

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

- Date and Time :-** Tuesday 12 December 2023 at 1.30 p.m.
- Venue:-** Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham.
- Membership:-** Councillors Wyatt (Chair), Tinsley (Vice-Chair), Andrews, Atkin, Aveyard, Barley, Bennett-Sylvester, C Carter, Castledine-Dack, T Collingham, Cowen, Ellis, Havard, Khan, McNeely, Reynolds, Taylor.
- Co-opted Members:-** Mrs. K. Bacon, 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 24 October 2023 (Pages 3 - 12)

To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 October 2023 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. Annual Bereavement Services Report (Pages 13 - 71)

To consider an annual report and five-year development plan in respect of the delivery of the Bereavement Services contract.

7. Road Safety and Cumwell Lane Update (Pages 73 - 81)

To consider an update report in respect of Road Safety and Cumwell Lane.

8. Social Frontiers in Rotherham West and Their Impact on the Community (Pages 83 - 105)

To consider a presentation in respect of a Social Frontiers project undertaken by research partners at the University of Sheffield and Rotherham United Community Trust.

9. Work Programme (Pages 107 - 114)

To consider and endorse an updated outline schedule of scrutiny work.

10. Urgent Business

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

11. Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission will take place on 6 February 2024, commencing at 1.30 pm in Rotherham Town Hall.

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Tuesday 24 October 2023

Present:- Councillors Wyatt (Chair), Andrews, Atkin, Bennett-Sylvester, C Carter, Cowen, Ellis, Havard, McNeely, Taylor and Tinsley (Vice Chair); and co-opted member Mrs. M. Jacques, representing Rotherham Federation of Communities.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Aveyard and T. Collingham and from Mrs. K. Bacon.

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

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

29. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

Pursuant to Minute No. 24, the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion shared an update on events that had taken place over the weekend prior to the meeting. The Cabinet Member expressed profound sympathies for the families in Catcliffe and in other areas of the Borough affected by flooding during the weekend. The Cabinet Member outlined the impact of the floods and the unprecedented levels of the River Rother which had been recorded. The Cabinet Member described the support provided by Council teams throughout the weekend which was ongoing. Reports were also being assembled to capture learning from the events. These reports would be public in the weeks and months ahead. Regarding community working, the Cabinet Member had met with parish councillors just prior to the meeting to ascertain how their response had worked alongside the overarching Place response of the Council and other partners. This discussion provided support to the Parish Councils and gathered insights and learning. This relationship would continue to be nurtured and developed through open communication and mutual support, with a full analysis to follow.

Members noted that scrutiny had reviewed flooding alleviation after the 2007 floods, and again in 2019 to consider learning. Members expressed a desire to receive the forthcoming reports for overview. Members also expressed their gratitude to the volunteers and staff.

Members felt that the briefing for Members had been effective, as this equipped Members to pass on useful information, for example, around road closures. Members sought additional information regarding the decision to take the rail network offline from late Friday morning. The response from the Cabinet Member explained that the call was made by Network Rail to take their signalling and electrical components out of the track. This was believed to be the right call, because the tracks did flood and remained flooded there. In 2019, when the tracks flooded, the station also flooded, resulting in Rotherham being without trains for nine days. The precaution of removing the signalling and electrical components

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meant that when Network Rail were ready to put the equipment back in place after the water had receded, they could do so right away. This reduced the duration of service disruption.

The Chair noted that Kilnhurst Primary School, which had been vulnerable to floods in the past, had external equipment that had been in the deluge. Following half-term holidays, it was hoped that the children would be able to come back to school, as the interior of the school had not flooded.

The Chair noted that the Commission continued to pursue answers to questions submitted to Yorkshire Water.

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 September, 2023, be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

As a landlord, Cllr Tinsley declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 7 – Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy.

31. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

The Chair advised that there were no members of the public or representatives of media organisations present at the meeting and there were no questions in respect of matters on the agenda.

32. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair advised that there was no reason to exclude members of the press or public from observing any items on the agenda.

