

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

Date and Time :- Tuesday, 8 September 2020 at 1.30 p.m.

Venue:- Virtual Meeting

Membership:- Councillors Atkin, Buckley, B. Cutts, Elliot, Jepson, Jones, Khan, Mallinder (Chair), McNeely, Reeder, Rushforth, Sansome, Sheppard, Taylor, Tweed (Vice-Chair), Julie Turner, Whysall and Wyatt.

Co-opted Members:- Mrs. W. Birch. Mrs. M. Jacques.

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view [via the Council's website](#). The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

Rotherham Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair or Governance Advisor of their intentions prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 July 2020 (Pages 1 - 7)

To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 July 2020, as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of items listed on the agenda.

4. Questions from members of the public and the press

To receive questions relating to items of business on the agenda from members of the public or press who are present at the meeting.

5. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any part of the agenda.

6. Communications

To receive communications from the Chair in respect of matters within the Commission's remit and work programme.

7. Town Centre Master Plan Update (Pages 8 - 42)

To consider an update report in respect of the progress on planned development projects in Rotherham Town Centre.

8. Bereavement Services Update (Pages 43 - 80)

To consider an update report in respect of the Bereavement Services contract with Dignity, Ltd.

9. Outcomes from Scrutiny Workshop - Housing Repairs and Maintenance (August 27 2020) (Pages 81 - 82)

To receive a briefing with respect to outcomes from the scrutiny workshop on housing repairs and maintenance that took place on 27 August 2020.

10. Work Programme Update (Pages 83 - 86)

To receive an update on progress with respect to the Work Programme for 2020-21.

11. Urgent Business

To consider any item which the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

12. Date and time of the next meeting

The next virtual meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission will take place on 20 October 2020, commencing at 1.30 pm.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION**Tuesday, 14th July, 2020**

Present:- Councillor Mallinder (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Birch, Buckley, Elliot, Jacques, Jones, Khan, McNeely, Reeder, Rushforth, Sansome, Sheppard, Taylor, Julie Turner, Tweed, Whysall, and Wyatt.

Also present were Co-optees representing Rotherfed Ms. M. Jacques and Ms. K. Bacon.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B. Cutts; Jepsen; and Beck, the Cabinet Member for Housing.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-

<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

75. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 9 JUNE 2020

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 9 June 2020, were approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

76. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A personal interest was declared in respect of Council tenancy by Councillor Rose McNeely.

77. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions submitted from members of the press or public.

78. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items of business for which it was necessary to exclude members of the press or public.

79. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications presented.

80. HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY 2019-22 - PROGRESS UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report providing a progress update on performance within the 2019-20 reporting period and the first two months of 2020-2021, up to the end of May 2020. The six key aims of the Strategy were identified: to support people with complex needs; to prevent homelessness and offer rapid housing solutions; to increase support prevent homelessness among young people; to end rough sleeping and begging in Rotherham; to improve access to tenancy support,

employment and health support services; and to ensure there is enough emergency accommodation. Progress toward these aims was outlined in the report, by means of graphs and charts of performance figures. These figures indicated that this year has presented 15% more cases of homelessness than the previous year. This increase is due to legislation now being embedded such that other agencies were now referring homeless people to the service. Escalation triggers had therefore been introduced to flag business critical areas so that responses and resources could be deployed to implement solutions. Caseloads had started to increase towards the end of March 2020; however, the average caseload reduced when more staff were subsequently recruited to the team—with further staff expected to be recruited in the next six months. Figures were presented as to both increasing and declining trends in homelessness, and the three-phase response method was illustrated. Progress against each of the Strategy's six aims was specified and projections for expansions and partnership efforts in the coming six months were described.

In discussion, Members requested that assurances be provided that the end of the evictions embargo would not bring demand beyond what can be accommodated. Officers provided assurances that more staff were being recruited and trained and would be ready to meet any demand. The courts were taking a gradual approach to conduct a set number per week. The Council will have three of those slots per week. It has been made clear that unless there are extreme circumstances the preference would be in favour of defendants. As for private-landlord tenants who have been served notice, the team were already working with those individuals. There was a sophisticated dashboard that was in regular use for monitoring trends as they emerged.

Members also requested clarification around how long it might be before households in temporary accommodation could be provided with something more permanent. Officers provided assurances that the service had already accommodated many of the people in need. It was clarified that it had not been the same people throughout the measurement period who had made up the total number tallied. The people all had had move on plans. A twice-weekly visit was conducted for documentation and monitoring service delivery such as meals provision. Everyone was moved on to more permanent housing as soon as possible.

Members asked if there was a way to route charity funds toward Shiloh. Officers explained that funding sources were never guaranteed, although funding had increased over the last few years. In cases where staff salaries were grant funded, those jobs were not secure, and staff often left for jobs with better security. Thankfully, Rotherham had brought funding in, for example, from Crisis UK. It was noted that the Service strived to draw funding from a variety of sources, not only Council funding. The benefits of raise awareness of the services that are available and actively helping people was also emphasised, in hopes that more people would know where they can give moneys that really help the people who are

most in need. It was noted that a significant accomplishment of the Housing Team has been to bring in bids to meet the need. It was also noted that the staff in the team often moved on to promotion in other teams. Although the team would never be able to get years upon years of guaranteed funding, the team would continue to be resourceful to meet the need. It was suggested that officers would provide an answer in writing regarding the process when renters cannot continue to rent because the landlord wishes to sell.

Members requested further elaboration around the partnership with Shiloh. Officers explained the day-to-day operational collaborations with Shiloh, including the initial arrangement of a phone call or a visit with anyone whom Shiloh thinks could use the help of the service. Under normal circumstances, an outreach surgery was held at Shiloh up to twice a week, with the goal of expanding to three times a week once staffing allows. During the pandemic, Shiloh has provided meals, speaking to officers each day to ascertain the number of meals needed, etc. Together with Shiloh, the team had collaboratively looked for funding to help people find support for private-rented accommodation.

Additional clarification was requested regarding the reason for a spike in homelessness among people in the 25-40 age group. In response, it was stated that the primary demographic is single males with the primary cause of relationship breakdown.

Members commended the efforts of the Homelessness Team and observed that the Homelessness Team were doing excellent work.

Resolved:-

1. That the progress update in respect of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy be noted.

81. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - RENTS AND SERVICE CHARGES - RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC AND FUTURE PROVISION

Consideration was given to a report outlining the success of the new service model for the Housing Income Recovery Service, which was restructured in 2018; the response to the pandemic; and the development of future provision. The Transformation Programme was designed to reflect current thinking in the field and had been built upon a set of principles encompassing contemporary operational practices, placing the customer at the heart of the service delivery model, despite the service having the ability to deliver life changing sanctions.

The outcome of the 2018 Transformation Programme was to create a Housing Income Recovery Service, restructured and very specifically focussed on maximising housing income in all its forms, with a joining up of responsibility for the collection of both current and former tenants' rent

arrears. In addition, a new and better-equipped Financial Inclusion and Tenancy Support Service was created. This part of the service developed and delivered practical interventions and projects to enable tenants to get the maximum benefit from their income.

In 2019, the Advocacy and Appeals Team also became part of the Financial Inclusion Service, to deliver debt advice and specialist benefit advice to people living with cancer. The appeals part of the service supported people with appeals on Employment Support Allowance (ESA). It was shown through quantitative figures and qualitative individual narratives that the Appeals part of the service has a strong performance record of making a difference in material outcomes for individuals.

The success of the transformation of the Housing Income Service was demonstrated through performance data. Although official year-end data was forthcoming via Housemark, RMBC outperformed all others in the Northern Benchmarking group (which include organisations such as Sheffield CC, Hull CC, Wakefield, St Leger Homes, Nottingham) on rent collection. At the end of the 2019/20 financial year, rent collection was the highest for over a decade.

Facts and figures were presented to show how many properties of which types the Council managed as well as information around how the pandemic had affected rents collection and tenant arrears. It was remarked that there had been on average a £5.17 decrease in the balance of residents in arrears. It was noted that the team had won awards and had developed a reputation for sharing good practice.

It was observed that the period of the pandemic and initial recovery had shown that the service was not only high performing but also able to flex to meet the needs of its customers with staff maintaining high levels of performance while working from home. It was noted that practical support and advice had been developed and sent to all tenants through a leaflet developed in response to the pandemic. Collaborations had been undertaken with the Employment Solutions Team within Financial Inclusion to help meet the emerging needs of tenants following the pandemic. These efforts included provision of technology courses and support for finding work opportunities, preparing for interviews, or with moving to an area where work could be obtained. Other efforts including redeployment of staff to meet the demand for Universal Credit applications processing were also described. Finally, it was advised that projections for the future could be made only cautiously, as the pandemic continued to play out with possible extended furloughs and the possibility of debt that could be offset by Universal Credit or other benefits.

In discussion, Members commended the teams for their work. Appreciation for the information design in the leaflet was also expressed.

Members requested additional clarification around whether arrears were caused by the Bedroom Tax. Assurances were provided that clear

communication was maintained with tenants about what their responsibilities would be and any financial implications for the Bedroom Tax on residents would be clear. This tax was only on those who are on UC or Housing Benefit who were not of retirement age, which means many tenants are not responsible to pay it. Nevertheless, support was provided to tenants if needed. Ultimately, it was a political decision whether or not the Bedroom Tax was collected, which was outside the purview of officers.

Members also inquired as to the trigger points that the team were monitoring to ensure the earliest, most effective response. It was clarified that a sophisticated IT kit, operating on a series of algorithms, was utilised to track tenant payment history over the past 12 months. The kit identified changes in payment behaviour, so that at the point of need, the team could draw on that intelligence to take the recommended action to support the tenant. The team also were responsible to follow government protocols, which require the consideration of factors such as whether the tenant in question has been identified as a vulnerable tenant, for example. The importance of keeping people with a roof over their heads was emphasised, and not only for the cost savings involved; therefore, the team strive to sustain tenancies even under these kinds of circumstances. Nevertheless, there were some tenants who could not and would not pay, and as a last resort those cases would have to go to court, albeit as a last resort.

Further inquiry was made into the measures in place that ensure the team are operating on the very latest information from government. The response explained that the team utilised a number of training platforms to ensure every staff member kept current with the latest information and best practice. It was noted that the Financial Inclusion team leader had continued to conduct virtual training Teams meetings on the changing government guidance throughout the pandemic so that all team members stayed fully informed.

Members also expressed curiosity as to how the team responded to residents who preferred to pay in cash. In response, officers noted that while cash is an option, the preferred method of payment was now by recurrent debit card payment rather than by bank transfer, because this payment type precluded additional fees to the payer if it happened that there were insufficient funds to cover the payment.

A further question was asked about the possibility of investigating a specific individual case, to which it was agreed a response would follow outside of the meeting.

Further elaboration was requested around expanding the appeals team based on the profound positive effects of their work so far. Officers responded that a further staff member would be recruited to be added to the team as an initial measure. It was noted that the team were recently relocated from R&E into Housing Financial Inclusion, which represented a

change from a corporate service to a service now available more broadly to all tenants and residents. This restructuring formed part of the next phase of the Advice Service Review.

Members also expressed interest in more information about how the Service responded to debts of people on Universal Credit. In response, officers provided assurances that at the start of COVID-19 pandemic, the government chose to increase the amount of UC people could receive for the year by about a thousand pounds. The service also had supported anyone with a claims benefit to make a Universal Credit claim. Using a system allowing members of the team to directly access and see the status of the claim at any time, the team also helped claimants. Teams also screened potential new tenancies and monitored for any new redundancies at the end of the furlough scheme. Furthermore, eight new staff were being trained to support people into employment and skills training to meet that upcoming need. It was stated that this was because Universal Credit was not the long-term answer, but the answer was to support people into skills and employment.

Members also expressed the desire to know more about the kinds of contracts which would still be possible after the E.U. exit. Officers responded that contracts both temporary and permanent would still be available, and that there were further project announcements through Sheffield City Region through 2022.

Resolved:-

1. That the details of the report be noted.
2. That a further update in respect of Rents and Service Charges be provided in six months or at an appropriate future date.
3. That the outcome of the Advice Service Review be circulated as part of the next update in respect of Rents and Service Charges.

82. IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2020-21

Consideration was given to a revised work programme and schedule that had been compiled in consultation with officers and Members. It was emphasised that an update in respect of progress toward the priorities would be provided at subsequent meetings of the Commission. It was emphasised that these priorities also have been planned with a degree of flexibility built in to accommodate matters that may come up, especially as the Council responds to the current pandemic situation. Members and officers were thanked for their contributions to the work programme.

Resolved:-

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION- 14/07/20

1. That approval be given to the work programme for the 2020-21 municipal year as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
2. That authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with the Governance Advisor, to amend the work programme in between Commissions as appropriate.

83. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair advised that there were no items of business requiring urgent consideration by the Commission.

84. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Chair announced that the next virtual meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission was scheduled for 8 September 2020, commencing at 1.30 pm.

BRIEFING	TO:	IPSC
	DATE:	8 September 2020
	LEAD OFFICER:	Dan Watson Investment & Economic Initiatives Manager, R&E 01709 254 569 Daniel.watson@rotherham.gov.uk
	TITLE:	Town Centre Masterplan Update

1. Background

- 1.1** On 11 September 2017, Cabinet resolved to adopt the Town Centre Masterplan. This Masterplan included a range of interventions, with the following identified as key projects:
- A leisure led **Forge Island** redevelopment;
 - Introduce high-quality **public realm**, in key locations in the town centre, and improve linkages between Forge Island and the town centre core to fully realise the benefits of the Forge Island development;
 - The redevelopment of **Rotherham Markets**;
 - The development of **housing** sites within the town centre.
- 1.2** Good progress has been made with many projects identified in the Masterplan, as well as additional projects that have arisen since its adoption, these include:
- **University Centre Rotherham** – A new £10.5m town centre campus, offering degrees and professional training qualifications in a state-of-the-art teaching facility;
 - **National Tram Train Pilot** – A unique national pilot scheme that connects heavy and light rail infrastructure, systems and operations together to provide a new transport service between Sheffield and Rotherham;
 - **Rotherham Interchange** Refurbishment – A £12m refurbishment and modernisation of the Rotherham Interchange enhancing the public transport infrastructure present in the town centre;
 - **George Wright** – A major renovation of Grade II Listed building as a boutique hotel with associated bar and restaurant;
 - **Westgate Chambers and Domine Lane** – A £10.7m redevelopment in a prime central location providing, retail space and 61 apartments;
 - **Keppel Wharf, Old Market and Imperial Buildings** - Work underway to increase the residential space at Keppel Wharf overlooking the river and incentives are being offered to attract new niche businesses to vacant refurbished retail spaces in the Grade II Listed Imperial Buildings;
 - **Makers Emporium** - Unique retail space on the High Street bringing together a mixture of crafters, makers, artists and designers, trading from a shared and professionally managed retail unit. In the 6 years since opening, over 120 small businesses have been supported by the project.
- 1.3** The delivery of the Masterplan is supported by an allocation in the Council's capital programme referred to as the Town Centre Investment Fund (TCIF). This has been utilised to progress and deliver some key schemes and importantly is acting as the Council's match funding for several funding applications currently ongoing. These funding applications are needed to deliver the Masterplan in full and deliver the transformational vision for the town centre.

