

Committee(s)	Dated:
Port Health & Environmental Services	23 July 2019
Subject:	Public
Cemetery & Crematorium Performance 2018/19	
Report of:	For Information
Director of Open Spaces	
Report author:	
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Summary

This report provides Members with the year end position of the Cemetery and Crematorium regarding its performance measures, financial position, key activity and achievements as well as a summary of how the service reacted at the start of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Burial and cremation numbers continue to fluctuate slightly year on year with 2,316 cremations and 815 burials in 2019/20. This is partly due to an ongoing decrease in the number of deaths over the last three years in the boroughs that the cemetery serves. The Cemetery and Crematorium is generally maintaining its market share of burials and cremations across the seven neighbouring Borough's. The local risk income target was overachieved by £68k and with careful budget management the final net local risk position was an £158k underspend/overachievement.

The Cemetery and Crematorium implemented its pandemic plan and remained open five days a week during the Coronavirus pandemic for essential services such as grave selections, burials and cremations. Operational practices were changed to ensure the health and safety of both staff and the public. The impact of Coronavirus on the volume of burials and cremations did not come into effect until April 2020 onwards, which is outside the period of this business planning review.

Recommendation

- Note the performance of the Cemetery and Crematorium during 2019/20.

Main Report

Background

1. The Open Space's Departmental Business Plan for 2019-20 together with a Business Plan for the Cemetery and Crematorium (appendix 2) was approved by this Committee on 5 March 2019.
2. The City of London Cemetery and Crematorium's vision is; *'to provide a model cemetery and crematorium constituting both a site of excellence in bereavement services, a forerunner in cemetery conservation and the greatest choice of burial and cremation facilities in the UK.'* This together with the Department's vision and objectives inform and direct the work of the service

Current Position

3. This report sets out how the Cemetery and Crematorium has done against its performance targets and key planned activity over the 2019/20 financial year.
4. The end of 2019/20 saw the Country dramatically change as the Coronavirus pandemic spread across the World and our Government introduced new regulations, asking us to; *Stay home, Protect the NHS, Save Lives*. However, the Cemetery and Crematorium provides a 'critical service' and has remained open and fully staffed throughout, continuing to operate five days a week and implementing its established pandemic plan which was drawn up for such situations.
5. Ensuring the health and safety of staff, the public and funeral directors during the pandemic was a primary aim for the management team and many different operational practices were introduced including:
 - Staggering start / lunch / finish times for grounds maintenance teams
 - Opening the Ernie Turner Training Centre as an extra canteen facility for staff breaks to facilitate good social distancing
 - Suspending all 'non-urgent' service provision and appointments, such as ash strewing and burial appointments, non-urgent grave selections and transfers, memorial garden and genealogy appointments
 - Cleaning chapels with disinfectant after each service and not allowing staff to enter the chapel during a funeral
 - Restricting the number of mourners able to attend a funeral in line with government guidance
 - Allowing multiple drop-offs for 'no service' funerals to help funeral directors and allowed for the effective use of the cremators
6. As a result, and despite the Country being in 'lockdown' the Cemetery and Crematorium continued to enable the public to make informed burial choices and provide an excellent cremation and burial service.

Performance Measures

7. The Cemetery and Crematorium business plan included ten performance measures. Although it is always appropriate to set stretching targets, the management team at the Cemetery and Crematorium have limited control over the choices made by the bereaved.

