

Introduction

Bereavement service is a discretionary service although the Council (under Social Services) has duty to dispose of deceased who are either homeless or have no relations. However, there is no statutory requirement for the Council to operate its own burial/cremation facilities. The Council has already agreed to externalise Bereavement Services.

Bereavement prices are set against the market (i.e. neighbouring operators) and prices have been set to deliver a surplus. The proposed charges detailed in Appendix 7.1 show an increase of 10% incl. 2.5% inflation) will generate an additional £170k p.a. compared to current projected income levels. Any increase above that level could impact on service demand and result in a reducing net benefit.

Bereavement services has been consistently implementing above inflation price increases to deliver pricing efficiency savings (since 2006) approved through the budget setting process.

To date, most of our prices are at the upper quartile of those set by neighbouring operators. The burial price differential reflects an additional premium for non residents, rather than a discount for residents.

Cremation prices	Price 09/10	Price 10/11
Harwood Park	£600	Not issued
Golders Green	£554	Not issued
New Southgate	£525	£565
Islington	£515	Not issued
Enfield Crematorium	£510	£530
Marylebone	£504	Not issued
City of London	£498	Not issued
Breakspear	£495	Not issued
Manor Park	£485	Not issued
Forest Park (new)	£470	£500
West Herts	£460	Not issued
Parndonwood	£443	Not issued
Hendon	£420	£516

Burial prices	Std grave from	Non parish from	New fee
Enfield Lawn	£2,760	£4,320	
Tottenham	£2,760	£5,300	
Southgate	£2,350	£4,595	Not announced
Chingford	£1,673	£3,346	Not announced
Enfield Cemeteries	From £980	£4,000	Not announced
Lambeth	£3,000	£3,250	Not announced
City of London	£2122 - £3300	From £6,995	Not announced
Camden	£2005 - £3605	From £3,515	Not announced
Lewisham	£1942 - 2145	£6,995	Not announced

As our traditional burial space is depleted, we now only largely offer vault burials, and as can be seen in the comparison below, our burial prices are significantly higher than the neighbouring competitors.

Name of Authority	Resident	Non resident fee	Reopen fee
Haringey	£4615	£5695	£995
Enfield	£1015	£2981	£450
Barnet	£3300	£5045	£395
Waltham Forest	£990	£1540	£776
Lambeth	£2250	£3750	£849
Brent	£2506	£3772	£886

Analysis of costs and Income

Full year Budget

	Bereavement Budget £k	2010/11 Forecast £k
Expenditure		
Employees	784	734
Premises related	280	241
Transport	71	58

S&S	305	302
Third party payments	67	65
Corporate Overhead s	109	109
Total Expenditure	1,616	1,509
Income		
Customer and client Receipts	-2,158	-1,738
Net Surplus	-542	-229

The Service has a base budget surplus in 2010/11 of over £500k. However, as shown above we are anticipating that this will be under achieved by £313k. Whilst the proposed increases, based on current activity levels, would yield additional income of £85k, this will reduce this shortfall but still fall short of the base budget.

Summary of pricing proposal

2011/12 Bereavement prices are proposed to be increased on average by 5% ie 2.5% above Council inflation assumption of 2.5%. In accordance with current legislation, VAT is not chargeable on the services listed in the attached table.

These increases have been discussed with the Cabinet member who is supportive of the proposals.

Discounts and concessions

We operate a 'Resident' and 'Non resident' pricing structure. Non residents are charged a "premium" over above the prices paid by residents, e.g. for vaults, a non-resident is being charged £1,080 more than the price paid by a non-resident.

Cremation prices are the same for both residents and non-residents i.e. no discounts are offered.

Methods of payment

Invoices are sent to funeral directors approx twice a month. Payments are normally received either by BACS or cheques.