33. NEIGHBOURHOODS ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working and the Head of Neighbourhoods. It was noted that the model was described as exemplary following a recent peer review by the LGA. Cabinet had refreshed and updated the Strategy last year, including a delivery plan for the new updated strategy, included in the report. The strategy was based upon the priorities and objectives set out within the Council Plan. The delivery plan was summarised, and also included many priorities reflected within the ward plans. Continuous engagement was ongoing to inform the delivery plan and ward priorities.

Areas of focus included providing more opportunities for people with protected characteristics to participate in and engage with the delivery of the Strategy, and increasing the visibility of ward priorities across the Council. A programme of neighbourhood tours for staff had also been introduced, so that staff have a sense of the neighbourhoods they serve. Community safety issues were also being addressed within the Strategy

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through partnership working with South Yorkshire Police to improve CAPS and tasking groups. Regarding this, proposals informed by Members would be submitted to the Safer Rotherham Partnership. Integrated locality working was a further area for development.

In discussion, the Chair clarified the term Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was a source of funding from new developments that is used to deliver priorities and projects within the wards.

Members requested further information regarding the development of the website. The response from the Head of Neighbourhoods indicated that regular posts from the Service feed into the website, but previously the messages were routed first through the Council's corporate news feed. This was being resolved so that the Service could post directly onto the ward webpages.

Members sought more information regarding the work to achieve parity between wards. The response from the Cabinet Member and the Head of Neighbourhoods illustrated a key way the Strategy aimed to achieve parity was in the priority area of perceptions of safety. This was being delivered through improvements to functionality of the CAPS, tackling ASB issues, and submitting a series of proposals to the Safer Rotherham Partnership to this effect.

Members sought further clarification of times and targets for the delivery plan with a view to being able to show impact and value added, noting that much of the work is to support and enable work of other services. The response from the Head of Neighbourhoods explained the absence of times and targets from the report is due to cross referencing strategies from other parts of the Council which are linked into the Neighbourhoods Strategy but have their own impact targets and delivery plans. This was not repeated in this report in the interest of avoiding duplication. Ward plans, however, did have their own impact and were included within the delivery plan. Statistics and ward breakdowns alongside case studies, provided evidence to demonstrate impact. Members noted the desire for time scales and targets to be added, especially to track progress with expanding inclusion.

Members noted the ambition of the service for continuous improvement and sought more information on how the delivery of the Neighbourhood Working Model is narrowing the gap between more deprived and less deprived areas within the borough and how the Strategy will have an impact on addressing deprivation. In terms of more deprived and less deprived neighbourhoods, the response from the Cabinet Member noted the continuation of allocating some parts of the budget based on the numbers of households, with other parts of the budget allocated based on the number of council households, within which there may be a higher proportion of deprived households. A system was currently being developed whereby neighbourhoods could be considered according to indices that would identify the areas that had the most to gain from

improved access to resources.

Members sought to know more details around the challenges faced in the delivery of the Strategy and how these were addressed. The response from the Cabinet Member explained that the position was being reviewed as to whether or not there were enough housing officers in each ward based on the complexity of need within the wards. The existing roles of housing officers were also under review, to consider if these were the right roles to deal with the complexity well. It was noted that although the distribution was felt to be fair numerically, there were some areas where pressure on the role of a housing officer was very different to other areas. These considerations would be factored in in time for next year's budget decisions.

Elaborating on the role of the north, south, and central areas of the borough, the Head of Neighbourhoods noted the directive of government was that in any areas where there is a parish, the Community Infrastructure Levy money will go to parishes. To help tackle inequalities, Neighbourhoods Teams promote the ward priorities that Members have designated to make sure the Council is responding to the priorities set by Members. This informs the areas of focus for service delivery and policy.

Regarding Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) moneys, Members sought additional insight into whether utility companies invest in the community. The response from the Head of Neighbourhoods indicated that although CIL was primarily around housing development, the question would be passed on to planning colleagues for response.

