

**CABINET
7 JANUARY 2020**

DARLINGTON CREMATORIUM REFURBISHMENT - UPDATE

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Heather Scott,
Leader and Local Services Portfolio**

Ian Williams, Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Cabinet on the pre-planning consultation for the Crematorium Refurbishment and new Chapel.

Summary

2. Members approved the direction of travel for the Crematorium within Darlington's West Cemetery contained in the previous Cabinet report of 8 October 2019. Members, and before that Scrutiny, considered the three options presented to them and recommended progressing Option 3, which was to replace the existing cremators as well as redeveloping the existing Chapel into the Bereavement Service Office and building new Chapel within West Cemetery on part of the land identified for future burials.
3. This option also included a through-road through the cemetery extension across the Allotment site to Pondfield Close and exiting onto Salutation Road.
4. As part of taking the recommended option forward, pre-planning consultation has taken place and a Planning Application was submitted on 20 December 2019. Following the consultation, a decision was taken to remove the through-road from the Planning Application and therefore enter and exit the cemetery from Carmel Road North.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that Members note the removal of the through-road from the Planning Application:-

Reasons

6. The recommendation is supported as following further analysis including the comments received, the decision was taken to remove the road to ensure the new chapel and works to the existing cremators could still move forward in a timely manner.

**Ian Williams
Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services**

Background Papers

Report entitled - Darlington Crematorium Refurbishment, considered by Cabinet on 8 October 2019

Ian Thompson : Extension 6612
CD

S17 Crime and Disorder	There is no impact on crime and disorder as a result of this report.
Health and Well Being	No direct impacts.
Carbon Impact	Provision of new cremators and associated equipment to abate mercury emissions as well as ensuring any installation provides the opportunity to future-proof subsequent legislation as well as minimise carbon impacts. Provision to be able to abate NOx (a collective term for various oxides of Nitrogen which is a pollutant by-product of the combustion process having similar adverse effects to that of mercury).
Diversity	No direct impacts.
Wards Affected	The existing crematorium is located within West Cemetery in Hummersknott Ward, however residents will use the facility from all Wards.
Groups Affected	Different faith groups and non-faith groups require different services and iconography. Any new development will take account of the individual requirements where possible.
Budget and Policy Framework	This decision does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework. Costs with associated building works and lost income will be met from existing resources.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	No direct impacts.
Efficiency	By upgrading the existing equipment will improve the overall efficiency of the cremators and associated equipment.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

MAIN REPORT

Background

7. Cabinet had previously considered a detailed report presented on 8 October 2019 where three options were considered for the replacement/refurbishment of the crematorium within Darlington. The three options were:
 - (a) **Option 1**
New build, new site.
 - (b) **Option 2**
To replace the existing cremators alongside limited improvements to the Chapel.
 - (c) **Option 3**
Replace the existing cremators as well as redeveloping the existing Chapel into a Bereavement Service Office and new Chapel within West Cemetery on the part of land identified for future burials.
8. Both Option 2 and Option 3 included the opportunity to create a through-road going through cemetery extension land across allotments onto Pondfield Close and exiting through Salutation Road.
9. Prior to Cabinet, consultation had taken place with faith leaders, funeral directors and informally with the Allotment Association. As detailed in the report, there were no strong objections from faith leaders or funeral directors with regard to Option 3 as long as the hearse and formal funeral cars did not pass the care home. The informal discussions with the Allotment Association, whilst not ideal for them, was not presenting any strong opposition as it was believed a workable solution could be found.

Pre-Planning Consultation

10. Pre-planning consultation has taken place between 7 and 21 November 2019 as part of this process. 166 comments have been received with breakdown as follows:

Comment Category	Number
Not consulted	20
Out of town site needed	15
Drainage Issues	11
Undignified split site	16
Traffic issues	78
Pollution	8
Security Issues	5
Poor route past the Nursing Home	8
Loss of allotments	5

11. As can be seen from the above, by far the majority of objections are related to traffic concerns.
12. In addition, through the pre-planning consultation process the Allotment Association submitted concerns with regard to the proposals.
13. More discussion has been held with the Allotment Association and agreement has not been reached, thereby the decision at this time is to proceed with a planning application removing the road.
14. In consultation with the Leader of the Council, the decision was taken to remove the road from the Planning Application to enable the Crematorium project to move forward at the earliest opportunity, subject to Planning Permission.