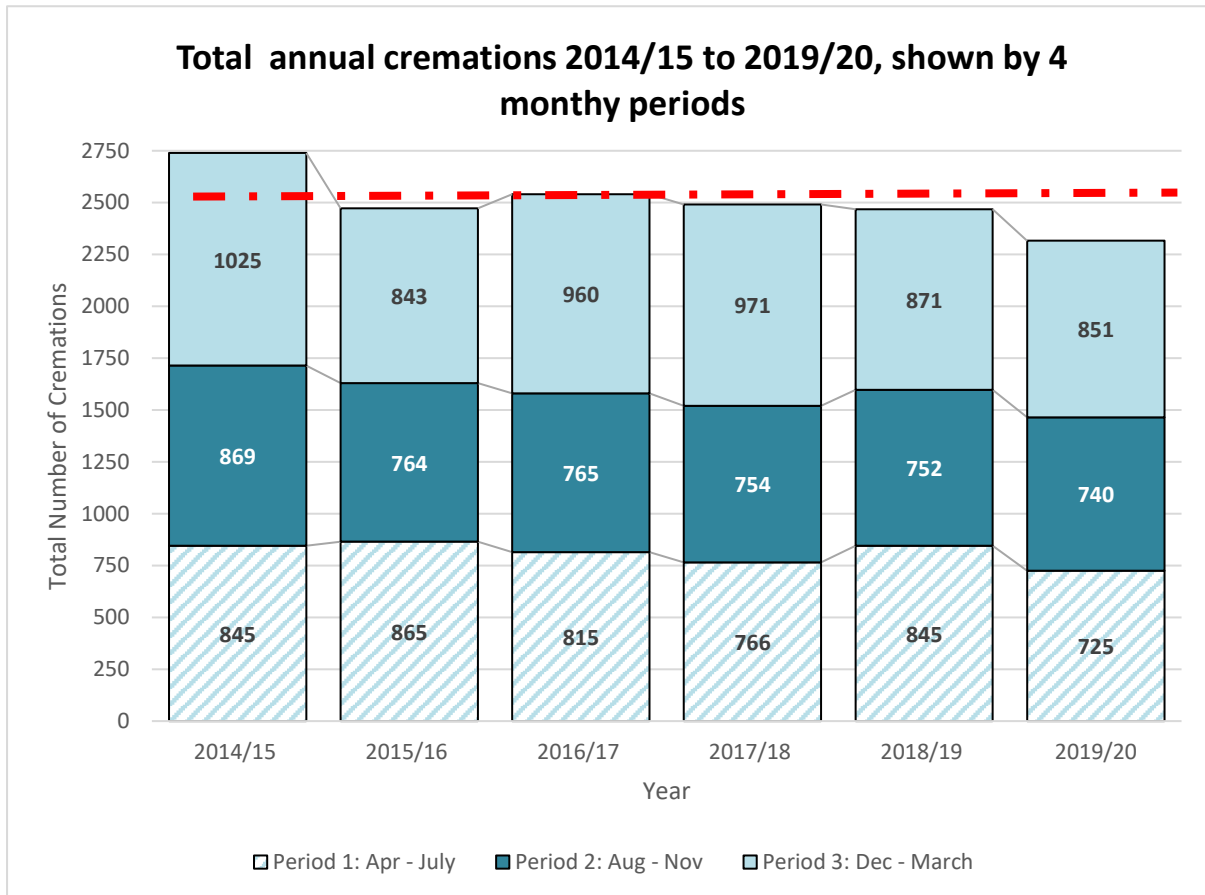
Performance Measure - Cremations

Performance Measure	2018/19 Actual (annual)	2019/20 Performance Target	2019/20 Actual (annual)
Number of adult cremations.	2,468	2,528	2,316

8. The number of cremations at the cemetery was below target by 212 and approx. 6% down on the total number of cremations in 2018/19. In 2019 there were less

deaths in the boroughs that the cemetery serves than in 2018 and 2017, and this trend is reflected in the number of cremations that the cemetery received. In addition, the abated cremator was relined in early December and servicing of another in March meant fewer cremations could be accommodated.

- For comparison, the graph below shows the annual number of cremations over the last 6 years.



- The average number of cremations per year over the six years is 2,504. This is shown as the dotted line within the graph above.

Performance Measure - Market Share

Performance Measure	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Target	2019/20 Actual
Maintain our market share of cremations in relation to our seven neighbouring Borough's	22.5%	22.0%	20.2%	22.1%	21.7%	22.0%	23.0%	20.1%

- The Cemetery and Crematorium also assesses its market share of cremations and this data shows a slight decline. However, the seven-year data shows that people continue to choose to be cremated at the City's Cemetery and

