

SERVICE LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN

COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM

2008-13

Mission Statement:

To provide an efficient and effective service for the bereaved that is sympathetic and caring.

COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

Introduction...

The crematorium was opened in 1971 to satisfy the requirement for a cremation service within a 15 mile radius of Bridgend. The management of the crematorium is overseen by a Joint Committee, comprising of elected members of Bridgend County Borough Council (B.C.B.C.), the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.

Coychurch Crematorium was designed by the late Sir Maxwell Fry, an architect of international acclaim. The buildings are regarded as being one of the most important buildings of architectural note in the county of Bridgend and are Grade II* listed. The buildings are Coity Chapel, Crallo Chapel, Chapel of Remembrance, crematory and offices. The stained glass windows were designed by internationally recognised artists with contributions from artists associated with Swansea College of Art.

Cremation is now used for more than 70% of all deaths and is accepted by most religious denominations. The procedures are controlled by the Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities of which the Joint Committee is a member. The Federation has a Code of Cremation Practice, which it regularly reviews. All apparatus is operated and monitored in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

The crematorium operators are managed by Bridgend County Borough Council's Technical Services section within the Environmental and Planning Services Directorate, consequently, management practice is influenced by that Council's Programme for Improvement and internal policies. This Business Plan has been developed from the plan for Technical Services and includes details and objectives from that plan which effect Coychurch Crematorium.

Richard Fletcher
Assistant Director – Architectural & Technical

**Directorate of Environmental &
Planning Services**

January 2008

COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

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COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

1: Serving our Community

Overall Policies and Strategies

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee aims to ensure that a quality cremation service is provided for the disposal of human remains. Cremation procedures will be carried out with due reverence, efficiently, safely, cost effectively and with adherence to current codes of practice and statutory requirements.
2. The Joint Committee will ensure that the Crematorium and its facilities are maintained at a high standard. The condition of the fabric of the buildings, grounds, plant and equipment will be closely monitored to ensure specified standards are achieved.
3. The Joint Committee will aim to ensure that the needs of different religions and cultures are met. The Joint Committee acknowledges that there will be requirements to provide for different funeral service formats, including non-denominational services and that it accepts the need to accommodate such requirements whenever possible.
4. The Joint Committee will ensure Crematorium staff receive the necessary training to enable them to provide a professional and caring service. Appropriate staff will receive continuous training in cremation regulations and procedures, health and safety, customer care and computing.
5. The Joint Committee will ensure that the administration of the crematorium service is efficient, open and responsive. During normal working hours members of the public, undertakers and other associated professionals will have access to the crematorium administration offices, and staff will be available to assist with bookings and enquiries.
6. The Joint Committee recognises the need to provide alternative and attractive memorialisation facilities, which will compliment features within the crematorium grounds. The Joint Committee appreciates that following the loss of a loved one, grieving is experienced by the bereaved. These emotions can take different forms, one of which is the establishment of and identification with a memorial, which serves as a focus for feelings and memories. Within the Crematorium, provision is made for the establishment of a variety of such memorials.

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Service Profile & Resources

Strengths and Areas for Development

- **Strengths –**
 - Attractive and well maintained crematorium
 - Quality of bereavement service standards acknowledged by user satisfaction questionnaires
 - Committed, well qualified and experienced staff, focused on customer care.
 - Averaging 1800 cremations per annum. 45% from Bridgend, 37% Vale of Glamorgan, 15% from Rhondda Cynon Taff and 3% Others
 - Service generates income to remain self financing

- **Challenges –**
 - Establishment of a private sector crematorium in close proximity to Coychurch
 - Influenza Pandemic

- **Areas for Development –**
 - Improve IT systems to benefit from efficiencies in future technology.
 - Improve chapel facilities
 - Develop infrastructure to serve the new extension to the memorial gardens
 - Extend memorisation into adjoining land
 - Refurbish toilet facilities
 - Future re-build of cremators and possible installation of mercury abatement plant
 - Investigate air movement within main chapel.
 - Maintenance of Crematorium Lodge

Financial resources / systems

- The service has a net revenue budget of £647k for 2007/08. A breakdown of this budget by service is given in **Section 5**.

