

D&NS – Performance and Business Services: Bereavement Services

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information						
<p>Description of Current Service Baseline</p>	<p>Who provides the service?</p> <p>History how service was formed and why it exists</p> <p>How is the service provided</p>	<p>Registration & Bereavement Services merged in 2003 to create a 'one-stop' shop for bereaved families with 1 manager responsible for both service areas.</p> <p>The Authority has acted as a burial authority for 142 years, providing municipal cemeteries.</p> <p>The Bereavement Service is currently provided by 3.5 staff. Key responsibilities are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide the front-line administration service for the arrangement of all burials and exhumations within the Borough's cemeteries • provide an information service for the bereaved and provide a point of contact for families and funeral organisers and for enquiries relating to the Borough Cemeteries. • produce and grant Deeds relating to ownership of the Right of Burial and Right to Erect a Memorial for grave spaces. • approve memorials applications in-line with cemetery regulations and ascertaining grave ownership • provide technical and legal advice on the law of burial and exhumation. <p>Internal partnership arrangements exist with CFYA with regard to the operation of the Borough Cemeteries. Horticultural and Cemeteries Service provides the grave preparation, grave maintenance and grounds maintenance element and the Asset Management & Inspection Unit provides the inspection and maintenance of all fixed assets i.e. footpaths, buildings, memorials, etc.</p> <p>2010/11 Bereavement Services Statistics:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="996 1169 1758 1350"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Burials Organised: 458</td> <td>Memorial Applications Approved: 441</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deed of Grants Produced: 338</td> <td>Transfer of Grave Ownership: 142</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Assignment of Grave Ownership: 2</td> <td>Exhumations Arranged: 1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Burials Organised: 458	Memorial Applications Approved: 441	Deed of Grants Produced: 338	Transfer of Grave Ownership: 142	Assignment of Grave Ownership: 2	Exhumations Arranged: 1
Burials Organised: 458	Memorial Applications Approved: 441							
Deed of Grants Produced: 338	Transfer of Grave Ownership: 142							
Assignment of Grave Ownership: 2	Exhumations Arranged: 1							

<p>Challenge</p>		<p>Potential to review current working practices to offer improved efficiency with improved joined-up working with CFYA.</p> <p>Potential to commission service from external provider.</p> <p>Potential to restructure current partnership arrangements for the operation of the Borough Cemeteries – re-combining operational and administrative services in relation to cemeteries may offer increased efficiency.</p> <p>Potential to deliver services in partnership with neighbouring authority, subject to reconciliation of varying administrative and operational practices.</p> <p>Longer term potential to discontinue service once no further burials are possible in the Borough Cemeteries. Current burial figures account for approximately 28% of all deaths within the Borough and less than 0.5% of the entire population of the Borough.</p>
------------------	--	---

<p>Customer Baseline</p>	<p>Who are the customers what are their needs now</p> <p>How are service users consulted and how do their views shape delivery</p> <p>How satisfied are the customers</p> <p>How do you communicate with your users</p> <p>How are these services promoted / marketed</p>	<p>The burial service is predominantly used by, but not restricted to, residents of the Borough.</p> <p>Potentially, the Statutory aspect of the service could relate to all residents of the Borough, with the exception of the Sikh community, which favours cremation over burial.</p> <p>For any development plans or major policy changes we work closely with the Communications Unit to develop and deliver a consultation and communications plan.</p> <p>Given the sensitive nature of the bereavement service, customer satisfaction questionnaires are not currently used. Satisfaction levels and general improvements are based mainly by closely monitoring the CCCC statistics with particular emphasis on any complaints and the nature of complaint.</p> <p>Most communication is either face-2-face or by telephone, though we have a range of information and guidance leaflets.</p> <p>Services are promoted and marketed in a variety of ways and we work closely with the Communications Unit for larger projects. Registration & Bereavement Service have a portfolio of information and guidance leaflets & brochures. The service holds road shows and promotes new services and cemetery development plans via press releases, Stockton News and the Council's website.</p>
---------------------------------	---	---

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information										
Customer Challenge	<p>Are there customers who could use the service but don't</p> <p>Are there customers using the service who shouldn't be</p> <p>Who are the customers of the future and what are their needs / What is likely to impact on demand for these services in the future</p> <p>What do complaints/ compliments tell you about these services</p>	<p>Burials within the Borough's cemeteries are not restricted to residents only.</p> <p>No – The service is available to all, including advice and guidance on all aspects relating to Burials.</p> <p>An expected increase in the population of the Borough and any change to current burial trends could impact upon the Council's ability to provide burial space</p> <p>Anticipated increase in the number of residents from BME Communities may result in increased demand for burials conducted in accordance with particular religious or cultural traditions, which would not be classed as standard burial practice.</p> <p>In 2010/11, Bereavement Services received:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="994 719 2045 783"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Commendations</th> <th>Compliments</th> <th>Comments</th> <th>Complaints</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bereavement</td> <td>10</td> <td>42</td> <td>0</td> <td>4*</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*Complaints tend to be linked to policies, procedures and maintenance issues relating to cemeteries. Bereavement Services work in conjunction with CFYA to investigate and resolve any problems for bereaved families.</p>		Commendations	Compliments	Comments	Complaints	Bereavement	10	42	0	4*
	Commendations	Compliments	Comments	Complaints								
Bereavement	10	42	0	4*								