Members requested additional information regarding whether CIL and allocated ward budgets would be going up in line with inflation. The response from the Cabinet Member noted that indicative numbers for next year were similar to the numbers for this year and would not likely be going up.

Members sought to find out if more case studies could be shared around enforcement activity and outcomes. The response from the Head of Neighbourhoods reaffirmed that ward data should be received on a quarterly basis. This data included police, environmental health, and housing data. If this data was not received regularly, Members were requested to contact the Head of Neighbourhoods directly. It was noted that the Service continually pressed for better communications with Children's Services, especially around consultations and schemes. Whilst communications had shown some improvement as a result, it was felt that there was room for more improvement. The Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion responded to note that the feedback of Members regarding publicity of events which receive Children's Capital of Culture funds would be shared with the Service.

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Resolved:-

1. That the progress of the delivery of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy be noted.
2. That inflation and rising costs of materials and labour should be factored into ward delegated budgets.
3. That the outcomes of proposals to the Safer Rotherham Partnership be submitted for overview.

34. HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY

Consideration was given to an update report and presentation by the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, the Assistant Director of Housing, and the Head of Housing options, who were joined by the CEO of local partner organisation, Shiloh. The presentation summarised progress on the implementation of the refreshed Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, including context information around the increase in homelessness nationally and regionally, due to factors such as cost of living, cost of housing, and support needs. The response to these challenges experienced by the Service in Rotherham was described, and the results of a public engagement exercise at the Rotherham Show were shared, indicating room for greater awareness among Rotherham residents of the issues around homelessness and the support available.

The refreshed strategy had placed additional Service emphasis on prevention and early intervention. Trauma involved in having to move can actually be avoided with the right support in place. It was noted that some rents were rising, which put pressure on individuals, and there are fewer moving on options for people. All local authorities were seeking to employ homelessness officers, and the Service was now fully staffed. A training programme was being delivered to develop staff, and current case loads were described, including new cases and closed cases. The highest reasons for presentation were family and friends not being able to accommodate, the loss of private rented accommodated, and the sales of the properties. Families temporarily in hotels were moved into permanent housing or other housing as soon as possible, because it was unlawful to have more than six families in hotels for more than six weeks. The lettings and move on information for households were also provided.

Rough sleeping counts had been reducing steadily since 2018. There were three that had been found in September, who were not engaging with services. The six o'clock walks by officers had been accompanied by councillors. If the offer of support was refused, the Service kept trying, as sometimes it was hard for the person to decide to engage with Services for a range of reasons.

The Chief Executive of Shiloh then summarised the activity and delivery of the Shiloh charity in Rotherham which prioritises services toward those most in need. The Shiloh services were delivered from a neutral venue,

primarily set up for rough sleepers to provide a warm welcome, and offer a full change of clothing, laundry, and food. These Monday and Friday drop-in services were delivered specifically for the homeless team for Rotherham Council. This is because rough sleepers struggle to engage with authority. On Wednesdays, a multi-agency drop in was hosted for a two- to three-hour window, providing access to every service within one place, including officers from the Council's homelessness team, drug and alcohol service, universal credit, citizens advice, Gates surgery and NHS mental health clinician. This helped to stop the entrenchment that made engagement very difficult.

In conclusion, the presentation reaffirmed the six priorities of the Strategy and outlined improvements to the refreshed website for the Service where additional information had been made available.

In discussion, Members requested additional details regarding the possibility of increasing energy standards for private rented properties. The Assistant Director of Housing provided context for the discussion around energy standards for the private rented sector. The shortage of accommodation and retrofit rules were described, and the lack of security in the sector which was a key driver in central government's own impact assessment, leading to the likelihood that there would not be a requirement to achieve C energy efficiency under the Renters Reform Bill. The Council was in a position that was unfortunately in competition with other authorities who were placing within the Borough, and landlords were more likely to work with the Home Office because this paid more. The private sector therefore presented challenges, and it was important for the Council to consider continually how its schemes can be more attractive options for landlords.

