

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Port Health and Environmental Services Committee	19 January 2016
<b>Subject:</b> Open Spaces Business Plan – April to November 2015 progress report.	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Information</b>

### **Summary**

This report provides an update on progress against the elements of the Open Spaces business Plan 2015 – 2018 which relate to the City of London Cemetery and Crematorium.

The report covers progress to date in respect of:

- Performance indicators
- Programmes and Projects
- SBR savings
- Key risks

### **Recommendation:**

Members are asked to note the positive progress made towards delivering the business plan, as detailed within this report.

### **Main Report**

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1. The Open Spaces business plan 2015/16 – 2017/18 was approved by the Port Health Committee on 5 May. From a Cemetery and Crematorium perspective the business plan recognises the Cemetery and Crematoriums role as both an open space and a local authority business.
- 1.2. A number of performance indicators are set within the business plan that relate specifically to the Cemetery and Crematorium. In addition there are a number that relate to open space element of the Cemetery and Crematorium.
- 1.3. Across the Open Spaces Department a range of Programmes and Projects are being developed and delivered that will see improvements in terms of:
  - a. **Focussing on the Core** –our Open Spaces are either Charitable Trusts with specific charitable objectives or they operate as a local authority functions (e.g. City Gardens and the Cemetery and Crematorium).
  - b. **Operational Efficiencies** – recognising that there could be more focus on challenging our ways of working this was an opportunity to review our operational effectiveness including how our services compare with similar

services provided by others and consideration whether alternate methods of delivery could be appropriate.

**c. Income Generation** – identifying opportunities for new and/or additional income consistent with the purposes for which we hold and manage the open spaces.

- 1.4. The Cemetery and Crematorium element of the service is involved and impacted upon by the Energy Efficiency Programme and the Fleet and Equipment Review Programme. In addition the Cemetery and Crematorium identified two specific projects for progress as part of the business plan: the Shoot project and Burial records online.
- 1.5. Progress against these Programmes is shown on the attached Programme Roadmap (Appendix 1) and detailed in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.5.

## **2. Performance Indicators**

- 2.1. A range of performance indicators were included within the business plan and the following relate specifically to the Cemetery and Crematorium Service. Excellent progress has been made to date across the basket of indicators including retention of Green Flag, Green Heritage and London in Bloom awards and income levels on track to achieve target.

<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Target for 2015/16</b>	<b>Progress to Nov 2015 for Cemetery and Crematorium</b>
<b>Preserving the ecology and biodiversity of our sites</b>	Green flags awards	Green Flag Award retained.
	Green heritage awards	Green Flag Award retained
	London in Bloom awards	Gold Award in the Large Cemetery category.
<b>Customer satisfaction</b>	Completion of one hundred, 60 second surveys for each site	Surveys to be undertaken
Developing our staff	1.5% of direct employee costs to be spent on training *	0.63%

- 2.2. \* The developing our staff measure does not take into consideration training that staff may receive that has no financial cost, such as various forms of in-house and on-line training, mentoring and shadowing. As part of the work on Investors in People consideration is being given to the development of a more effective and appropriate basket of performance indicators related to staff and staff development.

### 2.3. Cemetery and Crematorium Specific Indicators

Performance Indicator	Actual 2014/15	Target 2015/16	Progress to November 2015
Market share of cremations	22.02%	23%	21.3%*
market share of burials	7.2%	8%	8.3%
Income compared to income target	£4,593,562	£4,357,000	£3,090,410 equivalent to 71% of target.
Percentage of cremations using the new fully abated cremator	50% due to a gas failure in January and February 2015	60%	61.5%

- 2.4. \* The Performance Indicator for 'market share of cremations' is currently below the annual target, however cremation and burial numbers for the year are similar to those of last year. The reduction in market share of cremations is measured in relation to the total deaths in the seven neighbouring Borough's: Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Hackney, Havering and Barking & Dagenham. Officers believe that the drop in market share for cremations reflects a shift in religion of the populations in the seven neighbouring Boroughs; with a larger proportion of the Boroughs' populations being Muslim. We recognise that the local Muslim population's preference is to be buried rather than cremated and for many the preference is also for the burial to take place in a Muslim cemetery.

