

**REPORT TO : GREATER GWENT CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE**

**DATE : 15 MARCH 2017**

**PURPOSE : REVIEW OF FEES AND REVENUE ESTIMATES FOR 2017/18**

### **1. Introduction**

This report is intended to:

1. outline the draft revenue estimates for 2017/18. These are included in detail at Appendix A.
2. propose Cremation fee increases commencing on the 1 April 2017. Details of our proposals are included at Appendix B.

### **2. Revenue estimates 2017/18**

The draft estimates for 2017/18 outlined at Appendix A show a planned surplus of £709,287. Key factors to note are:

- Employee costs reflect a 1% increase which applies to the local government sector.
- The only inflationary increases applied are:
  - a) Energy costs 5%
  - b) Rates 2%
  - c) Refuse collection 8.2%
  - d) Insurances 2%

\*\* No increase in cremation fees has been reflected in these figures, so further surpluses could be generated by an increase in fees.

### **3. Fee Increases 2017/18**

Given the continuing financial challenges that local government is currently facing, we are recommending that the Committee considers increasing the Cremation fees to be more consistent with other Welsh authorities.

This will ensure that the Crematorium is on a firm financial footing going forward, and can continue to provide a reasonable distribution back to its member Authorities.

A number of options for fee increases are considered at Appendix B. Having considered the Cremation Society of Great Britain published statistics, we would recommend a fee increase of 3% at this time.

#### **4. Recommendations**

It is recommended that :-

- a) the estimates for 2017/18 are approved,
- b) crematorium fees are increased by 3%, excluding memorial items
- c) the introduction of a £10 charge for copies of certificates is approved(cremation certificates and photocopies of registrar's disposal certificates)
- d) a distribution of £750,000 be made, prior to the financial year end, retaining a sufficient level of reserves to cover any emergency works.

Meirion Rushworth  
Honorary Treasurer

## GREATER GWENT CREMATION JOINT COMMITTEE

## ESTIMATES 2017/18

	Estimate 2015/16 £	Estimate 2016/17 £	Estimate 2017/18 £
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	275,387	278,127	280,896
Premises	277,642	284,067	290,959
Transport	3,134	3,134	3,157
Supplies & Services	203,853	204,321	204,821
Mercury Abat.Capital Costs	110,000	110,000	110,000
Capital Financing	62,000	62,000	62,000
	<u>932,015</u>	<u>941,649</u>	<u>951,833</u>
<b>Income</b>	(1,599,120)	(1,599,120)	(1,599,120)
Operating (Surplus)/Deficit	<u>(667,105)</u>	<u>(657,471)</u>	<u>(647,287)</u>
Capital Charge Adjustment	(62,000)	(62,000)	(62,000)
(Surplus)/Deficit for year	<u><u>(729,105)</u></u>	<u><u>(719,471)</u></u>	<u><u>(709,287)</u></u>

## APPENDIX B

**REPORT TO : GREATER GWENT CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE**

**DATE : 15 MARCH 2017**

**PURPOSE : TO REVIEW THE CREMATION FEES FOR 2017/18**

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Joint Committee received a report on the review of fees for 2016/17, in January 2016, and decided to implement an increase of 10% from 01 April 2016.

It is now necessary to review fees for the coming year in light of our recent review of fees elsewhere in the country. It is proposed that any increase in fees as a result of this report will be actioned from 01 April 2017.

### 2. FEES in 2016/17

The table below shows the current cremation fee in Gwent, in relation to our geographically nearest competitors.

	<b>Basic adult Cremation fee*</b>	<b>TOTAL Crematorium Charges**</b>
<b>CARDIFF</b>	530.00	530.00
<b>GWENT</b>	651.00	651.00
<b>HEREFORD</b>	684.00	684.00
<b>ABERDARE</b>	655.00	655.00
<b>BRIDGEND</b>	623.00	644.00
<b>BARRY</b>	735.00	790.00
<b>PONTYPRIDD</b>	655.00	655.00
<b>FOREST OF DEAN</b>	785.00	785.00
<b>GLOUCESTER</b>	680.32	745.22

\* cremation fee, plus medical referee's fee and environmental surcharge

\*\* cremation fee plus medical referee's fee, environmental surcharge, use of chapel, music (recorded), and scattering/strewing of cremated remains

In 2015/16 Gwent was the 15<sup>th</sup> busiest crematorium out of 278 nationwide, and the busiest single chapel crematorium. It was the busiest in Wales, carrying out 12.86% of the 22,776 cremations in Wales.

Only 76 crematoria have lower cremation fees than Gwent. 201 are higher.

The 6 lowest fees nationwide are:

London (City of)	Local Authority	£380.00
Belfast	Local Authority	£364.00
South West Middlesex	Local Authority	£490.00
Greenock	Local Authority	£522.00
Cardiff	Local Authority	£530.00
West Hertfordshire	Local Authority	£540.00

and the 5 highest fees nationwide are:

Beckenham	Private	£956.00
Chichester	Private	£956.00
Crawley	Private	£956.00
Leatherhead	Private	£956.00
Nuneaton	Private	£956.00

### 3. FEES for 2017/18

The following table shows the impact of various increases in the fees, with the additional estimated income based on cremations of 2872

<b>% increase</b>	<b>Revised Fee</b>	<b>Additional estimated income</b>
3%	£671	£57,440
5%	£684	£94,776
10%	£716	£186,680
15%	£749	£281,456
20%	£781	£373,360

### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Joint Committee considers:

- a) a 3% increase in cremation fees, excluding memorial items. This would ensure sufficient funding for the Committee to maintain its services going forward, and for a distribution to constituent authorities.
- b) the introduction of a £10 charge for copies of certificates (cremation certificates, and photocopies of registrar's disposal certificates)

**Meirion Rushworth**  
**Honorary Treasurer**