



Bereavement Service Strategy

Title			
Creator	Author(s)	Katie Bargewell – Head of Environment	
	Approved by	LMT	
	Department	Bereavement Services	
	Service area	Environment Services	
	Head of Service	Katie Bargewell – Head of Environment	
	Director	Corporate Director Environment, Communities and Culture – Geoff Field	
Date	Created	01 January 2026	
	Submitted	18 May 2026	
	Approved	?	
	Updating Frequency	3 years	
Status	Version: 0.1		
Contributor(s)	Katie Bargewell (Head of Environment), Gary Welch (Risk and H&S Manager),		
Subject	Bereavement Services Strategy		
Type	Strategy		
	Vital Record		EIR x
Coverage	Middlesbrough Council		
Language	English		

Document Control

Version	Date	Revision History	Reviser
0.1		First draft	
0.2			
0.3			
1.0		First approved version	

Distribution List

Version	Date	Name/Service area	Action
1.0		Bereavement Services and ECS	
1.1			
1.2			
1.3			

Contact: Katie_Bargewell@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Foreword

Bereavement is a deeply personal and often challenging experience, and it is our responsibility as a Council to ensure that our services offer compassion, dignity, and respect to every individual and family we serve. Middlesbrough's Bereavement Services play a vital role in supporting our community through moments of loss, and this strategy sets out a clear and ambitious vision for how we will enhance and future-proof these services.

We recognise that our cemeteries and crematorium are not only places of remembrance but also reflections of the values we uphold integrity, care, and community. This strategy outlines the steps we will take to improve infrastructure, strengthen service delivery, and ensure compliance with national standards, while remaining sensitive to the diverse cultural and emotional needs of our residents.

Through investment, innovation, and collaboration, we aim to create a bereavement service that is responsive, sustainable, and worthy of the trust placed in us. Whether through expanding access, improving environmental practices, or fostering stronger relationships with families and stakeholders, our goal is to deliver a service that truly honours those we have lost and supports those who grieve.

We are committed to continuous improvement and welcome feedback from our community as we move forward together.

Executive Summary

This Bereavement Services Strategy sets out Middlesbrough Council's vision for delivering compassionate, inclusive, and sustainable bereavement services that meet the evolving needs of our community. Recognising the emotional significance of crematoria and cemeteries, the strategy outlines a comprehensive plan to improve service delivery, infrastructure, and environmental performance.

The strategy highlights a number of critical challenges, including ageing cremation equipment, limited burial capacity, and inconsistencies in how services are managed. To address this, it sets out a move towards a unified leadership structure, alongside targeted investment in facilities and strengthened operational practices. Together, these changes aim to deliver a more coordinated, sustainable service that ensures all residents receive respectful and dignified provision.

Immediate priorities reviewing the service workforce to ensure that it is future proofed, improving site aesthetics, and introducing weekend services. Medium and long-term actions focus on cemetery development, cremator replacement, and community engagement. The strategy also addresses compliance with national legislation and industry standards, with a strong emphasis on health and safety, environmental responsibility, and financial sustainability.

Performance will be monitored through annual reviews, stakeholder feedback, and service metrics such as market share, client satisfaction, and staff wellbeing. This strategy reflects the Council's commitment to delivering high-quality bereavement services that honour the deceased and support the living.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bereavement Services are among the most sensitive and emotionally significant functions provided by Middlesbrough Council. They represent not only a practical necessity but also a reflection of the Council’s commitment to dignity, compassion, and respect for all residents during times of loss.
- 1.2 This strategy has been developed in response to growing challenges within the service, including ageing infrastructure, limited burial space, inconsistent management arrangements, and evolving community expectations. It aligns with the Council’s core values, Passion, Integrity, Creativity, Collaboration, and Focus and supports wider corporate priorities such as environmental sustainability and community wellbeing.
- 1.3 The strategy outlines a clear roadmap for improving service delivery, enhancing operational efficiency, and ensuring compliance with legislative and industry standards. It also recognises the importance of cultural sensitivity, equitable access, and environmental responsibility in shaping a modern bereavement service.
- 1.4 By setting out short, medium, and long-term actions, this strategy aims to future-proof Bereavement Services, restore public confidence, and ensure that Middlesbrough remains a place where families can honour their loved ones with dignity and care.