2. Key Issues	
2.1	<u>Funding Update</u>
2.2	<p>Sheffield City Region (SCR) Funding</p> <p>An application for Local Growth Fund (LGF) funding of £2.8m has been made to contribute towards the delivery of the Forge Island enabling works. The costs of the scheme are currently supported by a £1.5m LGF loan which was awarded in 2016 to fund the purchase and clearance of the site. This application requests approval to convert the loan into a grant and to secure a further grant of £1.3m to contribute towards the construction of the flood defence works critical to unlocking the site as quickly and efficiently as possible.</p> <p>LGF funding will contribute towards the costs of safeguarding the development and surrounding area(s), providing a capital contribution towards the total cost of the site acquisition and enabling works specifically the flood wall, with RMBC and other stakeholders funding the canal barrier construction which will be delivered in 2021/22. The flood wall will incorporate landscaping along the canal frontage to create a high quality, modern waterside destination for Forge Island providing flood protection for a 1:100 year plus climate change event, as required by the Flood Risk Toolkit.</p> <p>The Full Business Case was submitted on 10 June 2020 and has been through both external and internal appraisal panels. It will now go to the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) Board in September 2020 for a decision, with the expectation that funding will be made available this financial year.</p>
2.3	<p>Get Building Fund</p> <p>On 1 June 2020 the MHCLG wrote to Councils highlighting their key role in supporting local recovery, including through existing local growth programmes which will serve as an important economic stimulus. Recognising the challenges associated with delivering capital programmes this year, MHCLG has committed to working with each LEP to review local growth fund programmes and develop a shared understanding of how delivery will be managed, and what support may be needed from Government.</p> <p>As part of that process, MHCLG is exploring the acceleration of departmental funds to support the delivery of capital projects in order to stimulate the economy over the next 18 months. This includes inviting Councils to come forward with ideas for bring forward delivery of existing Government funded capital projects to generate new activity within 18 months, help create jobs and raise overall demand in the economy.</p> <p>In addition, funding of new exceptional, shovel-ready capital projects which can be delivered within 18 months will be considered. Where considering new projects, these must deliver on two overarching objectives – driving up economic growth and jobs and/or supporting green recovery – and would primarily enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • town and city centre modernisation through targeted infrastructure investments unleashing their longer-term economic potential. • investment in physical connectivity to improve the functioning of the local economy. • investment in innovation ecosystem including through improvements to research and development facilities driving up business productivity. • improvements to human capital. • improving digital connectivity, in order to support economic performance, particularly in more isolated areas. <p>Working with city region partners, the Council submitted project outlines to Government for decision which included projects to further the delivery of the Town Centre Masterplan as follows:</p>

Town Centre Masterplan Delivery Contribution – grant request £2.18m:

Public Realm - improvements to the key streets in the heart of the pedestrianised Rotherham Town Centre. Works will include the upgrade of Bridgegate, Effingham Street, College Street and Howard Street, as well as the replacement of existing street furniture and lighting. Works will improve accessibility around the town centre and help with DDA compliance.

The HE Hub - owned by RMBC with RNN currently holding a long lease for the site. The current building is now vacant and surplus to requirements to RNN Group following the completion of the University Centre Rotherham in September 2018. The site forms part of the wider Markets redevelopment area.

Riverside Precinct - located on the east bank of the River Don, the site forms an integral part of the first stage of development on Forge Island, connecting the main island site to the rest of the town centre.

The proposal is to demolish the existing buildings on site and undertake works to prepare the site for future development, and therefore forms part of the advanced enabling works to prepare the site for development by the Council's Forge Island development partner, Muse Developments Ltd.

2.4 Future High Street Fund

Following the success of the Council's Stage 1 Bid and having been invited to Stage 2 of the process - business case development; the requirement was to work up detailed HM Treasury Green Book compliant business cases with developed/detailed designs and costings. The Council received £150,000 of revenue funding to work up these detailed project proposals based on the initial plans outlined in the Expression of Interest. The robustness of these will be key to determining how much, if any, funding each individual Authority will be allocated at Stage 3.

The Council's Final Bid aims to secure funding for the following proposals:

- 1) Rotherham Markets, Library & Community Hub - Rotherham Markets is an important economic and social hub in the heart of the town centre. This will be redeveloped to reinforce this role delivering an Innovative Test Space for Enterprise, Learning and Culture as well as high quality public realm, delivering a pioneering new flexible shared space of markets, libraries and community hubs;
- 2) Riverside Gardens (currently Riverside car park) - A playful green space connecting Forge Island with the heart of the town providing recreational space for residents and visitors. This intervention is critical to the flow of pedestrians between Forge Island and the town centre, ensuring continuity of a high-quality experience and encouraging further dwell-time within the town centre core;
- 3) Grimm & Co (The National Centre for Folk & Fairy Tales) – a new home for the internationally-renowned Grimm & Co, a new cultural, learning and visitor destination will take root in a beautiful Grade II* Listed Church. This proposal forms part of the priority for a Child Centred Borough and for the Children's Capital of Culture 2025;
- 4) Safe & Smart Streets - Providing a high-quality environment and connecting key sites across the town centre. Proposals seek to address the key challenge of safety and security concerns expressed by users of the town centre by providing well-lit, secure and more welcoming public spaces. Proposals also allow for the introduction of events, a programme of public art, playful trails, sculptural street furniture and high-quality planting and green space will connect and frame our landmarks.

Having submitted the Business Case and supporting documentation on the 5 June 2020 the Council must now wait for the MHCLG to review and score the Bid against the HM Treasury guidance across the following key areas:

- 1) Strategic case – how the proposals fit with the stated vision for the town centre and align with local, regional and national strategies.
- 2) Economic case – balancing the costs of the proposal against the identified benefits and outputs, producing a Benefit Cost Ratio.
- 3) Commercial case – stating how the proposal responds to analysis of current markets and identified demand.
- 4) Financial case – summarising the detailed costs of the proposals, how match funding will be incorporated, and profiling spend.
- 5) Management case – detailing how the projects will be governed, delivered and evaluated as well as how identified risks will be managed.

Successful submissions will be announced in Autumn 2020.

2.5 Towns Deal Fund

The Town Deal is a £3.6bn programme seeking to “unleash the economic potential” of 100 places across the country. Rotherham has been given the opportunity to access £25 - 50 million. The focus will be on increased economic growth through regeneration, improved transport, better broadband connectivity, skills and culture.

A Town Investment Plan (TIP) is due for submission by 30th October 2020. The plan will focus on the economic growth corridor which stretches from Templeborough through the town centre and out to Eastwood.

Towns Fund Accelerated Funding (£1m) – grant funding to deliver capital projects as part of the emerging Towns Fund proposals. The funding is for this financial year, project proposals need to be submitted to MHCLG by 14 August 2020 and need to be accompanied by confirmation from the S151 officer that this spending is in line with the Towns Fund intervention framework. The guidance advises that government is “particularly encouraging projects that will support towns in responding to immediate challenges, including:

- Improvement to or new parks and green spaces and sustainable transport links;
- Improvements to town centres including repurposing empty commercial properties;
- Demolition or site remediation where this will have an immediate benefit.”

A range of options are being reviewed and will be available following feedback from MHCLG.

3 Delivery Progress

3.1 Forge Island Development

The Council’s development partner Muse Developments Ltd were granted planning permission for the site on 18 June 2020. This proposal includes the following:

- Multi-screen cinema;
- Hotel;
- Food and drink units;
- High quality public realm;
- New pedestrian footbridge over the River Don;

The Council are supporting Muse in progressing negotiations with key anchor tenants for the site, with announcements expected soon. Images and plans can be viewed [here](#).

3.2**Forge Island Flood Defences and Enabling**

Work is now at an advanced stage on the flood defence, enabling and public realm improvements on Forge Island.

The current phase of works comprises the installation of sheet metal piled flood defences along the west side of the site and a flood gate on the north (Bridge Street) side, forming part of the ongoing Rotherham Renaissance Flood alleviation Scheme (RRFAS), which will eventually run from Templeborough to Kilnhurst via Rotherham Town Centre.

The flood defence wall is situated 8 metres away from the adjacent Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation Canal to allow maintenance of this historic feature, and this has created an opportunity to create very high-quality public open space, which will enable the public to enjoy this previously neglected section of the water course.

The canal footbridge adjacent to Rotherham Lock has been restored, new footpaths are being created in the form of re-used cobbles from the previous towpath. coupled with modern setts; and Coreten steel planters are being introduced which will accommodate extensive tree and shrub planting as well as a low-level lighting scheme.

The highlight of these works will be the construction of terraced amphitheatre adjacent to Rotherham Lock which as well as providing a seating area will also provide access to the upper deck of the wider leisure development that is being developed in partnership with Muse Developments Ltd.

Colleagues in the Councils Network Management Unit are well-advanced in preparing site investigation and preliminary design works as part of the construction of a flood barrier at the confluence of the River Don and canal at Browns Cut.

An additional scheme on the site has seen the introduction of a fish pass at Masbrough Weir. This allows native species such as salmon and trout to reach their traditional upstream spawning grounds for the first time in two centuries; a testimony to the improved river quality and the co-ordination of works and investment by the Environment Agency, Don Catchment Rivers Trust and Rotherham MBC.

See Appendix A

3.3**Rotherham Markets Redevelopment**

The redevelopment of the Rotherham Markets Complex is a key project in the adopted Rotherham Town Centre Masterplan (TCM) and forms a major part of the Council's Final Future High Street Fund Bid submitted in June 2020. It is in need of significant investment and modernisation to ensure it can provide for current and anticipated future demand in addition to continuing to perform its key role in the town centre as an economic and social activity hub.

The development of this project, and others contained within the Town Centre Masterplan, is overseen and guided by the Town Centre Masterplan Project Board.

A development brief was prepared for the site and consultants were appointed in July 2019 to prepare plans, the lead architects commissioned and working with the Council to develop these plans is Greig & Stephenson Architects. Concept plans have been developed for the entire Rotherham Markets complex, also incorporating the planned relocation of the Central Library to the site; this specific element being led by RMBC Building Consultancy Unit. Significant stakeholder engagement has been ongoing throughout this design development process to ensure that stakeholders are aware of and involved in the development process and their input is captured and considered accordingly.

3.4 Concept Design

A concept design has been prepared to RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) Stage 2 (Concept).

3.5 Rotherham Town Centre Public Realm

The Masterplan identified a package of interventions including public realm improvements, across several key strategic areas, to help improve the function, aesthetics and linkages into and across the core of Rotherham town centre. It highlighted the critical importance of public realm enhancements to help encourage and improve movement and connectivity, particularly between Forge Island and the wider town centre, and to improve the physical environment and experience within the town centre.

At the Cabinet meeting held on 23 December 2019, the decision was made to agree the design proposals and to release funding in the approved capital programme to implement phase one of the public realm improvements detailed in the Town Centre Masterplan.

Bridgegate was identified as the first section of public realm to be delivered as part of phase one. Subsequently, it has been decided that the proposed works to College Street, with its additional parking, should be brought forward and delivery accelerated.

The locations proposed for improvements as part of the public realm scheme have been split into two phases with the first phase including: Bridgegate, Frederick and College Street. Outline designs and artist impressions are provided in Appendix B.

Bridgegate

The Bridgegate scheme is the most advanced in terms of design (RIBA4) and deliverability, with a tender for materials having been issued and a supplier procured. The Highways Delivery Team (HDT) are to undertake the works.

College Street

A decision has been made to bring forward the delivery of the College Street scheme. To help accelerate the scheme designs to RIBA3 have been requested and are being produced. A Traffic Regulation Order is now in place for the additional 11 parking spaces. This will bring the total number of parking spaces in this location to 19.

Frederick Street

Frederick Street concludes phase 1 and has also been prioritised for delivery due to the funding requirements associated with the Transforming Cities grant the Council will receive towards its delivery. The funds are administered through the Sheffield City Region and to be eligible the expenditure must be defrayed in 20/21 (£300k) and 21/22 (£100k). The project is currently being designed by the Landscape Design Team and will be delivered by HDT.

Phase 2 of works includes Effingham Street and Howard Street.

Howard Street

This provides the link from the newly completed Frederick Street and the Passenger Transport Interchange to Market Square and the Markets, transforming the retail heart of the town.

Effingham Street

This will deliver an improved layout of market stalls and provide additional space for traders and space to expand the offer to other street markets including continental food markets. It is currently estimated that works on site would start in early 2022.

Riverside Gardens including Upper Millgate (dependent on FHSF funding)

To help avoid the risk that the Forge Island scheme is delivered with the unattractive riverside car park still in situ, undermining the impact of this transformational project and its connectivity with the wider town centre with one side of the riverbank being aesthetically poor, the Council has included a landscape option within its Future High Streets Fund bid. Designed to give this site a new purpose in the context of Forge Island and the wider town centre, it would be referred to as Riverside Gardens and will draw people, especially children and families to what is a neglected part of Rotherham town centre. Utilising the riverside location and the change in levels to create a fun landscape for play and interaction.

3.6 Town Centre Housing

The Council's contractor Willmott Dixon has started work across three sites delivering 171 new homes for sale, Council rent and shared ownership. Millfold House on Westgate has been demolished and foundations are being dug at the former Sheffield Road car park and the former Henley's garage site on Wellgate.

The schemes have been given new names:

- Sheffield Road car park will be known as 'Westgate Riverside' (72 homes)
- Millfold House: 'Millfold Rise' (45 homes)
- Henley's Garage: 'Wellgate Place' (54 homes)

See Appendix C for plans and images.

4. Key Actions and Indicative Timelines**4.1 Forge Island Development**

The development programme is subject to completion of agreements with end users. Interest from end users remains strong despite the impact of Covid 19 and agreements with key anchor occupiers are expected in the very near future

4.2 Forge Island Flood Defences and Enabling

These works are due to be completed in September 2020.

4.3 Rotherham Markets Redevelopment

Progressing the markets redevelopment as proposed is dependent upon a successful outcome to the Future High Street fund submission. The full business case was submitted on 5 June 2020 and a decision is expected in "autumn". Subject to this decision this would allow for approval of detailed designs in December 2020 and potentially a start on site in January 2022.

4.4 Rotherham Town Centre Public Realm

Indicative delivery programmes:

Site	Start	Finish
Bridgeway	September 2020	November 2020
College Street	January 2021	May 2021
Frederick Street	January 2021	June 2021
Howard Street	May 2021	July 2021
Effingham Street	February 2022	June 2022
Riverside Gardens Upper Mill	January 2022	September 2022

4.5	<u>Town Centre Housing</u> The first completed homes are expected at Wellgate Place before Christmas 2021, with all three sites due to finish by Spring 2022.
5. Recommendations	
5.1	Progress towards delivery of key schemes within the Town Centre Masterplan and associated timeframes is noted.

Forge Island Flood Defences and Public Realm Improvements



Flood Defences at the South End of Forge Island



New pedestrian footways and the site of a planter at the north end of the site



Amphitheatre similar to that proposed at Rotherham Lock

Construction Design And Management Regulations 2015

The contractors attention is drawn to the abnormal risks identified below, annotated on the drawing and explained in the associated design risk registers.

