

Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 002181
Date 13 April 2018

Public Health Funerals

Request:

- 1) Please tell me the average cost for a public health burial funeral in the financial years of:

2015/2016 Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 Average Burial fee
1 January 2016 - £1,490
(Including public grave, funeral director services and ministers fees)

2016/2017 Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 Average Burial fee
1 January 2017 - £1,512
(Including public grave, funeral director services and ministers fees)

2017/2018 Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 Average Burial fee
1 January 2018 - £1,512
(Including public grave, funeral director services and ministers fees)

- 2) Please tell me the average cost for a public health cremation funeral in the financial years of:

2015/2016 Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 Cremation fee
from 1 January 2016 - £1,173 (if Coroner's referral) or
£1,337 if Doctor's fees required

2016/2017 Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 Cremation fee
from 1 January 2017 - £1,187 (if Coroner's referral) or
£1,351 if Doctor's fees required

2017/2018 Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 Cremation fee
from 1 January 2018 - £1,197 (if Coroner's referral) or
£1,361 if Doctor's fees required

- 3) Please tell me how many public health funerals the council has provided in the financial years of:

2015/2016	47
2016/2017	30
2017/2018	33

- 4) Please tell me the total cost of public health funerals the council spent in the financial years of:

	£
2015/2016	57,602
2016/2017	37,489
2017/2018	40,170

- 5) Please tell me how many people you have denied public health funerals and on what grounds in the financial years of:

In response to question 5, it has been established after careful consideration that the Council does not hold the above information.

Consequently, we are unable to provide any information relating to the above, and are informing you as required by Section 1(1) (a) of the Act, that states:

"Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request".

- 6) For this financial year only, please outline your policy on how many family members you allow to attend.

Any number of family members can attend a funeral arranged by the local authority. However, we do not provide conveyance to the funeral, no family cars or flowers are supplied.

- 7) Please tell me what you ask people seeking a public health funeral to do before agreeing to undertake it

The team ensure that an appointment is made face to face with the referrer and a request for information form is completed with them, alongside an application for Local Authority funeral form. Any financial documents are requested and supplied, e.g. bank statements, investment paperwork, a Will or keys to the property if there is one. (A search and inventory may be required). We would put a media release out seeking the family of the deceased (if the referral was made by the Coroner for example) or if it were friend that referred for a Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984, funeral. All attempts to locate family and seek any advance written funeral plans or financial arrangements for the funeral are checked as far as is reasonably possible.

- 8) Please outline your position on returning ashes of the deceased to family members after a public health cremation has taken place.
The next of kin can collect the cremated remains. An indemnity is signed to confirm this arrangement. The cremated remains are held for up to one month, pending a decision. If at the end of this period, (and in the absence of any instructions), the cremated remains are placed in the Garden of Remembrance at the Crematorium.
- 9) Please detail how you make the availability of a public health funeral known to residents - is there a self-referral model or do people have to be referred to the council by a coroner?
Referrals are received direct from the Coroner's Office, but in addition, the Coroner, the Registrar and local Funeral Directors give details of the relevant Funerals department within the Local Authority as required. City of Wolverhampton Council only undertake our statutory responsibility to arrange a funeral when no suitable arrangements for the disposal of the body have been or are being made otherwise that by the authority under Section 46 – (1) Part III, Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984. Our referring partners are aware of this and advise the registrants of the death as needed. A self-referral can be made, a face to face meeting is then arranged and the forms attached completed in those circumstances.