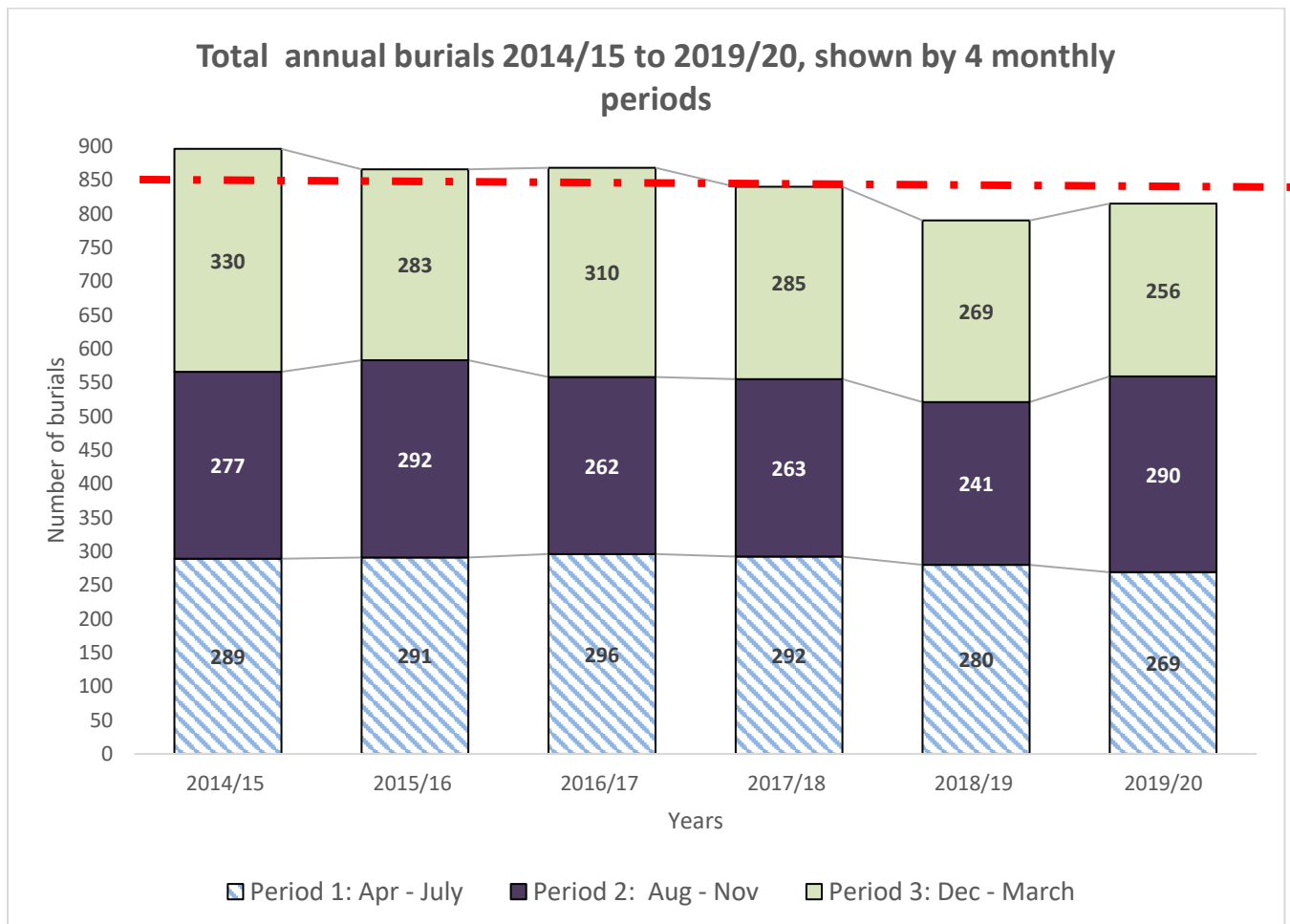
Crematorium and that our market share has remained relatively constant, despite the drop in the number of deaths

Performance Measure - Burials

Performance Measure	2018/19 Actual (annual)	2019/20 Performance Target (annual)	2019/20 Actual (annual)
Number of burials.	790	861	815

12. The number of burials was below target by 46 burials but approx. 3% up on the total number of burials in 2018/19. Whilst there were less deaths in the boroughs that the cemetery serves than in the two previous years, the number of burials at the cemetery increased due to the Cemetery's offer and shortage of burial space elsewhere.

13. For comparison, the graph below shows the annual number burials over the last 6 years.



14. The average number of burials per year over the six years is 846. This is shown as the dotted line within the graph above.

Performance Measure	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Target	2019/20 Actual
Maintain our market share of burials in relation to our seven neighbouring Borough's	7.4%	7.4%	6.9%	7.1%	7.3%	7.3%	7.5%	7.1%

15. The performance target for 'our market share of burials in relation to the Cemetery and Crematorium's seven neighbouring Borough's' was missed by 0.4%. However, the seven-year data shows that people continue to choose to be buried at the City's Cemetery and Crematorium and that our market share has remained relatively constant, despite the drop in the number of deaths.