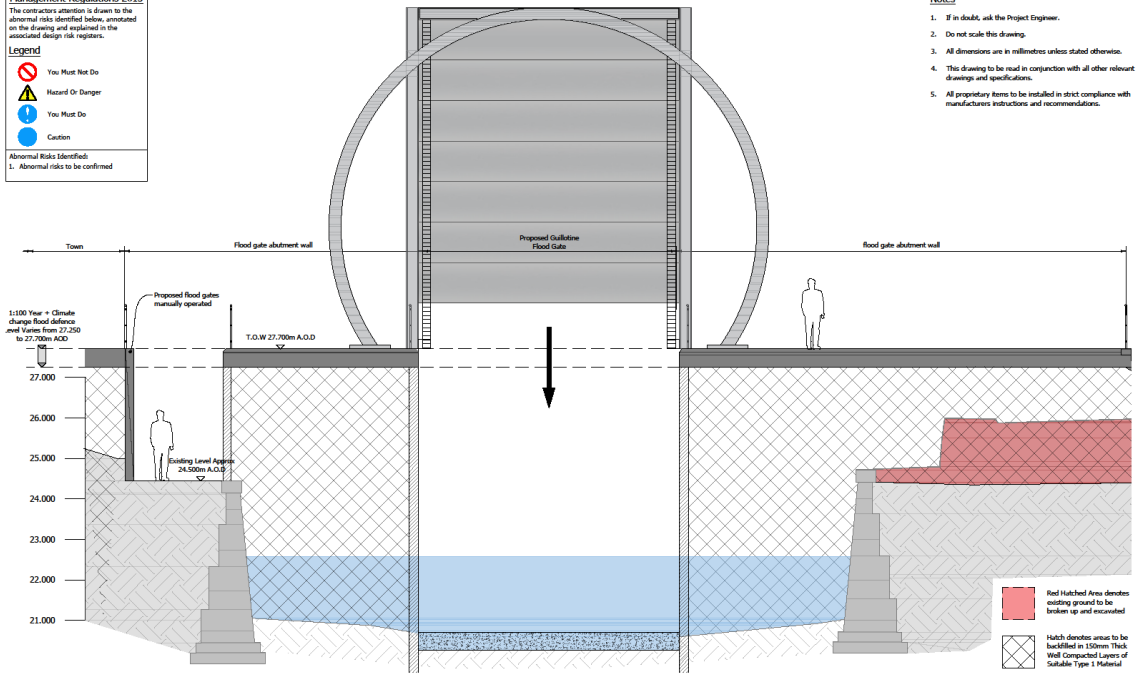
Legend

- You Must Not Do
- Hazard Or Danger
- You Must Do
- Caution

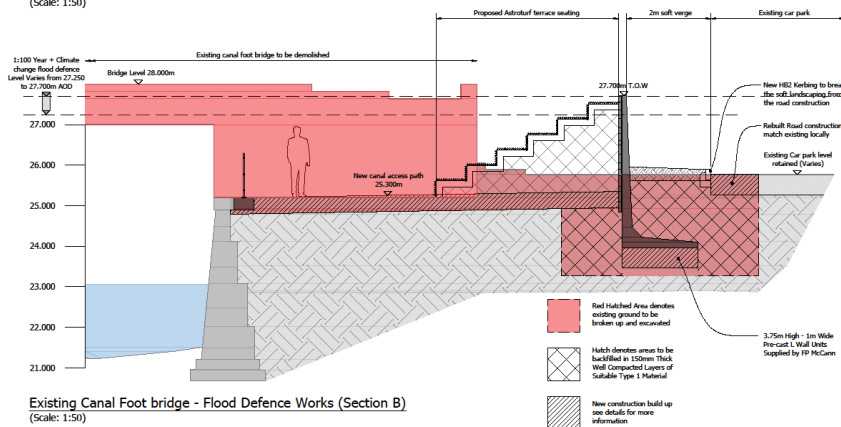
Abnormal Risks Identified:

1. Abnormal risks to be confirmed

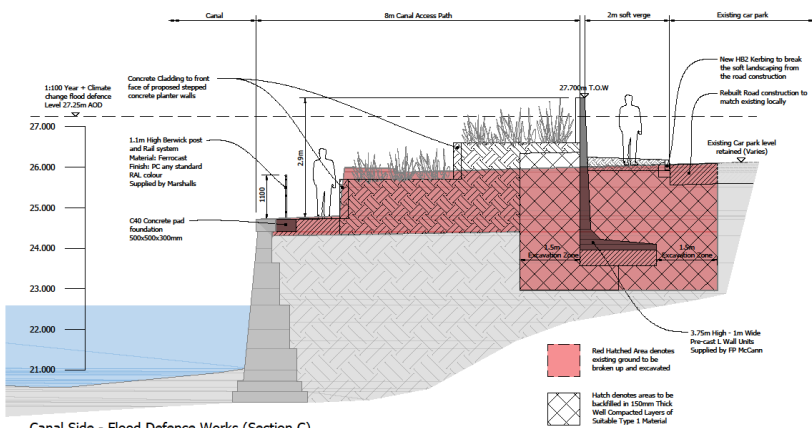
- Notes**
1. If in doubt, ask the Project Engineer.
 2. Do not scale this drawing.
 3. All dimensions are in millimetres unless stated otherwise.
 4. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all other relevant drawings and specifications.
 5. All proprietary items to be installed in strict compliance with manufacturers instructions and recommendations.



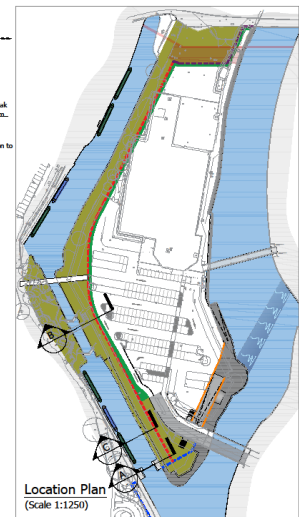
New Guillotine Canal Gate - Flood Defence Works - (Section A)
(Scale: 1:50)



Existing Canal Foot bridge - Flood Defence Works (Section B)
(Scale: 1:50)



Canal Side - Flood Defence Works (Section C)
(Scale: 1:50)

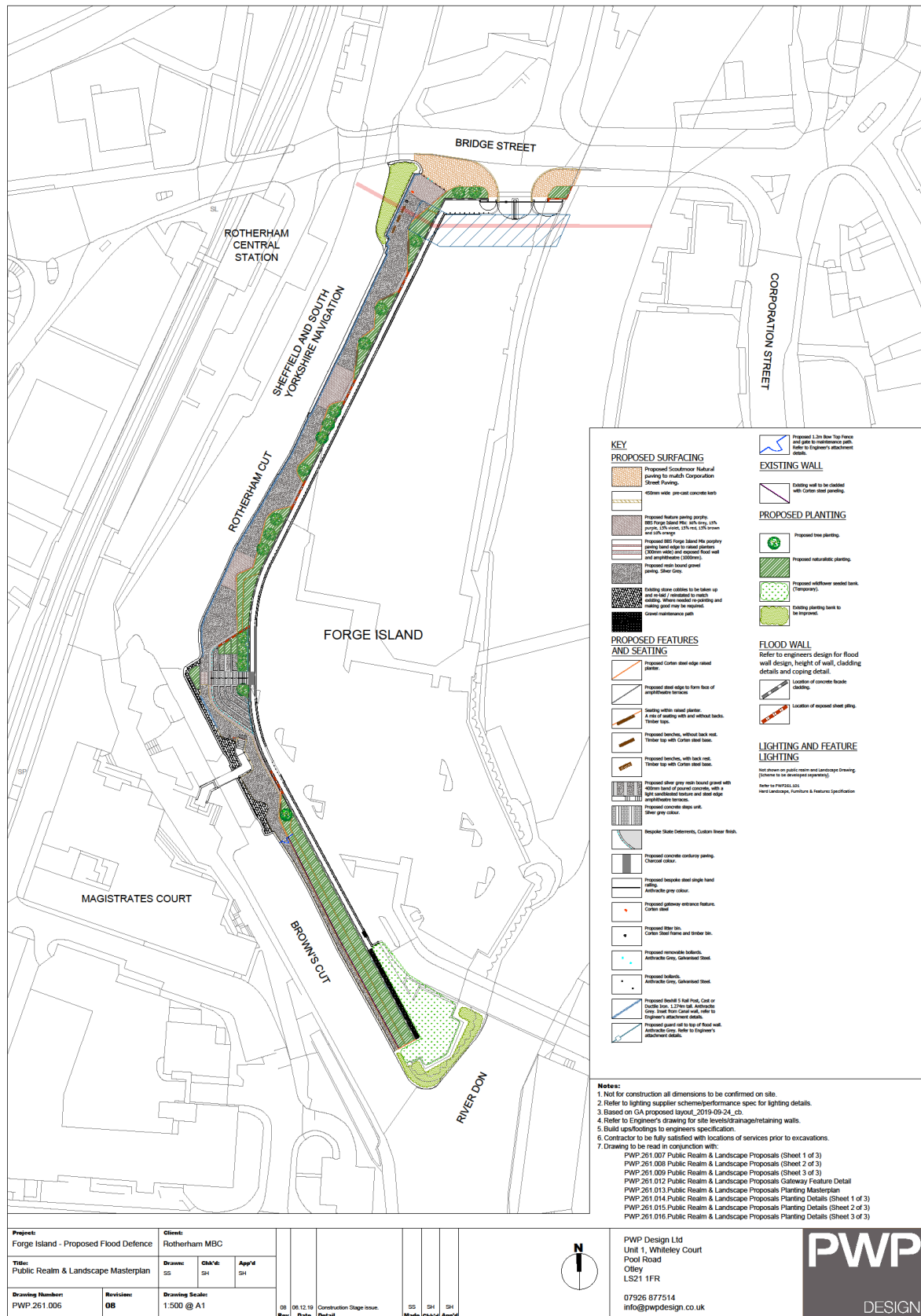


Location Plan
(Scale 1:1250)

02	Amended to suit agreed landscape/flood defence layout	T.P	24.04.18
01	First Issue	T.P	06.11.17
Rev	Amendment	By	Date

Client: **Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council**

Potential Design Idea for the Flood Defence Canal Barrier Adjacent to Forge Island



Extent of Flood Defence and Public Realm Works, Forge island



Rotherham Town Centre

Public Realm Future High Streets Fund Overview

Client: RMBC
21.05.20
Rev 03



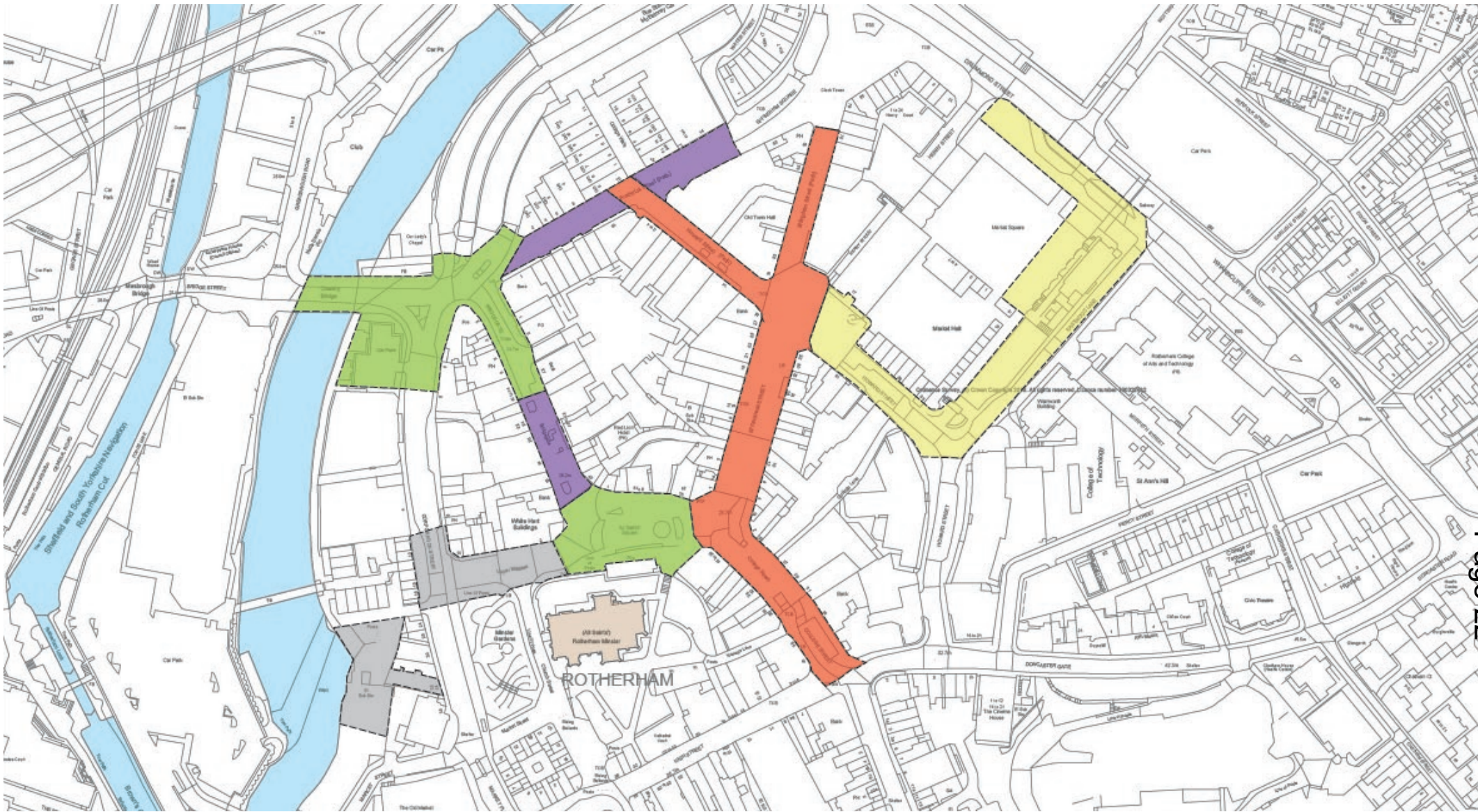
www.pwpdesign.co.uk

Introduction & Public Realm Focus Areas Plan

Following on from the Rotherham Town Centre Masterplan (2017), PWP Design have been commissioned to develop proposals for a series of public realm projects to help realise the Masterplan’s vision.

The plan shows areas of completed/upcoming public realm improvements for context and identifies a series of key areas highlighted by RMBC for future improvements. This document provides an overview of emerging public realm proposals and rationale for the Gateway, Riverside and Markets Redevelopment areas and. Further detail on the designs are provided through the individual projects.