Members noted the excellent cross-agency working which was delivered by the Service and sought additional information regarding landlords who may not be following the requirements around Section 21 notices and whether the Service worked with developers in the built-to-rent market. The response from the Assistant Director of Housing and the Head of Housing Options noted that staff were aware of how it should be done and were thoroughly trained to pick up on any issues with section 21 notices. Built to rent developments involved rates that were higher than the local housing allocation rate. This was one of the big challenges that the homelessness service has in finding prospective properties. The suggestion of working with professional landlords was noted to be explored further.

Members expressed curiosity around whether there was any desire to keep some private rented houses available for use as temporary accommodation when needed? Hotels were hard to find within Rotherham. The Service had at times had to move people out of hotels because the hotel was taken over by the Home Office. Other local authorities also placed people in hotels within Rotherham. If there was a show on at the arena, for example, this had an impact on whether local

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hotels were available for families. Sometimes, the Service found there was not a place in Rotherham. This required the Service to look further afield for placements such as within the Dearne Valley, or Attercliffe, which were as near to Rotherham as possible and still within South Yorkshire. The portfolio of temporary accommodation was being expanded. Key choices property management achieved 100 properties, and the service was currently considering incentives for landlords such as rent guarantees to provide assurances. This involved setting out what would be the offer and the business case to see what would attract landlords to take a homeless household. A gap analysis regarding age groups had been done, and the Service had successfully obtained funding for single people, with four assessment beds in ten properties.

Members sought additional details around sustainment of the Service, especially for the Service to be able to answer or return phone calls and respond to enquiries. The response from the Head of Housing Options described assistance from the contact centre with fielding calls when the team were down to three staff members. The team had now taken the calls back, and there was now a prevention and intervention team. The team were dedicated to managing with the resources that the team had. Members expressed thanks to the three officers who continued to deliver the Service during such a pressured time.

Members noted that getting the homeless people through this stage of their lives and into training and employment was a credit to the Financial Inclusion Team. Further clarification was requested regarding the rough sleeper figures. The response from the Head of Housing Options clarified the figures in the table which referred to the time between April and September, and the other figures referred to the annual count from March 2022 to April 2023.

Further information was requested regarding the budget for the Service. The response from the Assistant Director of Housing indicated that this year is going to bring significant pressure. There was an overspend that would continue to move around in response to the housing market which was part of the regular budgets which were published. Most of this pressure was related to hotel accommodation.

The Assistant Director of Housing provided an update following the weekend floods, which resulted in a total of 16 households being rehoused into hotel and extended placements to the end of the week, and a series of welfare checks were being undertaken. The service were looking at medium term rehousing for these households, and many wanted to be able to go back to their own homes. The situation of private tenants without insurance was different to a Council tenant who has a property to return to once the Council returned the property to a fit state. Some funding could be sought through the Bellwind Scheme for major incidents. There were associated budgetary impacts.

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Additional assurances were requested that no homelessness person or rough sleeper was currently in danger. The response from the Head of Housing Options provided assurances that the service worked on the basis of intelligence garnered from officers and rough sleeper outreach workers, and there had been no reports of rough sleepers in flooded areas.

Members offered further condolences to residents in Catcliffe and Treeton and noted the journey to being fully staffed. Foreseeing increased pressure on the service, Members sought to know whether the team could be scaled if needed. The response from officers noted that through a homelessness prevention grant, a migration team had been set up, and there was an accommodation officer to work with private landlords and with the Home Office around decision-making. This specialist support was in place to alleviate pressure. There was also more office-based officer working. There were three experienced officers in the office sharing knowledge to contribute to the rapid training of new team members. New officers were paired with experienced officers to keep people motivated. The managers in the office were also visible to be a resource to team members. There was also a concerted and thorough training plan. It was important to recognise the work staff were doing and to ensure they feel valued.

