

**Executive Member Decision Session for
Neighbourhood Services**

15 December 2009

Report of the Corporate Landlord

Bereavement Services. Service Asset Management Plan

Purpose of Report

1. This report seeks the Executive Member's approval to the proposed Bereavement Services Service Asset Management Plan (SAMP). The SAMP is attached at Annex 1.

Background

2. Service Asset Management Plans are one of the documents which Property Services use to deliver the principles of Asset Management Planning across the council.
3. The revised Corporate Asset Management Plan was approved by the Executive in July 2007. This is the strategic document which uses Asset Management Planning principles to set the framework for the council's ownership and use of buildings and land to deliver the council vision and corporate aims.
4. This strategy needs to be translated to a service level so that the property which any service occupies enables that service to deliver its aims and vision in the best possible way, meeting the needs and expectations of customers and staff.
5. Extensive work had recently been done in looking at the future for Bereavement Services in York as a result of:-
 - The requirement to install new Cremators at York Crematorium to replace the current obsolete ones, and to comply with the new Mercury abatement emissions legislation, which comes into effect in 2012. A CRAM bid has been submitted for inclusion of this work in the Capital Programme for 2010/11.
 - The need to enhance the customer experience by way of improvements to the Crematorium buildings and grounds, and Dringhouses Cemetery.
6. It was, therefore felt appropriate, to produce a Service Asset Management to ensure that:-
 - The property needs of the service to deliver its "vision" could be identified.

- The properties occupied and used by Bereavement Services could be analysed and audited against the identified needs.
- Options and priorities to close the gap between future needs and current provision could be appraised.
- A way forward that would deliver the changes needed to meet the services property needs taking in to account cost, funding streams and opportunities.

Consultation

7. A SAMP can only be produced if it is a result of joint working between Property Services and the relevant council service.
8. A number of meetings and discussions have taken place between, officers from Bereavement Services and Asset and Property Management, and other staff. In particular this consultation has included:-
 - Analysis of key Bereavement Services documents which are also a result of extensive consultation with key stakeholders including the public.
 - Meeting with the Head of Licencing and Bereavement Services, the Bereavement Services Manager, and the Service Management Accountant.
 - Involvement of the Bereavement Services Manager on the suitability of the buildings to deliver the service.
 - Discussion with other council services on the range of options through the Corporate Asset Management Group.
9. The SAMP has been produced jointly between Bereavement Services and Property Services.
10. The plan has been approved by the Corporate Asset Management Group.

Bereavement Services Asset Management Plan

11. Annex A contains the final draft of this SAMP for approval by Members. There are a number of annexes to the SAMP included.
12. The SAMP is set out in the following sections:-
 - 1) Introduction

Brief explanation of the purpose and advantages of the SAMP.
 - 2) Vision

This section contains the vision for Bereavement Services and sets out the aims and objectives of the service. It also highlights 4 key property areas which will need to be taken into account.

 - Accessibility – providing a high quality bereavement service giving choice and access to all customers and users.

- Location – are the properties in the right place for service delivery?
- Delivery – the need to continue with improving service delivery.
- Cost – maintaining a significant net income to the Council.

3) Audit

Analysis of the Crematorium in meeting the current and future needs of the service are detailed in this section, in particular looking at

- Running Costs
- Outstanding Repairs
- Accessibility
- Suitability
- Property and Service PI's

Conclusions are contained in Section 3.3. of the SAMP and note that the Crematorium buildings are

- More costly to run than the average for all Council buildings.
- Repairs are needed, although urgent and essential repairs are relatively low.
- Suitability is generally good, the main areas where there are weaknesses centre around image, environment and space.

4) Joint Appraisal

Following detailed consultation between Asset and Property Management, and Bereavement Services, an assessment has been made in this section of how the current provision fits with the proposed structure, and identifies options to close the gap. Sources of funding and other factors have been looked at.

These have been used to look at each location and building and identify ways forward.

5) Action Plan

All the information gathered above has been formed into an action plan which in summary for the Bereavement Services SAMP means

- Carrying out urgent and essential repairs
- Replacement of the Cremators by 2012
- Alterations and improvements to the Crematorium
- Tree surveys

- Inclusion of unused land on the north side of the site into the Strays and Agricultural Land Asset Management Plan
- Investigation of the provision of refreshment facilities on site
- Repairs and improvements to Dringhouses Cemetery
- Development of purpose-built reception/meeting/interview rooms
- Including the Crematorium in the carbon management programme

6) Timetable

A 3 year timetable has been produced detailing what can be achieved in each year.

7) Review

It is the intention that this SAMP should always be a “live” document and so should be regularly reviewed, on at least an annual basis to take in to account:-

- Review of progress
- New opportunities available
- Changing priorities and initiatives for Bereavement Services
- Opportunities for working cross-service and with other parties

13. As already mentioned It is the intention to use this SAMP to support the CRAM bid currently being submitted for the replacement of the Cremators.

Implications

14. This report has the following implications.

- **Financial**

There are significant financial implications in terms of the potential revenue savings from reducing running costs, the need for funding from the capital repairs budget to address the maintenance backlog estimated at £39,000, and inclusion of the replacement of the Cremators in the Capital Programme for 2010/11. Estimated cost £1.475m.

- **Human Resources**

There are no human resources implications.

- **Equalities**

There are no equalities implications.

- **Legal**

There are no legal implications.

- **Crime and Disorder**

There are no crime and disorder implications.

- **Information Technology**

There are no information technology implications

- **Property**

The property implications are contained in this report and the Bereavement Services Asset Management plan attached below.

15. **Risk Management**

There are no known risks associated with the recommendation below.

Recommendation

16. That the Executive Member is recommended to:-

- i) Approve the proposed Bereavement Services Asset Management Plan as detailed in Annex 1.

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Background Papers: Information used to complete this report and the SAMP are contained in the Asset and Property Management file no. E00434.

Annex

Annex 1 – Service Asset Management Plan Bereavement Services.