

Meeting of:	COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	13 JUNE 2025
Report Title:	ANNUAL REVIEW OF 2024-25 BUSINESS PLAN OBJECTIVES
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CLERK & TECHNICAL OFFICER COYCHURCH CREMATORIUM JOINT COMMITTEE
Responsible Officer:	JOANNA HAMILTON BEREAVEMENT SERVICES MANAGER & REGISTRAR
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	To advise the Joint Committee on the performance of Coychurch Crematorium during 2024-25, in relation to the number of cremations, public satisfaction, expenditure for planned works, and an assessment and review of the business plan service development objectives.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Joint Committee on the performance of Coychurch Crematorium during 2024-25.

2. Background

- 2.1 Clause 3.2 of the Joint Authority 'Memorandum of Agreement' relating to the Coychurch Crematorium Joint Committee requires that the Joint Committee shall receive a report at the Annual General Meeting reviewing performance against the Business Plan for the preceding financial year.

3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 **Appendix A** identifies the performance of Coychurch Crematorium relating to:

- Number of cremations
- Service standards
- Planned expenditure
- Achievement of Business Plan objectives

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty, and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services, and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

- 5.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with five ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The well-being objectives are designed to complement each other and are part of an integrated way of working to improve well-being for the people of Bridgend. The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

6. Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 There are no safeguarding and corporate parent implications arising from this report.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 These are reflected in the report and detailed in the Treasurer's Annual Accounting Statement 2024-25 which is also being presented to this Committee.

9. Recommendation:

- 9.1 The Joint Committee is recommended to note the report.

Background Papers: None

APPENDIX A

CREMATORIUM ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL REVIEW 2024/25

Number of cremations

In 2024/25, the Crematorium carried out the following cremations:

CREMATIONS (residence)	TOTALS
Borough of Bridgend	954
Vale of Glamorgan	102
Rhondda-Cynon-Taff	370
Others	53
TOTALS	1479

Public Satisfaction

The Crematorium carries out a quarterly review of questionnaire results which feeds into an annual assessment of the quality of service. For 2024/25, this showed that the indicator for the overall satisfaction level, to a standard of good or excellent, remains at 100%. Where necessary, the Bereavement Services Manager & Registrar has responded to the cremation applicant. An analysis of the responses received is indicated below:

SERVICE FOR THE BEREAVED – CREMATORIUM (RECEIVED APRIL to JUNE 2024 incl.)

Responses 47

During the implementation of your funeral requirements, how would you rate:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
The availability of service times	70.2	27.7	2.1	
The arrangements on the day of the funeral	90.9	9.1		
The presentation of the cremation plot	81.5	18.5		

In dealing with staff how would you rate: -

Literature and information given	84.1	15.9
Presentation of personnel	85.4	14.6
General attitude of staff	87.8	12.2

How would you rate the following conditions within the crematorium:-

Chapels	91.1	8.9
Access roads and footpaths	85.1	14.9
Rose gardens and grounds	84.8	15.2
Grass cutting around memorials	84.4	15.6
Toilets	74.4	25.6
Water stations and waste bins	72.5	27.5

OVERALL SATISFACTION	91.50%	8.50%	-	-
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If the cremated remains of the deceased were removed from the crematorium please state why:-

- Wishes to be scattered elsewhere.
- To scatter elsewhere.
- Ashes going in with my Dad in Maesteg cemetery.
- Going in Laleston cemetery.
- Fathers Ashes taken home.
- Undecided on final resting place.
- Placed in family grave elsewhere.
- To obtain token/keepsake, as not possible at the crematorium.
- To await my mother passing he will be kept at home.

What other form of memorialisation would you like to see: -

- I cannot think of any as the day was perfect, thank you.
- None, Thank you.

Do you have any further observations or comments: -

- Everything was perfect.
- A very relaxed and calming grounds.
- There was a slight delay before entry, this was perfect, as we were able to speak to friends of Penelope.
- Better maps of the grounds would be beneficial.
- All was perfect.
- Satisfied.
- The canopy/shelter area at the side of the chapel is a welcome addition, it gave everyone time to chat and greet each other and not worry about the weather.
- Beautiful, peaceful venue with lovely staff, Thank you.
- Helpful, dignified funeral service and assistance provided by staff.
- An improvement to the waiting area where the hearse arrives, or some sort of shield against wind and rain prior to entering the chapel.

SERVICE FOR THE BEREAVED – CREMATORIUM
(RECEIVED JULY 2024 to SEPTEMBER 2024 incl.)

