

Report of Manging Director

Minor Variation to a Cremation Price

1 Purpose of report

To ask for approval to vary one of the prices for a non-standard cremation

2 Executive summary

The cremation prices charged by Wellingborough Bereavement Services Ltd were first agreed in 2016 and have remained constant since that time. Pricing of the main cremations can only be adjusted by agreement of this council.

A minor variation on a trial basis to one of the non-standard cremation fees is being proposed.

3 Appendices

None

4 Proposed action: Council is invited to RESOLVE to;

4.1 Agree a minor variation to the price of a non-standard cremation as detailed in the report for a trial period. This price will be reviewed again as part of the annual report to council later in 2019.

5 Background

5.1 The prices for cremations by Wellingborough Bereavement Services Ltd were set by council in 2016. They have not changed since that time and are reviewed as part of the Annual Report, most recently in December 2018.

6 Discussion

6.1 As part of her ongoing engagement with funeral directors the crematorium manager, has been discussing the fees for the less popular non-standard cremations and how to increase their use.

6.2 She was approached as part of this by a Northampton funeral director to work in partnership in providing a low cost funeral for those on a budget. It is proposed to add an additional service of Attended Cremation with a simple service (10 minute eulogy only) at a trial cost of £600. This is a reduction of £75 on the attended no service option and gives the mourners a chance to have a formal short eulogy from a ceremony leader.

6.3 There is currently a CMA investigation into the funeral director industry and crematoria profession which hopes to address concerns over pricing and the costs of funerals. With this increased focus the proposed trial at a reduced fee

until the end of the calendar year will demonstrate how WBS Ltd are addressing the needs of the customers and these concerns over increasing prices of funerals. If the new service proves successful in terms of need, it would be proposed to permanently include it as an additional service offering and will be included in the fees for 2020-2021.

6.4 The Current fees are;

- Standard Service: £899 (child cremation: (up to 16 years) no charge)
- Reduced Service: £799 (to finish before 10am and to start after 4pm) Evening and weekend funerals: £899 (reverts)
- Attended No Service: (no ceremony leader present) £675
- Unattended Service: (direct cremation) £450
- Extended Service: (total length of 1 hour 20 minutes) £200

6.5 The new fee for the trial would be

- Attended Simple Service: (ceremony leader present, 10-minute eulogy) £600

7 Legal powers

7.1 Section 111 of The Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions.

7.2 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 gives the Council the power (subject to certain exceptions which do not apply here) to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the borough

8 Financial and value for money implications

Whilst this is a reduction in the fee for a similar service the impact on the profitability of WBS Ltd is negligible for the trial period and a full financial implications of introducing this as a permanent change will be presented as part of the annual report later in 2019.

9 Risk analysis

There is no significant risk to this proposal at this time.

10 Implications for resources

None at this time.

11 Implications for stronger and safer communities

None at this time.

12 Implications for equalities

None at this time

13 Author and contact officer

Liz Elliott Managing Director

14 Consultees

Senior Management Team
Directors of WBS Ltd

15 Background papers

Previous reports to Resources Committee and Council