- ICT systems used by the Service is:
 - Gower Epilog
 - Cedar Financials (controlled Corporately)

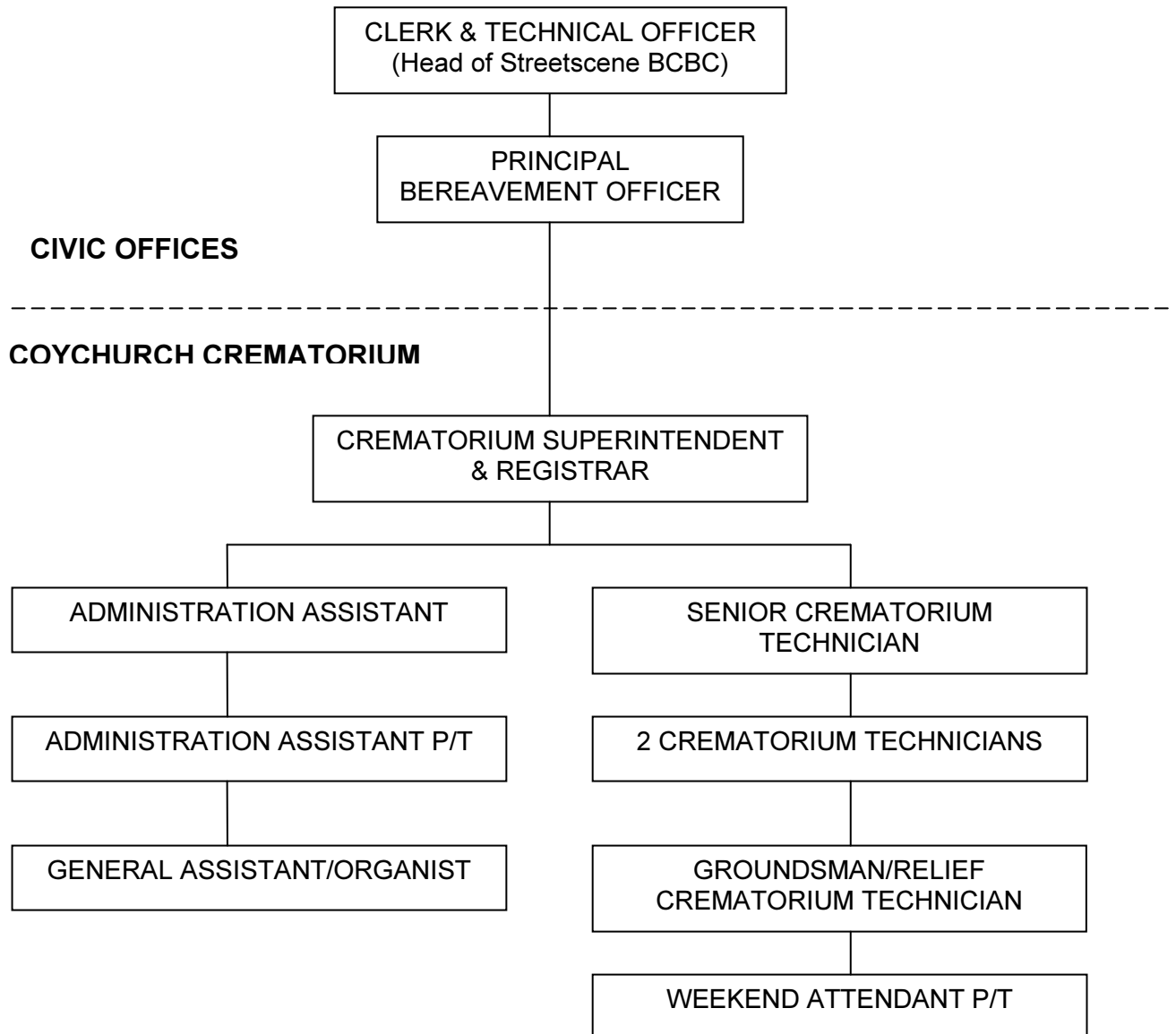
Service Users

- The service does not distinguish between residents and non-residents.

COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

Staffing

The Service employs 7 full time employees and 2 part time employees, working at Coychurch Crematorium. The Crematorium Technical Officer and Principal Bereavement Officer support the service and are located at Bridgend County Borough Council's Civic Offices.



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OPENING HOURS

The Crematorium Office hours of opening are:-

Monday to Thursday	9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.
Friday	9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.
Saturday	9.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.

The Crematorium Grounds hours of opening are:-

SUMMER PERIOD - From last Sunday in March to the last Saturday in October.

Monday to Friday	9.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m.
Saturday	9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.
Sunday and Bank Holidays	10.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

WINTER PERIOD - From last Sunday in October to the last Saturday in March

Monday to Thursday	9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.
Friday & Saturday	9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.
Sunday and Bank Holidays	10.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

Memorialisation and Resting Places for Cremated Remains

The following are the resting places available to the service:-

- Scatter Lawns with a central courtyard containing wall plaques, vase blocks and columbaria vaults.
- Burial plots with memorial plinths for Welsh slate plaques
- Rose Garden Plots with Welsh slate plaques
- Columbaria vaults with granite plaques
- Book of Remembrance
- Tree dedications
- Memorial Bench Dedications
- Granite Wall Plaques
- Vase Block Placements

The Joint Committee will arrange memorial services for Palm Sunday and Christmas.

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2: Some Recent Key Achievements...

Key Achievements over the past 3 years...

Coychurch Crematorium

- High level of public satisfaction recorded
- National recognition of architectural and landscape standards at Coychurch Crematorium
- Expansion of Waiting Room and provision of disabled toilets
- Development of additional car parking facilities
- Development of new office facilities
- Purchase of land for extension of memorial gardens

Performance Management

The crematorium circulates a questionnaire to all applicants for cremations. The results from these returns remain consistently high with an overall satisfaction of good or excellent as indicated below:-

2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
100%	100%	99.25%

Local Performance Indicators

As part of B.C.B.C.'s performance management procedures, a local performance indicator has been identified for Coychurch Crematorium. The indicator relates to user satisfaction which is reported annually to the Joint Committee. The current targets are:-

2007/08	2008/09
100%	100%

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3: Challenges facing the Service

Establishment of Private Sector Crematorium

The provision of another crematorium in close proximity to Coychurch Crematorium would reduce the number of cremations undertaken by this establishment. This could affect the financial arrangements of the service and the level of maintenance.

Influenza Pandemic

A contingency plan has been developed for the crematorium service.

Any additional provision within that plan would require the co-operation of existing and temporary staff to potentially operate a 24 hour service.

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4: Priorities for Future Service Development

IT Improvements

Upgrade the existing cremation booking and recording system to provide modern and efficient administration procedures

Improvements to Crallo Chapel

The ministers' stand and catafalque area requires attention to update and enhance its appearance.

Maintenance of Crematorium Lodge

A recent survey of the lodge has identified defects, some of which require immediate attention. Some work was undertaken in 2007/08 but further projects will have to be completed to maintain this building .

Refurbishment of Toilets in Flower Court and Coity Chapel

Improve the toilet facilities within the flower court at the exit to the main chapel and adjacent to Coity Chapel in compliance with Disability Discrimination Act standards

Develop Infrastructure for New Extension

Construct an access road and additional car parking into adjoining land, which will allow the expansion of the memorialisation gardens

Replace Heating in Coity Chapel

The heating system within Coity Chapel has not been replaced since the crematorium was first opened. A recent inspection by a Mechanical Engineer has indicated that the equipment is not efficient and requires replacement.