Responses 36

During the implementation of your funeral requirements, how would you rate:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
The availability of service times	78	19	3	
The arrangements on the day of the funeral	89	11		
The presentation of the cremation plot	89	11		

In dealing with staff how would you rate: -

Literature and information given	79	21
Presentation of personnel	78	19
General attitude of staff	86	14

How would you rate the following conditions within the crematorium:-

Chapels	91	9
Access roads and footpaths	92	8
Rose gardens and grounds	92	8
Grass cutting around memorials	94	6
Toilets	91	9
Water stations and waste bins	88	12

OVERALL SATISFACTION	89%	11%	-	-
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If the cremated remains of the deceased were removed from the crematorium please state why:-

- To scatter at sea.
- Being interred in local churchyard.
- To be interred in Sarn Cemetery.
- To be scattered elsewhere.
- Scattering dad's ashes in Kent where he comes from.
- Interment in dad's local cemetery.
- Request of the deceased.
- Interment in London.
- To inter in home village cemetery.
- My husband's ashes are remaining with me until I can go with him.
- To bury with husband in cemetery.
- Taken back to family.

What other form of memorialisation would you like to see: -

- None

Do you have any further observations or comments: -

- Very satisfied with how the service went.
- Excellent facilities and courteous staff.
- Amazing supportive staff. Made a very difficult time easy for us. No request was too much.
- Coychurch Crematorium is very well kept, it's immaculate. Thanks to all staff.
- Everything excellent.
- The beautiful, serene surroundings made the day a lot more bearable.
- We were all very satisfied with all arrangements and can't thank you enough.
- Very happy with my dad's service.

SERVICE FOR THE BEREAVED – CREMATORIUM
(RECEIVED OCT 2024 to DEC 2024 incl.)

Responses 39

During the implementation of your funeral requirements, how would you rate:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
The availability of service times	79	18	3	
The arrangements on the day of the funeral	87	13		
The presentation of the cremation plot	88	12		

In dealing with staff how would you rate: -

Literature and information given	94	6
Presentation of personnel	91	9
General attitude of staff	91	9

How would you rate the following conditions within the crematorium:-

Chapels	92	8
Access roads and footpaths	90	10
Rose gardens and grounds	90	10
Grass cutting around memorials	92	8
Toilets	89	11
Water stations and waste bins	86	14

OVERALL SATISFACTION	90.00%	10.00%	-	-
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If the cremated remains of the deceased were removed from the crematorium please state why:-

- My father is at home with my mum.
- To be scattered with her beloved dog privately.
- Scattered elsewhere.
- To be placed with wife in time.
- Scattering my husband's ashes as requested by him.
- To be buried at Maesteg Cemetery.
- To be buried at a different site with other family.
- To be interred at Treorchy Cemetery nearer home.
- To be placed in graveyard.
- To be interred in Laleston Cemetery.
- To be scattered on her parents grave.
- To be interred at a church where other family are laid to rest.

What other form of memorialisation would you like to see: -

- None

Do you have any further observations or comments: -

- We had never been to Coychurch Crematorium until the day of our father's service. We were stunned by the beautiful stained glass hallway leading into the hall along with the wonderful presentation of the grounds. We are pleased that our dad had a beautiful send off in such lovely surroundings.
- Thank you.
- Nice service provided.
- I must single out special praise for the crematorium technician attending the interment of ashes whom, amidst an almost biblical storm, was tasked to inter my husband's ashes. He tried so very hard in appalling circumstances to keep the grave dry. He looked so upset and concerned about our feelings. Thank you, you were totally amazing. Also thank you to the Crematorium office staff member attending.
- Thank you.
- Coychurch Crematorium offers a beautiful external and internal setting for a fitting farewell to a treasured relative.
- All our dealings with Coychurch Crematorium have been better than excellent, thank you very much for making a traumatic experience bearable.
- It was observed on the day of my husband's funeral that the chapel and grounds looked beautiful and was mentioned by many of the mourners.
- Thank you.
- An excellent service, many thanks.

SERVICE FOR THE BEREAVED – CREMATORIUM
(RECEIVED JAN 2025 to MARCH 2025 incl.)

Responses 32

During the implementation of your funeral requirements, how would you rate:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
The availability of service times	71.1	22.2	6.7	
The arrangements on the day of the funeral	100			
The presentation of the cremation plot	95.5	4.5		

In dealing with staff how would you rate: -

Literature and information given	97.4	2.6
Presentation of personnel	97.4	2.6
General attitude of staff	97.3	2.7

How would you rate the following conditions within the crematorium:-

Chapels	97.7	2.3
Access roads and footpaths	95.3	4.7
Rose gardens and grounds	95.1	4.9
Grass cutting around memorials	95	5
Toilets	88.9	11.1
Water stations and waste bins	94.3	5.7

OVERALL SATISFACTION	95.60%	4.40%	-	-
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If the cremated remains of the deceased were removed from the crematorium please state why:-

- To be scattered elsewhere.
- Family wish to retain the ashes.
- Burial in a family plot in a churchyard.
- We wish to keep our son's urn with us for a little while longer.
- To scatter at deceased's desired location.
- To be buried in my dad's grave.
- To be buried in Newton Church.
- To scatter privately.
- To be interred at Sarn Cemetery.
- To be buried with my parents.
- To retain the urn at home.
- Interred with husband at Cemetery.
- As per wishes of the deceased.
- We have our own cemetery grave.

