

**NORTH EAST SURREY CREMATORIUM BOARD****6<sup>th</sup> December, 2016****REPORT ON CHARGES**

1. Appendix I to this report shows the current cremation fee; the fee for a two-line inscription in the Books of Remembrance; the fees for roses, and the charges made by other crematoria adjacent to the Board's area. Appendix II sets out the current scale of all charges. Where applicable, all proposed fees include VAT at the standard rate of 20%.
2. The Board, at its meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015, increased the standard cremation fee from £535 to £545, inclusive of medical referees' fees and a plastic urn. This was put into effect on the 1st January 2016.
3. The fees charged by neighbouring crematoria (see Appendix I) continue to show increases, and there is no evidence that a further increase would result in any loss of business for the Board. The Board continues to undertake significant work and made improvements to ensure that its facilities are attractive.
4. A standard cremation fee of £555 (an increase of 1.8%) is therefore recommended. The Board's fee will remain amongst the lowest in the comparison with neighbouring crematoria and nationally (national statistics have previously shown the fee to be in the lowest 5%). Details of other related fees are shown in Appendix II.
5. Charges normally must at least keep up with rising costs and the retail price index excluding mortgage costs (RPIx) has varied between 1.9% and 2.2% over the previous four months. Therefore it is suggested that increases of around 2.0% should apply to charges for popular memorial types, but it is proposed to again freeze charges for some less popular memorial types. Some of the smaller prices have been amended by different percentages, both up and down, to round all prices to the nearest whole pound.
6. The difficulty in fixing charges for memorials is assessing to what extent an increase in fee will reduce the number of sales. Memorial fees have been discussed with staff from Enable, and the changes in memorial charges that are recommended are shown in Appendix II.
7. It is extremely difficult to estimate any additional income from recommended increases in memorial charges as the number and range of items varies considerably. However, if sales remain proportionate to the current year, the additional income in a full year would be as follows: -

	£
Books of Remembrance	310
Cremated Remains Graves	1,090
Other	80
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	1,480
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8. The additional income for both cremation fees (assuming a fee of £555) and memorial charges would amount to about £5,210 in 2016/17, and £18,310 in a full year. Each additional £1 on the standard cremation fee produces approximately £1,600 in a full year.
9. RECOMMENDATION  
That from 1st January 2017, the standard cremation fee be increased to £555 and that supplementary cremation charges and memorial fees be increased as set out in Appendix II of this report.