2. Legislative, Regulatory and Governance Framework

- 2.1 To ensure that the Bereavement Services strategy aligns to the Council Plan, the following four ambitions underpin our aims.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
<p>A successful and ambitious town</p>	<p>Attract and grow businesses to increase employment opportunities The strategy promotes investment in bereavement infrastructure (e.g., cremators, memorial gardens), which may stimulate local business engagement—especially with funeral directors, stonemasons, and suppliers—supporting job creation and economic activity.</p> <p>Improve attainment in education and skills By professionalising the service and introducing clearer roles and responsibilities, the strategy supports staff development, training, and upskilling within bereavement services.</p> <p>Ensure housing provision meets local demand While not directly linked to housing, the strategy’s land-use planning for cemeteries complements broader spatial planning efforts, ensuring sustainable use of council owned land.</p>
<p>A healthy Place</p>	<p>Improve life chances of our residents by responding to health inequalities The strategy ensures equitable access to bereavement services regardless of background, religion, or income, addressing emotional wellbeing and social inclusion during times of loss.</p>

	<p>Protect and improve our environment Environmental sustainability is a core theme, with actions such as improving cremation practices, exploring electric/hybrid cremators, and promoting granite-free memorials.</p> <p>Promote inclusivity for all The strategy explicitly commits to culturally sensitive and inclusive services, ensuring dignity and respect for all communities.</p> <p>Reduce poverty By introducing graduated pricing and reviewing funeral costs, the strategy aims to reduce funeral poverty and ensure affordability for all residents.</p>
<p>Safe and resilient communities</p>	<p>Support adults to be independent for longer Bereavement services indirectly support emotional resilience and independence by offering dignified, accessible services that help families navigate loss.</p> <p>Improve transport and digital connectivity While not a primary focus, improved service coordination and stakeholder engagement (e.g., with funeral directors) may enhance logistical planning and digital record-keeping.</p> <p>Promote new ideas and community initiatives The strategy encourages community engagement, consultation, and the development of Middlesbrough specific memorial designs, fostering civic pride and innovation.</p> <p>Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour By enforcing cemetery regulations and addressing issues like unauthorised memorabilia and unsafe memorials, the strategy contributes to safer public spaces.</p>
<p>Delivering best value</p>	<p>Ensure robust and effective corporate governance The strategy introduces clearer leadership, accountability, and compliance with national standards, improving governance across bereavement services.</p> <p>Set a balanced revenue budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan Financial sustainability is addressed through cost-efficiency measures, pricing reviews, and long-term planning for infrastructure investment, helping restore resilience and value for money.</p>

3. Vision and Strategic Aims

3.1 Vision Statement

To deliver a compassionate, inclusive, and environmentally responsible bereavement service that honours the dignity of every individual, supports families through loss, and reflects Middlesbrough Council’s commitment to excellence, sustainability, and community wellbeing.

4. Strategic Aims

4.1 The strategic aims set out the long-term direction for Bereavement Services and provides a clear framework for delivering a modern, compassionate and sustainable service.

4.2 These aims are designed to respond to current challenges, anticipate future demand and ensure that the service continues to operate with dignity within an efficient process and financial resilience.

4.3 The aims reflect the core priorities identified through service reviews, stakeholder engagement and organisational objectives, focusing on improving the quality and accessibility of bereavement services, strengthening operational infrastructure and promoting environmental responsibility.

4.4 This strategic direction will guide decision-making, investment, and service development over the coming years to ensure Bereavement Services remains responsive to the client and service user needs while upholding the highest professional and ethical standards.