Vestry Improvements

This area of the crematorium has been used as an administrative storage area, as well as allowing Ministers a room to prepare themselves before the service commences. Improved storage facilities are necessary with a separate room for ministers.

Surface Garden of Remembrance Footpaths

The surfacing to the footpaths within the Garden of Remembrance were never completed, due to the financial constraints at that time. This memorialisation area is now in regular use and the footpaths should now be completed.

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Extend Memorialisation into New Land

Prepare a memorial area inside the new land extension, which will provide a sympathetic and sustainable memorialisation garden

Investigate Air movement in Crallo Chapel

Review the air movement in the main chapel to provide an improved environment for attendees.

Upgrade of Cremators

The current cremators are due for re-construction in 2012. This is being investigated and detailed costs will be provided when options are available for discussion. Mercury Abatement plant will be considered in discussions to ensure that adequate provision is made at the appropriate time.

CAMEO

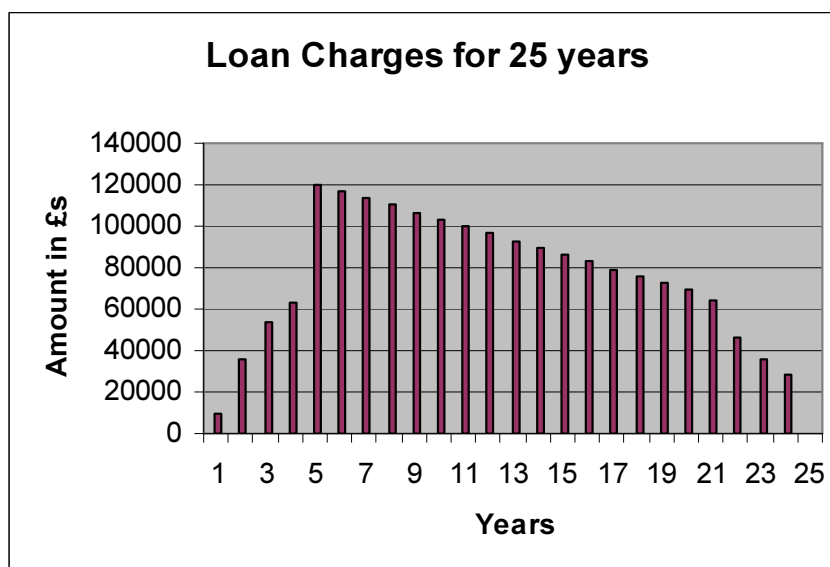
Contributions towards the CAMEO scheme will commence on 1 January 2013.

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PHASING OF IMPROVEMENTS 2008 – 2013

The cremation fee for 2007/08 is £298.30 with an agreed increase to £350.00, effective from 1 April 2008. The national average for 2007/08 is approximately £400. Increasing the fee further to generate surplus income for the service would fund larger projects within the crematorium grounds and bring the fee level in line with national standards by 2012/13, when the Cameo levy of £32 per cremation comes into operation. This levy will reduce annual yield from the fee increase by £54,000 from 1/1/2013 onwards. The table below indicates an estimate for known improvements required within the period 2008-2013. There are several options financing these projects, the favoured option is to increase annual fees by £25.00 per annum (exclusive of annual inflation). **Table 1** shows the effect on the revenue surplus of adopting this method. These increases in fees are shown in the final row. The table shows that this method is affordable and the most prudent, as it does not burden the service with debt charges for future years.

Any loan to finance the expenditure would need to be undertaken by the host authority, Bridgend C.B.C. to whom the Committee would need to pay loan charges for 25 years. The total additional loan charges would be £1,853,185 over this period, peaking at £120,320 in 2013/14, reducing to £64,475 by 2032/33 and finally being extinguished in 2036/37. The chart below indicates the resulting debt burden.