<p>Aims & Objectives Baseline</p>	<p>Is the service required by statute</p> <p>Is there a statutory level of service</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The service fulfils the statutory duty to administer the burial service and maintain burial records in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977.</p> <p>The Order also requires the administration of grave ownership and memorialisation in relation to individual graves.</p> <p>The service is also subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972.</p>
<p>Challenge</p>	<p>Is the service responsive or proactive or a mixture</p> <p>Is the service needed</p> <p>What would happen if the service was not provided either in whole or part</p> <p>How would the service react to new pressures what capacity would be required to deal with additional / new demands</p>	<p>The service is a mixture in that it responds to customer needs but is proactive in seeking and implementing improvements to improve the customer experience.</p> <p>Yes – Although there was no legal requirement for our Council to provide burial or cremation facilities, the Authority chose to act as a burial authority and is therefore subject to the legislation that governs cemeteries.</p> <p>If the service was not provided customer satisfaction levels could reduce as a result of limiting choice. For the Council this could also mean a reduction in income as service would be sought from an alternative provider / elsewhere.</p> <p>The service is flexible to be able to react to new pressures. For example, an out of ours service has been agreed with the Muslim community at no extra cost.</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
Aims & Objectives Challenge	Who provides a similar service to this using a different delivery mechanism e.g. external partnerships, shared services etc	There are a number of private cemeteries and crematoria throughout the country.
Relevance / Context Baseline / Challenge	<p>How does the service fit with the overall aims of the Council</p> <p>How does the service contribute to key policy areas</p> <p>What policies, plans and strategies impact on the service e.g. statutory, policy, function , other services</p> <p>Are there any political judgements / decisions involved in determining the level of service</p>	<p>The Bereavement service contributes to the Council's vision – “We are passionate about creating a clean, green and vibrant place where people are safe, healthy and happy” – through maintenance and development of the Borough's cemeteries –and contribute to the remainder of the vision – “We are ambitious, open and fair. We deliver great services for your money” – through the provision of accessible and efficient, fit for purpose services.</p> <p>The Service's strategic objective is: “To provide a dignified, efficient and professional Registration and Bereavement Service, offering greater freedom of choice to meet changing needs of our customers”</p> <p>The service fulfils the statutory duty to administer the burial service and maintain burial records in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977.</p> <p>The Order also requires the administration of grave ownership and memorialisation in relation to individual graves.</p> <p>The service is also subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972.</p> <p>Non-statutory fees are subject to annual review. Service provision is subject to scrutiny through the Select Committees. Two previous scrutiny reviews were undertaken in 2006/07 and 2007/08</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information																																				
Financial / Resource Considerations Challenge	How can you demonstrate that the service is cost effective overall? Do external contracts offer value for money?	Fees comparison of main services with other Tees Valley Local Authorities: <u>Bereavement Services 2010/11</u> <table border="1" data-bbox="994 344 2047 571"> <thead> <tr> <th>Authority</th> <th>Burial Rights 50 Yrs</th> <th>Burial Rights 100 Yrs</th> <th>Interment Fee (Adult)</th> <th>Memorial Fee</th> <th>Add. Inscription</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Stockton</td> <td>350.00</td> <td>500.00</td> <td>300.00</td> <td>178.00</td> <td>21.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Redcar & Cleveland</td> <td>478.00</td> <td>N/A</td> <td>459.00</td> <td>180.00</td> <td>40.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Middlesbrough</td> <td>N/A</td> <td>681.00</td> <td>466.50</td> <td>134.70</td> <td>8.95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hartlepool</td> <td>N/A</td> <td>555.00</td> <td>345.00</td> <td>(Incl. in burial rights)</td> <td>(Incl. in burial rights)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Darlington</td> <td>562.00</td> <td>N/A</td> <td>552.00</td> <td>175.00</td> <td>67.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> N/A	Authority	Burial Rights 50 Yrs	Burial Rights 100 Yrs	Interment Fee (Adult)	Memorial Fee	Add. Inscription	Stockton	350.00	500.00	300.00	178.00	21.00	Redcar & Cleveland	478.00	N/A	459.00	180.00	40.00	Middlesbrough	N/A	681.00	466.50	134.70	8.95	Hartlepool	N/A	555.00	345.00	(Incl. in burial rights)	(Incl. in burial rights)	Darlington	562.00	N/A	552.00	175.00	67.00
Authority	Burial Rights 50 Yrs	Burial Rights 100 Yrs	Interment Fee (Adult)	Memorial Fee	Add. Inscription																																	
Stockton	350.00	500.00	300.00	178.00	21.00																																	
Redcar & Cleveland	478.00	N/A	459.00	180.00	40.00																																	
Middlesbrough	N/A	681.00	466.50	134.70	8.95																																	
Hartlepool	N/A	555.00	345.00	(Incl. in burial rights)	(Incl. in burial rights)																																	
Darlington	562.00	N/A	552.00	175.00	67.00																																	
Service Drivers	What do we need to change and why? What are the main drivers of change?	To identify options for future strategy, policy and service provision that will provide a dignified, efficient and professional Registration and Bereavement Service for SBC residents. Meeting efficiency targets through the Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) programme and exploring alternative options.																																				