

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Audit, Risk and Scrutiny
DATE	30 April 2019
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Inspection Report of Aberdeen Crematorium by the Inspector of Crematoria
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/19/196
DIRECTOR	Rob Polkinghorne
REPORT AUTHOR	Graham Keith
TERMS OF REFERENCE	6.9

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

At its meeting on 1 November 2016, the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee resolved to present resulting reports of audits of Aberdeen Crematorium to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee for assurance purposes. This report provides the Committee with the Inspector of Crematoria's Inspection Report carried out by the Inspector of Crematoria on 23 January 2019.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the inspection report

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 1 November 2016, the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee approved a suite of compliance measures with the aim of improving arrangements at the Aberdeen Crematorium. One of these assurance measures was that the Inspector of Crematoria's annual inspection report be presented to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.2 The Inspector of Crematoria's Inspection Report is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The Inspectors report refers to the Bereavement Services team relocating "from its current location within Aberdeen Council Headquarters to a newly created office within the Crematorium". The Bereavement Services completed their move from Marischal College to Aberdeen Crematorium on 6 February 2019.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	None identified	L	Not applicable
Legal	None identified	L	Not applicable
Employee	None identified	L	Not applicable
Customer	None identified	L	Not applicable
Environment	None identified	L	Not applicable
Technology	None identified	L	Not applicable
Reputational	None identified	L	Not applicable

7. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous People	People and communities are protected from harm

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	Full EHRIA not required

Privacy Impact Assessment	Not required
<u>Children's Rights Impact Assessment/Duty of Due Regard</u>	Not applicable

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Aberdeen City Council Report to Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee
Aberdeen Crematorium Performance Indicators (CHI/16/251)
<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=503&MId=3877&Ver=4>

10. APPENDICES (if applicable)

Appendix 1 - Inspection Report (Jan 2019) - Aberdeen Crematorium

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix 1 - Inspection Report (Jan 2019) - Aberdeen Crematorium

Inspector of Crematoria Scotland

Robert Swanson QPM

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Inspection of Crematoria

Name and Address of Crematorium: Aberdeen Crematorium Skene Road Aberdeen AB15 8PT	
Name of Cremation Authority: Aberdeen City Council	Date of Inspection: Wednesday 23 rd January 2019
Undertaken by: Robert Swanson QPM HM Inspector of Crematoria Scotland	In the presence of: Graham Keith Performance & Development Manager Angus Beacom Crematorium Manager

1. Cremation Fees (Mon – Fri)

Excluding Surcharges

Cremation Only (without service) £653
Children (up to the age of 18 yrs) No Charge
Adult Cremation Fee.....£693 (45 min. time slot)

2. Staffing levels

Staff certificated to carry out cremations:
7 members of staff qualified to carry out cremations

3. Office Management

Administration Procedure:

Now that major refurbishment to the Crematorium has been completed the administration office is to re-locate from its current location within Aberdeen Council Headquarters to a newly created office within the Crematorium.

This is viewed as a welcoming change, bringing all staff under the one roof, and providing members of the public and funeral directors with improved parking and facilities.

The move will be of particular benefit to funeral directors as they will no longer need to make the double journey to Council Headquarters and the Crematorium.

The administration procedure and process was examined from point of first intimation to dispersal of the ashes, with random checks carried out on a selection of paperwork and computer records.

All were found to be of a high standard with a number of safeguards in place to ensure compliance with the instructions of the applicant.

Computer System:

BACAS

4. Total Number of Cremations Carried Out 2018

Breakdown by category	
Adult:	1921
Under 1 year old:	12
Aged 1 -16 years:	0
Stillbirth:	10
Pregnancy Loss:	
Individual:	165
Shared:	1086
Body Parts:	9
Total:	3203

5. Cremation / Identity Card Process

The only noted change since the date of the last inspection relates to the change of use from poly urns to cardboard caskets.

The process and all related documentation was examined and demonstrated from point of arrival of the coffin, throughout all stages including cremation, cooling, cremulation, storage and dispersal of the ashes, subsequent updating of computer records and storage of documentation.

All were found to be of a high standard with noted attention to detail, with safeguards to ensure total compliance with the instructions of the applicant, measures to minimise the risk of mislabelling ashes, and continuity of identification throughout.

6. Recovery of Ashes

Ashes have been recovered from all cremations.

7. Ashes Policy (retain / scatter / inter / storage)

Details of process:

Like a number of other Crematoria, Aberdeen have moved from using Poly Urns to Cardboard Caskets for holding ashes.