- Markets Redevelopment
- Riverside
- Completed
- Gateway (Phase 1)
- Gateway (Phase 2)



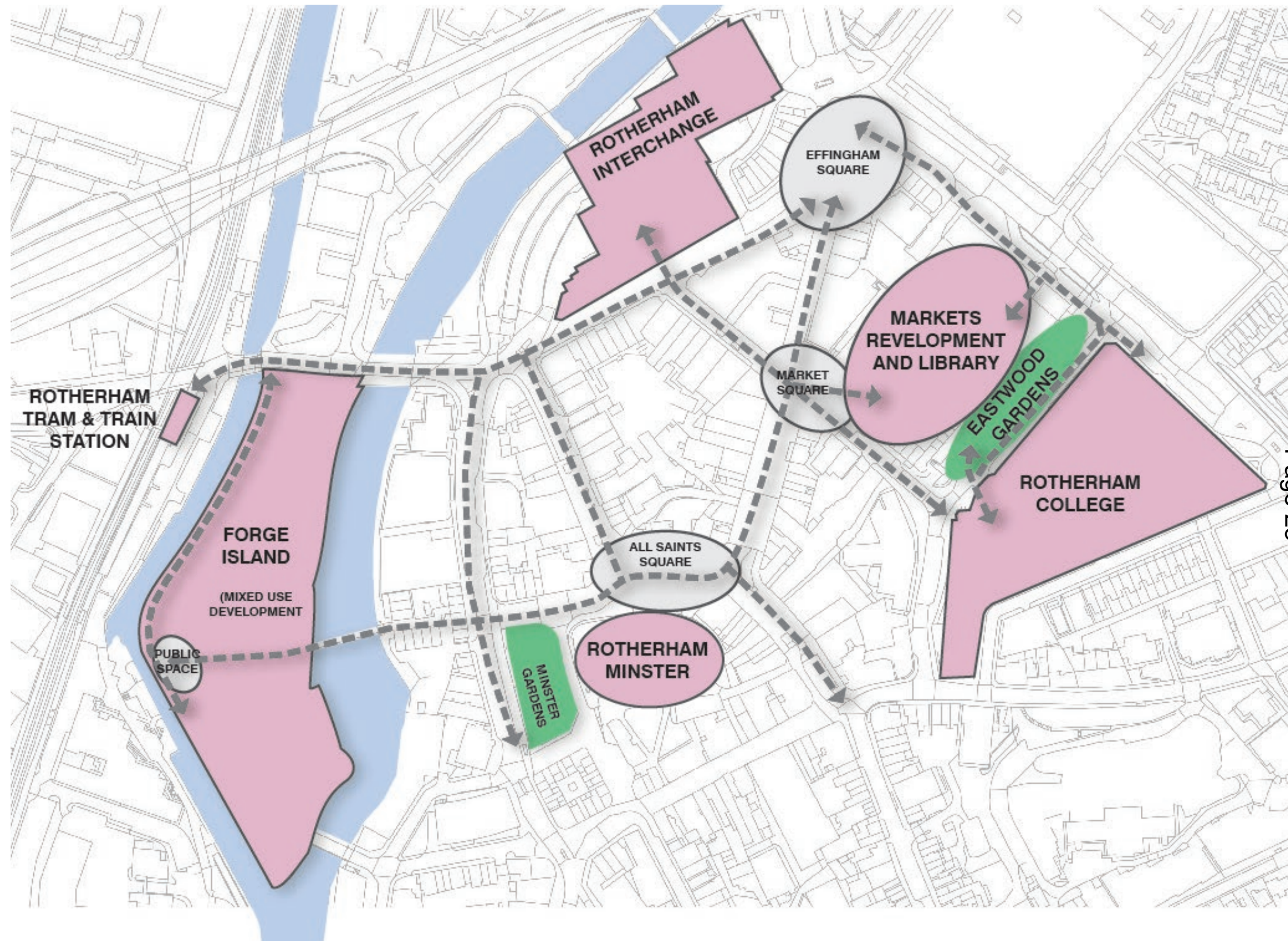
Regeneration Context

The emerging town centre public realm work aims to develop a cohesive palette for the town centre, within the context of major regeneration projects including Forge Island, Rotherham Market and the Interchange. The approach aims to create a unified character and improved visitor experience for the core town centre streets and public spaces, as well as complimenting the distinctive palette already established around the Minster.

The existing public realm throughout much of the town centre is poor quality, cluttered and confusing. We believe the reinvention of these streets and spaces are fundamental in achieving the regeneration aims and supporting the key projects:

- Connecting key destinations and public transport.
- Improving the visitor experience.
- Introducing new technology for example car and phone charging points.
- Introducing significant areas of new planting and safeguarding existing street trees.
- Creating a competitive town centre offer.
- Enhancing the environment for new residential development to support town centre living.
- Supporting existing and enabling new uses and activity such as events, leisure, street markets.

RMBC plan to apply the new palette and design principles to a series of key streets and spaces. The purpose of this is to knit together the major regeneration projects and existing assets, improve access, footfall, activity and make the public realm work harder for the benefit of the Town Centre.



Public Realm Layers & Palette

The proposed designs consider three layers to the public realm. Paving should be robust, simple and contemporary. This will be overlaid by furniture, trees and planting that avoids clutter and allows flexibility of use of the streets. Within this permanent environment there is huge opportunity to enliven the public realm through pop up and temporary interventions. The next page includes a study carried out to explore the palette for future improvements, in consideration of the existing Minster Quarter and planned works at Forge Island. This has led to the development of a cohesive palette to be rolled out for ‘Unified Streets & Spaces’.

POP-UP ELEMENTS

TEMPORARY



FURNITURE, TREES & PLANTING

PERMANENT



PAVING



FORGE ISLAND DEVELOPMENT

Emerging proposals show a contemporary, industrial palette, creating a distinctive character for this destination. This includes a modern grey blend of paving with corten steel accents. The large scale spaces and aspirations for Forge Island provide opportunity for ambitious design statements.

FORGE ISLAND CANALSIDE

The proposed palette aims to compliment the Forge Island Development. It includes silver grey resin bound gravel and warm/rusty toned porphyry cobbles. Timber, corten steel and dark grey steel is used for features and furniture.

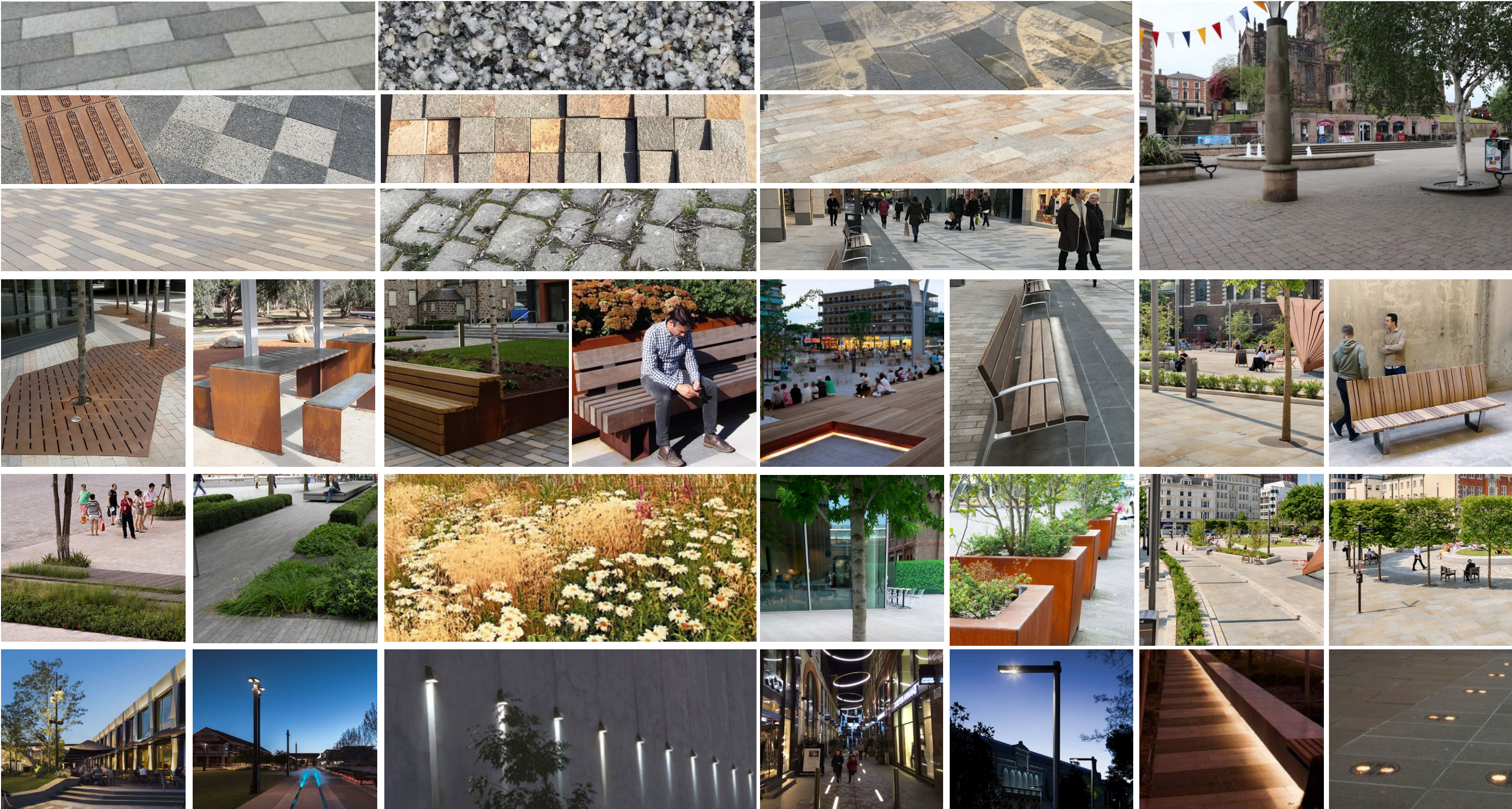
UNIFIED STREETS & SPACES

There is a clear need to simplify, reduce clutter and unify the core streets in Rotherham. Themes can be drawn from Forge Island and the palette must be able to react to a wide variety of locations. Proposals include a new Rotherham blend of pavers (buff/grey tones) and the occasional use of feature materials, creating a unified ‘carpet’ in the town centre core. Timber, colour accents and dark grey steel is used for furniture and features.

MINSTER QUARTER

All Saints Square & Minster Gardens already provide a distinctive character area and setting for the Minster. Future schemes within this area should follow the lead of these in terms of palette. This includes sandstone setts/slabs and consideration of bespoke details. Furniture and features can vary from the wider town centre public realm to emphasise this distinctive quarter. Further inspiration from other places is also given below.

HARD MATERIAL
FURNITURE
PLANTING
LIGHTING



Public Realm Emerging Proposals

The following masterplan illustrates the emerging sketch design proposals for the key areas in the town centre.

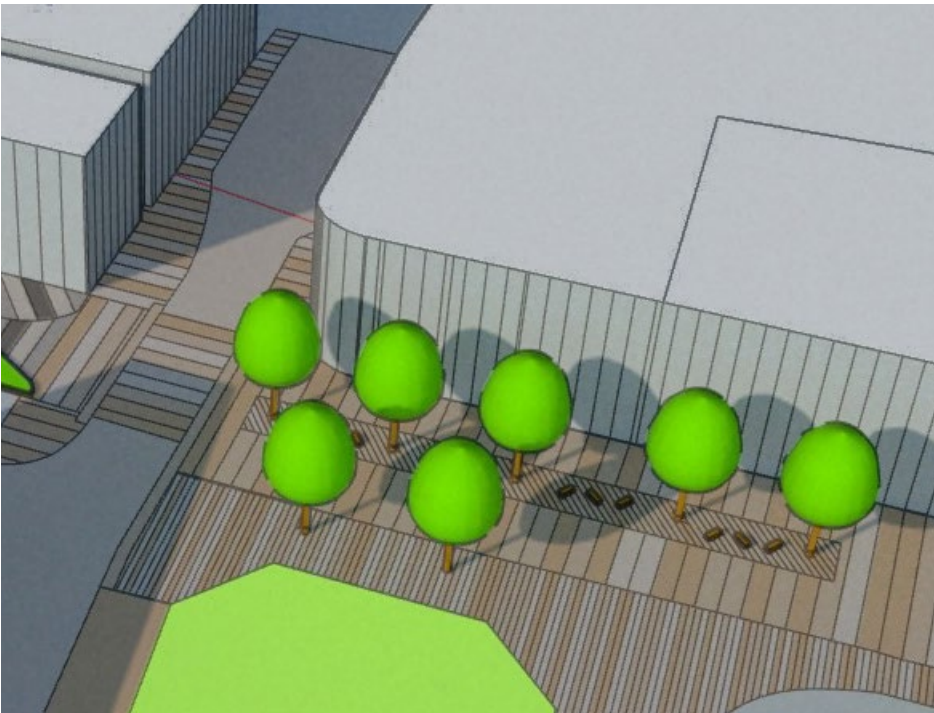


Key Areas

Gateway Area proposals deliver enhanced access and links into the town centre core along College Street, Bridgegate, Frederick Street, Howard Street and Effingham Street. This includes opening up of views to the Minster, improved visitor parking, cycle routes and links to public transport hubs. Effingham Street is also home to the busy street market and improvements focus on simplifying the street and creating a space that supports this use.



Riverside Area proposals are key to connecting Forge Island and the riverside to the town centre core. Through improvements to Corporation Street and Upper Millgate a showcase route is created capturing views of the Minster and encouraging visitors to Forge Island to use the town centre.



Markets Redevelopment Area proposals create a strong relationship between public realm and this major regeneration project. Market Square delivers a high quality main entrance to the Market and Eastwood Gardens is a new green space destination, providing opportunity for events at the Outdoor Covered Market to spill out. Public realm wraps around the building improving entrances for the Market and the proposed Library. Links to Rotherham College are also improved, bringing it into the town centre core.



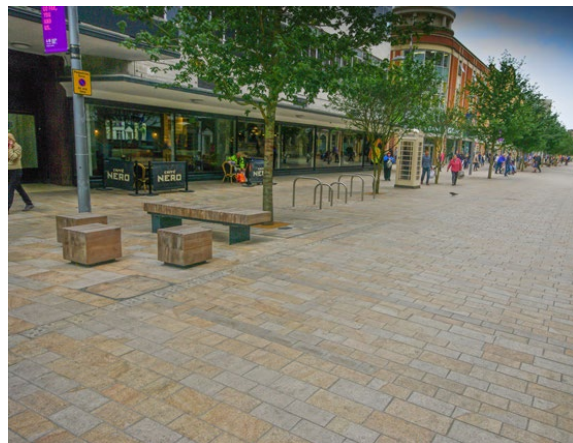
Public Realm Summary

Public realm proposals offer the opportunity to:

- Create a cohesive, modern, high quality public realm that can be rolled out throughout the town centre.
- Improve the visitor experience, access and increase activity, events and footfall to support local businesses.
- Provide opportunity to bring new uses into the town centre.
- Improve connections to key destinations such as Forge Island, Rotherham Market, Rotherham Interchange and the Minster.

Key design principles include:

- Reducing clutter and creating more flexible, accessible spaces.
- Improving infrastructure and functionality for the street markets.
- Simplifying the paving and introducing high quality, modern furniture and lighting.
- Introducing a wider range of seating opportunities.
- Creating opportunities for technology, such as Wifi and phone charging.
- Opening up views of the Minster.
- Adding a new layer of interest through pop up features and catenary lighting. These help with wayfinding, branding and introduce opportunities for art, performance, play and planting.





