

COUNCIL – TUESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2024

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR P MOULT TO COUNCILLOR M WYATT

“I am interested in the issue of public health funerals, in terms of the overall trend, if there is a cost to the council and whether the authority recover the costs by civil debt proceedings. Could the portfolio holder please provide me with this information?”

REPOSENSE FROM COUNCILLOR M WYATT TO COUNCILLOR P MOULT

“Public health funerals are provided by local authorities for people who have passed away and have no next of kin, or who’s next of kin, relatives or friends are unable or unwilling to make the necessary arrangements for a funeral. They are designed to protect public health and are important in ensuring that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their circumstances.

The Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 places a statutory duty on local authorities to arrange for a burial or cremation where no suitable alternative arrangements are being made. Where there is money in the estate, this is used to cover as much of the cost of the funeral as possible. This can be via money found at the property, selling assets or claiming money from bank accounts.

The figures for the last four years are:

Year	Number of funerals	Total cost	Total amount recovered
2021	5	£6612.00	£4,290.34
2022	5	£7309.00	£4,449.75
2023	6	£5862.00	£2,931.00
2024 – to date	5	£5750.00	£1,450.00