Performance Measures - Finance

16. As expenditure costs rise and fluctuations in burial and cremation numbers are a constant challenge, the Superintendent continues to carefully manage his income and expenditure budgets and ensures that a high-quality service is maintained which helps safeguard our market share of burials and cremations.

Performance Measure	2018/19 Actual (annual)	2019/20 Performance Target	2019/20 Actual (annual)	Over/under achievement
The overall income target for the Cemetery and Crematorium (OSD local risk only)	£5,085,060	£5,089,000	£5,157,686	Overachievement £68,686
The overall net financial position for the Cemetery and Crematorium (OSD local risk only)	£1,919,283	£1,599,000	£1,757,472	Overachievement £158,472

17. Members will note the continued strong financial performance of the Cemetery and Crematorium, with both the overall income and the net income performance targets overachieved. The Director's local risk achieved:

- gross expenditure of £3,400,214
- gross income of £5,157,686.
- net income of £1,757,472

This net position saw an overachievement of income by £158k on the final agreed Directors local risk budget.

18. Appendix 3 provides a summary of the overall budget position including costs outside the control of the Director of Open Spaces. The cost of 'other charges and recharges' totals £2.371million. Therefore, despite a net overachievement of £158k within the Director of Open Spaces local risk budget, the Cemetery and Crematorium made an overall loss of £614k. Therefore, no money can be transferred into the reserve fund.

19. As the allocation of funding from the Cyclical Works Programme to the Cemetery and Crematorium continues to decrease and the central fabric repairs budget

were ‘frozen’ the Cemetery and Crematorium had to fund several small projects itself. This year those projects included:

- Repair of the front wrought iron pedestrian entrance gate
- Releveling of the paving at the baby garden and ash grave area
- Wiring improvements to allow monitors in the cremation chapels for audio visual tributes at funerals
- The replacement of screens within the crematorium chapels
- The replacement of audio equipment in our crematorium chapels

Other Performance Measures

20. Several new performance measures were introduced in 2019/20 and performance against target is shown below.

Description	2019/20 Target	April – July 2019 Actual	Aug – Nov 2019 Actual	April 2019 to March 2020 Actual
Number of ‘no service’ cremations	82	21	12	60
% of early time slots taken up	30%	12.6%	19.7%	48%
Amount of gas used to heat the Modern Crematorium - kWh	Establish baseline	21,255 kWh	18,746 kWh	23,126 kWh
Energy generation from Solar Power - electricity in kWh	Establish baseline	6,225 kWh	6,012 kWh	25,126 kWh

21. The number of ‘no service’ cremations was not achieved, and this reflects an increase in other crematoria now offering a similar service, meaning that funeral directors now have a greater choice of providers for this low-cost option.

22. The increase in ‘% of early time slots taken up’ in the final three-month period is believed to be due to some crematoria increasing their fees in October meaning that the offer at the City was more attractive.

23. Twelve key actions were identified in the Business Plan. The table in Appendix 1 lists the actions and progress made. Some key areas of progress include:

- Completed the removal of laurel and rhododendrons
- Completed the provision of hoggin pathways
- Organised history tours of the cemetery
- All signage replaced
- Sunken garden works completed

Delivering the Departmental Business Plan.

24. The Cemetery and Crematorium also contributes to several Departmental performance measures such as sickness absence, Health and safety reporting, Green Flag and Green Heritage awards, of which the cemetery has retained the latter two. In addition, the Cemetery and Crematorium has specifically progressed the Department’s Business Plan activity relating to our regional and national influence, particularly in relation to:

- Children's Funeral Fund (CFF) – Working with government and other cemetery and crematorium providers to develop an understanding of how the CFF works, in practice.
- Grave Reuse – Working with Government and Cem & Crem providers to share our best practice in grave reuse.:

Other Key achievements in 2019/20:

25. The Cemetery & Crematorium has progressed several other activities. These include:

- Cremator replacement - contract has now been signed, works are now due to start in August
- All identified fleet and machinery purchases for 2019/20 were completed in year, a new replacement schedule is in place for 2020
- The landscape horticulture apprentice has moved on to level 3 and is now based at West Ham Park