Westgate Riverside CGI



Wellgate Place CGI



Millfold Rise CGI

TOWN CENTRE HOUSING UPDATE

Improving Places Select Commission 8th September 2020

Page 32

Jane Davies, Head of Strategic Housing & Development

Wellgate Place, Westgate Riverside, Millfold Rise

The town centre '3 sites' housing programme is progressing well:

- Initial start on site (securing and clearance work) – 24/02/20
- Main works started – 08/06/20
- Contract signed – 31/07/20
- First tranche of Homes England funding (£4.1m) drawn down – 31/07/20
- Demolition of Millfold House complete – September 2020
- First homes completed – October 2021
- Final homes completed – July 2022

	Units	Tenure	Type	Completion
Wellgate Place (Henley's)				
Block A	11	S/O	1b/2b flats	Oct 2021
Plots 35 – 46	12	S/O	2b/3b houses	Oct 2021
Plots 47 – 54	8	Sale	2b/3b houses	Nov 2021
Block B	23	Rent	1b/2b flats	Dec 2021
Westgate Riverside (Sheffield Rd)				
Block B	21	Rent	1b/2b flats	Jan 2022
Block A	23	Rent	1b/2b flats	Feb 2022
Plots 45 – 52	8	S/O	2b/3b houses	Mar 2022
Plots 53 – 72	20	Sale	2b/3b houses	Apr 2022
Millfold Rise (Millfold House)				
Block A	31	Rent	1b/2b flats	Dec 2021
Block B	14	Sale	2b houses	July 2022

Wellgate Place: rent / shared ownership



Wellgate Place: sale / shared ownership



Westgate Riverside: homes for sale



Westgate Riverside: sale / shared ownership



Westgate Riverside: apartments for rent



Millfold Rise: apartments for rent



Millfold Rise: homes for sale



Further town centre housing ambitions

SCR Brownfield Fund – seeking funding for:

- Acquisition and remediation of other key Sheffield Rd sites – control over riverside zone
- Extending this ambition to High St: 30 apartments on the Primark site
- Gap funding for Forge Island apartments
- Support to build early homes in Eastwood

Public Report
Improving Places Select Commission

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 08 September 2020

Report Title

Update report on the Agreement between Dignity Funerals Ltd and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

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Chris.willis@rotherham.gov.uk

Ashleigh Wilford
Superintendent Registrar & Bereavement Services Contract Manager
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Ashleigh.wilford@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report has been requested to provide an update on the report presented to the Improving Places Select Commission on 19th December 2019 and to present the Annual Performance Report for the Dignity contract for the provision of Bereavement Services for Rotherham.

Recommendations

1. That Members note the content of this report.
2. That Members note the content of the Annual Performance Report.
3. That Members note the content of “Permanent Extension of Latest Burial Time at East Herringthorpe Cemetery” Officer Decision.
<https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s125442/Permanent%20extension%20of%20latest%20burial%20time%20at%20East%20Herringthorpe%20Cemetery.pdf>

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Dignity Annual Performance Report

Background Papers

1. Report to Improving Places Select Commission dated 19th December 2019.
2. Permanent Extension of Latest Burial Time at East Herringthorpe Cemetery Officer Decision Paper.

<https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s125442/Permanent%20extension%20of%20latest%20burial%20time%20at%20East%20Herringthorpe%20Cemetery.pdf>

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Not Applicable

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Update report on the Agreement between Dignity Funerals Ltd and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.

1. Background

- 1.1 On 1st August 2008, the Council entered into a 35-year contractual agreement with Dignity Funerals Ltd (Dignity) for the provision of bereavement services for Rotherham. This partnership enabled the transfer of significant risks from the Council to Dignity and saw Dignity take on the responsibility for capital works and maintenance of the East Herringthorpe cemetery and crematorium along with the maintenance of the eight other municipal cemeteries located throughout the Borough. The Council retained the risk in relation to cemetery chapels, associated buildings and boundary walls on some cemetery sites.
- 1.2 Since March 2018 the Regeneration and Environment Directorate has been working to improve performance monitoring of the Agreement. The performance management framework was refreshed, and regular monitoring and reporting arrangements have been put in place.
- 1.3 This report provides an update on the progress made against the recommendations from Members, set out in the Improving Places Select Commission meeting on 19th December 2019.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 At the meeting 19th December 2019, the Improving Places Select Commission set a range of actions:
 - 2.1.1 That the decision regarding the future of the pilot and implications of the decision be reported back to Improving Places.
 - 2.1.2 That arrangements be made for a Member visit to East Herringthorpe Cemetery.
- 2.2 An update of actions taken in relation to each of the recommendations made by the Improving Places Select Commission in the meeting that took place on 19th December 2019 is provided below.
 - 2.2.1 On 16th March 2020, the recommendation to make the conditions of the out of hours burial pilot became permanent. With a commencement date of 1st April 2020, the latest time of burial, at East Herringthorpe cemetery, being 18:30 hours on a permanent basis, between 1st April and 30th September.

Implications were considered in respect of Finance, Legal, Human Resources, Children & Young People and Vulnerable Adults, Equalities and Human Rights, Ward Priorities and Partners.
 - 2.2.2 A meeting was originally arranged for Cllr Khan and Katherine Harclerode, Democratic Services, to visit East Herringthorpe Cemetery

on 23rd March 2020. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown measures this visit was put on hold. An open invitation has been made to arrange another visit and Katherine Harclerode is now finalising dates with Bereavement Services.

Performance Management Framework

- 2.3 There are a total of 54 Key Performance Targets. Of these, 46 Key Performance Targets have been met (green) between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of March 2020. A key achievement to note in met Performance Targets includes:

KPT 9.3 Provision of short notice burial facility 7 days per week in accordance with Council's Policies, general rules and regulations relating to the Management of its Cemeteries and Crematorium.

A short notice burial service is available 7 days a week, excluding Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Christmas day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Following a successful pilot, at East Herringthorpe cemetery to extend the latest burial time, this has now become permanent.

- 2.4 There are 2 Key Performance Targets not met (red) between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of March 2020. These are:

KPT 9.1 Provision of environmentally friendly burial options.

Two potential sites for environmentally friendly burials have now been identified. One potential site has been identified at Barley Hall in Thorpe Hesley which is council owned land. The second under consideration is land within the planned expansion at East Herringthorpe Cemetery, which is included in the contract. Dignity had planned to complete a consultation exercise to gauge demand by June 2020, but this was put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Dignity are still working through the scope of this consultation and discussion with the Council will begin on the 8th of September to move forward. Following consultation, a briefing paper will be produced with a recommended option.

KPT 10.2 Secure storage for registers and records.

Secure storage was to be delivered and installed on site at the East Herringthorpe offices in March/April 2020 but has been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Contractors have now been scheduled in for delivery and installation of the fireproof units, week commencing the 17th August 2020. There will be a short transition period to set up storage correctly. Some older records are in a poor state and professional repairs have been completed where necessary. A programme of scanning and transcribing documents will commence when safe to do so and is expected to take approximately 2 years.

- 2.5 There are 6 Key Performances Targets in progress (amber) between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of March 2020. These are:

KPT 3.1 All signs in the Facilities (including temporary signs) shall be clearly legible and illuminated (where relevant) and maintained in good order. All temporary signs shall be provided or removed promptly where appropriate,

such as maintenance operations, in accordance with the Council's requirements.

New signage commissioned for East Herringthorpe in November 2019. All work completed and signed off 28th February 2020. A 5-year rolling programme for all signage in other cemeteries has been implemented, with quotes for new entrance signs at all the other cemeteries currently being obtained. The Cemeteries Supervisor keeps an audit log of all cemetery signs including any graffiti damage. There are currently no signs requiring urgent attention.

KPT 3.2 All external light fittings to be working at all times.

A capital request of £12,300 was approved as part of the Council's capital programme to cover the costs of reinstating lighting on the driveway to the crematorium which is predominantly used by Funeral cars. New solar lighting was installed alongside the existing cast iron fixtures on 27th June 2020. This will be RAG rated Green in next year's performance report.

KPT 8.3 Provide annual statement on customer satisfaction levels including plan for improvements.

Dignity completed a customer satisfaction survey carried out between May 2019 and March 2020 which saw a very low response rate. Only 4 responses received from the memorial client survey which is insufficient to conduct an analysis and 14 responses received from the crematorium survey. This data has been submitted to Bereavement Services. Trajectory (the company used) advised at least 100 responses would be required to make it statistically meaningful. Customer surveys have currently been put on hold due to Covid-19 pandemic. Dignity will inform the Council when they plan on recommencing these surveys, however during this suspension period Dignity will be reviewing the methods of survey used. The next Performance meeting will include a proposal and timeline for the next consultation process.

KPT 10.3 Restoration of and redrafting of cemetery plans in line with agreed proposals

Existing paper plans are being assessed to ensure accuracy between existing burial records and redrawing. Digitisation of the plans will be part of the memorial testing programme (KPT 15.4) which will commence in mid-September 2020.

KPT 15.4 Provision of an effective plan for systematic testing of all cemetery memorials and progress in accordance with agreed timescales. Testing protocols and procedures to be in accordance with the Council's policy for the Management of Cemetery Memorials.

Work to begin "topple testing" to check the structural integrity of headstones was due to commence in April 2020 by a team based in London but was put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Work will re commence in mid-September 2020.

KPT 16.2 Evidence of consultation with, and support, to Friends groups within each cemetery site (where appropriate).

No communication has taken place since March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. New, Council lead, focused engagement with the various groups is being planned to commence in September 2020.

Contact will be made with representatives from each group via email, introducing the new Bereavement Services staff. There will then follow organised site visits to each cemetery beginning in September 2020 with key members of each group, Bereavement Services and Dignity staff as required. This will give an opportunity to discuss issues arising and planned engagement moving forward. This work will feed into actions at the monthly Dignity performance meetings in support of service improvement planning.

Service Improvement Proposals

- 2.6 There are a total of 9 Service Improvement Proposals. Of these, 7 Service Improvement Proposals have been met (green) between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of March 2020.

- 2.7 Key achievements to note in met Performance Targets include:

SI 7 It is proposed to ensure that periodic liaison meetings take place with funeral directors, starting in January 2018.

During the Covid Pandemic, regular communication was established with local Funeral Directors, including daily contact to gather body storage data and to discuss issues and developments made at the Managing the Deceased Workstream. Regular meetings took place with the whole group to involve them in the pandemic planning process and discuss issues and procedure in a more formalised manner. Good working relations have been established and will continue to improve as Bereavement Services develops.

- 2.8 There is 1 Key Service Improvement Proposal not met (red) between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of March 2020. This is:

SI 5 Options identifying suitable land for burials will be produced during Spring 2018 and presented to members to consider for future action.

As part of the recovery plan from the Managing the Deceased Workstream a decision was made to review the availability of burial space at all our cemeteries.

A project group was established 23rd April 2020 consisting of Bereavement Services, Dignity, Asset Management and Legal Services to review previous work completed in 2008 and 2018 to identify existing land within contract or available new land to increase burial capacity across Rotherham.

As part of this, a new appraisal exercise will be conducted by Asset Management to look at suitable sites for a new cemetery in Maltby. This appraisal exercise will include planning, legal comments, ground investigation, site investigation and Ward Member consultation.

All sites under review will be included in a paper detailing proposed options for expansion at each of the cemetery sites.

- 2.9 There is 1 Key Service Improvement Proposal in progress (amber) between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of March 2020. This is:

SI 9 Turning Circle Masbrough Cemetery. Bringing the turning circle back into use.

A site meeting has taken place with Bereavement Services, Green Spaces and Dignity on the 5th August 2020. Initial clearing of the turning circle has been completed by Dignity and quotes are being obtained by Green Spaces to install new railings and gates around the area. Legal are to ascertain who is responsible for the costs. There is an ongoing issue with Japanese Knotweed at the site requiring potential specialist treatment, which may delay developments.

2.10 Dignity's Involvement in the Emergency Response to Covid-19

It is worth noting that Dignity were involved in the emergency response to Managing the Deceased throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. This included:

- Attendance at workstream meetings
- Engagement with Funeral Directors
- Responding to changes in legislation and Government advice relating to new ways of working, the closure and reopening of cemeteries and burial grounds, changes to the delivery of funerals to accommodate increased demand.

Workstream partners are currently reflecting on the experience of the last few months and producing a plan for the year ahead which takes account of the learning to date. This will also inform the improvement journey for Bereavement Services and new actions will be incorporated into the current contract monitoring process.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 This is an update report. Members are asked to note progress made and comment on any issues arising.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 This is an update report. There is no proposal for consultation.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 This report is for information only, no decision is requested.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)

- 6.1 This report introduces no additional financial or procurement implications. The Council's Capital Programme has funded the new solar lighting at East Herringthorpe. The revenue cost implications arising from the officer decision

to permanently extend burial times at East Herringthorpe have been contained within the approved revenue budget for this Service.

7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)

7.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 This report introduces no specific implications in relation to Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Issues relating to Faith burials are being addressed via the Project Liaison Group.

10.2 The Equality Analysis process will be progressed via the Project Liaison Group.

11. Implications for Partners

11.1 This report introduces no additional implications for partners or other Directorates.

12. Risks and Mitigation

12.1 Risks relating to the Agreement are monitored via the performance management framework.

12.2 Financial risks are monitored via the Council's annual review of the finance model.

13. Accountable Officer(s)

Polly Hamilton Assistant Director, Culture Sport and Tourism.

Approvals obtained on behalf of:-

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive		Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Stuart Fletcher	10/08/20

Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)	John Crutchley	11/08/20
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)	N/A	Click here to enter a date.

Report Author:

Chris Willis

Assistant Bereavement Services Manager

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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).



Annual Performance Report

1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020

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1. Introduction

Dignity is required to provide annual assurance to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council that Key Performance Targets are being met and Service Improvements are being made.

Dignity is required to provide financial data sufficient for the Council to establish the correct level of any payments due to the Council.

2. Key Performance Targets

This section is extracted from the more detailed Performance Management Framework document.

KPT	Priority	Description	RAG
1.1	L	A register of issued keys and their holders. All keys held by Dignity's staff must be kept secure by them at all times.	
1.2	M	Locks shall be changed if it is suspected that unauthorised keys are in circulation. Any cost incurred shall be borne by the party responsible for their circulation.	
1.3	H	Dignity shall react to intruder / fire alarms by attending the East Herringthorpe Crematorium site within 10 minutes during opening hours and 30 minutes at other times.	
1.4	L	Tampering with, or stealing from cars parked at the facilities or in its grounds shall be deterred wherever Dignity has reasonable opportunity to do so.	
1.5	L	Unauthorised parking, including unauthorised disabled space parking, shall be deterred wherever Dignity has reasonable opportunity to do so.	
1.6	H	Fire detection and alarm systems, security systems and equipment, emergency lighting systems and wet and dry fire main installations and firefighting appliances to be tested, inspected and maintained in accordance with industry standards and statutory requirements. Malfunctions must be logged and remedied within agreed response times.	

		All to be carried out in accordance with legal requirements.	
1.7	L	Fire Risk Assessment to be carried out in accordance with The Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997/1999. Carried out September 2018. Fire Officer visit 15 November 2017.	
2.1	H	Disruption to effective delivery of operation of facilities to be limited to the extent identified in the Annual Maintenance Plan.	
2.2	L	Carry out planned maintenance and asset renewal work in accordance with the Annual Maintenance Plan. Maintenance on going and monitored.	
2.3	L	Full records to be kept of all reports and transactions concerning works to the premise and alterations to services, arising from whatever source and for whatever purpose in accordance with the Council's requirements	
2.4	M	Carry out the test and inspection of electrical and mechanical services and equipment in accordance with the relevant frequencies and timescales. Update the Health and Safety file on completion.	
2.5	H	When carrying out any infrastructure work, Dignity must comply with the requirements of the appropriate local authorities and utility companies. All necessary statutory approvals must be adhered to.	
2.6	H	Gas leaks or suspected gas leaks shall be reported urgently to the gas supplier and the Council and records shall be kept of any gas leaks together with the reasons and any action taken to restore safe supplies.	
3.1	M	<p>All signs in the Facilities (including temporary signs) shall be clearly legible and illuminated (where relevant) and maintained in good order.</p> <p>All temporary signs shall be provided or removed promptly where appropriate, such as maintenance operations, in accordance with the Council's requirements.</p>	

3.2	M	All external light fittings to be working at all times.	
4.1	M	All sites to be maintained in accordance with the agreed method statements and to a minimum standard, with particular attention being paid to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grass Maintenance • Hedge Maintenance • Horticultural Features Maintenance • Arboricultural Work • Litter and Cleanliness • Pesticides 	
4.2	M	All site road and footway surfaces to be maintained with a smooth, unencumbered surface.	
4.3	M	All main access roads, paths and footways shall be kept clean in accordance with the Council's Requirements and weeds, clippings, and any similar material on roadways and pedestrian paths are to be removed.	
4.4	H	Provide for the removal of water run-off and sewage from the site by ensuring that all drains, sewers, gullies and on site treatment is maintained free from obstructions and unpleasant or unreasonable odours.	
4.5	H	All main access roads and paths to be kept clear of snow and ice and to be gritted as necessary to keep in a safe condition.	
5.1	M	All sites to be maintained in accordance with the agreed method statements and to a minimum standard as provided in the Cleaning and Waste Management Performance Standards.	
5.2	M or H if graffiti offensive	Stains and graffiti that are not removable by cleaning are to be reported to the Council within two hours of notification or detection by Dignity. Graffiti that is not removable by cleaning are to be painted over if so requested by the Council (acting reasonably) within four hours from the time of the instruction.	
5.3	H	Checks to be carried out of toilets in the facilities and supply provision at regular periods during the day. Waste receptacles are to be in their agreed position in a clean condition with sufficient space for waste disposal after each cleaning visit.	