4.5 **The Strategic aims are:**

Enhance Service Quality and Accessibility

- Provide respectful, culturally sensitive services that meet the diverse needs of our community.
- Explore extended service hours, which may include weekends.
- Introduce extended service options such as memorial days, advent services and open days.

Strengthen Infrastructure and Operational Resilience

- Replace ageing cremation equipment with compliant, energy-efficient models.
- Address burial space shortages through strategic land planning and development.
- Improve site aesthetics and maintenance to enhance public perception.

Promote Environmental Sustainability

- Adopt practices to monitor fuel usage and maximise fuel efficiency that reduce emissions.
- Explore sustainable memorial options and reduce reliance on granite.
- Align with Middlesbrough's Green Strategy and environmental goals.

Ensure Financial Viability and Value for Money

- Review pricing structures and payment options to address funeral poverty and ensure affordability.
- Improve operational efficiency and reduce unnecessary expenditure.
- Develop a sustainable revenue model through better land and service management.
- Explore service enhancements opportunities and implement competitive pricing structures to regain market share.

Foster Community Engagement and Trust

- Strengthen relationships with funeral partners including funeral directors, stonemasons, celebrants/clergy and service users.
- Promote transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in service delivery.
- Introduce a wider service offer centred on bereavement service support i.e. memorial days, reflections sessions and advent services.
- Encourage public involvement in service design and memorial garden development.

Embed Strong Governance and Compliance

- Align with national legislation and industry standards (e.g., LACO 1977, FBCA/ICCM, NAMM/BRAMM, Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2006, Cremation Regulations 2008).
- Enforce cemetery regulations including the management of private graves to improve the visual appearance of cemeteries and reduce risk and liability.
- Establish clear roles, responsibilities, and leadership within the service.

5. Current Position

5.1 Service Overview

Bereavement Services encompasses both cremation and burial provision, delivered across several teams. As an emotionally significant public service, it represents a visible expression of the Council's values and commitment to dignity and compassion. However, the service is currently experiencing a range of operational, financial and reputational pressures that require strategic attention and investment.

5.2 Cremation Services

The crematorium operates three cremators. An additional two cremators are on site but are no longer compliant with current environmental regulations and therefore not currently operational. A feasibility study is currently underway to determine the most viable options for securing the operational resilience and regulatory compliance necessary for the future business needs.

Environmental compliance is governed by the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2006, the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and relevant ICCM/FBCA guidance. Pending regulatory changes will require the abatement of 100% of cremations from November 2027, adding further urgency to the need for modernised equipment and infrastructure.

In addition to equipment issues, the crematorium buildings require refurbishment, the internal layout and building flow need review to better support service delivery and client movement, reception areas are insufficient for current demand, and the range of memorial options available to families remains limited.

5.3 Burial Services

Burial provision is under significant pressure. Acklam Cemetery has less than one year of burial capacity remaining, placing it in a critical position. Work is underway to extend Thorntree Cemetery, and this new provision is expected to offer approximately five years of additional burial space. Demand for same day and weekend burials, particularly for faith groups requiring immediate or time sensitive interment, creates further operational strain on staff and resources.

Cemetery regulations are not consistently enforced, leading to the increase of unauthorised items on lawn graves and the installation of non-compliant memorials. These issues negatively affect the appearance of cemetery grounds, diminish the quality of the visitor experience, and increase both public safety risks and the Council's liability.

5.4 Operational Challenges

Operationally, the service would benefit from a restructure to ensure priorities are aligned and efficiencies are maximised. Although the service is financially stable, reviewing

current processes and areas of higher expenditure would support stronger financial oversight and improved value for money.

5.6 **Public Perception**

Public confidence in Bereavement Services has weakened, and the service is not currently the preferred choice for many residents or Funeral Directors. This has contributed to a loss of market share to neighbouring providers. Rebuilding trust, improving the reliability and responsiveness of services and enhancing the overall customer experience are therefore essential to restoring the service's reputation.

