

## Yeovil Crematorium – Revisions to Timetable

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Executive Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Peter Gubbins, Yeovil Crematorium/Area South
Ward Member(s)	Cllr Peter Seib, Cllr Barbara Appleby, Cllr Jeny Snell
SLT Leads:	Nicola Hix, Director, Support Services and Strategy/ Jill Byron, Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
Service Manager:	James Divall, Assistant Director, Strategy & Support Services
Lead Officer:	Robert Orrett, Commercial Property Land & Development Manager

### Purpose of the Report

1. As we approach the transition from South Somerset District Council to the new Somerset Council, the councillors elected to the new authority have undertaken an extensive review of both the revenue and capital budgets for the financial year 2023/24 and beyond. This has implications for some of the projects currently underway in South Somerset. This report identifies the impact on the Yeovil Crematorium Refurbishment and Extension Project.

### Forward Plan

2. This report did not appear on the forward plan, as it could not have been anticipated.

### Public Interest

3. Residents of South Somerset and the wider area will be interested to understand how our plans for Yeovil Crematorium are influenced by the decision of the newly elected councillors to the Somerset Council.

### Recommendations

4. That District Executive notes that -
  - a. The total amount of the agreed capital budget has been reprofiled so that the spend anticipated to be incurred 2023/24 and in following years has been deferred by a year.
  - b. Future spend will be dependent upon an updated business case being submitted to the Somerset Council next year for implementation 2024/25 and beyond.
  - c. The total forecast capital spend for this financial year is £0.700m, spending in 2023/24 is £0.385m and the remaining £3.367m has been reprofiled for 2024/25 and beyond.

## Background

5. Yeovil Crematorium is the only crematorium facility in the immediate area and averages 1700 cremations a year. It supports a large geographic area. The crematorium is managed by SSDC on behalf of the Yeovil Crematorium and Cemetery Committee. The existing crematorium was built in 1970 and is now rather dated and lacking in capacity (for example, the existing chapel accommodates less than 100 mourners).
6. South Somerset District Council (SSDC) owns an 89% interest in Yeovil Crematorium and Yeovil Without Parish Council (YWPC) owns an 11% interest.
7. Project work has been progressed since 2017 to design and deliver refurbishment of the Crematorium by constructing a new chapel, a new waiting room (created from the existing chapel), a smaller secondary chapel and improved parking and other associated facilities, including replacement cremators. The construction project was in the final stages before commencement on site when the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown started. It was deferred due to cost risk and operational pressures linked to the pandemic. Throughout the remainder of 2020 and the first half of 2021, the operational focus for the crematorium was meeting continuing needs for funerals in the area during the pandemic. This was often challenging for families and mourners coping with loss, and also for the staff at the crematorium.
8. Work on the part of the project to totally replace and renew the cremator equipment and install Mercury Abatement plant has been carried out. This is now all in use and only minor aspects of commissioning detail and ancillary works remain. Detailed review of the proposed extension and refurbishment project has continued with close attention to enabling the crematorium services to continue to be provided throughout. This is a challenge to achieve and the potential for the project to require a far longer than typical period on site potentially creates additional financial risks to both the council clients and the contractor in a difficult and volatile construction market.
9. A report to Full Council in February 2022 recommended that the total project budget was increased to £5.721m. This increase gave confidence to the contractor to commit the large amount of time to detailed repricing. The estimate of project cost inflation at that stage was made by council officers. The world and national inflation situation has worsened materially since that estimate was made and evidence prepared by independent construction industry analysts confirm the experience of rapidly accelerating costs. A further budget increase of £0.185m, being shared 89/11% between SSDC and YWPC in accordance with the ownership shares was approved in September 2022.
10. Subsequent to this decision, Executive lead members for the new Somerset Council have reviewed the entire capital programme for the new authority in the light of budgetary challenges and the decision was taken to scale back some programmes and defer others. The Yeovil Crematorium Refurbishment and Extension Project is one of the projects which will be deferred for a year and will require an updated Business Case.

## Next Steps

11. It is proposed that a business case is prepared for consideration by Somerset Council for implementation from 2024/25.



# South Somerset District Council

12. There are remaining committed costs to meet in relation to this project – final instalments to the cremator supplier, ancillary costs on the cremator replacement, committed costs on the construction project, planned works to provide for capacity needs in the Garden of Remembrance and limited short term repair needs with the main building project deferred. These costs are reflected in table 1 below.

## Financial Implications

13. The total approved remaining capital budget for this project remains at £4.452m. The Revised Estimates (Quarter 2 budget monitoring position) approved by Full Council in December 2022 assumed that £1.085m would be spent this year with the balance in 2023/24 (see table one below). The new position which will be included in the Quarter Three capital budget monitoring report is an estimated spend of £0.700m this year, which includes provision for some of the outstanding costs set out in paragraph 12, £0.385m reprofiled from this year into 2023/24 with the balance reprofiled into 2024/25 financial year.

Table 1: Yeovil Crematorium Project Capital Expenditure

	2022/23 Est. Spend (£000s)	2023/24 Est. Spend (£000s)	2024/25 Est. Spend (£000s)	Total
Q2 Budget Monitoring	1,085	3,367	0	4,452
Q3 Proposed figures	700	385	3,367	4,452

## Legal implications (if any) and details of Statutory Powers

14. None

## Risk Matrix

15. None arising from this report

## Council Plan Implications

16. None arising from this report

## Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

17. None arising from this report

## Equality and Diversity Implications

An Equality Impact Relevance Check Form has been completed in respect of the Proposal?	Yes / <del>No</del>
The Impact Relevance Check indicated that a full EIA was required?	<del>Yes</del> / No
If an EIA was <b>not</b> required please attach the Impact Relevance Check Form as an Appendix to this report and provide a brief summary of its findings in the comments box below.	
If an EIA <b>was</b> required please attach the completed EIA form as an Appendix to this report and provide a brief summary of the result of your Equality Impact Assessment in the comment box below.	
<b>Additional Comments</b>	

## Privacy Impact Assessment

18.No personal data will be processed

## Background Papers

June 2017 – District Executive	Refurbishment and Development of Yeovil Crematorium (Confidential)
June 2017 – Full Council	Refurbishment and Development of Yeovil Crematorium (Confidential)
December 2017 – Scrutiny Committee	Update Report on Progress with the Scheme to Develop and Refurbish Yeovil Crematorium
August 2019 – Full Council	Update on the Refurbishment and Development of Yeovil Crematorium (Confidential)
February 2022 – Full Council	Options to refurbish Yeovil Crematorium
August 2022 - District Executive	Yeovil Crematorium Project - Request for Additional Funding from the Corporate Capital Contingency Budget