What other form of memorialisation would you like to see: -

- None

Do you have any further observations or comments: -

- First time visitors who attended the service said what a beautiful location, chapel and surroundings and were very impressed.
- The gardeners who maintain the lawns and hedges are always so polite and respectful. For example, one day they stopped mowing so I could lay flowers and they didn't start again until I walked away.
- Excellent service all round, very organised, great communication and very reassuring throughout the process and very helpful. Thank you!
- Beautiful chapel, excellent acoustics and very creative stained glass windows.

- We had a livestream of the service. We viewed this a few days after the funeral even though we were present – sound quality was good but the images were dark. *(Note: The Crematorium's Media Company was contacted as this was an unusual comment – the webcast quality was checked and the images on screen were clear, it is believed the family's computer settings caused the dark images.)*
- Fantastic venue, absolutely beautiful.

Expenditure for Planned Works 2024/25

The Capital Works expenditure for 2024/25 is itemised below:

Narrative	Budget 2024-25 £'000	Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
Flower Court Extension retention	25	0	(25)
Groundworks – Paths to memorial areas	50	53	3
Total	75	53	(22)

Expenditure for the Flower Court Extension was not required as this was completed and paid for from funds in 2023-24, including the retention. The overspend on Groundworks - Paths is due to additional improvement works on site. This is outlined in the annual Accounting Statement 2024-25.

Business Plan Service Objectives

A progress report on the service objectives and planned actions is summarised on the following Business Plan Assessment and Review.

2024/25 BUSINESS PLAN ASSESSMENT & REVIEW

SERVICE OBJECTIVES	PLANNED ACTIONS	TARGET/DESIRED OUTCOME	RESP OFFICER	METHOD OF MEASUREMENT	PROGRESS REPORT
Flower Court Extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feasibility Study Construction / Design Consultants Fees Retention payment 	<p>June 2019 March 2024</p> <p>March 2025</p>	Joanna Hamilton	Report to JC. Regular progress meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported to meeting 7th March 2025, site construction commenced October 2022 and completed October 2023. Retention payment released March 2024.
Additional Paths in Memorial Areas to improve safety and pedestrian access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install Rose Garden Install old burial plot section Install new memorial areas 	<p>March 2024 & 2025 March 2025</p> <p>March 2025 & 2026</p>	Joanna Hamilton	Report to JC. Regular progress meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported to meeting 7th March 2025, new pathways installed in rose garden Jan 2024, accommodated in 2023-24 capital budget. Additional works programmed into capital budget for 2024-25. New pathways installed in new memorialisation area in new land extension Apr 2024. New pathways installed in older burial plot areas Dec 2024. Alterations to drainage and installation of new pathways in new land extension Feb 2025 to prepare new section for future use. Additional works programmed into works schedule and capital budget for 2025-26 to continue to improve safety and pedestrian access.
Chapel of Remembrance (CoR). Redecoration internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redecoration - external Redecoration – internal Stone sealing 	<p>March 2024 March 2025 March 2025</p>	Joanna Hamilton	Regular progress meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported to meeting 7th March 2025. External works, cleaning of stonework, completed May 2023. Internal redecoration works delayed due to flower court extension works (book of remembrance requires relocating to small chapel during CoR closure) and completed Jan 2025. Sealing of internal and external stonework completed Jan 2025.

Courtyard, Garden of Remembrance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional cleaning of stone walls. • Replace coping stones to memorial walls. 	March 2025 March 2025	Joanna Hamilton	Regular progress meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported to meeting 7th March 2025. Additional works added in 2024-25, accommodated in 2024-25 revenue budget. Completed Jan 2025.
External stonework to main buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional cleaning of stone walls throughout site. 	March 2025 March 2026	Joanna Hamilton	Regular progress meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported to meeting 7th March 2025. Additional works added in 2024-25, accommodated in 2024-25 revenue budget. Stone niches to cloister and vestry opposite lake, wall surrounding lake, walls adjoining new flower court, chapel of remembrance and funerary stone at road entrance, completed Feb 2025. • Additional works planned for 2025-26 and accommodated from 2025-26 revenue budget.
Improvements to exterior of Crematorium Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redecoration - external. 	March 2025	Joanna Hamilton	Regular progress meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported to meeting 7th March 2025. Additional works added in 2024-25, accommodated in 2024-25 revenue budget. Completed Feb 2025.
Exit Junction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundworks to improve sight lines 	March 2026	Joanna Hamilton	Report to JC. Regular progress meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported to meeting 7th March 2025, delayed due to flower court extension, reprogrammed for 25/26.
Budget Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually review & revise service charges • Review works programme • CAMEO payments 	Annually Annually Annually (Commenced Jan. 2014)	Joanna Hamilton	Annual report to Joint Committee Annual report to Joint Committee Annual report to Joint Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed, reported to meeting on 7th March 2025. • Completed, reported to meeting on 7th March 2025. • Completed, reported to meeting on 7th March 2025.

