



**COUNCIL CABINET**  
**27 APRIL 2004**

Report of the Director of Commercial Services

## **Best Value Review of Bereavement Services**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. To endorse the Terms of Reference for the Best Value Review of Bereavement Services, as outlined in Appendix 2.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The themes identified in Appendix 2 will enable the Review to focus on the key issues to the delivery of Bereavement Services by the Council.
- 2.2 The Terms of Reference need to be endorsed by Members in order to progress to the next stage of the Review.

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 As part of the 2003/2006 programme of Best Value Reviews, the Council is carrying out a review of Bereavement Services.
- 3.2 The Terms of Reference are set out in Appendix 2.
- 3.3 This review focuses on burial and cremation services provided by the Bereavement Services section of Derby Parks. The service manages one crematorium, six cemeteries and eight closed churchyards.
- 3.4 The Markeaton Crematorium was opened in 1956 and currently carries out approximately 3,000 cremations each year. The Crematorium is equipped with four cremators, which were installed in 1995/6. The main chapel has seating capacity for 98 and the round chapel seats 35. A maximum of 26 services a day can be held within the two chapels. The Crematorium employs five full-time and two part-time staff and the office is open on weekdays from 9.00 to 4.30 - 4.00 on Fridays.
- 3.5 Nottingham Road Cemetery is the largest in the city and accepts the majority of the 500 burials carried out each year within the city. The cemetery was opened in May 1855 and occupies an area of 80.5 acres. The future capacity for new graves is estimated at 70 years.

- 3.6 The cemetery office at Nottingham Road acts as an administrative and operational centre for all cemeteries and closed churchyards within the city and is open on weekdays from 9.00 to 4.00 - 3.30 on Fridays. Seven full-time staff are based at Nottingham Road.
- 3.7 The five other cemeteries are:
- Spondon Cemetery – opened in 1884
  - Uttoxeter Road Cemetery – opened in April 1843
  - Normanton Cemetery – opened in 1899
  - Chellaston Cemetery – opened in 1934
  - Mickleover Cemetery – opened in 1957.
- 3.8 A review of the cemetery and crematorium regulations was carried out in 2000 /2001 and the new regulations came into force in November 2001, following extensive consultation with stakeholders. While the majority of new graves continue to be maintained as lawn graves, a range of other burial options is now offered.
- 3.9 The stakeholders of Bereavement Services encompass the entire community and include representatives of religious and non-religious groups, ethnic minorities, funeral directors, memorial masons and employees of the service.
- 3.10 The Review Team held a scoping event on Thursday 11 March 2004, which was attended by 20 key stakeholders including Members and representatives from other local authorities. The event identified seven issues, which were later prioritised using the risk matrix shown in Appendix 3.
- 3.7 The risk matrix was then used to develop five key issues and themes for the Review. These are shown in Appendix 2 – Terms Of Reference.
- 3.8 The Terms of Reference need to be considered by Council Cabinet before being reviewed by the Scrutiny Management Commission. The Council Cabinet, taking account of any comments made in the scrutiny process, must then finally approve them.
- 3.9 It is anticipated that the review will be completed by September 2004.

## OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4. None.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Geoff Hall 01332 716516 e-mail <a href="mailto:geoff.hall@derby.gov.uk">geoff.hall@derby.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers:</b>	None
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference – Bereavement Services Best Value Review Appendix 3 – Risk Matrix

## IMPLICATIONS

### Financial

1. The costs incurred in carrying out this review must be self-financing from within the Bereavement Services included in the review.

### Legal

2. The Best Value Review of Bereavement Services is being carried out under the requirements of the Local Government Act 1999.

### Personnel

3. None arising directly from this report.

### Corporate Priorities and Objectives

4. This review will examine and challenge Bereavement Services to ensure that they are consistent with the council's objective to provide **integrated, cost effective services that respond to customers' and community needs.**