In the past, some capital expenditure has been financed by precepting the constituent authorities for capital contributions. If the large expenditure in years 2011/12 and 2012/13 for cremators were to be financed in this way, it would mean contributions pro rata to usage as shown in the following table. It is not thought that this option would be favoured by authorities as it would add to the amount to be raised by Council Tax rather than fees and charges.

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Authority	Proportion %	2011/12 £000	2012/13 £000	Total £000
Bridgend CBC	43.7	43.7	236.0	279.7
Vale of Glamorgan CBC	39.5	39.5	213.2	252.7
Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	16.8	16.8	90.8	107.6
Total	100	100	540	640

Other financing options include leases for the purchase of cremators and operational leases, which include purchase and maintenance. These have the advantage of equalising annual payments for up to ten years, and alleviating VAT risk considerations for some other authorities, but leases cost more overall as administration, risk and interest considerations are factored into the charges.

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TABLE 1

Narrative	Expenditure					Total
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
2008/09						
Upgrade Computer software	10					10
Crallo Chapel Improvements	10					10
Maintenance of Crematorium Lodge	20					20
Refurbish Flower Court Toilets	40					40
Land Extension Design	10					10
2009/10						
Replace heating in Coity Chapel		15				15
Vestry Improvements		15				15
Develop Infrastructure for New Extension		210				210
2010/11						
Surface Garden of Remembrance Footpaths			25			
Memorialisation into new land			30			30
Refurbish Coity Chapel Toilets			40			40
Air Movement equipment in Crallo Chapel			70			70
2011/12						
Preparation work for new cremators				100		100
2012/13						
New cremators					540	540
CAMEO payment (3 months)					14	14
TOTAL	90	240	165	100	554	1124
Cumulative Spend	90	330	495	595	1149	1149
Available from current budget	60	60	60	60	60	300
Additional Revenue from cremation fees	85	127	170	213	255	850
Total Cumulative Revenue	145	332	562	835	1150	1150
Balance	55	2	67	240	1	1
Surplus	103	50	115	288	49	49
<i>Cremation Charge (excluding inflation)</i>	£350	£375	£400	£425	£450	

Assumptions – (1) 1700 cremations per year (2) Starting Surplus level of £48k as at 1/4/2008

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5. Revenue budgets

PROPOSED BUDGET 2008/09

Narrative	2007/08	2008/09
	Budget	Budget
	£000	£000
Employees	219	223
Premises	195	228
Supplies, Services and Transportation	88	97
Agency/Contractors	60	62
Administration	35	36
Capital Financing	50	50
Gross Expenditure	647	696
Fees and Charges	682	751
Surplus	35	55

The budget currently provides approximately £80k for the maintenance and repair of the roads and associated buildings. Some of these funds are spent on routine maintenance work and so there is only a limited amount available for improvement works in each financial year.

COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

6. BUSINESS PLAN ASSESSMENT & REVIEW

This section demonstrates how the Service Objectives referred to above will be achieved by identifying actions required and allocating responsibility for those actions to individuals. The table will be used throughout the period of the plan to monitor the achievement of those objectives.

Directorate Priorities

SERVICE OBJECTIVES	PLANNED ACTIONS	TARGET/DESIRED OUTCOME	RESP OFFICER	METHOD OF MEASUREMENT	Resource Implications
Provide an efficient and effective service for the bereaved , that is sympathetic and caring					
	Prepare financial estimates, monitor budgets at monthly meetings and to close down accounts at year end	March 2009 Keep expenditure within budget	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	Budget monitoring meetings	Staff time
	Schedule, commence and complete staff appraisals	March 2009 Link individuals needs to objectives	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	DMTs	Staff time
	Review the training needs of staff and develop the Departmental Training Plan	March 2009 Development of staff to improve their performance	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	DMTs	Staff time
	Maintain and monitor Performance Indicators	March 2009 Identify areas where performance may not be achieving targets	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	Team meetings	Staff time
	Use the Council's Attendance Policy to address any difficulties with absences	March 2009 Address individual staff issues with HR	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	Review meetings	Staff time