Implications

Corporate & Strategic Implications

26. The Business Plan identifies how the department's activities will support the aspirations of the organisation, as reflected in the Corporate Plan. By delivering the Business Plan, the Cemetery and Crematorium will support the Corporation's strategic aims:

- **Contribute to a flourishing society**
- **Shape outstanding environments**

Conclusion

27. The Cemetery & Crematorium continues to provide an important service to the local community. It has continued to perform well and provided a fully staffed, critical service during the COVID19 pandemic. The national dip in death rates was impacting slightly on the number of burials and cremations however income was just above target and the net position saw an overachievement of £158k within the Directors local risk budget.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Progress on Business Plan 12 key actions
- Appendix 2 - Cemetery and Crematorium Business Plan 2019-20
- Appendix 3 - Finance

Background Papers

- Final Departmental High-Level Business Plans 2019/20 Including Open Spaces Department) – PHES Committee March 2019
- Period 1 & 2 (April – November 2019) Cemetery & Crematorium Business Plan Performance update – PHES Committee Jan 2020

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APPENDIX 1

Cemetery & Crematorium Activity	Progress April to July 2019	Progress August to November 2019	Progress December to March 2020
Implement the year one actions arising out of the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) review, including: reducing Haywood Rhododendron Clumps in Church and Chapel Avenue, breaking-up and softening the South Boundary railings with clumps from the Haywood, Robertson Pallet Screen the fence-line in area 32a.	Completed cutting back the Rhododendron and Laurel clumps in Church Avenue, Chapel Avenue and areas in North Boundary Rd	This work is generally carried out in the spring and early summer due to other work commitments.	Sadly, the cutting back of clumps has not happened due to the weather in March and the focus on the cemetery's reaction to the Coronavirus
Landscape Projects – Continued development of the 'shoot' burial area. Removal of large conifers. Planting of more appropriate hedging in the memorial gardens. Improve pathways to the Classic Ash Grave area.	Further Conifer removal was carried out around the site in the spring. Several areas are being replaced with hoggin pathways throughout the summer months	Removed a further 54 large conifers from the lawn section of the cemetery	The pathways have been completed, a large hedge was removed and the entrance to the 'shoot' burial area has been re-designed
Develop our audience and accessibility to the service by working in partnership with local schools, universities and representative organisations, providing free heritage tours for individuals and groups and organising an Open House event.	Several visits and tours have been carried out during the year so far and the history tours have remained popular.	We took part in Open House in September, provided a guided tour for the Highgate Cemetery Management Committee, visited and provided reuse advice to Brompton Cemetery and facilitated a school visit to our nature area	There were several school visits over the winter months to round off the year.
Continue to work in partnership with our established consultative groups and offer training to funeral directors around the new forms introduced in April 2018.	Form training was completed last year. Similar partnership work undertaken regarding grave reuse and the introduction of the Children's Funeral Fund.	Work is ongoing but there is very little guidance regarding the Children's Funeral Fund and a reluctance on the part of Funeral Directors to risk losing money.	The Children's funeral fund is still poorly advertised but take-up in this government offer has increased.
Work with City Surveyors Department to progress the replacement of the ageing cremators with new abated ones.	Ongoing - City Surveyors Department has recommended the use of a specialist industry consultant.	This project is currently about to go to formal tenders	Tenders were sought, a contract has been drawn up and work is now due to start in August 2020
Develop our grave reuse and reclamation programme as a model system for creating the sustainable UK cemetery – by increasing grave reclamation in management zone 2.	Ongoing and working well.	62 reuse graves have been sold so far this year relieving pressure on the space for further new graves.	93 reuse graves were sold in 2019-20 making it the second most chosen burial option. This proves that grave reuse is a viable option to the bereaved.
Develop the use of sustainable energy using Photovoltaic cells and increasing the use of waste heat recycling to operational	Ongoing and working well	Ongoing and working well	Waste heat continues to be used to heat the crematorium building and PVs are still working successfully on the flat

