

# Middlesbrough Council

## Registration & Bereavement Services Charter

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We aim to provide dignified registration, burial and cremation functions which will provide caring and sensitive services to the bereaved members of the community.

### **What you can expect from us:**

- ❖ The deceased and bereaved family and friends will always be our focus.
- ❖ We will be professional and helpful at all times.
- ❖ We will provide an empathetic, professional, and respectful registration service.
- ❖ We will conduct dignified and respectful burial and cremation services.
- ❖ We will endeavour to provide services that meet the needs of the whole community and are responsive to individuals wishes
- ❖ We will maintain a safe and peaceful environment for burial and cremations
- ❖ We will work closely with funeral directors, memorial masons, the NHS, and other organisations to ensure professionalism and high standards throughout the registration and bereavement process
- ❖ We will treat you fairly, with dignity, respect, honesty and follow the Councils Employee Code of Conduct
- ❖ We will endeavor to provide services in consideration of the needs and wishes of individuals, families, our communities and faith groups. However, this may not always be possible and we reserve the right to offer a reasonable alternative service or arrangement.

### **You can help us by**

- ❖ Adhering to the timescales for the submission of documentation, regarding registration, burial, and cremation services
- ❖ Undertaking business activities in accordance with the Councils Standing Orders
- ❖ Treating our employees with Dignity & Respect
- ❖ Providing us with all the required information in a timely manner and informing us of any changes in circumstances.
- ❖ Managing and setting family expectations regarding policies, procedures and timescales

### **Customer Service**

If you need to visit us in person, we aim to:

- ❖ Follow the principles of the Councils Customer Charter
- ❖ Ensure you are greeted by a member of staff as quickly as possible, arranging a private interview room if necessary.
- ❖ Do our best to accommodate any additional needs you may have, in a safe and friendly environment.
- ❖ Ensure that our customer service staff wear named ID badges.

## **Complaints, Queries**

If you contact us by email or in writing, we will aim to:

- ❖ Respond to your query at the first point of contact and if this is not possible, we will acknowledge receipt of your correspondence where appropriate and explain why and let you know when you can expect a response.
- ❖ Reply using plain, jargon-free language.
- ❖ If you have complained, if appropriate, we will resolve your issue informally. Where required we will investigate your complaint further, providing a full response and/or update in a timely manner.

## **DIGNITY AND RESPECT**

Middlesbrough Council is committed to a positive workplace environment in which all employees, councillors, service users and members of the public are treated with dignity and respect.

How we interact with work colleagues, business partners & the public will affect the day to day working environment. Concerns over service delivery need to be resolved in an amicable manner.

## **Characteristics of a Respectful Working Relationship**

### **Include:**

- Polite behaviour – courteous and considerate behaviour towards each other
- Welcoming and valuing people with different backgrounds, cultures, strengths, and opinions
- Freedom from disrespectful, discriminating, bullying, and harassing behaviour
- Working constructively with each other

Middlesbrough Council continues to engage with all funeral providers and families and carries out its role with dignity and respect, positively and professionally.

However, Middlesbrough Council takes a Zero tolerance stance, and will take proportionate and appropriate action against provider who does not treat our employees with dignity & respect or who demonstrate inappropriate conduct towards the Council or our staff.

We hope that a continued professional relationship can continue without the for this and any issues are resolved at the earliest opportunity.

## **Service standards**

### **Registration**

Registration is via appointment only. Customers without an appointment will not be able to complete their business on the day.

The Register Office will endeavor to comply with the following:

- ❖ Offer an appointment to customers wishing to register a death within five working days.
- ❖ All customers will be seen within 10 minutes of their appointment time.
- ❖ A form 9 burial / cremation order can only be issued upon receipt of an electronic Medical Certificate of Cause of Death signed by the doctor, providing it is fully completed and has

been scrutinised and signed off by the Medical Examiner and paperwork has been issued by the Coroner where necessary.

- ❖ If a body is to be taken out of England and Wales, it is a requirement for the death to be registered so that an official death certificate can be issued for travel. A death registration appointment will only be made upon receipt of an electronic Medical Certificate of Cause of Death signed by the doctor, providing it is fully completed and has been scrutinised and signed off by the Medical Examiner. The Coroner will also need to be informed to issue relevant paperwork in order for the registration to proceed. Appointments are subject to staffing and resource availability.
- ❖ Any requests for an urgent faith burial / cremation or an 'Out of England Order' will be dealt with during the week Monday – Friday between 9:00am - 11:00am and 2:00pm - 4:00pm (excluding bank holidays & festive holidays) this is subject to staffing and resource availability.
- ❖ The Registrar will be on call on **Saturday morning** between the hours of 9:00am and 11:00am (excluding bank holidays & festive holidays) to issue any paperwork for any urgent faith burials / cremations or to register a death if an 'Out of England' request is received. **The Registrar should only be contacted once the Medical Examiner has confirmed that the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death has been signed off and sent electronically to the Register Office.**  
Please call 01642 726050 and ask to be connected to the Registrar on call if you require this service.

## **Burials & Cremations**

- ❖ For a comprehensive understand of the Bereavement Service provided by Middlesbrough Council please follow the link [Cemeteries and crematorium | Middlesbrough Council](#);
- ❖ Specific requirements relating to Funeral Directors can be found by following the link [Funeral directors | Middlesbrough Council](#)
- ❖ To allow a same day Burial service to be requested, the Funeral Director is required to provide all necessary documentation to Bereavement Services with as much notice as possible. Without the statutory documentation being provided in an acceptable timescale, we reserve the right to defer or cancel the funeral arrangement.
- ❖ The time for a same day burial to take place will be determined by Bereavement Services with the latest time being 2:30 pm in Autumn / Winter and 3pm Spring / Summer and will be granted subject to the registration of death & Certificate for burial or Cremation (part B) being received from the Register Office or Coroners.
- ❖ We will always endeavor to provide where appropriate, for cultural or religious reasons, a same day burial. However, we reserve the right to refuse such requests where circumstances mean we are unable to provide this, for example this may be due to accessibility to the burial plot, availability of council resources and environmental conditions. Where these conditions cannot be met, arrangements will be made for a burial to take place on the next suitable available date and time.
- ❖ Any requests for same day burials (outside of the normal working week Mon-Fri) must be made between 9 am and 11am with a fully completed application. Any request is subject to the conditions above. Further specific details are available on the Council's Website.