

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services (Housing & Regeneration Services)

Community Safety and Environmental Safety Committee: 4 April 2007

Subject: Clydebank Crematorium – CAMEO Scheme – Further Information

1. Purpose

- 1.1** A report “Clydebank Crematorium – Crematoria Abatement of Mercury Emissions Organisation - CAMEO Scheme” was presented to the Community Safety and Environmental Services Committee of 7 February 2007. The Committee agreed to continue consideration of the report to the next meeting of the Committee to enable further information to be obtained on the financial implications associated with the issue
- 1.2** The purpose of this report is to provide further information on the CAMEO scheme as it affects Clydebank Crematorium with emphasis on the financial implications.

2. Background

- 2.1** The Committee will recall that the CAMEO scheme was the subject of a report “Mercury Emissions at Clydebank Crematorium” to the Community Safety and Environmental Services Committee of 11th January 2006. The Committee agreed :-
- a) that the Council join the Crematoria Abatement of Mercury Emissions Organisation (CAMEO) scheme;
 - b) that consideration be given to the inclusion of the necessary contribution to CAMEO as part of the 2006/07 budget;
 - c) in principle, to the future installation of necessary abatement equipment at all three of Clydebank Crematorium’s cremators; and
 - d) that the Director of Development and Environmental Services be instructed to submit bids for funding at a future appropriate time within the Council’s capital budget process.
- 2.2** Following on from this decision the Council registered with the CAMEO scheme and the £25 environmental surcharge was incorporated into the fee structure for burials and cremations 2006/07.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** When the report “Mercury Emissions at Clydebank Crematorium” was submitted to the CS & ES Committee (11th January 2006) it was anticipated that crematoria joining the CAMEO scheme would pay the environmental surcharge of £25 per cremation from 1st January 2007. It has since been determined that there is no legal requirement for payment to CAMEO of the environmental surcharge to commence until 1st January 2013.
- 3.2** The CAMEO steering group further advises that the current £25 surcharge no longer reflects the costs associated with mercury abatement and recommend that cremation authorities increase the surcharge to £35 per cremation from 2007.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** There are no personnel or staffing issues raised through the subject of this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** The 2006/07 cremation fee (incorporating environmental surcharge) increased by £42 (12.07%) from 2005/06. This generated no reaction from Funeral Directors or the bereaved. It should be noted that with an average funeral costing in the region of £3,200, cremation fees constitute only around 12% of the overall cost and a rise in cremation fee of £42 is a 1.31% increase on the overall cost of £3,200
- 5.2** The 2006/07 basic charge for cremation of £390 at Clydebank Crematorium is just slightly over the national average of £378. The 12.07% increase applied in 2006/07 was much lower, both in percentage and actual money, than other Scottish crematoria. For example, Glasgow City Council increased the average cremation fee at Daldowie and Linn crematoria by £58 or 22.92%. Cardross Crematorium increased their average cremation fee by £52 or 15.52%.
- 5.3** Of the twenty-four crematoria in Scotland, eighteen applied a percentage increase for their 2006/07 fees, the average increase being £35.56 or 10.76%.

- 5.4** It can be reasonably assumed that Scottish crematoria applying a 2006/07 increase of £25 or greater did so to partly take account of the £25 environmental surcharge. The eleven Scottish crematoria applying an increase in 2006/07 of less than £25 will at some point in the future have to make a substantial adjustment to their fee structures to take account of the environmental surcharge. Clydebank Crematorium has already taken this step.
- 5.5** Through advice received from the Federation of British Cremation Authorities and the CAMEO Steering Group, the Council increased cremation fees for 2006/07. Subsequent advice from the FBCA and the CAMEO Steering Group has rendered redundant the need to pass these fees to CAMEO. As a result, additional income of around £42,500 will accrue to the crematorium revenue budget 2006/07.
- 5.6** The crematorium utilises highly technical plant and equipment in order to retain its operating licence, meet legislative requirements and deliver a high standard of service. Maintaining and replacing plant requires a sufficient income stream and the income gain through the environmental surcharge has assisted in this matter.
- 5.7** The Council has committed to installing the necessary mercury abatement equipment prior to December 2012. Taking into account design considerations, alterations to buildings, equipment order lead times, demand on equipment manufacturers, installation lead times etc. it is likely that the latest date that the Council could place the necessary orders would be in 2010. This would be subject to the necessary funds being available to facilitate these significant works. In the event that the Council completes these works, following full implementation of the CAMEO scheme, the Council would receive a payment from CAMEO. Should the Council not be in a position to carry out the work, then environmental obligations would be met by paying the environmental surcharge to CAMEO.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** There is the risk of reduced income to the Crematorium should the Committee decide to discontinue applying the environmental surcharge. In any event, the environmental surcharge must be applied by no later than 31st December 2012 to meet the requirements of the CAMEO scheme.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1** The Council acted in accordance with advice from CAMEO and the FBCA in applying the environmental surcharge to the cremation fees for 2006/07. Subsequent advice from CAMEO and the FBCA means that the environmental surcharge could be withdrawn however the charge would have to be re-introduced at some point in the near future.
- 7.2** Even having applied the environmental surcharge in 2006/2007 the charge for cremation at Clydebank Crematorium is just slightly over the National Average.
- 7.3** There have been no complaints received regarding the 2006/07 Cremation fee structure. The income from the environmental surcharge has offset the costs of major plant renewal at the Crematorium and will offset future adaptations to accommodate mercury abatement equipment.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1** Committee is requested to approve the application of the £35 environmental surcharge per cremation, as recommended by the CAMEO Steering Group and the Federation of British Cremation Authorities.

Irving Hodgson
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Date: 19 March 2007

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Appendices Scottish Crematoria 2005/06 Fee Comparison
Scottish Crematoria Ranking 2006

Background Papers: Mercury Emissions at Clydebank Crematorium -
Community Safety and Environmental Services
Committee 11th January 2006.

Clydebank Crematorium – Crematoria Abatement of
Mercury Emissions Organisation – CAMEO Scheme –
Community Safety and Environmental Services
Committee, 7th February 2007.

Wards Affected : All wards