

Increasing Management Capacity at Yeovil Crematorium

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Purpose of the Report

To seek approval for the introduction of new management arrangements for Yeovil Crematorium.

Forward Plan

This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of January 2015.

Public Interest

SSDC jointly owns Yeovil Crematorium with Yeovil Without Parish Council (YWPC) as tenants in common with SSDC holding 89% and YWPC the remaining 11%.

The management of the Crematorium is currently overseen by the Joint Burial Committee, which sets fees and charges and is responsible for the overall supervision and governance of the facility. The current membership of the Joint Burial Committee is 3 members from SSDC, 2 from Yeovil Town Council (YTC), 2 from Yeovil Without Parish Council (YWPC), and 1 from Brympton Parish Council (BPC).

This report seeks approval for new management arrangements (subject to consultation) for the crematorium designed to increase the overall management capacity.

Recommendations

1. That subject to satisfactory consultation responses being received District Executive approves the implementation of new management arrangements for Yeovil Crematorium.
2. That responsibility is delegated to the Assistant Director – Communities in consultation with the Chair of the Area South Committee to carry out consultation with the Members of the Joint Burial Committee.
3. That responsibility is delegated to the Assistant Director – Communities in consultation with the Chair of the Area South Committee to develop a management agreement with YWPC.
4. That responsibility is delegated to the Assistant Director – Environment in consultation with the Chair of the Area South Committee to oversee the implementation of any new management arrangements.

Background

SSDC jointly owns Yeovil Crematorium with YWPC as tenants in common with SSDC holding 89% and YWPC the remaining 11%.

The management of the Crematorium and Yeovil Cemetery is currently overseen by the Joint Burial Committee, which sets fees and charges and is responsible for the overall supervision and governance of the facilities. The current membership of the Joint Burial Committee is 3 members from SSDC, 2 from Yeovil Town Council (YTC), 2 from YWPC, and 1 from Brympton Parish Council (BPC).

Under the current arrangements the management of the Crematorium is provided via an agreement with Yeovil Town Council. The Town Clerk currently manages the Crematorium in return for a small annual fee and a small payment is also made direct to YTC to cover some administrative costs. Property Services, Financial Services, Human Resources, Insurance, Health and Safety and ICT support is provided through South Somerset District Council. All of the staff at the Crematorium and the Cemetery are employees of SSDC.

Proposed Changes

It is proposed that from the 1st February 2015 subject to consultation that SSDC will take over the overall management of the Crematorium. Within SSDC this role will be undertaken by the Environmental Health Manager who will co-ordinate the services involved in the day to day running of the facility supported by the Principle Environmental Protection Officer. SSDC's Environmental Health Manager is part of the Directorate for Operations and Customer Focus, which gives him access to a broad range of resources including Property and Engineering, Lufton Depot, Building Control, Business Continuity and Health and Safety. Many of these are already involved in the work of the Crematorium and all fall within the remit of the Assistant Director for Environment Services.

All SSDC corporate standards and policies will apply including overtime, sickness, travel claims, recruitment, financial procedures, payments and contracts. SSDC's Environmental Health Manager will carry out regular checks of the cleanliness and appearance of the Crematorium. A quarterly management team meeting will be held to co-ordinate the teams from SSDC and the Crematorium and include a forward plan of improvements that can be included in work plans and the budget process. A representative from YWPC will be invited as well as the Yeovil Town Clerk where there is a need to discuss pre-agenda items.

The preparation of the budget and budget monitoring reports for the Crematorium will be the responsibility of the Environmental Health Manager and presented by him to the Joint Burial Committee.

The Yeovil Town Clerk will continue to provide support for the Joint Burial Committee including preparing agendas and reports, act as Clerk to the meeting and produce minutes.

Key benefits of the proposed new arrangement

- To provide the opportunity to build a comprehensive vision for the facility in the future;
- To ensure that there is a senior management presence on a daily basis (on site or close off site) to deal with any issues that arise;
- To put in place a program of refurbishment to bring the facility up to date;

- To ensure the delivery of some key actions identified by Audit e.g.
 - Ensuring that the risk register is maintained and regularly reviewed and understood;
 - Ensuring risk assessments and mitigation of those risks are in place;
 - Ensuring funeral directors have signed a code of conduct and strengthening our links with them to improve the service to the public;
 - Carrying out regular health and safety inspections;
 - Co-ordinating the management of all of the services involved in running the Crematorium and Cemetery;
 - Co-ordinating staff training, opportunities and appraisals;
 - Reviewing complaints and public feedback

It also provides the opportunity to evaluate and resolve in issue of the future use of the Poppy Field on the crematorium site. It should be noted that the Poppy field is part of the Crematorium and is therefore owned by SSDC (89%) and YWPC (11%).

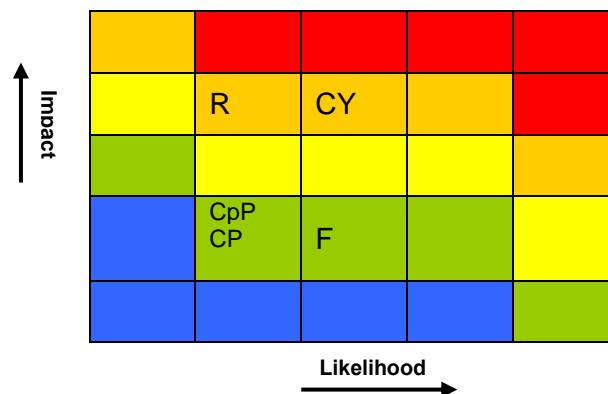
Financial Implications

There are currently no initial financial implications of the implementation of this proposal, as the new work will be added to The Environmental Health Manager's existing duties.

Decisions around financing the new management arrangement on a permanent basis will be made once a full evaluation of the management requirements is complete. This may include a need to backfill some of the SSDC work of the Environmental Health Manager and on evaluation there will need to be a recharge made to the Crematorium that will be dependent on the time required. It is suggested that the new role could start in February 2015. An evaluation will be made and reported back to the Joint Burial Committee and District Executive in the autumn with possible recommendations for amendments to the Joint Burial Committee legal agreement if required.

Risk Matrix

This matrix only identifies the risk associated with taking the decision as set out in the report as the recommendation(s). Should there be any proposal to amend the recommendation(s) by either members or officers at the meeting then the impact on the matrix and the risks it identifies must be considered prior to the vote on the recommendation(s) taking place.



Key

Categories	Colours <i>(for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)</i>
R = Reputation	Red = High impact and high probability
CpP = Corporate Plan Priorities	Orange = Major impact and major probability
CP = Community Priorities	Yellow = Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY = Capacity	Green = Minor impact and minor probability
F = Financial	Blue = Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

Council Plan Implications

Council Plan 2012 – 2015 – Focus 1 - Jobs.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

Investment in the Crematorium will introduce more energy efficient technology.

A. the annual report on “greenhouse gas emissions from local authorities own estate and operations” to Defra and;

B. wider carbon implications

Equality and Diversity Implications

An Equalities impact assessment would be developed as part of the consultation and planning process.

Background Papers

None