5.4	M	Plant rooms and housings are to be clean and tidy, free of water, oil or other spillage. Also free of all materials not directly related to the function.	
5.5	M	Drains and gullies, scum channels and outlets, pumps and filters are to be kept free from obstructions or contaminants.	
6.1	M	Dignity shall develop and implement a strategy for controlling pests and rodents. This will be a combination of preventative and reactive measures to ensure as far as is reasonably possible a pest and rodent free environment, especially in buildings, without the creation of a human health or safety hazard or a present or future environmental risk. Records shall be kept of any pest and rodent control measures and incidents together with the action taken.	
7.1	H	Provision of an Emergency and out of hours response and access to information in accordance with required outcomes and the performance standards required for key holder responsibilities.	
7.2	H	Provision of an agreed, effective business continuity plan identifying key areas of risk, resource implications and planned action to negate risk.	
7.3	L	Specific plans for a pandemic which feeds into the Council's plans for a pandemic.	
8.1	M	<p>A report detailing all complaints from customers is to be provided to the Council on a monthly basis, with quarterly summaries, outcomes and trends. Dignity shall keep records of all comments and complaints from customers which must be maintained, including the date and time of each along with the response of the partner to a customer complaint.</p> <p>Complaints log to be in place with monthly reporting to Council. Formal logging of any issues, requests and complaints is in place. This is monitored daily. Client Service Centre also record any complaints/issues. Complaints procedure provided. Appendix 9</p>	

8.2	H	Complaints of a "serious nature" from customers must be notified to the Council within 1 working day of receipt. A "serious nature" includes major contraventions of Health & Safety Regulations and public or staff misconduct of a sexual nature.	
8.3	M	Provide annual statement on customer satisfaction levels including plan for improvements.	
9.1	L	Provision of environmentally friendly burial options.	
9.2	L	Compliance with policies and rules and regulations regarding management of cemeteries and crematorium. Comply with Management of Cemeteries and Crematorium and future revisions agreed by Dignity and the Council.	
9.3	L	Provision of short notice burial facility 7 days per week in accordance with Council's Policies, general rules and regulations relating to the Management of its Cemeteries and Crematorium.	
10.1	L	Dignity must conduct its management of records in accordance with the Council's Records Management Policy. Performance in line with the Council's policies on Data Protection and the Freedom of Information Act.	
10.2	L	Secure storage for registers and records conforming to BS5454:2000 in line with agreed proposals The BS5454:2000 standard has been superseded by BSEN16893:2018	
10.3	L	Restoration of and redrafting of cemetery plans in line with agreed proposals	
10.4	L	Digitized capture of registers to be made available on the internet in line with agreed proposals.	
11.1	L	Provide evidence of commitment to the Council's Equalities & Diversity policy, Records Management Policy and Health and Safety Policy by annual statement reporting on progress and key measures to be undertaken.	
11.2	L	Demonstrate compliance with the Council's Customer Care	

		Standards through annual statements providing detail of outputs.	
11.3	L	Provide annual statement on business continuity arrangements including action plan for pandemic and risk assessment. Annual statement on business continuity. Statement provided	
12.1	L	Submit Annual Charter for the Bereaved assessment by 31st January.	
12.2	L	Provide the Annual Charter for the Bereaved Improvement Plan within 28 days of the receipt of the Charter report	
13.1	L	Response to enquiries by person, telephone, email and post should be in accordance with the Council's Customer Care Standards	
14.1	M	Cremation booking system available 24/7. An electronic booking system is in place 24/7.	
15.1	L	Provision of an affordable range of memorials in accordance with the proposals and prices of existing schemes agreed with the Council.	
15.2	L	Provision of an effective Memorial Masons Registration scheme with an annual system of registration.	
15.3	M	Effective control and monitoring of all applications for work on cemetery memorials in accordance with the Council's Policy for the management of cemetery memorials.	
15.4	L	Provision of an effective plan for systematic testing of all cemetery memorials and progress in accordance with agreed timescales. Testing protocols and procedures to be in accordance with the Council's policy for the Management of Cemetery Memorials.	
16.1	L	Minuted meetings of liaison group to take place at least biannually.	

16.2	L	Evidence of consultation with, and support, to Friends groups within each cemetery site (where appropriate).	
17.1	L	Carry out a review of Policies annually or when a new policy is formulated. Consult Council on changes and update documentation accordingly.	
17.2	L	Report to Council appointed officer on any breaches of statutory provisions, policies rules and regulations within 24 hours of a breach.	

KPT Exception Reporting (status of amber or red)

KPT 3.1

The new signage for East Herringthorpe completed 28th February 2020 and there is a 5-year rolling programme for signage in all other cemeteries.

KPT 3.2

The Council has requested quotes for LED lighting or Solar lighting on the driveway of Herringthorpe cemetery, which has not previously had operational lighting. This is awaiting the outcome of the capital bid.

KPT 8.3

Customer satisfaction surveys have been sent out. Dignity Crematoria Director to provide the results of surveys from May 2019 to March 2020.

There is a mystery shopping programme in place, but results are person sensitive and apply to whole of Dignity.

KPT 9.1

Dignity does not offer environmentally friendly burial options at Rotherham but would be willing to explore options should appropriate burial land become available and if customer demand develops. Dignity will conduct a consultation exercise. The Council has commenced enquiries about suitable land.

KPT 10.2

Scanning has been escalated to Dignity IT Services and the Crematoria Director who are looking at the potential to scan documents. Scanning and transcribing is expected to take 2 years to complete once commenced. Masbrough records have

been repaired and returned to site 6th March 2020. Secure storage is due for delivery and installation end March 2020 / beginning of April 2020 (delayed slightly due to shipping restrictions around COVID-19).

KPT 10.3

Existing paper plans are being assessed to ensure accuracy between existing burial records and redrawing. Digitisation of the plans will be part of the memorial testing programme which will be commencing April/May 2020.

KPT 15.4

Dignity has a plan in place to start testing and the equipment has been sourced. Signage has been approved and will be put in place in cemeteries April 2020 to manage client expectations. Staff have been trained in the permit and SIAM testing system. Testing will commence at East Herringthorpe.

KPT 16.2

The council will recommence focused engagement with the various friends' groups with support from Dignity when required.

3. Service Improvement Proposals

This section should be read in conjunction with the more detailed performance management framework.

SI	Description	RAG
SI 1	Financial Aspects, Exceptional Surplus Dignity will provide the Council with sufficient financial detail in the Annual Report to assess the level of Equity IRR payments to be made at each financial year end. All financial information will be treated as commercially sensitive by both parties.	
SI 2	Financial Aspects, Financial Related Deductions The Council will levy charges against Dignity in relation to failure events against the Performance Management Framework reported on a monthly basis to the Council.	
SI 3	Performance Management Framework Reporting against the Performance Management Framework will begin in the final quarter of 2017/18. Started in the first quarter of 2018/19 and has continued since.	

SI 4	<p>Annual Report</p> <p>Dignity will provide an improved Annual Report. The Annual Report will be provided by 6th April 2018. Report provided and this is now an annual requirement.</p>	
SI 5	<p>Maltby Cemetery</p> <p>In 2008 a review of 6 potential sites was undertaken to establish suitable additional burial land in Maltby. Given the age of the review, Asset Management have proposed that this exercise be undertaken again.</p> <p>A project group was established April 2020 consisting of Bereavement Services, Dignity, Asset Management and Legal Services to review previous work completed in 2008 and 2018 to identify existing land within contract or available new land to increase burial capacity across Rotherham. As part of this a new appraisal exercise will be conducted by Asset Management to look at suitable sites for a new cemetery in Maltby.</p> <p>All other sites are under review and will be included in a paper detailing all proposed options for expansion at each of the cemetery sites. Current burial space at Maltby Cemetery is approximately 10 years.</p>	
SI 6	<p>Grounds Maintenance</p> <p>It is proposed that the provision of grounds maintenance will be measured against the criteria described in the Performance Management Framework.</p>	
SI 7	<p>Funeral Directors</p> <p>It is proposed to ensure that periodic liaison meetings take place with funeral directors, starting in January 2018, to inform progress of the contract with Dignity.</p> <p>A liaison meeting was proposed for 25th April 2019 but there was no take up. Preference stated for one to one meetings and these will commence in April and May 2019.</p> <p>Meetings took place June 2019 and January 2020. Further meeting scheduled for 2020.</p>	
SI 8	<p>Legal Review</p> <p>It is proposed that the Project Liaison Group is established to discuss feasibilities of formal changes that might improve contract delivery whilst not affecting costs to service users.</p>	

	The Project Liaison Group meets quarterly and progresses priority issues. Last meeting held 11 th February 2020.	
SI 9	Turning Circle Masbrough Cemetery It is proposed to bring the turning circle back into use. Work to be planned for March 2020. Discussions to take place with Council regarding preventing vehicular access when the cemetery is closed.	

4. Events Monitoring

4.1 Dignity has a department dedicated to Client Services. All calls are monitored and passed to the appropriate persons and department for action. There is an internal procedure to deal with any incident, complaint etc. These are logged in and logged out.

4.2 Dignity has records of complaints, comments and compliments received directly at Rotherham crematorium offices. These are logged under each cemetery and are available for viewing. There are complaints, compliments and request for service logs in place.

4.3 All requests for service, such as grass cutting, leaking taps, turfing or seeding of graves and topping up of graves are addressed in an agreed amount of time with the grounds maintenance contractors and records are kept.

4.3.1 Dignity has a logging system using an excel spreadsheet. It is the responsibility of the Cemetery Supervisor to keep records up to date and ensure work is carried out as requested.

4.4 There is a complaints procedure in place and log numbers are given by Client Services and reported to the appropriate persons to deal with.

4.5 All complaints are referred to the Council and reviewed at monthly performance meetings.

4.1 Availability Requirements

Availability events	Priority level			
	Super	High	Medium	Low
Number of events logged in the period 1 st April 2019 to 31 st March 2020.	0	0	0	0

Availability events	Priority level
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	Super	High	Medium	Low
Percentage of events logged within 24 hours.	0	0	0	0

Availability event failures	Priority level			
	Super	High	Medium	Low
Number of event failures logged in the period 1 st April 2019 to 31 st March 2020.	0	0	0	0

Availability event failures	Priority level			
	Super	High	Medium	Low
Percentage of event failures logged within 24 hours.	0	0	0	0

4.2 Performance Standards

Performance events	Priority level			
	Super	High	Medium	Low
Number of events logged in the period 1 st April 2019 to 31 st March 2020.	0	0	0	2

Performance events	Priority level			
	Super	High	Medium	Low
Percentage of events logged within 24 hours.	0	0	0	100%

Performance event failures	Priority level			
	Super	High	Medium	Low
Number of event failures logged in the period 1 st April 2019 to 31 st March 2020.	0	0	0	2

Performance events failures	Priority level			
	Super	High	Medium	Low
Percentage of event failures logged within 24 hours.	0	0	0	100%

5. Operational Periods

Service Area	Target number of operational periods (Days)	Number Achieved Apr-Sep (9am to 7pm % 8pm at Crematorium / East Herringthorpe)	Number achieved Oct-Mar (9am to 5pm)
Crematorium Grounds	361	365	365
Cemeteries	361	365	365
Masbrough	361	365	365
Greasbrough	361	365	365
Rawmarsh Greasbrough Lane	361	365	365
Rawmarsh High Street	361	365	365
Rawmarsh Haugh Road	361	365	365
Wath	361	365	365
Maltby	361	365	365
Moorgate	361	365	365

Service Area	Target number of operational periods	Number achieved
Book of Remembrance.	361	365
Administration.	253	253
Interments.	253	253
Cremations.	253 x 13	<p>13 services available each weekday, 2 are for direct cremations, 1 is for intimate service at 30 minutes, 1 is for early morning (45 minutes service time and 9 are for 45 minutes service times.</p> <p>Target operational services therefore = $253 \times 13 = 3289$.</p>

5.1 The Book of Remembrance is open every day of the year:

- Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm
- Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays 10:00am to 4:00pm

5.2 The Dignity Office is open Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm

5.3 Cremations:

- 253 x 13 based on first booking times of 8:15 and 8:20 for direction cremations, 9:00 for intimate service, 9:30 for early morning service and 10:15 through to 16:15 at 45-minute intervals for remaining days services.
- 13 x (365-104(sat & sun)-8(bank hols)) = 13 x 253

13 bookings per day are available which include options for unattended and early morning services during the week. Weekend services are available by request.

6. Customer engagement

Complaints, Comments and Compliments

Number in the period 1 st April 2019-31 st March 2020.	Overall Complaints	Upheld Complaints	Comments	Compliments
	8	4	104	7

6.1 Customer Satisfaction

6.1.1 Dignity has a 24/7 Client Services Department that logs all calls. There are timescales in which responses must be given.

6.1.2 Complaints are handed over to the Client Relations Team who log the details according to Dignity policy and pass to the Regional Manager and Local Manager. The target response time is within 24 hours, details are updated continually until the file can be closed. Where necessary, Client Services will contact the client. Logs of these reports are submitted to the Dignity Board of Directors

6.1.3 Dignity uses a mystery shopper service for which there is specific focus on the memorial element of the business. Reports are submitted to Head of Memorials and Regional Managers. The reports highlight any additional training requirements and enable feedback, both positive and negative, to staff. This process contributes to maintaining a high standard of service delivery.

6.1.3.1 Dignity have completed a Funeral and Cremation Industry Survey and the results are shown in the link: <https://www.dignityfunerals.co.uk/media/2999/time-to-talk-about-quality-and-standards.pdf>

6.1.4 Action taken to improve services as a result of customer feedback is recorded.

6.1.5 Training needs are identified and scheduled.

6.1.6 One to one meetings with staff are recorded.

6.1.7 Policy and procedures are reviewed if necessary.

6.1.8 Staff monitoring is carried out.

6.2 Funeral Director Liaison Meetings

6.2.1 Funeral directors were invited to attend a forum on 25th March 2019, no confirmation of attendance or agenda items were received. A preference for one to one meetings was noted and visits arranged with individual Funeral Directors in June 2019 and January 2020.

7. Business Continuity

7.1 Dignity's business continuity and strategic plans are classed as business sensitive and cannot be shared. The statement below has been made by Dignity in respect of business continuity.

