

Subject of assessment:	Bereavement strategy			
Coverage:	Service-specific.			
This is a decision relating to:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Function
	<input type="checkbox"/> Process/procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Review
	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)		
It is a:	New approach:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Revision of an existing approach:	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is driven by:	Legislation:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<p>Description:</p>	<p>Insert short description, using the following as sub-headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key aims, objectives and activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing service quality, accessibility and cultural sensitivity • Strengthening infrastructure and operational resilience, including replacement of cremation equipment and addressing burial capacity pressures • Promoting environmental sustainability through reduced emissions and sustainable memorial options • Ensuring financial sustainability and affordability, including addressing funeral poverty • Improving governance, leadership and compliance with national standards • Rebuilding public confidence and strengthening stakeholder relationships • Statutory drivers (set out exact reference) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 • Cremation Regulations 2008 • Environmental Protection Act 1990 • Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order (LACO) 1977 • ICCM / FBCA guidance and codes of practice • NAMM / BRAMM standards for memorial safety and installation • Differences from any previous approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving to a unified leadership structure • Addressing longstanding infrastructure issues (e.g. non-compliant cremators, limited burial space) • Introducing new service options (e.g. weekend services, expanded memorial offerings) • Strengthening environmental sustainability commitments • Embedding structured performance monitoring and evaluation • Focusing on affordability and reducing funeral poverty • Increasing community engagement and co-design of services • Key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries (internal and external as appropriate) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Environment services and wider council teams Elected members and senior leaders Funeral Director Stonemasons Faith Leaders • Intended outcomes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved quality, dignity and accessibility of bereavement services • Increased customer satisfaction and restored public confidence • Sustainable and compliant cremation and burial provision • Sufficient burial capacity for current and future demand • Reduced environmental impact and improved site standards • Greater financial sustainability and affordability • Stronger partnerships and community engagement • A resilient, modernised and future-proof bereavement service
<p>Live date:</p>	<p>2026</p>
<p>Lifespan:</p>	<p>3 Year Period 2026-2029</p>
<p>Date of next review:</p>	<p>Annual reviews – within 3 years (2029)</p>

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
<p>Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation?*</p>	☒	☐	☐	<p>There are no identified adverse impacts on individual human rights arising from the Bereavement Services Strategy. The strategy is designed to enhance dignity, respect and equitable access to bereavement services for all residents, ensuring that individuals are treated with compassion during times of loss.</p> <p>The proposals focus on improving service quality, accessibility (including extended service provision), cultural sensitivity and environmental standards, all of which support individuals' rights to dignity, respect and non-discrimination.</p> <p>Evidence used to inform this assessment includes analysis of current service provision, stakeholder engagement, and consideration of diverse community needs. There are no elements within the strategy that restrict access to services or disproportionately disadvantage any group in a way that would infringe on rights protected under UK legislation, including the Human Rights Act 1998.</p>

* Consult the Impact Assessment further guidance for details on the issues covered by each of these broad questions prior to completion.

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
<p>Equality Could the decision result in adverse differential impacts on groups or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equality law? Could the decision impact differently on other commonly disadvantaged groups?*</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>There are no identified adverse differential impacts on individuals or groups with protected characteristics arising from the Bereavement Services Strategy. The strategy has been developed to promote inclusivity, equitable access and cultural sensitivity across all bereavement services, ensuring that the needs of diverse communities are recognised and supported.</p> <p>Key elements of the strategy actively support equality by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring services are accessible regardless of background, religion or income • Promoting culturally sensitive practices, including accommodating faith-based burial requirements and service preferences • Introducing extended service provision (including weekends) to better meet diverse community needs • Reviewing pricing structures to improve affordability and address funeral poverty, supporting economically disadvantaged groups <p>The strategy aligns with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act by seeking to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups</p> <p>Evidence used to inform this assessment includes service reviews, stakeholder engagement, and consideration of community demographics and needs. The proposals are intended to reduce inequalities in access to bereavement services rather than create them, and no groups are expected to be disproportionately negatively impacted.</p>

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
<p>Community cohesion Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town?*</p>	☒	☐	☐	<p>Evidence Not applicable. There are no identified negative impacts on community cohesion arising from the Bereavement Services Strategy. The strategy is designed to strengthen relationships across communities by promoting inclusive, culturally sensitive bereavement services that recognise and respect the diverse needs of Middlesbrough's population.</p>
<p>Armed Forces Could the decision impact negatively on those who are currently members of the armed forces of former members in the areas of Council delivered healthcare, compulsory education and housing policies?*</p>	☒	☐	☐	<p>There are no identified negative impacts on current or former members of the armed forces arising from the Bereavement Services Strategy. The strategy relates specifically to bereavement service provision (cremation, burial and memorial services) and does not directly impact on Council-delivered healthcare, education or housing policies. The strategy promotes equitable and inclusive access to services for all residents, including veterans and serving personnel and their families, ensuring dignity, respect and cultural sensitivity in bereavement provision.</p>
<p>Care leavers Could the decision impact negatively on those who are care experienced?*</p>	☒	☐	☐	<p>There are no identified negative impacts on individuals who are care experienced arising from the Bereavement Services Strategy. The strategy is focused on improving the quality, accessibility and inclusivity of bereavement services for all residents, including vulnerable groups.</p>
<p>Reducing Poverty Could the decision impact negatively on the Council's ambitions to reduce poverty in the town?</p>	☒	☐	☐	<p>Not applicable. There are no identified negative impacts on the Council's ambitions to reduce poverty arising from the Bereavement Services Strategy. Instead, the strategy includes specific measures intended to support affordability and reduce financial pressures associated with bereavement.</p>

Screening questions	Response	Evidence
<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If the answer to all of the above screening questions is No then the process is completed. ➤ If the answer of any of the questions is Yes or Uncertain, then a Level 2 Full Impact Assessment must be completed. 		

Assessment completed by:	Katie Bargewell	Head of Service:	Katie Bargewell
Date:	13.05.2026	Date:	13.05.2026