APPENDIX 1

Cemetery & Crematorium Activity	Progress April to July 2019	Progress August to November 2019	Progress December to March 2020
areas of the modern crematorium.			roof of the modern crematorium
Work to expand and develop our 'cleaner greener' fleet and machinery.	Planning to replace two items of plant with modern diesel engines and aim to replace an electric utility vehicle this year.	We are in the process of replacing one of our aging electric utility vehicles. A fast charging unit has been installed for our electric minibus	The replacement of an electric utility vehicle was completed in March
Implement the recommendations arising out of the workforce plan, staff and customer surveys as well as developing staff.	We have continued to improve communications with visitors around the weekend bus service and information generally. Replacing cemetery signage to help with directions One member of staff has completed a level 3 ILM in supervisory management	We have continued to replace cemetery signage, display weekend mini-bus times have improved the literature and cemetery maps that are provided to visitors	One cemetery administration officer completed ICCM Law of burial and cremation module. The Cemetery mini-bus service has continued to be successful; staff training is regularly discussed at one-to-ones.
Develop a name search facility for the online burial register system.	Whilst we have not been able to develop a name search facility, we are in the process of adding a further 10 general registers to the on-line offer.	Work to expand our on-line registers is still underway	Works completed in March, registers from 1956 to 1997 added to on-line search facility



APPENDIX 2 - The Open Spaces Department's Vision is: we enrich people's lives by enhancing and providing access to ecologically diverse open spaces and outstanding heritage assets across London and beyond.

The 2019/20 Cemetery & Crematorium activity will help deliver the following Corporate Plan Outcomes:

Contribute to a flourishing society

3. People have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential

Support a thriving economy

5. Businesses are trusted and socially and environmentally responsible

7. We are a global hub for innovation in finance and professional services, commerce and culture

8. We have access to the skills and talent we need

Shape outstanding environments

9. We are digitally and physically well-connected and responsive

10. We inspire enterprise, excellence, creativity and collaboration

11. We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment

What we do at the Cemetery & Crematorium: provide high quality burial and cremation options to all in a magnificent Grade I listed landscape whilst consciously protecting the heritage value of our site.	2019/20 Final budget is:		
	(Expenditure) (£000)	Income (£000)	Net (£000)
CEM & CREM LOCAL RISK BUDGET			
Total Employee Expenses	(2,482)	-	
Total Premises Related Expenses	(425)	-	
Total Transport Related Expenses	(146)	-	
Total Supplies and Services	(436)	-	
Total Customer, Client Receipts	-	5,089	
Total Local Risk Budget	(3,490)	5,089	1,599
City Surveyor's local risk & CWP (Cem & Crem)	(1,148)	-	
Recharges (Cem & Crem)	(1,757)	-	
Central risk (Cem & Crem)	(9)	-	-
Total other charges and recharges	(2,914)		
GRAND TOTAL ALL CHARGES	(6404)	5,089	(1,315)

The Open Spaces Department's top line objectives and outcomes are:

A. Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible.

- Our open spaces, heritage and cultural assets are protected, conserved and enhanced (12)
- London has clean air and mitigates flood risk and climate change (11)
- Our spaces are accessible, inclusive and safe (1)
- Our habitats are flourishing, biodiverse and resilient to change (11)

B. Spaces enrich people's lives.

- People enjoy good health and wellbeing (2)
- Nature, heritage and place are valued and understood (3)
- People feel welcome and included (4)
- People discover, learn and develop (3)

C. Business practices are responsible and sustainable.

- Our practices are financially, socially and environmentally sustainable (5)
- London's natural capital and heritage assets are enhanced through our leadership, influence, investment, collaboration and innovation (10)
- Our staff and volunteers are motivated, empowered, engaged and supported (8)
- Everyone has the relevant skills to reach their full potential (8)

We will measure:

- Net budget position
- Gross Income
- Market share of burials
- Number of burials, cremations and 'no service' cremations
- % of cremations that take up early time slots
- Amount of gas used to heat the modern crematorium
- Energy generation from solar power

We will also contribute to a range of Department wide performance measures.

KEY: The numbers in brackets show how the Open Spaces Outcomes link to the twelve [Corporate Plan Outcomes 2018-2023](#).

The Cemetery and Crematorium's Vision is:

to provide a model cemetery and crematorium constituting both a site of excellence in bereavement services, a forerunner in cemetery conservation and the greatest choice of burial and cremation facilities in the UK.