Ashes are dispersed in accordance with the instructions of the applicant.

Ashes can be either scattered in the Garden of Remembrance, interred in the cemetery, retained pending a decision from the applicant, or collected by the applicant or representative / funeral director.

A check of the disposal instructions on a random sample of documentation was found to accurately reflect the disposal outcome.

There is provision for a change of instruction by the applicant prior to dispersal.

Ashes awaiting collection are stored in a secure room with clear identification and instructions affixed.

8. Cremators

Number of cremators: 4

Make (s): FT3

Size (s): Large

9. Sample of Cremation Register

<p>Category: Shared Pregnancy Loss</p> <p>Cremation number: F6329</p> <p>Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 21st November 2018 with the ashes scattered within the Garden of Remembrance at Hazlehead on 30th November 2018.</p>	<p>Category: Individual Pregnancy Loss</p> <p>Cremation number: F6356</p> <p>Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 17th January 2019, with the ashes retained, pending collection by the applicant's partner. The ashes were seen to be stored in accordance with current policy.</p>
<p>Category: Adult</p> <p>Cremation number: 151315</p> <p>Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 16th November 2018 with the ashes collected by the funeral director on 19th November 2018.</p>	<p>Category: Adult</p> <p>Cremation number: 151016</p> <p>Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 7th September 2018 with the ashes collected by the funeral director on 11th September 2018.</p>
<p>Category: Adult</p> <p>Cremation number: 151394</p> <p>Result: All documentation and records examined and found to be in order. The cremation was carried out on 10th December 2018 with the ashes collected by the applicant on 22nd December 2018.</p>	

10. Use of Baby Tray

Number / Source: 4 - FT

11. Pregnancy Loss Policy / Procedure

NHS / Shared:

There has been no change to the policy since the date of the last inspection.

The Cremation Authority continue to have an agreement with NHS Grampian for cremation of shared and individual pregnancy loss.

Ashes from cremation of shared pregnancy loss are scattered within the Garden of Remembrance.

Ashes from individual cremation of pregnancy loss are dispersed in accordance with the instructions of the applicant.

Individual:

The policy and procedure for cremation of individual pregnancy loss does not differ from that of an infant.

12. Metal Extraction

Policy:

Unless otherwise instructed by the applicant all metal extracts are sensitively re-cycled in accordance with the policy of the Cremation Authority as part of the ICCM Scheme.

The monies accrued on an annual basis (several thousand pounds) are donated to a nominated charity.

There have been no issues in respect of any aspect of the process.

13. Code of Practice, Cremation Practice Guidance and Policy Statement (on website / displayed)

The Inspection confirmed that the procedures in place at Aberdeen Crematorium are in accordance with the Scottish Government Policy Statement on Infant Cremation.

Staff are fully aware of current and proposed legislative and guidance changes and have ready access to hard copy and computer held material.

The Cremation Authority website was seen to provide comprehensive information on relevant matters, with links to a number of associated reports.

14. General Observations

All public and private areas seen during the course of the inspection were found to be clean and tidy, and with the major refurbishment programme now complete, staff and visitors have a much improved facility and workplace.

Given the scale of the refurbishment and the need for services on site (prior to cremation) to be suspended for several months during the renovation, it is with great credit to staff that the number of cremations carried out during 2018 was only slightly down on previous years.

Services which would be likely to have been conducted at the Crematorium had it not been for the ongoing refurbishment were facilitated in local churches and other local premises.

This arrangement worked well with no major issues reported.

The near completion of all sections of the AWPR is likely to be welcomed by the Cremation Authority, as it will provide a more direct and timeous route to the Crematorium for many.

Whilst it was seen that the crematorium did not have a defibrillator on-site the Inspector was advised that one is to be acquired in the near future.

15. Overall Assessment

The inspection found there to be no shortcomings in any aspect of the cremation process, with good practice observed throughout.

Attention to detail was noted at all stages with safeguards in place to ensure continuity of identification from point of arrival of the coffin to dispersal of the ashes, and total compliance with the instructions of the applicant.

As was noted during a previous inspection, there was evidence of regular audit and

service updates provided by management, ensuring that high standards are maintained.

Overall, the inspection found Aberdeen Crematorium to be a well-run Crematorium staffed by an experienced, highly motivated and enthusiastic team who have an excellent working relationship with stakeholders, attendees and each other.

Signed: Robert Swanson QPM
HM Inspector of Crematoria Scotland

Date: 4th February 2019