6. **Strategic Objectives**

- 6.1 The issues outlined highlight the scale and urgency of the challenges facing Bereavement Services. Ageing infrastructure, limited burial capacity, compliance pressures, management arrangement is spread across teams and declining public confidence demonstrate that the service must adapt to meet both present or future demands. However, these pressures present an opportunity for transformation, to modernise facilities, strengthen operational resilience and improve the client/customer experience and re-establish the service as a trusted service provider and the preferred choice for the bereavement care within the region.

In responding to the Strategic Aims, the following objectives set out a clear plan to address the service challenges whilst ensuring that Bereavement Services operate with efficiency, sustainability and financial stability.

6.2 **Deliver Compassionate and Inclusive Services**

Bereavement Services will ensure that all interactions are respectful, culturally sensitive and accessible to every resident, with a strong customer-centred approach embedded across all teams.

6.3 **Modernise Infrastructure and Equipment**

The service will replace outdated cremators, upgrade digital tribute systems and enhance the physical environment across all cemetery and crematorium sites to reflect a high standard of care and dignity.

6.4 **Expand Accessibility and Flexibility**

Weekend provision may be explored, alternative funeral service formats and options, and a wider range of burial options will be explored to provide families with genuine choice and support the changing community needs.

6.4 **Strengthen Governance and Accountability**

A unified management model, with clearly defined responsibilities across all areas of the service, to provide clarity, consistency and improved operational oversight.

6.6 **Ensure Environmental Sustainability**

Energy-monitoring systems, improved fuel efficiency and sustainable memorial options will be prioritised to reduce emissions and support Middlesbrough Councils Green Strategy.

6.7 **Improve Financial Efficiency and Value for Money**

Pricing structures and payment options will be reviewed regularly with a view to affordability and reducing funeral poverty within the financial constraints the Council operates in. Operational efficiencies will be sought where possible to improve financial efficiency and value for money.

6.8 **Enhance Community Engagement and Trust**

The service will encourage stronger relationships with funeral partners and service users, involve residents in service development and improve the service offer to regain market share.

6.9 **Secure Long-Term Service Viability**

Future burial capacity will be planned through cemetery development, supported by working groups assessing long-term risks and investment requirements.

7. **Implementation**

7.1 The successful delivery of this strategy relies on a clear and coordinated approach to implementation. The actions set out in this section translate the strategic objectives into practical steps that will strengthen leadership, modernise infrastructure, improve service quality and rebuild trust with the community. They provide a structured programme of work that addresses immediate priorities while laying the foundations for long-term resilience, compliance and financial sustainability.

7.2 Implementation will be supported by strengthened governance arrangements, cross service collaboration and ongoing engagement with staff, key partners and service users. By aligning operational improvements with the service's strategic direction, Bereavement Services will be better equipped to meet the needs of bereaved families, staff, respond to future demand and uphold the highest standards of dignity, care and professionalism.

Implementation Theme	Key Action
<p style="text-align: center;">Leadership and Governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review service delivery and unify management of cremation, burial and administrative functions. • Define clear roles and responsibilities across all teams. • Establish a strategic working group to oversee implementation and monitor progress.
<p style="text-align: center;">Infrastructure and Equipment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a technical and financial assessment of cremator replacement options, including electric or hybrid models. • Deliver site improvement projects e.g. Signage upgrades, pond refurbishment, enhanced cleaning regimes, client facilities. • Plan and secure land for cemetery expansion at priority sites (Acklam, Linthorpe, Thorntree).