### 3. Programmes and Projects

- 3.1. The roadmap for the Cemetery and Crematorium is appended to this report. Progress continues to be made on all projects and revised project milestones are now reflected on the roadmap. Two of the Open Spaces Programmes will impact on the Cemetery and Crematorium, namely the energy efficiency programme and the fleet and equipment review programme. The Shoot and burial records online programmes are specific to the Cemetery and Crematorium. An update on each is given below.
- 3.2. **Energy Efficiency Programme** –The cemetery and crematorium has already made good progress in this area by using carry forwards agreed by your committee to install solar panels on its modern crematorium roof and for the installation of heat recovery from mercury abatement in its service chapels. The energy efficiency board are looking at further ways to improve efficiency. One potential initiative is improvement to the glazing at the modern crematorium.

- 3.3. **Fleet and Equipment Review Programme** –The cemetery superintendent sits on this Programme Board. Work is currently underway to assess the fleet and equipment across the Open Spaces Department and then review divisional service needs and how best to manage the fleet in the most efficient and cost effective way.
- 3.4. **Shoot project** –The shoot project has progressed well and the clearing and levelling work has now been completed. The appointed project managers are now in the process of reporting the measuring of water levels to the Environment Agency with an aim of achieving full sign-off of the project from LB Newham within the next month. The hard landscaping sections of the project were removed from the contract brief and will be picked up in the coming months as the soft landscape and planting is carried out by the cemetery team.
- 3.5. **Burial records online** –The division had previously had images made of all of the general registers and work has been carried out by the cemetery team to cleanse the existing data. Talks are on-going with the web development team to consider next steps, with the aim of creating on-line access for genealogy searches.

#### **4. Service Based review Savings.**

- 4.1. A saving of £213k over three years (2015/16 to 2017/18) was agreed by Members at the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee on 18 November 2014 as part of the Revenue and capital budgets report. The savings required at the Cemetery & Crematorium are anticipated to be met through increases in income generation. This increase was originally profiled as increase in income of £66,000 in 2015/16 and a further increase of £147,000 in 2017/18. Taking into consideration the income to date and the proposed fees and charges for 2016/17 the Superintendent has revised his savings profile such that the savings are distributed across the three years: 2015/16 will be £106k, 2016/17 will be £56k and 2017/18 will be £51k. This is a lower risk approach than loading the savings to year one and year three.
- 4.2. Officers are confident that we will achieve the £106k additional income in 2015/16. This target has already been built into the agreed budget profiles.
- 4.3. As well as implementing the SBR savings the Cemetery and Crematorium service aims to be cost neutral to the City of London. A report will be presented to this committee in the summer highlighting some issues with this approach, particularly in relation to covering the cost of the surveyors local risk budget and corporate recharges.

## **5. Risk**

- 5.1. Risks at the Cemetery and Crematorium continue to be monitored and managed. The Cemetery and Crematorium's risk register is appended to this report at Appendix 2.

## **6. Corporate & Strategic Implications**

- 6.1. The delivery of the Open Spaces Business Plan 2015/16 – 17/18 will support the City of London's strategic aim "to provide valued services to London and the nation" and the key policy priority of "maintaining the quality of our public services whilst reducing our expenditure and improving our efficiency".

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1. The Cemetery & Crematorium continues to perform well in relation to the majority of its performance indicators and the relevant Programmes and Projects are progressing as planned.

## **Appendices**

1. Cemetery & Crematorium Roadmap
2. Risk Register

## **Background Papers:**

- Open Spaces Business Plan 2015/16-17/18

## **Gerry Kiefer**

Business Manager

T: 020 7332 3517

E: [gerry.kiefer@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:gerry.kiefer@cityoflondon.gov.uk)