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SERVICE OBJECTIVES	PLANNED ACTIONS	TARGET/DESIRED OUTCOME	RESP OFFICER	METHOD OF MEASUREMENT	Resource Implications
	Support managers in achieving the Directorate correspondence response targets	March 2009 Word processing completed on time to an acceptable standard	Admin Staff	Team meetings	Staff time
	Develop, implement and progress initiatives within Health and Safety Action Plan	March 2009 Achieve required performance levels in health and safety	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	H&S Committee/ Action Plan	Staff time
	Continue programme of Health and Safety Committee meetings for Technical Services	March 2009 Quarterly meetings with appropriate representation to discuss/resolve issues	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	H&S Committee/ Action Plan	Staff time
	Develop programmes of AD and CA safety tours to selected sites	March 2009 Assess Health and Safety performance across the department	Richard Fletcher Huw Jenkins	Safety tours/ audits	Staff time, with assistance from H&S Adviser
	Carry out customer satisfaction surveys to gauge a measure of service delivery performance. To include feedback from compliments, interface meeting and complaints received	March 2009 Address any areas of service not considered as satisfactory	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	Questionnaire responses and complaints	Staff time
	Review the condition, suitability, sufficiency of the crematorium	August 2009 Develop a bereavement service asset management plan	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	Completion of the service asset management plan	Staff time
	Ensure Crematorium operates at zero subsidy	March 2009 Service operates within budget	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	Team meetings, TSPI02	Staff time

COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

SERVICE OBJECTIVES	PLANNED ACTIONS	TARGET/DESIRED OUTCOME	RESP OFFICER	METHOD OF MEASUREMENT	Resource Implications £k				
					08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
<i>IT Improvements</i>	<i>Introduce Epilog System in Crematorium in collaboration with Council's Bereavement Services</i>	<i>April 2009</i>	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	<i>Successful Installation</i>	10				
<i>Infrastructure for Extension of Memorial Area</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Commission detailed drawings</i> • <i>Tender and appoint Contractor</i> • <i>Construction of infrastructure</i> • <i>Extend memorialisation</i> 	<i>April 2009</i> <i>April 2009</i> <i>April 2010</i> <i>April 2011</i>	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	<i>Regular progress meetings</i>	10	210	30		
<i>Chapel Improvements</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ministers stand & Catafalque</i> • <i>Air Movement Equipment</i> • <i>Vestry Improvements</i> 		Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	<i>Regular progress meetings</i>	10	15	70		
<i>Building Maintenance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Maintain Lodge</i> • <i>Refurbish Flower Court Toilets</i> • <i>Replace heating Coity Chapel</i> • <i>Refurbish Coity Chapel Toilets</i> • <i>Surface Garden of Remembrance</i> 		Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	<i>Regular progress meetings</i>	20 40	15	40 25		
<i>New/Rebuild cremators</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Preparation Works</i> • <i>New cremators</i> 		Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	<i>Regular progress meetings</i>				100	540
<i>Budget Strategy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exercise service charge</i> • <i>Annually review</i> 	<i>April 2009</i>	Sian Hooper Joanna Hamilton	<i>Annual report to Joint Committee</i>					

COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

7: Contact Points for Crematorium Service

If you require further information about the services – please contact:

Technical Services

- Huw Jenkins (tel: 01656 643416) / email: huw.jenkins@bridgend.gov.uk

Bereavement Services

- Sian Hooper (tel: 01656 643469 / email: sian.hooper@bridgend.gov.uk

Coychurch Crematorium

- Joanna Hamilton (tel: 01656 656605 /email: joanna.hamilton@bridgend.gov.uk

Finance Officer

- Keith Fowler (tel: 01656 643615 / email: keith.fowler@bridgend.gov.uk