Crewkerne Joint Burial Committee.

The cost for Darkin Millers services for the audit of accounts for the Joint Burial Committee for 2015/16 would be £191.66p plus VAT. In the event of additional works being necessary, these would be invoiced at the quoted rate of £33.00 per hour.

Devon Audit Partnership

Devon Audit Partnership have extensive knowledge and experience and their services have been appointed previously by South Somerset District Council to provide their audit services for their South West Audit Partnership.

The cost for Devon Audit Partnership services for the audit of accounts for the Joint Burial Committee for 2015/16 would be £1080.00 plus VAT.

(Paula Jeffery, Management Accountant – 01935 462271)

10. STATISTICS OCTOBER 2015 – DECEMBER 2015

The number of cremations for year October 2015 – December 2015 were 400 compared to 397 for the same period last year.

The number of burials for year October 2015 – December 2015 were 11 compared to 8, and ashes burials were 7 compared to 9, for the same period last year.

CREMATORIUM & CEMETERY REVENUE

See attached.

Paula Taylor Registrar/Admin. Manager 01935 476718

Crematorium Revenue		April 2015 - March 2016																							
Month	No Crem	Cremation	Other reven	Donations	Tab.Right	Tablet	B.o R.	Urns	Vase	Misc.	Rose right	Rose	TOTAL												
April	154	85120.00	379.00	61.04	860.00	2902.00	512.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	60.00	126.00	90020.04	2 x NRFS											
May	132	73360.00	320.00	41.65	1032.00	3004.00	807.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	60.00	126.00	78750.65	1 x Child											
June	129	70000.00	364.00	48.50	1118.00	3208.00	527.00	100.00	22.50	0.00	60.00	126.00	75574.00	3 x NRF 1 x Baby											
July	150	84000.00	913.00	57.03	1376.00	3438.00	434.00	0.00	42.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	90260.53												
Aug	98	54320.00	605.00	18.22	602.00	2552.00	698.00	56.00	15.00	0.00	60.00	126.00	59052.22	1 x NRF											
Sept	141	78960.00	331.00	22.90	946.00	2446.00	448.00	0.00	32.50	0.00	120.00	252.00	83558.40												
Oct	131	72800.00	352.00	25.54	946.00	3070.00	542.00	0.00	12.50	0.00	60.00	126.00	77934.04	1 x NRF											
Nov	129	72240.00	583.00	35.50	2064.00	5070.00	576.00	220.00	15.00	0.00	60.00	126.00	80989.50												
Dec	140	78400.00	209.00	30.85	602.00	1874.00	881.00	88.00	5.00	0.00	60.00	126.00	82275.85												
Jan													0.00												
Feb													0.00												
Mar													0.00												
Total	1204	669200.00	4056.00	341.23	9546.00	27564.00	5425.00	464.00	145.00	0.00	540.00	1134.00	718415.23												
Cemetery Revenue		April 2013 - March 2014																							
No of																									
Month	Burials	Interm.	Chapel	Purch.	Ashes	Memorials	Total																		
April	3	860.00	180.00	1960.00	760.00	594.00	4354.00	1 x baby																	
May	6	1720.00	270.00	813.00	190.00	840.00	3833.00	2 x baby & 1 x NRF																	
June	6	2150.00	180.00	1145.00	627.00	403.00	4505.00	1 x baby																	
July	5	2580.00	270.00	554.00	817.00	649.00	4870.00																		
Aug	4	1290.00	90.00	1299.00	437.00	841.00	3957.00	1 x baby																	
Sept	3	1290.00	180.00	1077.00	817.00	403.00	3767.00																		
Oct	3	1290.00	90.00	954.00	190.00	102.00	2626.00																		
Nov	2	860.00	0.00	954.00	190.00	450.00	2454.00																		
Dec	6	2580.00	360.00	1268.00	817.00	72.00	5097.00	1 x NRF																	
Jan							0.00																		
Feb							0.00																		
Mar							0.00																		
Total	38	14620.00	1620.00	10024.00	4845.00	4354.00	35463.00																		
Number of Cremations								Number of Burials																	
Month	2009/10	2010/11	2010/11	2011/12	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Month	06	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16								
													B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A					
April	142	149	149	110	165	128	154	April		5	7	2	6	2	6	2	6	6	3	2					
May	154	105	105	154	153	145	132	May		5	7	5	6	4	4	3	6	4	6	2					
June	139	128	128	121	128	128	129	June		3	4	4	4	1	4	4	4	2	6	4					
July	138	147	147	110	122	108	150	July		3	5	3	3	3	0	3	2	5	5	5					
Aug.	108	121	121	109	117	124	98	Aug.		4	4	8	4	4	4	5	2	1	4	4					
Sept.	127	120	120	122	102	117	141	Sept.		2	1	8	1	7	1	1	2	4	3	4					
Oct.	136	132	132	121	136	136	131	Oct.		2	4	3	6	4	2	2	2	3	3	1					
Nov.	129	139	139	122	160	126	129	Nov.		4	6	3	5	4	5	5	3	4	2	1					
Dec.	123	145	145	88	133	135	140	Dec.		9	4	5	4	4	2	1	3	2	6	5					
Jan.	180	180	180	161	143	190		Jan.		7	7	6	4	0	6	1	7	1							
Feb.	155	143	143	109	114	167		Feb.		10	4	2	1	2	2	4	5	5							
March	138	162	162	143	136	169		March		5	9	5	7	4	2	2	8	4							
Total	1669	1671	1671	1470	1609	1673	1204	Total		59	62	54	51	39	38	33	50	41	38	28					