Cemetery and Crematorium activity:

Open Spaces and Historic Sites Are Thriving and Accessible

1. Implement the year one actions arising out of the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) review, including: reducing Haywood Rhododendron Clumps in Church and Chapel Avenue, breaking-up and softening the South Boundary railings with clumps from the Haywood, Robertson Pallet Screen the fence-line in area 32a. (A1) (10d)
2. Landscape Projects – Continued development of the 'shoot' burial area. Removal of large conifers. Planting of more appropriate hedging in the memorial gardens. Improve pathways to the Classic Ash Grave area. (A3 & A4) (11b)

Spaces Enrich People's Lives

3. Develop our audience and accessibility to the service by working in partnership with local schools, universities and representative organisations, providing free heritage tours for individuals and groups and organising an Open House event. (B6 & B8) (3b)
4. Continue to work in partnership with our established consultative groups and offer training to funeral directors around the new forms introduced in April 2018. (B7 & C10) (7a)

Business practices are responsible and sustainable.

5. Work with City Surveyors Department to progress the replacement of the ageing cremators with new abated ones. (A2 & C9) (5c)
6. Develop our grave reuse and reclamation programme as a model system for creating the sustainable UK cemetery – by increasing grave reclamation in management zone 2. (C9) (5b)
7. Develop the use of sustainable energy using Photovoltaic cells and increasing the use of waste heat recycling to operational areas of the modern crematorium. (C9) (11a)
8. Work to expand and develop our 'cleaner greener' fleet and machinery. (C9) (11a)
9. Implement the recommendations arising out of the workforce plan, staff and customer surveys as well as developing staff. (C11) (8a)
10. Develop our apprenticeship programme and volunteering opportunities. (C12) (8d)
11. Develop a name search facility for the online burial register system. (B7 & B8 & C9) (9b)
12. Develop staffs' wider understanding in relation to managing the landscape whilst providing services and running a business. (C11 & C12) (8d)

Key:

The letter/number in brackets (e.g. A2) shows which Open Spaces outcome our activities are helping to achieve.

The number/letter in brackets (e.g. 2a) shows which Corporate Plan activity our activities are helping to achieve.

The Open Spaces Department's **Cultural Values** which staff should uphold in the course of their work are:

Collaborative and Inclusive, Passionate and Driven, Respectful and Open, Honest and Responsible

Appendix 3

Cemetery and Crematorium Local Risk Revenue Budget - 1st April 2019 - 31st March 2020

(Income and favourable variances are shown in brackets)

Open Spaces (City Fund)	Final Agreed	Budget (Apr '19 – Mar '20)			Actual year end (Apr '19 – Mar '20)			Variance Apr-Mar £'000	Note
	Net Budget 2019/20 £'000	Gross Expenditure (£'000)	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000	Gross Expenditure (£'000)	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000		
Cemetery and Crematorium – Local Risk	1,599	(3,490)	5,089	1,599	(3,400)	5,158	1,757	158	1
Cyclical Works Programme	(898)	(898)	-	(898)	(398)	-	(398)	500	2
Surveyor Local Risk	(250)	(250)	-	(250)	(242)	-	(242)	8	
Central Risk	(9)	(9)	-	(9)	(9)	-	(9)	-	
Recharges	(1,757)	(1,757)	-	(1,757)	(1,722)	-	(1,722)	35	
Total other charges and recharges	(2,914)	(2,914)	0	(2,914)	(2,371)	0	(2,371)	543	
TOTAL PORT HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE (OPEN SPACES)	(1315)	(6,404)	5,089	(1,315)	(5,772)	5,158	614	701	3

Notes:

- OS Directors net income is 10% above target for the Cemetery as a result of the service being closely managed with an aim to overachieve the income target so that money could be used to fund several small projects which have been detailed earlier in this report in paragraphs 16 and 18. The Open Spaces local risk income target was overachieved by £69k.
- The City has a programme of cyclical repairs and maintenance works to maintain its operational properties to a good condition. This is delivered in a number of overlapping three year programmes of works, and is delivered by the relevant departments, principally the City Surveyor, the Barbican Centre and the Department of the Built Environment. In 2019/20 the overall agreed budget for these three year programmes was £14.777m, of which £10.368m was spent. The programme is monitored by the Corporate Asset Sub Committee and the carrying forward of the £4.409m unspent balance (i.e. £1.093m City Fund and £3.316m City's Cash/Guildhall) is subject to separate arrangements as each programme is phased over a number of years. In 2019/20 the final agreed budget for these programmes in relation to this service was £898k, of which £398k was spent and the £500k unspent balance will be carried forward to 2020/21. The underspend of £500k on the programme is mainly due to rephasing of the programme works at Cemetery and Crematorium.
- Once all other charges and recharges are applied (total cost £2.4M) the division made a loss of £614k.