7.2 Dignity has plans in place for events of mass fatalities. The plan considers such items as machine type and factors in upping the level of consumables and spares kept on site. Adjustments to maintenance and cool down periods are detailed and plans relating to staffing levels are included.

The benefit of Rotherham being part of the Dignity group means that there are 45 other sites, 77 cremators and approximately 150 certificated operators that can be called upon for support.

7.3 Business continuity is ensured by the Board of Directors.

8. Health and Safety

8.1 Dignity complies fully with health and safety regulations.

8.2 Dignity is regularly monitored.

8.3 Dignity has a company Health and Safety Department and a dedicated person for crematoria health and safety.

8.4 The Rotherham Manager has Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) certificate and there is a trained health and safety representative on site.

8.5 Dignity has 4 trained first aiders on site and all staff have completed defibrillator training. There is a defibrillator on site at East Herringthorpe.

8.6 Dignity has trained persons for ladder use and inspection.

8.7 All contractors used are on the company approved list.

8.8 There is a monitoring program in place for works carried out e.g. refurbishment works, roof works, servicing of cremator equipment etc.

8.9 Dignity had an inspection by the Fire Officer 15th November 2017, no follow up actions were required. No further visits required. Spot checks may be carried out in future but no requirement for annual visits.

8.10 All Dignity risk assessments are up to date and those of Glendale grounds maintenance have been checked by the Health and Safety Officer. Records are available.

8.11 All security alarms are regularly serviced and maintained:

8.11.1 Offices serviced in July 2019

8.11.2 Crematorium serviced December 2019

8.12 CCTV serviced in December 2019.

8.13 Fire alarm and detection systems regularly serviced and maintained.

8.13.1 Upgraded system installed to offices in October 2017 and serviced in March 2019 and January 2020.

8.13.2 CFS inspected fire extinguishers in June 2019.

8.13.3 All documentation relating to servicing is available on site or via dignity head office.

8.14 PAT testing is up to date; the last test was March 2019.

8.14.1 Fixed wire testing last carried out in June 2017 and is next due in June 2022.

8.15 Servicing of cremators carried out in last November 2019 and the next service is due in April 2020.

8.16 Emissions testing carried was carried out in June 2019 and is next scheduled for June 2020.

8.17 All reports are up to date and have been issued to the Environmental Health Officer. The Environmental Health Officer scheduled a meeting for 21st March 2019. No visits made since but everything up to date. Permit requirements fully met and all in accordance with requirements. Quarterly health and safety returns are also submitted, the most recent submission was for the first quarter period ending March 2019.

8.18 All accident reports are up to date and were submitted to the Dignity health and safety officer on time, along with incident of truth statements.

8.19 The Lone Working Policy and Risk Assessment are up to date.

9. Equality and Diversity

9.1 The Equality Analysis has been submitted to the Council.

9.2 Dignity staff completed the Councils' Equality and Diversity e-learning module in 2018 and will refresh when required.

9.3 Services are offered equally to all communities at all sites managed by Dignity.

9.4 Dignity adheres to policies and procedures that ensure respect is given to the deceased and their grieving families.

9.5 A short notice burial service is offered to all communities at all sites and from April 2019 a pilot at East Herringthorpe cemetery offered extended times between April and September 2019. This has now been taken forward as a change to contract for 2020 onwards.

9.6 Cemeteries and the Book of Remembrance are open all year round, subject to summer and winter opening times.

9.7 Cremations and burials are offered in accordance with scheduled times.

9.8 There is a booking facility available 7 days a week and this is monitored by the Dignity Out of Hours Team.

9.9 All Funeral Directors are aware of the policy for booking both cremations and burials.

9.10 Weekend and Bank Holiday cremations are booked with the Dignity Manager to ensure staff availability. Weekend and Bank Holiday burials are booked through the Out of Hours Team or via a Glendale appointed person.

9.11 All Funeral Directors are aware that paperwork needs to be submitted by three hours in advance of the scheduled burial time for a same day burial

10. Bereavement Charter

10.1 Dignity complies with the standards as required by the Bereavement Charter.

10.2 To date Dignity has not received any recommendations for improvements to the charter.

10.3 Dignity has its own standards and Rotherham complies with these.

10.4 Dignity has achieved a gold award for the Institute of Cemetery and Cremation Management (ICCM) Charter for the Bereaved (February 2020). The gold is awarded for both Cremations and Burials.

10.5 Dignity held the first memorial and carol service on the 1st December 2018 in the newly refurbished chapel. Invites were sent out to all families who used the temporary chapel while refurbishment works took place. Approximately 100 people and refreshments were provided after the service. Very positive comments were received. The second service included the re-opening of the chapel and took place on 28th April 2019 at 2pm. The Mayor of Rotherham performed the opening ceremony. A third service was held on 2nd December 2019.

10.6 The areas where Dignity did not fully score are:

10.6.1 Dignity is unable to offer meadowland or woodland burial.

10.6.2 Dignity does not re-use previously buried ground.

10.6.3 Dignity offers a 100-year lease and not various options for grave rights.

10.6.4 Dignity does not allow shroud only cremations or burials. The Councils' requirement for suitable coffins is met.

10.6.5 Information is not available in multiple languages. Dignity has not had a request for this and has not had any requests for interpreters to date.

10.6.6 Dignity operates cremations for respect of the deceased and their family, not to specifically save fuel.

10.6.7 All Dignity sites have a high concentration of trees; hedges etc. and provide a natural habitat for wildlife. Dignity does not specifically place wildlife boxes but does have a few located around the chapel building. There have been no requests from local environmental groups.

10.6.8 Waste is mixed rather than segregated. However, Dignity does compost and mulch.

10.6.9 Dignity does not provide wheelchairs and there have been no requests for provision.

10.6.10 Dignity does not offer braille and there have been no requests for provision.

10.6.11 Dignity does not offer a specific baby memorial book; all memorial options are offered to the families of deceased babies.

10.6.12 Dignity does not provide refrigerated coffin storage. Dignity cremates all received on the same day unless there are exceptional circumstances that prevent this.

10.6.13 Dignity does not publish a list of Funeral Directors on the web site.

10.6.14 Dignity does not provide embalming leaflets or advice but does signpost to the appropriate funeral director.

10.6.15 Dignity does not carry out shared or communal hospital cremations.

11. Memorial Masons Registration Scheme

11.1 The Project Liaison Group has made a commitment to review and modernise the Memorial Masons Registration Scheme, the first draft of the revision has been presented to the group and change agreed to allow cleaning in-situ by registered Memorial Masons. Further changes are under review.

11.2 Records are regularly updated to maintain a current list of who is registered to carry out any works in the cemeteries. This is monitored by the wardens who are employed by Glendale ground maintenance. The list was last updated December 2019.

11.3 Any Stone Mason can apply to join the scheme and appropriate paperwork will be issued for completion. Once received and validated the applicant is added on to the list.

11.4 The Stone Mason is required to make an appointment with the wardens for any works to take place and the wardens monitor works to ensure compliance with the rules and regulations of the cemeteries.

11.5 A permit system is in place. This is monitored by the Cemetery Supervisor who liaises with the Wardens.

11.6 Transfer of ownership appointments are available to provide a high standard of service to families, give explanations, check all the registers and assist with paperwork.

12. Memorial Safety

12.1 The Wardens and Grounds Maintenance Teams are in the cemeteries most days and report any findings with regard to health and safety, headstone and grave issues.

12.2 A more detailed inspection takes place monthly and reports are submitted with any necessary works.

12.3 Dignity is in the process of introducing memorial testing. All equipment has been purchased, staff training has taken place and testing is scheduled to commence late April/May 2020.

13. Annual Preventative Maintenance Plan

13.1 Works to refurbish the chapel commenced in May 2018 and were completed the end of September 2018. This has increased the capacity of chapel to over 170 seated and up to 150 standing. A new music system has been installed and both visual tributes and web casting are now available. This has vastly improved the facilities and experience offered to the bereaved.

13.2 Dignity has reviewed the grounds maintenance plan, moving from a demand lead approach to a more structured and timetabled approach. Dignity has requested a groundworks plan from the contractors that shows all aspects of works they are contracted to carry out and the planned times for each cemetery. The responsibility for ensuring the schedule is as planned and assisting in updating the plan lies with the Cemetery Supervisor.

13.3 Any issues with fencing are identified through cemetery inspections, reports are logged, and repairs scheduled.

13.4 Major damage was to the main gate pillars and gates at Haugh Road Cemetery. A full health and safety assessment was carried out, after which the pillars were replaced and one gate re-hung. Work required to both the hung gate to straighten it out and the 2nd gate which requires brackets fixing to the pillar to support it has been completed February 2020. Provision was made for the cemetery to stay open via an alternative access point throughout the schedule of works to replace the pillars.

13.5 Extensive damage to the wall at Maltby Cemetery resulting in damage to headstones was complete February 2020. All families with damage to headstones who have been in contact with us have had headstones replace or the damage repaired. Signs remain in place for the families whose contact details have not been updated with us so that they can contact us in due course.

14. Burial Capacity

14.1 Dignity has completed the process of identifying burial space at all cemeteries. There are many graves that have been listed as lost and as this could purely be down to tree roots, these are continually being reassessed in order to use where possible even if for a grave depth of one or for a baby.

14.2 Areas for new burial space have been identified in cemeteries that are currently recorded full. After consultation with the Council, alterations to the grounds at Haugh

Road Cemetery have been carried out to provide additional cremated remains and full burial plots. This has created a new area around the cenotaph and plots are available for pre-purchase. Consultation with the Council is taking place on land for Wath and Greasbrough Cemeteries.

14.3 Below is an estimate of current availability. The estimated number of years remaining is based on burial statistics obtained over the last 5 years. Baby graves are included in the full and cremated remains figures. Greasbrough Lane Cemetery remains a problem as land is unsuitable at certain times of year for burial and visiting. Land is required for future planning at East Herringthorpe.

Cemetery	Full Graves	Cremated Remains	Muslim Section	Catholic Section	Years of available space
East Herringthorpe	124	29	2 earthen, 15 lined, 9 baby. New areas being developed.	21 cremated remains & 11 full	2
Maltby	193	52		36	10
Moorgate	1	3			1
Haugh Road	58	40			10+
Greasbrough	0	0			0 – re-open only
Greasbrough Lane	52	81			3
Masbrough	2 new and re-open	7			2+
Wath	45 + 15 Catholic	34 (+ 30 suitable for baby)		15	2
High Street		Closed cemetery – returned to nature			

14.4 East Herringthorpe

14.4.1 Land identified to the side of the Glendale compound, behind the houses off Ridgeway would be suitable. Dignity believes the land is owned by the Council and has requested further details. At present, residents are extending their back gardens into this area. Should this be available land, it would provide burial space for many years. This is now an urgent requirement.

There is also the field at the back of the Muslim section. However, it would take several years and significant expense to alter the area to suitable burial ground. Access roads would need to be put in plus full consolidation of the ground and full headstone strips along with drainage. Testing would need to be carried out for

potential suitability. Dignity are awaiting quotations and schedules of works for the testing.

A new area in the Muslim section is being developed and some access pathways have been placed both to this and the lower area where we continue to offer lined graves.

14.4.2 Dignity has started planning for future access.

14.4.3 Current availability will provide burial space for approximately 2 years in the Cemetery as a whole and 5 years in the Muslim section.

14.5 Maltby

14.5.1 If burials continue at current levels, grave space for the next 10 years has been identified; the majority of this space had previously been marked as lost. Dignity has requested the Council, Maltby Parish Council and Friends of Maltby Cemetery to report any suitable land that becomes available.

14.5.2 Land within the cemetery boundary has been mapped out for cremated remains. This will provide for several more years of interment space.

14.6 Moorgate

14.6.1 Dignity generally only receives requests for re-opening of existing graves at this site. There have only been 5 new graves in the last 3 years, 2 of these were in the cremated remains section and the other three were in the 1st New Section A. This is the only area that can accommodate new graves. There is a new tap in this area. There appears to be a lot of space but due to the nature of the cemetery and its age, it is believed that the majority of this land relates to public graves and as such is unmarked. There is no future room for expansion at this site.

14.7 Haugh Road

14.7.1 This was previously a closed cemetery for new burials and no grave allocation has taken place for several years. Dignity have now opened up an area around the Cenotaph which has provided at least 40 cremated remains plots and 58 full burial plots. This will now mean that pre-purchase graves can be offered to families in this cemetery. This may also mitigate the risks identified at Greasbrough Lane.

14.8 Greasbrough

14.8.1 This cemetery is currently available for re-opening of graves only. Some land has been identified from the cemetery plan as future burial land and this has been presented to ward members. Dignity are awaiting further discussions.

14.9 Greasbrough Lane

14.9.1 Dignity repeatedly reports the problems at Greasbrough Lane cemetery relating to waterlogged land. Adverse weather conditions during winter months result in a large section of the cemetery being cordoned off for health and safety reasons. Signage is posted and families are made aware of adverse weather conditions both on the interment notices they sign for the burials to go ahead and in the information pack sent out to families on the purchase of grave rights.

14.9.2 The action has not been to prevent people visiting but to warn that the ground is very slippery and extra care is needed.

14.9.3 No drainage was put in place when the cemetery was first designated as burial land. Existing graves and the clay nature of the soil mean it is not possible to add drainage. Dignity has reported that decisions need to be made on the future of this cemetery. Dignity advises families purchasing plots of the issues caused by wet weather conditions.

14.10 Masbrough

14.10.1 This is a very old cemetery with a lot of public graves. There is very little capacity remaining at this site.

14.10.2 Dignity met with Cllr Jones, who reported that land at the Psalters Lane side of the cemetery is owned by the Council and could be designated for future burial space. Cllr Jones forwarded a proposal to the Council.

14.10.2 A briefing paper was referred to the Project Liaison Group for consideration.

14.10.3 After further discussion, there has been no requirement for full burial at Masbrough. There is some land that it may be possible to use within the existing cemetery, but utilities need to be established and testing before this can be confirmed. There is also a requirement for a turning area at the bottom of the cemetery. This would prevent the churning up of ground and potential driving over edges of graves. The identified area is currently public ground. It has been agreed that the turning circle is to be re-established 2021.

14.11 Wath

14.11.1 This cemetery has limited capacity; there is burial space for approximately 2 years in the current boundary. There is adjoining land available that is owned by the Council and discussions have commenced regarding converting this to burial space. Ward Members have been consulted and the Council is progressing this further.

14.12 High Street

14.12.1 This cemetery is fully closed and has been returned to nature.

15. Performance of Contractors

15.1 Dignity sub-contracts grounds maintenance work to Glendale.

15.2 Dignity receives regular ground maintenance plans, schedules of work and staffing plans along with working hours. Dignity is working with the site manager to address all issues, implement strategies and the setting of timescales to ensure requirements are met.

15.3 Dignity has regular meetings with the contractors Manager and every month the Cemetery Supervisor produces a report on each cemetery and has a scheduled visit to all cemeteries with the contractors Manager. Remedial work is carried out and logs are kept of when work is actioned.

15.4 The contractor responds well to timed requests relating to complaints.

15.5 Grass cutting takes priority, Dignity has requested that advance notice be provided for visitors. Schedules submitted generally give the areas and places of work.

15.6 Logs are kept of damaged taps, moss on paths, potholes that require filling, leaves and grass cuttings on graves.

15.7 Generally the grounds are in good condition and a lot of work has taken place over the winter period.

15.8 Discussions are taking place regarding contract renewal early 2020.

16. Grounds Maintenance Plan

16.1 Detailed plans are available.

17. Cemetery Management Plan

17.1 Cemetery reports are logged. These tie in with meetings held between the Rotherham Manager, Cemetery Supervisor and contractors Manager.

