

# SALISBURY CITY COUNCIL

## Report

**Subject** : Crematorium Annual Update  
**Committee** : Services Committee  
**Date** : 10 February 2020  
**Author** : Neil Lucas, Crematorium & Cemeteries Manager

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### 1. Report Summary:

1.1. This report gives general details on the Crematorium operation, details of the Users and cold storage arrangements.

### 2. General Update:

2.1. The table below shows the adult cremation figures for the past three financial years.

Financial Year	Cremations
2017/2018	1,530
2018/2019	1,458
2019/2020	1,320 (Estimated)

2.2. For information the table<sup>1</sup> below shows the number of registered deaths over the last five years. The number of cremations that SCC can conduct is linked to the number of deaths. Please note that last year the death rate was down nationally by about 7%.

Year	No of Deaths Registered in England and Wales	Change against previous year	No of Deaths Registered in Wiltshire*	No of Deaths Registered In Salisbury	Change against previous year*
2019	Info Not Yet Available	-	3,678	1,563	2.7% decrease
2018	505,859	5.1% decrease	3,781	1,640	0.6% decrease
2017	533,253	1.6% increase	3,793	1,723	4.9% increase
2016	525,048	0.9% decrease	3,612	1,592	1.6% decrease
2015	529,655	5.6% increase	3,780	1,623	11.7% increase
2014	501,424	1.1% decrease	3,362	1,450	1.2% decrease

- 2.3. The Council must strive to be the best local crematorium in order to conduct the most cremations possible.
- 2.4. There are now new crematoria operating at Romsey and Andover in Hampshire which is affecting us with a reduction of approximately 15% of our cremations and this is happening throughout the country. A marketing and promotion plan is being developed to offset where possible this loss and to ensure the crematorium retains its operation at current levels. This plan will consist of a review of the webpages & printed information, our 'advertising'. We will also continue to give tours to the industry and the public.
- 2.5. Service improvements will include higher maintenance standards in the Gardens of Remembrance, Webcasting/Streaming Facility, Tribute Screens in the chapel and ongoing upkeep and maintenance of the crematorium building.
- 2.6. The Memorials at Salisbury Crematorium Guidelines, which were introduced by this Committee in 2014, have been used to good effect. Aged and damaged memorials/ flowers continue to be removed promptly and overall the grounds remain to be tidy and managed well.
- 2.7. The Parks Team have continued to improve and refine the management of the crematorium grounds with a programme of tree works and other changes to the Parks management regime.
- 2.8. The Cemeteries Management plan programme is currently underway to tidy up and improve both London Road and Devizes Road Cemeteries.
- 2.9. The new Avenue Cemetery is being received very well by users and the public. Currently 12 interments have taken place there since its opening in October 2019.

### **3. Users of the Crematorium:**

- 3.1. The Funeral Directors who mainly use the crematorium are from Salisbury equating to 72%. This has been boosted by the new Just Cremation Funeral Director which opened at the end of last year and uses Salisbury for all its cremations. The remainder are mainly from the north, south and west areas to Salisbury.
- 3.2. The crematorium is also now receiving more cremations from the south which is made up with the Blandford Forum area.
- 3.3. With Andover we have lost approximately 140 cremations per year. Various meetings have been held with funeral directors in this region and it has concluded that families will not drive past their new local crematorium to proceed to ours (32 mile round trip).
- 3.4. This is also unfortunately reinforced for when families re-visit the crematorium close to where they live on an anniversary or to just spend a quiet moment there in remembrance.
- 3.5. Historically we will continue to have the families that have had a loved one cremated here in the past.

### **4. Storage of Bodies:**

- 4.1. In 2016 funds were made available to purchase suitable cold storage units for the storage of bodies. The Council manages the storage of bodies in accordance with its agreed Code of Practice, which is in turn in accordance with the Federation of British Cremation Authorities best practice.

- 4.2. The Crematorium & Cemeteries Manager is required to report to this Committee the usage and customer feedback from families/Funeral Directors related to the cold storage facility.
- 4.3. Since the introduction of cold storage in October 2016, 182 bodies have been held in this facility to date out of 4,879 cremations (Oct 2016 – January 2020). This represents 3.73% of those cremated. From an operational point of view this has allowed the cremators to operate more efficiently.
- 4.4. Overall feedback from Funeral Directors and families has been positive, or non-committal. This scheme has not been a source of complaint. Funeral Directors continue to fill out the necessary paperwork required.
- 4.5. Families can opt out of the scheme if they so wish and during the dates mentioned in 4.3, 173 (3.55%) of 4,879 cremations opted out.
- 4.6. The table below shows the number of cremations that were carried out under the age of 21 years and Non-Viable Foetus'. There continues to be no cremation fee which was agreed by this Committee in 2017 for this age group.

<b>Year (Jan-Dec)</b>	<b>Under 21</b>	<b>NVF's</b>
2018	10	190
2019	3	171

## 5. Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 5.1. Note this report.

## 6. Background papers: Nil

## 7. Implications:

- 7.1. **Financial:** As outlined in the report.
- 7.2. **Legal:** As outlined in the report
- 7.3. **Personnel:** None in relation to this report
- 7.4. **Environmental Impact:** None in relation to this report
- 7.5. **Equality Impact Statement:** None in relation to this report

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<sup>1</sup> Data from Office for National Statistics