<p>Service Delivery Enhancements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the introduction of Saturday morning funeral services, Sunday Memorial Days and open days, and increase memorial appointment availability. • Review cremation procedures to reduce emissions and support efficiency. • Restructure pricing models to address funeral poverty and improve affordability. • Introduce enhanced competitively priced service options including direct cremations, simple services and cremated remains graves to offer greater choice, recoup market share.
<p>Environmental Sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt low-emission cremation practices aligned with Middlesbrough's Green Strategy. • Explore granite free and environmentally conscious memorial options. • Enforce cemetery regulations to manage unauthorised grave enhancements and non-compliant memorials
<p>Community Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen partnerships with funeral directors, stonemasons, celebrants and service users. • Conduct consultation exercises to involve the public in service design and memorial garden development • Promote Middlesbrough themed memorials that reflect local identity.
<p>Compliance and Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce NAMM/BRAMM standards for headstones and memorials installations and amendments • Update and consistently apply the Memorial arrangements/procedure and Cemetery Regulations • Conduct routine memorial safety inspections and implement a structured, risk-based testing programme across all cemetery sites • Manage public perception through sensitive communication with families, clear signage on works in progress, and proactive engagement when memorials are found to be unsafe or require temporary support or laying-down • As part of a restructure ensure that there is a position that has the responsibility to oversee compliance and stakeholder relationships.

8. Monitoring and Review

8.1 Ongoing monitoring and regular review are essential to ensure that the Bereavement Services Strategy remains effective, compliant and responsive to the needs of the community. As legislation, operational demands and public expectations evolve, the service must be able to adapt, demonstrate accountability and evidence continuous improvement.

8.2 The framework through which progress will be assessed is outlined below. By applying a structured approach to evaluation and review, Bereavement Services will maintain a focus on quality, safety and community confidence throughout.

- 8.3 An annual review will assess the effectiveness of key policies, while a comprehensive strategic review will take place every three years. Additional interim reviews may be carried out when prompted by legislative changes, emerging operational risks or feedback from service users.
- 8.4 The Bereavement Services Manager will coordinate the review process, working closely with Environmental Services, the Strategic Planning Team, Finance & Commercial Services and the Area Care Team to ensure a multidisciplinary perspective. Findings will be reported to the Head of Environment Services and to the appropriate Council Audit Committees, with outcomes also shared with external stakeholders such as funeral directors, community representatives and members of the public where appropriate.
- 8.5 Initial evaluations will draw on a range of measures including APSE audits, client satisfaction results, compliance with national standards, peer reviews, staff wellbeing indicators, community engagement activity and environmental performance metrics. Continuous improvement will be embedded by actively seeking feedback and sharing lessons learned across teams to encourage innovation and enhance service delivery.

9. Evaluation

- 9.1 To understand the impact of the Bereavement Services Strategy and ensure that planned improvements translate into meaningful outcomes, a structured evaluation framework will be used. This framework focuses on measuring performance, engagement, environmental outcomes, financial sustainability and compliance with statutory requirements.

9.2 Service Performance

Evaluation will consider changes in market share to determine whether more residents are choosing Middlesbrough's Bereavement Services over alternative providers.

Client satisfaction will be assessed through analysis of complaints, compliments and wider feedback trends.

Service responsiveness will also be explored, including uptake on new initiatives such as weekend services and direct cremation options.

9.3 Community Engagement

The effectiveness of engagement activities will be measured through the levels of public participation in consultation exercises and interest in Middlesbrough specific memorial designs.

Relationships with key stakeholders, funeral directors, stonemasons and community groups, will also be evaluated to assess the strength and consistency of partnership working.

9.4 Environmental Impact

Environmental evaluation will focus on emissions reduction, including monitoring the effectiveness of cremator upgrades and the “Holding Over” procedure.

“Holding Over” is a temporary storage of a coffin at the crematorium until the scheduled cremation can take place, procedure is followed in relation to communication, if this was to occur.

Adoption of sustainable memorial choices and improvements in environmentally conscious site maintenance will also form key indicators.

9.5 **Financial Sustainability**

Financial analysis will examine cost efficiency, progress in reducing overspend and revenue trends across services.

