

Role Profile



Role Title: Bereavement Officer

Service Area: Waste and Environment

Scale: SO1

Reporting to: Environmental Services Manager

Responsible for: Supervisory management of the work of support and contract officers

Purpose

- To be the Council's professional lead and principal contact for bereavement services (excluding those in relation to the Crematorium)
- To lead the delivery of services under the Public Health Funeral Policy, its associated procedures, workstreams and contracts
- To manage the day to day back office operation of the Council's cemeteries and Public Health Funeral service.

Key Responsibilities

1. Deliver and support the future development of the Public Health Funeral Policy and associated workstreams including identifying and procuring related services (e.g. Funeral Directors, heir hunters) as required.
2. Support the development and review as necessary of council bereavement and cemetery policies and procedures, ensuring they are kept in line with all relevant legislation and best practise.
3. Be responsible for the booking of funerals, granting/transfer of exclusive rights of burial and issuing of memorial permits at council cemeteries, acting as the first point of contact for funeral directors, memorial masons and bereaved members of the public.
4. Manage the development, procurement and day to day operation of the service's cemetery management systems.
5. Work alongside the Environment Inspection, Street Cleansing, Grounds Maintenance and Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Teams to ensure the effective operational management of the Council's cemeteries (including woodlands and associated annual memorial planting) ensuring sites are maintained to a high standard consistent with their use for funeral services and by the bereaved under council policies.
6. Work alongside Leisure Development officers to arrange for the placement of memorial benches in the district in line with the council's policy on memorial benches

7. Liaise with Funeral Directors, members of the public and Grounds Maintenance staff to arrange burials and issue Deeds and Cemetery Regulations.
8. Ensure the council meets its statutory duty to keep accurate records of all purchases of Exclusive Rights of Burial, together with precise details of which person is buried within each burial plot.
9. Issue permits for memorial works to masons, ensuring that the dimensions comply with current regulations and that it is signed by the rightful owner.
10. Commission and manage the regular testing of Memorials within council cemeteries to ensure they meet the required statutory safety standard. Managing as necessary for remedial action to be taken as a result.
11. Respond to Family History enquiries.
12. Provide supervisory management, as required, of the administrative and contract staff working on projects related to Cemeteries and Public Health Funerals setting their workloads, monitoring progress and providing motivation and support in relation to these workstreams.
13. Liaise with external organisations including, BW Foundation and stakeholders that carry out works on or adjacent to cemeteries to ensure minimal disruption/impact, to ensure the safety of users and sensitivity to the nature of the areas.
14. Provide briefings on cemeteries and bereavement services to senior managers and Members, both verbally and in writing including monthly and annual reports on burial statistics.
15. Manage Council budgets in relation to cemeteries and bereavement services; monitoring expenditure, advising on the setting of Cemetery fees and charges ensuring income targets are achieved and compliance with the agreed financial systems.
16. Organise the collection and reporting of performance information, service monitoring results and customer feedback in line with council procedures and standards.
17. Deal with Customer enquiries and complaints ensuring they are dealt with to a satisfactory conclusion and in accordance with Council policies

General

18. Develop stories and content for the Council's and related websites, social media and project-related websites to support the Council's communications strategy.
19. Undertake any other reasonable duties as required by the Environmental Services Manager or the Head of Waste and Environment.
20. Undertake when requested administrative duties on behalf of the Electoral Registration Officer and/or the Returning Officer relating to the registration of electors and the organisation of elections i.e processing postal votes, canvassing properties during office hours.
21. Deputise for the Environmental Services Manager as required
22. Consider and implement environmental sustainability as a guiding principle within processes, activities and projects delivered

Specific Knowledge, Skills and Expertise

QUALIFICATIONS & KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undergraduate degree or equivalent years professional experience in a relevant subject/field • Knowledge of health and safety, particularly in relation to use of public open space and cemetery environments • Working knowledge of cemetery and/or funeral management. • Understanding of contract lifecycle management, including drafting, reviewing, and managing contract documentation.
EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience within a bereavement service-related role. • Experience of working in a public service environment. • Experience of managing budgets including those relating to income generation. • Experience of the preparation and monitoring of contracts • Experience of supporting and working successfully within a customer service environment. • A track record of high performance and positive achievement.
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive and determination to ensure provision of efficient and empathetic services to the community. • Skills in negotiation, advocacy and communication, both written and verbal, together with effective presentation skills. • A mind-set that is innovative, creative and achievement orientated. • Able to demonstrate a strong commitment to equality and diversity. • Ability to develop and maintain positive relationships with partners, community groups, the business sector, and the public. • Ability to support the development and promotion of innovative and creative solutions to the challenges facing the council. • Flexibility to work unsocial hours as and when the post demands – late evening and weekend working may occasionally be required.

Key Relationships

- Three Rivers District Council Councillors
- Parish and Community Councils
- Hertfordshire County Council
- TRDC Finance, Legal, Grounds Leisure and Natural Infrastructure and Property
- Community groups and organisations
- Funeral Directors and related professionals
- Members of the public