Members requested additional details regarding actions the Council was taking to increase the volume of temporary residences. The response from the Assistant Director of Housing noted, as an example, that the Council owned a stock of fifteen properties designated for victims of domestic abuse. There was a knock-on effect to increasing the stock of temporary residences, and a decision was open to the Council. The need to increase the stock was evident from the financial pressures that had been mentioned.

Members sought further understand support to streamline the process which requires someone who has been through Key Choices to submit all of their information again to the homelessness Service if they receive a section 21 notice. The response from the Head of Housing Options noted that more support was available, and it was acknowledged that this interface could be more flexible. An external review of the service had been commissioned which would examine the customer journey as part of the review. Some elements, such as providing up to date bank statements did have to be up to date. Specific elements that people had to complete in order to go onto the waiting list that were not included in other submissions would be considered as part of the review.

Members sought to know whether houses purchased by the Council would help with homelessness or temporary accommodation. The response from officers noted that according to the housing acquisition policy, as part of section 106, these homes were added to the Council's housing stock. This added on the order of 100 properties, including properties that were previously purchased by right to buy. It is often

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cheaper to purchase these than to build them. The acquired properties would be used as general needs or as temporary accommodation, with the necessary staffing. The Council would make decisions at budget setting around how much of that will be done.

Members sought additional details around whether the Service maintained any register of landlords. The response from officers noted that the Service did have increased knowledge of private sector landlords and had an officer in strategic housing who worked with the private landlords, so although there was not a formal list of properties, officers did have knowledge of this.

Members also sought to know whether the Service rehoused pets as well, and whether the support offered was being shared effectively in messaging. The response from officers noted that one of the hotels accommodated dogs, and a review of temporary accommodation would consider pets. Officers were not aware of other cases where a dog could not be accommodated. The Service offered kennels as required. On Saturday, one of the first things staff were doing was to call around to kennels to try to ensure accommodation. Staff were mindful that a pet is regarded as a member of the family. Sometimes there could be some practical management reasons why this was not always possible to have pets in a property, but as a principle, the Service tried to accommodate pets if possible. In terms of Council support at Catcliffe, Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment described how the drainage team with pumps had been the first to arrive to Catcliffe Friday morning, handing off to the highways team and activating the emergency rest centre in the very early hours of Saturday morning. These teams had maintained their presence there and continued providing support.

Resolved:-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That thanks be passed on to the team who have kept the frontline service going during significant staffing pressures.
3. That thanks to Shiloh and voluntary sector partners be recorded for their work with people who would not otherwise readily engage with statutory agencies and services.

35. WORK PROGRAMME

Resolved:-

1. That the report and proposed schedule of work be noted.
2. That authority be delegated to the Governance Advisor in consultation with the Chair and Vice-chair to make changes to the schedule of work as appropriate between meetings, reporting changes back to the next meeting for endorsement.

36. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair advised that there were no urgent items requiring a decision at the meeting.

37. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:-

That the next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission will take place on Tuesday, 12 December 2023, commencing at 1.30pm in Rotherham Town Hall.

Public Report
Improving Places Select Commission

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 12 December 2023

Report Title

Annual Bereavement Services Report

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

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services

Report Author(s)

Ashleigh Wilford, Superintendent Registrar and Bereavement Services Manager
01709 334212 or ashleigh.wilford@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report provides an update on the Council's Bereavement Services management of the contract between Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and Dignity Funerals Limited.

Recommendations

1. That members note the content of this report.
2. That members also review the annual report from Dignity Funerals Limited alongside this report and note the content thereof.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Equalities Screening Assessment
Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Report to Improving Places Select Commission "Annual Bereavement Service Report" dated 13th December 2023.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public
No**

Annual Bereavement Services Report

1. Background

1.1 This report provides updates on the progress made in relation to:

- Management of the Dignity contract
- Capital Projects
- Disused cemetery chapels
- Council retained cemetery boundaries
- Digital autopsy contract with iGene Ltd
- Death management

1.2 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 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 cemetery chapels, associated buildings, and boundary walls on some cemetery sites.