Affordability and accessibility will be evaluated by measuring the impact of pricing reforms designed to address funeral poverty.

9.6 **Compliance and Safety**

Compliance with ICCM/FBCA guidance, NAMM/BRAMM standards, the Cremation Regulations 2008, Environmental Permitting Regulations 2006 and LACO 1977 will be monitored.

Risk management indicators will include incidents arising from memorial safety issues or breaches of cemetery regulations.

10. **Strategic Delivery Overview**

10.1 Our Bereavement Services strategy reflects our commitment to providing compassionate, respectful, and professional support to families during times of loss. We aim to ensure that cremation and burial services are delivered with dignity, sensitivity, and efficiency, while empowering staff and embedding best practices.

10.2 We will deliver this strategy by focusing on five key themes of activity:

- Acting Together – Working collaboratively with families, funeral directors, faith groups, and partners to provide seamless and supportive bereavement care.
- Supporting Families – Addressing the emotional and practical needs of bereaved families, ensuring clear communication and guidance throughout cremation, burial and memorial arrangements.
- Managing Services – Maintaining high standards in the management of cemeteries, crematoria, and memorial services, ensuring compliance and continuous improvement.
- Keeping Pace with Change – Responding to evolving cultural, legal, and technological developments in bereavement services, including digital memorial options and environmentally sustainable practices.
- Sharing Our Success – Promoting the benefits of a compassionate and professional bereavement service to build trust and confidence within our community.

10.3 A series of actions have been identified that, when delivered, will achieve our vision for Bereavement Services. Refer to appendix 1.

- 10.4 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken to inform the development of the Bereavement Services Strategy and to ensure that the needs of all communities are appropriately considered.

The assessment recognised that bereavement services are particularly sensitive for individuals with protected characteristics, especially in relation to religion or belief, age, disability, and cultural requirements. The strategy is expected to have an overall positive impact by improving the quality and accessibility of services, including investment in modern cremator technology, enhancements to cemetery environments, and a stronger focus on inclusive service delivery. Consideration has been given to ensuring cremation and burial practices remain respectful of different faith and cultural needs, while improvements to site layout and facilities will support better access for elderly and disabled users. No significant negative impacts have been identified; however, mitigating actions have been built into the strategy, including ongoing engagement with communities, reviewing accessibility, and ensuring clear and sensitive communication.

The outcomes of the EIA have directly shaped the proposals and will continue to be monitored throughout implementation.

2026 to 2027					
Objective	What success looks like	Actions to be taken	Responsible person	Target date	Status (Complete/incomplete)
Explore additional services or changes to the current offering within Bereavement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering of directs at a competitive rate. • Offer personalisation areas on lawn section graves • Extend services to include memorial and open day 	Explore the feasibility of carrying out additional services, staff consultation, gathering data and test the market (if applicable)	Bereavement Services Manager	August 2026	
Improve crematorium services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Cremators to improve service delivery against demand. • Compliance with DEFRA Process Guidance PG52/23 by 2027 & ICCM and DEFRA Codes of Operational Practices 	Complete a feasibility study of the cremators condition and understand the requirements for upgrades.	Regeneration - Asset Management, Bereavement Services Manager, Head of Environment	September 2026	
		Options appraisal for the cremators exploring replacement or refurbishment options. Any procurement activity that arises from the feasibility studies will be supported by the Procurement Team ensuring compliance with the Council's Constitution and/or Procurement Act 2023. This report will provide the key decision approval in the event that any procurement is in excess of £250k.	Regeneration - Asset Management, Bereavement Services Manager, Head of Environment	December 2026	
		Installation Plan agreed for the installation/refurbishment of cremator equipment	Regeneration - Asset Management, Bereavement	March 2027	