18. Service Development

18.1 Refurbishment works for the chapel and associated rooms commenced in May 2018 and were completed September 2018.

18.1.1 This has provided a building that retains the character of the chapel but offers modern facilities and technology. There is a new entrance into the waiting room for mourners, increased seating and standing capacity and a new mezzanine structure. A new Wesley music system has been installed and this enables both visual tributes and web casting. This has been well received by families. Council members and other groups have been given tours of the new facilities and memorial services have commenced.

18.2 A new Book of Remembrance room, with access each day of the year, has been provided and this is located closer to the main carpark.

18.3 New toilet facilities have been provided including nappy changing facilities and there is an additional external disabled toilet with radar key entrance. There is a new flower room providing a greater availability of space. The area has a water supply and provision of spare vases.

18.4 The refurbishment programme was completed on time and a temporary chapel was available throughout the works. The interval between cremations was temporarily increased to one hour during the works, at the request of Funeral Directors.

18.5 Dignity has implemented a new cremation diary, to offer more choice to families. There are now two direct unattended times at 8:15 and 8:20, an intimate attended but no service at 9:00 and a reduced fee for early full service at 9:30. The programme is then the standard offering at 45-minute intervals for the rest of the day. These times are offered Monday to Friday.

18.6 Dignity has complied with the requirements of GDPR and has a revised Privacy Notice <https://www.dignityfunerals.co.uk/services/privacy-cookies/>

18.7 Dignity has offered funding to work with the Muslim community to resolve the issue of DIY kerb sets and landscaping of the area. Graves are being made available in two new areas of the Muslim section. Graves are being pegged and set differently to address perceptions that not all of the coffin is covered by the designated kerb set area. This positioning of kerb sets and headstones will not vary, improving the look of the area. A hedge separates the old and new sections.

18.8 Dignity has put in some pathways to the two new burial areas for ease of access and has held meetings with select members of the Muslim community to correctly agree the direction of the graves. These meetings will continue to enable communication and further trust development.

19. Strategic Service Improvement Plan

19.1 There is focus to develop the following areas:

19.1.1 Customer engagement.

19.2.2 Memorial Testing programme.

19.1.3 Update the Memorial Masons Registration Scheme.

19.1.4 Consultation regarding environmental/natural burials.

20. Building Condition

20.1 The office block is now 12 years old and remains in a very good condition. Regular servicing and maintenance is carried out and hot water heaters have been replaced. Air conditioning facility is regularly serviced and repairs made as appropriate. Fire alarm system was newly installed and is regularly serviced. Intruder Alarm servicing is carried out yearly.

20.2 The chapel and associated facilities have been fully refurbished.

20.3 The crematory is suitable for use and is regularly maintained. Equipment although well used is in good working order.

20.4 Rainwater goods and problems regarding blockage are being addressed.

20.5 Dignity continues to report the risks resulting from the poor state of repair of chapels, for which the Council has retained responsibility.

20.6 The Council have agreed to the demolishing of the old office block which is in a very poor state of repair. Services need to be disconnected and / or relocated. Discussions are taking place between Dignity and the Council and costings are being obtained. The old toilet block requires secure boarding.

21. Cremator Compliance Checks

21.1 All documentation is held on site.

21.2 The Environmental Health Officer for the Council is kept up to date on all servicing, emissions testing, changes to operating staff and is given all the monthly and yearly reports. The 6 monthly and annual services took place in April and November 2019 and the next service is scheduled for April 2020.

21.3 Dignity's head of technical and facultative services regularly check compliance.

22. Benchmarking

22.1 Benchmarking of fees across South Yorkshire have been submitted but it is acknowledged that like for like comparisons are difficult to achieve due to the diversity of offerings.

23. Staffing

Name	Role	Hours	FTE
Samantha Fletcher	Manager	38.33	1
Jordan Sinclair	Cemetery Supervisor	38.33	1
Clare Chisholm	Memorial Consultant	38.33	1
Chris Dexter	Administrator	38.33	1
Mandy Crosthwaite	Administrator	20.00	.52
Amelia Hodgetts	Head Cremator Technician/Verger	38.33	1
Dean Winfindale	Cremator Technician/Verger/Grounds worker	38.33	1
Wayne Fell	Cremator Technician/Verger/Grounds worker	38.33	1
Harry Bailey	Grounds Person	28.30	.74

24. Financial Performance

24.1 On a monthly basis, Dignity to pay the fixed amount, including VAT, to the Council and to provide the Council with VAT only invoices to enable the Council to account for VAT correctly on the contract.

24.2 Dignity advises the Council of any revised annual fixed amount, reflecting the contract's indexation provisions. The Council has the opportunity to review any revisions before agreement is reached.

24.3 Dignity provides the Council with a detailed income and expenditure statement on a quarterly basis to enable the Council to monitor the financial performance of the contract. In order for the Council to meet its statutory deadlines for the publication of the statement of accounts, the annual income and expenditure statement is provided by the end of the second week of April.

24.4 Dignity provides the Council with an updated 35-year contract financial model on an annual basis, reflecting the combined actual income and expenditure statements to date and an updated estimate of future financial performance. This enables the Council to review the equity internal rate of return being achieved by Dignity and determines if the contract's exceptional surplus provisions are being triggered.

24.5 All financial affairs are managed via the Dignity accounts department.

25. Declaration

I hereby confirm that this document provides an accurate reflection of Dignity Funerals Ltd performance.	
Name: Samantha Fletcher Signature: (Manager) S C Fletcher	Date 13 th March 2020
The completed report should be returned to louise.sennitt@rotherham.gov.uk / chris.willis@rotherham.gov.uk by 6 th April 2020.	

BRIEFING	TO:	Improving Places Select Commission
	DATE:	8 September 2020
	LEAD OFFICER:	Katherine Harclerode Governance Advisor, Assistant Chief Executive’s Directorate 01709 254352
	TITLE:	Outcomes of Workshop on Housing Repairs and Maintenance (27 August 2020)
1. Background		
1.1	Present:	Cllrs Mallinder (Chair), Atkin, B. Cutts, Elliot, Jones, Reeder, Sansome, Sheppard, Wyatt; and Co-optees Ms. Bacon and Ms. Jacques.
1.2	Apologies:	Cllrs Buckley, Jepsen; McNeely; Taylor; and the Cabinet Member for Housing, Cllr Beck.
1.3	Attendees:	Tom Bell – Assistant Director of Housing George Temple – Head of Contracts, Investment and Compliance
1.4	Purpose of the session	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To seek assurances regarding service delivery under the April 2020 contract.2. To receive information regarding service response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
1.5	Scope	A presentation set forth information about Housing Repairs and Maintenance Service which is conducted through a partnership with two primary contractors, MEARS and ENGIE, as part of a contract that had recently expired and was therefore due for renewal in April 2020. Members had developed the scope around broad topics of Contract, Covid-19, Communication, Operations, and Social Value. Members expressed interest in receiving both qualitative and quantitative information on these topics as part of the workshop presentation.
2. Key Issues		
2.1	Contract:	The rationale for selection of the contractors under the contract renewed in April 2020, considered quality of service, cost, and contractor values and practices. On the basis of these criteria, MEARS and ENGIE have been the two companies selected.
2.2	Covid-19:	The presentation also illustrated the challenges faced in response to Covid-19, and safety and preparedness measures for the future. 10 staff members were redeployed to work with the Community Hub during Covid-19

	<p>crisis. It was noted that mobility became a challenge during the spring at the height of Covid-19 because all but two of the service vans were locked down in a different part of the Country and local vans had to be sourced and branded. Staff members also had to be given identification reflecting the partnership between ENGIE and the Council. Staff were outfitted with PPE, the cost of which has been absorbed by the contractor. Other staff were given the necessary kit to work from home. It was noted that COVID-19 had not affected the budget, and that budget targets for each of the years were set in advance so that progress with respect to those targets could be monitored on an ongoing basis. It is expected for spend to be on track with the budget allocated for this year.</p>
2.3	<p>Communication: The presentation addressed communications and feedback trends from residents regarding the current contract. Notably, complaints were down 50% from the previous measurement period, suggesting high quality service delivery even amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>
2.4	<p>Operations: The presentation clarified matters of operational process such as how repairs are scheduled and prioritised when service requests are received. Although, operations prepare for a 20:80 ratio between requests for repairs that are emergencies and requests that are not emergencies; however, the actual ratio for the service is 15:85. Personnel receiving the calls are highly skilled in determining through conversation with residents and asking the right questions whether a request is an emergency, and a maximum four-hour response window is maintained for resolution of emergencies. If individuals are known or make themselves to the service as being vulnerable, these residents are prioritised, but rarely do residents choose to self-identify. Many non-emergency repairs such as slow leaks are also handled rapidly.</p>
2.5	<p>Social Value: The presentation provided still further information about ways the service adds social value, specifically through use of data analysis and apprenticeships. Infrared data analysis and GIS mapping is used to identify and treat heat loss in areas of deprivation. As this year's apprenticeship programme goals were thwarted by Covid-19, the contractor has raised the number of apprenticeships to be recruited in subsequent years of the contract. 12 apprenticeships per year beginning next year are to be offered, with many of these becoming permanent positions either within the contractor organisation or one of their subcontractors.</p>
3. Recommendations	
3.1	<p>1. That the briefing be noted.</p>
3.2	<p>2. That the results of data analysis including GIS mapping be included in the next update in respect of Housing Repairs and Maintenance.</p>

BRIEFING	TO:	Improving Places Select Commission
	DATE:	14 July 2020
	LEAD OFFICER:	Katherine Harclerode Governance Advisor 01709 254532
	TITLE:	Revised Work Programme 2020-21 Municipal Year
1. Background		
1.1	The remit of the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) is to undertake scrutiny activity in respect of all matters pertaining to the borough of Rotherham as a place. In broad terms, this remit relates to business and economic development, employment, emergency planning, environment, housing, climate change, leisure, culture and tourism, transport and highways, as well as regulatory services such as trading standards and environmental health. The breadth of functions and services that fall within the Commission's remit is significant. The way in which the Commission discharges its scrutiny activity is a matter for itself, having regard to the provisions of the Constitution and any direction from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.	
1.2	Members are required to determine their work programme for the 2020/21 municipal year to give focus and structure to scrutiny activity to ensure that it effectively and efficiently supports and challenges the decision-making processes of the Council, and partner organisations, for the benefit of the people of the borough.	
1.3	The IPSC has chosen to scrutinise a range of issues through a combination of pre-decision scrutiny items, policy development, performance monitoring, information updates and follow up to previous scrutiny work.	
1.4	<p>The IPSC has six scheduled meetings over the course of 2020/21, representing a maximum of 18 hours of scrutiny per year – assuming 3 hours per meeting. Members therefore had to be selective in their choice of items for the work programme. The following key principles of effective scrutiny were considered in determining the work programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection – There is a need to prioritise so that high priority issues are scrutinised given the limited number of scheduled meetings and time available. Members should consider what can realistically and properly be reviewed at each meeting, taking into account the time needed to scrutinise each item and what the session is intended to achieve. • Value-added – Items had to have the potential to 'add value' to the work of the council and its partners. • Ambition – the Programme does not shy away from scrutinising issues that are of greatest concern, whether or not they are the primary responsibility of the council. The Local Government Act 2000 gave local authorities the power to do anything to promote economic, social and environmental well being of local communities. 	

1.5	<p>Subsequent Acts have conferred specific powers to scrutinise health services, crime and disorder issues and to hold partner organisations to account.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility – The Work Programme maintains a degree of flexibility as required to respond to unforeseen issues/items for consideration during the year and to accommodate any further work that falls within the remit of this Commission. • Timing – The Programme has been designed to ensure that the scrutiny activity is timely and that, where appropriate, its findings and recommendations inform wider corporate developments or policy development cycles at a time when they can have most impact. The Work Programme also helps safeguard against duplication of work undertaken elsewhere. <p>The revised plan avails itself of a number of possible modes as appropriate, including but by no means limited to items on scheduled meeting agendas, Task Groups, and meetings with service Officers and Partners.</p> <p>In order to keep agendas to a manageable size, and to focus on items to which the Panel can make a direct contribution, the IPSC has chosen to take some “information only” items outside of formal Commission meetings, for example by email.</p> <p>The Programme does need to maintain flexibility to accommodate additional or urgent items that may emerge during the year, and, if items are added, this may necessitate a review and re-prioritisation of the Work Programme. Furthermore, the scheduling of items may require some flexibility to take in to account the constraints on the capacity of officers and services currently responding to the active Covid-19 Crisis.</p> <p>With the postponed Whole Council election now scheduled to be held in May 2021, no meetings will be held in April 2021 during the pre-election period. The work of the Commission is therefore going to need to be completed by the meeting planned to be held in March 2021 before a new Council is elected for the 2021-22 municipal year.</p>
2. Key Issues	
2.1	<p>Some areas of recent scrutiny work that the Commission has previously completed may need to be re-examined in view of Covid-19, such as the implementation of changes by Dignity in respect of bereavement services. Other topics must be considered keeping in mind additional complexities that attend the pandemic, such as a cost/benefit analysis of Council buildings whose uses have diminished with the advent of working from home. Furthermore, the coming year is expected to see significant progress made on the Forge Island development and broader town centre public realm and housing improvements. These will continue to be matters of great interest to Members.</p>
2.2	<p>The work programme from 2019-20 has a number of items remaining which should form the foundation of the 2020-21 work programme. These items are detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.</p>
2.3	<p>The IPSC is free to determine its work programme as it sees fit. Whilst not yet sourced, good practice in respect of scrutiny work planning would involve seeking a range of suggestions from the public, partner organisations, officers and Members for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme.</p>
2.4	<p>Whilst formal conversations with Cabinet Members and officers have not yet taken place, Members should be clear about expected outcomes, how realistic expectations are and the impact of their decision on their wider work programme and support time. Members are free to incorporate into their work programme any other issues they think should be subject to scrutiny over the course of the year, with the same considerations in mind.</p>

3. Key Actions and Timelines	
3.1	Following the discussion at this meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission, formal discussions will take place with the relevant Cabinet Members and Link Officers in respect of a revised draft Work Programme for 2020-21. Following these discussions, the work programme will be developed and presented at the next meeting in July 2020 for endorsement.
4. Recommendations	
4.1	That the updated Work Programme be approved.

**Appendix 1 Outline Work Programme -
Improving Places Select Commission**

Meeting Date	Agenda Items
9 June 2020	Housing Strategy Progress Update
	Initial Work Programme 2020-21
14 July 2020	Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Update
	Housing Income and Service Charges Update
	Revised Work Programme 2020-21
July/August 2020 Workshop	Housing Maintenance and Repairs
8 September 2020	Town Centre Update
	Bereavement Services Update
20 October 2020	Economic Recovery
	Clean Air Zone
November 2020 Working Group	MIP Review and Flooding Response
8 December 2020	Allotments Self-Management
	Update on CCTV Review
	Cultural Strategy Implementation
	Energy Switching Scheme
January/February 2021 Working Group	Homes Allocation Process
2 February 2021	Rotherham MBC Code of Practice for Highway Inspection and Assessment
	Council Plan Performance Measures - Exception Reporting
	Highways Maintenance
16 March 2021	Transportation – Active Travel, Transforming Cities
	Aids and Adaptations Tenant Scrutiny Review