1.3 Dignity is required to provide annual assurance to the Council that Key Performance Targets (KPTs) are being met and Service Improvements (SIs) are being made, this is documented each year by the production of an Annual Performance Report (APR).

1.4 On 16th September 2021, following a successful six-month pilot, the Council implemented a contract for Digital Autopsies provided by iGene Limited, in conjunction with Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and Coronial Services. The aim of the Digital Autopsy process is to improve efficiencies in the autopsy process and to improve the service which bereaved families receive.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Updates on the Improving Places Select Commission recommendations from the meeting dated 13th December 2022

2.1.1 **Recommendation 1;** the report was noted.

2.1.2 **Recommendation 2;** feedback from Members was noted.

2.1.3 **Recommendation 3;** That an all-member session be convened to facilitate a further dialogue around improvements to Service delivery in the five-year plan. **This took place on 23rd March 2023.**

2.1.4 **Recommendation 4;** That Bereavement Services and Dignity work together to better demonstrate how equalities duties are adhered to in contract management and operational delivery. Dignity submitted their Equalities Impact Assessment in February 2023; Bereavement Services

manage the contract in line with the Council's Equality and Diversity policies.

2.2 Management of the Dignity Contract

2.2.1 By utilising the mechanisms in place within the contract for performance management, Bereavement Services continue to levy a number of financial penalty charges to Dignity Funerals Ltd where performance failures have not been resolved within the rectification period as defined in the contract for the severity level of the failure.

2.2.2 These are gradually decreasing as Dignity make improvements to their performance and the overall standard of the cemeteries.

2.3 Capital Projects – Bereavement Services

2.3.1 In March 2023, Cabinet granted approval for Capital Works to several Council retained assets in the cemeteries. Further approval is required for additional capital allocation due to changes in costs of materials and labour since the estimations were made. This section outlines current progress on capital works and estimated dates of completion.

2.3.2 *East Herringthorpe Cemetery* – An independent report on the existing facilities and cemetery standards is being sought by Bereavement Services for those of the Islamic faith requiring a burial and its findings will be reported to committee members where appropriate. The review did not take place in June 2023 as had been arranged, further work is underway to re-arrange the review in 2024.

2.3.3 *Maltby Cemetery* – The historical Lychgate at the cemetery entrance was restored by specialist contractors in July 2023 with restoration works being high quality and much appreciated by residents. The installation of a perimeter fence will be completed by 31st March 2024.

2.3.6 *All Cemeteries* – Granite benches will be installed in cemeteries across the borough. These benches will give the public a place to sit and reflect on their loved one's life and provide a place to rest for the elderly or infirm as they pass through the cemeteries.

2.3.7 *Greasbrough Lane Cemetery* – A perimeter fence will be installed along the top boundary of the cemetery to enhance the security of the cemetery by 31st March 2024.

2.3.8 *High Street Cemetery* – Significant works to improve the cemetery site commenced in October 2023 will see repairs to two of the stone walls, installation of a fence for safety along the bottom retaining wall and access improved to the cemetery at the point where an 'A' frame gate is currently situated. These works are to be completed by 31st March 2024.

- 2.3.9 Dignity continues to make investments in the cemeteries themselves and will report on this in more detail in a separate report to members.
- 2.3.10 Dignity have produced a Five-Year Plan detailing improvement and development works across the cemeteries for cemetery and crematorium assets in scope of the contract. Dignity will be accountable for the delivery of these service improvements and will update and refresh the plan on a rolling, annual basis. Performance is regularly monitored in the monthly performance meetings chaired by Bereavement Services and reported formally on a quarterly basis to the Internal Officer's Group and Project Liaison Meeting.

2.4 Disused Cemetery Chapels

- 2.4.1 When the contract was entered into with Dignity in 2008, the Council retained full responsibility for the municipal cemetery chapels located at Moorgate, Masbrough, Haugh Road Rawmarsh and Greasbrough Town Lane cemeteries.
- 2.4.2 All the chapels are in a poor state of repair and require varying levels of work to bring them into a secure, wind and watertight state, with considerable investment required to return them to any useable condition. A working group has been established with asset management which aims to put together a rolling program of chapel repairs, funding and bringing back into use.