		ensuring service continuity and minimal service disruption	Services Manager, Head of Environment		
		Develop a training strategy for all staff, updating relevant policies, procedures and safe systems of work to enable staff to conduct the work in a compliant, safe and effective manner.	Bereavement Services Manager	March 2027	
Improve burial Capacity throughout Middlesbrough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient capacity to meet the demand of Middlesbrough Residents. • Maintained and respectful areas for Middlesbrough Residents to mourn. • Improved burial space at Acklam, Thorntree and Linthorpe 	Identify cemeteries capacity	Bereavement Services Manager, Head of Environment	Annual review	
		Explore new sites for the long-term plan.	Bereavement Services Manager, Head of Environment and Head of Economic Growth and infrastructure	Annual review	
		Model burial trends against mortality projections to inform on future demand	Bereavement Services Manager	Annual review	
		Communication in relation to burial preferences and future requirements	Bereavement Services Manager, Head of Environment and Head of Economic Growth and infrastructure	Annual review	

The following actions will be carried out in the expected years as noted below; these will be delivered in line with all relevant compliance and legislation:

2027 to 2028					
Objective	What success looks like	Actions to be taken	Responsible person	Target date	Status (Complete/incomplete)
Policies & procedures that are “fit for purpose” and reflect the risk profile of the council	Set of policies and procedures that are fit for purpose and subject to periodic review	Review the register of policies/ procedures to ensure they are relevant and fit for purpose.	Bereavement Services Manager and Head of Environment	2027 – Review Annually	
	Monitoring performance against arrangements and procedure to identify trends and training needs.	KPIs agreed and reported to MBC chief executive and corporate steering group.	Bereavement Services Manager	2027 – Review Annually	
	Periodic internal audit of all Bereavement Services policies and procedures	Audit all policies and procedures and track amendments	Bereavement Services Manager	2027 – Review Annually	
	Delivery of Bereavement Strategy	Head of Environment to ensure delivery against the KPIs identified strategic plan and where appropriate consult with staff.	Head of Environment	2026 – Review Annually	
Cremator Replacement Strategy	Assessment of the cremators against regulatory requirements completed	Assess cremator conditions and remaining lifespan	Head of Economic Growth and Infrastructure, Bereavement Services Manager and Head of Environment	2026 – Review Annually	
	Completed options appraisal for the current cremators	Explore replacement or refurbishment options	Bereavement Services Manager, Head of	2026 – Review Annually	

			Economic Growth and Infrastructure		
	Refurbishment or Installation Plan agreed	Draft installation schedule, ensuring service continuity and minimal service disruption	Bereavement Services Manager, Head of Economic Growth and Infrastructure	Project review April 2027	
	Staff Training / Risk Assessments completed, and review periods agreed.	Schedule operator training on new machines incl. refresher training and certification.	Bereavement Services Manager	2027 – Review Annually or post incident.	
Burial Capacity	Cemeteries capacity confirmed	Audit burial capacity at each site and section.	Bereavement Services Manager	Quarterly review	
	New burial sites for the long-term plan confirmed	Work with Planning and regeneration to explore sites for potential use of burial sites	Regeneration, Head of Economic Growth and Infrastructure and Head of Environment Services	Quarterly review	
	Communication in relation to burial preferences and future requirements	Draft comms plan for communicating updates with our funeral partners, customers and service users including all faith groups	Bereavement Services Manager	Quarterly review	Appendix 1
Service Improvements	Site specific improvements identified and agreed.	Upgrade the aesthetics, signs and cleaning regime.	Bereavement Services Manager	Quarterly review	
	Stakeholder engagement	Strengthen relationships with Funeral Partners	Bereavement Services Manager	Continuous delivery	
	Service accessibility – Increase the offering of services	Explore options for Saturday services	Bereavement Services Manager	Continuous delivery	
	Compliance and Safety	Enforce the regulations for memorials and update headstone arrangements	Bereavement Services Manager	Annual Review	Appendix 1
	Pricing Review	Review pricing for services.	Bereavement Services Manager	Annual Review	

This document was classified as: OFFICIAL