

Mortuaries Shared Service – Q3 2016/17

1. SUMMARY

The Public Health Act 1936 grants local authorities the power to provide a mortuary for the reception and storage of dead bodies together with facilities for post mortem examination in their respective areas and if the Secretary of State requires, local authorities must provide a mortuary.

The London Boroughs of Barnet and Harrow have each decided that their respective strategies and objectives will be best achieved by establishing a shared Mortuary Service (“Shared Service”), hosted by Brent at Northwick Park Hospital Mortuary.

Barnet and Harrow have commissioned Brent to provide the Service on behalf of Barnet and Harrow. Brent has the power to provide mortuary services to Barnet and Harrow by virtue of section 1 of the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970 working alongside the requirements stated by the Human Tissue Authority and support through the Coroner’s Office.

1.1 SERVICE DASHBOARD

Service Risks	Low	Medium Low	Medium High	High	Reduced/Same	Increased	New
	0(0%)	3(50%)	3(50%)	0(0%)	6(100%)	0(%)	0 (%)

1.2 KEY SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

Key Successes

Parish funeral function for Brent is now under the direction on the shared mortuary rather than adult social care. This provides an efficient service to support those that are unable to make funeral arrangements or cannot afford to do so. This change will result in seeing a significant improvement in the time taken to deal with cases where no next of kin to weeks rather than months. The Mortuary team benefit from a working knowledge of majority parish funeral of cases and already work closely with coroner’s officers, which should significantly improve service delivery.

Key Successes

Through the North London Coroner's group it has been agreed to manage, via the coroner's office, the number of post mortems and storage across Brent and Haringey's sites. This would mean setting a typical daily number to ensure maximum efficiency on days that a pathologist is available. This reduces the chances of post mortems being cancelled by pathologists to due low numbers or excessively high numbers that impact on quality and additional stress on mortuary staff.

Managed a high volume of bodies through the Christmas and New Year period, when funeral directors and cremations were limited. Resulting in a continued service across the Boroughs, ensuring that the deceased and their relatives are treated with dignity and as quickly as possible after death.

Key Challenges	Actions Required
Long term recruitment of permanent staff to replace member resigned in July. Despite three attempts to recruit no suitable applicants found.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using agency staff to ensure service quality is maintained • Review recruitment package to encourage quality applications that is expected to be completed by end March 2017.
Ensuring sufficient capacity to cope with a high volume of deaths either over a short or sustained period, which significantly exceeds the normal operating levels of the mortuary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up meeting with Barnet excess death steering group scheduled for March 2017 • H.M Coroner to produce draft principles for the steering group setting out issues to consider, to contact undertakers to determine their capacity in the event of an increase in deaths and advise of the legal challenges concerning the need for a medical practitioner to confirm cause of death in the case of excess deaths . <p>Brent to determine the business continuity arrangements by end of January 2017.</p>

Key Challenges	Actions Required
Ensuring funerals of people that have no next of kin or unable to pay and dealt with by each local authority promptly to avoid impacting on storage capacity and reputation of storing long term bodies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brent has now integrated the parish (pauper) funerals functions under the mortuary team. Improved local procedures to be completed by March 2017 Mortuary team to press Barnet and Harrow to make arrangements for their cases to be completed by June 2017.

2. Finance

2.1 Revenue

Cost Centre Level 2 Name	Subjective Level 2 Name	Full year Budget	Budget Amount YTD	Transaction Amount YTD	Orders placed	Variance YTD	Forecast
Brent Harrow and Barnet Mortuary	Total expenditure	262,123.00	196,592.22	192,432.85	(3,379.52)	(4,159.37)	248,278.67
Brent Harrow and Barnet Mortuary	Total income	(200,800.00)	(150,599.97)	(178,625.00)	0.00	(28,025.03)	(267,937.50)
Grand Total		61,323.00	45,992.25	13,807.85	(3,379.52)	(32,184.40)	(19,658.83)

Balance of income invoiced in month 12. No expected overspend.

2.2 Capital

None for 2016/17.

3. Customer Experience

Customer Experience description	Comments and Proposed Intervention
Complaints	No complaints about the service received from members of the public, Coroner or other stakeholders therefore no interventions are required.
Customer Survey	Because of the stressful and emotional nature of the service no surveys of customers are considered appropriate. The main stakeholder HM. Coroner and his officers to be surveyed year end, during February for publication in March. Brent to devise questionnaire with assistance from partners.

4. Risk

The 5 X 5 matrix (heat map) below shows the residual risk assessment (probability and impact scores) for each risk.

Score:		LIKELIHOOD					
		1	2	3	4	5	
		Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain	
IMPACT	5	Catastrophic	2				
	4	Major	1				
	3	Moderate			3		
	2	Minor					
	1	Negligible					

Risk Commentary:

There are no risks with a score of 12 and above. There are control measures in place to manage the existing risks.