



Glasgow City Council

**Environment and Liveable Neighbourhoods
City Policy Committee**

**Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director of
Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability**

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Item 3

14th March 2023

BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

Purpose of Report:

To provide the Committee with an update on the current status of the Bereavement Service.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Committee notes the content of this report.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council's Bereavement Services is delivered, city wide by a team of 31 Cemetery and Crematorium staff, with around 1000 interments and 5500 cremations each year. The service is administered from Daldowie Crematorium. In addition, the grounds of our cemeteries and crematoria offer a peaceful and scenic setting for quiet contemplation.
- 1.2. The only statutory requirement in terms of bereavement services relates to the need for the Council to provide a burial ground, there is statutory legislation in place to govern the cremation, interment, and memorial inspection process. GCC currently holds responsibility for 32 Cemeteries and Churchyards of which 8 are under regular use. The two Crematoria, Linn and Daldowie provide 5 chapels, 2 and 3 respectively.

2. Cremation Process

- 2.1. Glasgow City Council undertake an average 5500 Cremations per year at our locations at Linn and Daldowie.
- 2.2. Regulation/Governance of Crematoria

All Scottish Crematoria are subject to an annual inspection by the HM Senior Inspector of Burial, Cremation and Funeral Directors. As a result of the pandemic no physical inspections were carried out during 2020/2. The most recent inspection reports received from the Inspector were wholly positive and Bereavement Services Management continue to maintain regular contact with the Senior Inspector.

- 2.3. In terms of the Pollution Prevention Control Regulations (PPC Regs) for Scotland, each crematorium in Scotland is required to operate to a defined permit process. These regulations are governed by SEPA and requires each Cremation Authority to provide regular reports on emissions and to instruct an external emissions assessment each year. The assessment at Linn was carried out during September 2022 and the Daldowie assessment was carried out in late January 2023. As a result of the pandemic there has been no physical inspection carried by SEPA since 2019.

3. Burial Grounds Process

- 3.1. Glasgow City Council undertake an average of 1000 burials per year at our Cemeteries across the City.
- 3.2. Regulation/Governance of Cemeteries

There is currently no external body governing cemeteries at present however, Burial Authorities are required to operate to the precepts of the Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016. In due course the Scottish

Government intend to appoint specific inspectors, reporting to the HM Senior Inspector of Burial, Cremation and Funeral Directors.

4. Service Delivery

4.1. Daldowie Crematorium

The refurbishment of the crematorium building, and roads infrastructure was completed and handed over from the contractor in May 2021. Further work to add CCTV to patrol the external areas of the building are due to be completed before the end of February 2023.

4.2. Linn Crematorium

Following the completion of the works to refurbish Daldowie Crematorium, the refurbishment works to Linn are expected to start later this year

4.3. Cremation Equipment Maintenance

Following the collapse of ATI Incinérateurs and the absence of a robust maintenance programme for the cremation equipment, a comprehensive maintenance package has been procured and will commence in March 2023.

5. Cemetery Capacity

- 5.1 An assessment of the total future capacity of all GCC cemeteries is underway Bereavement Services Management continue to work with representatives from the various faith groups to ensure we effectively address the specific service requirements. In the meantime, the development of works to extend the capacity of the Linn Cemetery Extension, which incorporates the Islamic Burial Section commenced at the start of February 2023. The initial works will provide an additional 200 lairs and a further phase of works an additional 500 lairs.

6. Headstone/Memorial/Wall Inspections with Burial Grounds

- 6.1. The Memorial Inspection Programme to assess the condition of all the memorial headstones in all the GCC Cemeteries continues to be carried out by BS Staff. The definitions of this programme follow the Scottish Government Guidance on the Management of Memorials in Cemeteries. The data is recorded on hand-held tablets which has proved to be very effective. It is intended that this process will be extended to include the walls in cemeteries and Parks. This digital process will supersede the current paper based, handwritten process, the anticipated timescale for implementation will be during October 2023.
- 6.2. Since the inception of the inspection programme in 2015 all the memorials in GCC Cemeteries have been assessed and action taken where necessary. The revised digital recording process has recorded over 128,500 memorials citywide of which 99% have proven to meet the necessary inspection

standards. This statistic is predominately due to the initial making safe exercise carried out between 2015 and 2017.

7. Administration of Service

The Bereavement Services Administration Team operates from the refurbished office at Daldowie Crematoria. As a result of Covid 19, all documentation for burial and cremation was required to be provided/submitted in an electronic format. While the restrictions have been eased, Bereavement Services has chosen to maintain this as the primary method for receipt of cremation and burial documents.

- 7.1 As with the operational processes, the HM Senior Inspector of Burial, Cremation and Funeral Directors carries out an audit of administrative processes during the annual inspection.

The most recent inspection was carried out during March 2022 and the resultant inspectors report indicated that the standard of staffing, service delivery and documentation provided by GCC Bereavement Services was 'very high.'

8. Training

- 8.1 In conjunction with the Daldowie Training Centre, Linn and Daldowie Crematoria have been registered as a training centre for the delivery of the SQA Introduction to the Principles of Cremation. This centre is also recognised to deliver the SQA Manage and Maintain Cemetery and Burial Ground Memorials. The Asst Group Manager and the Bereavement Services Manager have gained the necessary accreditation from the SQA to delivery and assess these courses.

9.

Resource Implications:

Financial: None.

Legal: None

Personnel: None

Procurement: CPU are progressing a permanent arrangement for the maintenance of the cremation/abatement plant.

Council Strategic Plan:

Grand Challenge 3: Fight the Climate Emergency in a just transition to a net zero Glasgow.
Mission 2: Become a net zero carbon city by 2030

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-2025

Generally supportive of the stated outcomes.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

EQIA screenings have been undertaken for the refurbishment projects.

Multi faith groups are supported and their needs and expectations met by service delivery.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.

Services are available to financially excluded individuals via Public Health Burials and direct services.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

Contributes to our energy and carbon masterplan and commitment to the Net Zero heat via renewables by 2030

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

Privacy and Data Protection impacts:

No impacts have been identified as part of the activity to date

10. Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee notes the content of this report.