<b>Best Value Terms of Reference</b>	
<b>Review Title</b>	<b>Bereavement Services</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Mike Carr
<b>Review Team Leader</b>	Geoff Hall – Assistant Director (Works & Engineering)
<b>Scope of Review: Key Issues &amp; Themes</b>	<b>Related points</b>
<p>1. Health &amp; Safety</p> <p>Stability of memorials needs to be checked and dangerous memorials laid down to eliminate danger.</p>	<p>a) Is the action taken an appropriate response to the perceived risk?</p> <p>b) What effect will the work have on the appearance of the cemeteries as places of peace and tranquillity?</p> <p>c) Is the programme of rectification sufficient to eliminate the danger within a reasonable period?</p> <p>d) What long-term arrangements will be made to restore the memorials in order to preserve the cultural and historical value of the cemeteries?</p>
<p>2. Cemetery Regulations</p>	<p>a) Do the Cemetery Regulations offer sufficient choice to all sections of our community?</p> <p>b) What arrangements should be made to enforce the regulations?</p> <p>c) What standards of maintenance should we apply within the Cemetery and Crematorium?</p>
<p>3. Is the current service sufficiently responsive to the needs of our customers?</p>	<p>a) Are there sufficient staff available at the Cemetery Office to cope with the normal range of demands of the service?</p> <p>b) Is there scope for introducing ICT to cemetery booking systems?</p>

<b>Scope of Review: Key Issues &amp; Themes</b>	<b>Related points</b>
<p>4. Is the Crematorium building and site sufficient to meet current and future requirements?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Is the capacity sufficient for current and future needs?</li> <li>b) What effect will the proposed emission regulations have on the service?</li> <li>c) Are the current facilities for mourners and officials satisfactory?</li> <li>d) Do the chapels meet the expectations of mourners?</li> <li>e) Could the layout of the site be improved to improve facilities and traffic safety?</li> </ul>

**Appendix 3**

**RISK MATRIX**

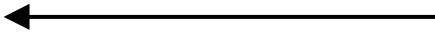
**STRATEGIC RISK PROFILE**  
 Organisation Name: Bereavement Services

**Likelihood:**  
 A Very high  
 B High  
 C Significant  
 D Low  
 E Very low  
 F Almost impossible

**Impact:**  
 I Catastrophic  
 II Critical  
 III Marginal  
 IV Negligible

	<b>Key</b>
	Red
	Amber
	Green

<b>A</b>					
<b>B</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5 , 7</b>			
<b>C</b>	<b>2</b>				
<b>D</b>	<b>3</b>				
<b>E</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>			
<b>F</b>					
	<b>IV</b>	<b>III</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>I</b>	



Likelihood

Impact



## Bereavement Services Risk Scenarios

1 Issue	Trigger	Consequence	Likelihood	Impact
For safety reasons, it has been decided that some gravestones will need to be laid down	Public outcry regarding overall appearance of cemetery Public enquiry Health and Safety Executive enquiry	Fines Trip hazards Litigation Maintenance costs rise Reputation Adverse publicity Rise in complaints Low morale Suspensions	B	3

2 Issue	Trigger	Consequence	Likelihood	Impact
The crematorium building was built in 1956 and, therefore, may not meet users expectations at present and in the future.	Dissatisfied customers measured through feedback	Poor quality of service Bad reputation Adverse media attention Bad emotional experience for mourners	C	3

3 Issue	Trigger	Consequence	Likelihood	Impact
The traffic flow system does not allow convenient access and exit from the crematorium facilities	Accident/ injury to member of staff or the public	Adverse publicity Loss of Business Complaints Litigation Bad emotional experience for mourners Loss of income	D	3

4 Issue	Trigger	Consequence	Likelihood	Impact
There is a need for the Cemetery Booking System to move forward with IT in order to continuously improve the service and keep up with other providers	Lack of IT System	Complaints Not meeting service users' needs	E	3

5 Issue	Trigger	Consequence	Likelihood	Impact
There are not enough staff to provide sufficient cover for the cemetery office	Staff not replaced when they leave Staff on long-term sick leave	Complaints Dissatisfaction of customers/service users Office closure Emotional distress for family involved	B	2

6 Issue	Trigger	Consequence	Likelihood	Impact
Access to the memorial book is between the hours of 8.30am and 4.30 pm for that particular day	Customer complaints that the service is not offered at a convenient time to them	Bad publicity Staff resources dealing with the complaints	E	4

7 Issue	Trigger	Consequence	Likelihood	Impact
The cemetery regulations don't meet the requirements of the community.	Graves not maintained in an appropriate manner.	Complaints from the public Additional expense due to individual maintenance of graves Inconsistent approach	B	2