The detail below provides specific information relating to each of the chapels:

2.4.3 *Moorgate*

Moorgate chapel remains in a state of disrepair. In October 2023, slate guards were fitted to ensure that slates falling from the roof did not fall to the ground below causing damage or injury. The chapel is in the process of application to become a listed building.

2.4.4 *Masbrough*

Masbrough chapels had slate guards fitted in October 2023, to ensure any falling slates did not fall to the ground below causing damage or injury.

2.4.5 *Haugh Road*

Haugh Road cemetery chapel has also had slate guards fitted. Self-set trees remain an issue for this chapel due to the proximity of trees to the chapel making the risk for self-set trees on the building higher than other areas. A decorative part on a gable end has come loose due to the roots of a self-set growth and works to re-stabilise this have been arranged.

2.4.6 *Town Lane*

These chapels remain in a better condition than the other chapels and would require considerably less investment to return them to a useable state.

2.5 Cemetery Boundaries

2.5.1 East Herringthorpe, Wath and Town Lane boundaries are all maintained by Dignity Funerals Ltd on behalf of the Council. The Council retained some aspects of boundaries in other cemeteries at the commencement of the contract and updates with regards to these at each cemetery are below.

2.5.2 *Moorgate Cemetery*

Obelisk and stone walls have been cleared of Ivy Growth. Probation services have been undertaking community payback work at the cemetery and have assisted greatly with reducing overgrowth at the cemetery.

2.5.3 *Masbrough Cemetery*

Dignity have removed considerable amounts of invasive ivy from the stone walls on site. This has revealed some repair works that the Council will need to carry out in 2024.

A section of wall under Dignity's responsibility has collapsed and will require rebuilding.

2.5.4 *Maltby Cemetery*

Perimeter fence and lychgate covered at 2.3.4.

2.5.5 *High Street Cemetery*

Boundary wall repair work covered at 2.3.7.

2.5.6 Work to repair the wall between the church and the cemetery is underway in line with works detailed at 2.3.7. The railings along the front boundary of the cemetery have been sanded, repaired where necessary and repainted.

2.5.7 *Haugh Road Cemetery*

Flaking paint has been removed on railings and re-painted. Missing railings have been re-instated to prevent unauthorised access out of hours.

2.5.8 *Greasbrough Lane Cemetery*

Covered at 2.3.6 in respect of the boundary line fence installation. Flaking paint to be removed on main iron gates and re-painted as part of the capital works.

2.6 Digital Autopsy Contract

2.6.2 A Digital Autopsy (DA) pilot began on 14th March 2021 for a period of 6 months. The contract was awarded to iGene London to provide a Digital Autopsy service to conduct digital post-mortem examinations. This pilot was deemed successful and so RMBC joined the existing contract between iGene and Doncaster MBC.

- 2.6.3 Digital Autopsy means the conducting of a post-mortem in a computerised environment using digital tools. Because the cause of death can be established quickly, usually within 48 hours, the deceased's body can be released to families more quickly than the traditional invasive method. It is also less distressing for the grieving family than the traditional method.
- 2.6.4 To date, the Digital Autopsy service has been positively received by professionals and it is delivering faster decision-making on Coronial cases and significantly reducing the number of invasive post-mortems required. It is important to note that some deaths must be investigated by an invasive autopsy due to the circumstances surrounding the death so there will never be a 100% success rate in Digital Autopsy utilisation.
- 2.6.5 The management of the Digital Autopsy is overseen by the Superintendent Registrar & Bereavement Service Manager of RMBC in partnership with Doncaster MBC representatives including the Senior Coroner for Doncaster and Rotherham jurisdiction.

The most recent performance statistics for the Digital Autopsy Service for Rotherham are;

- 81% of all deaths requiring autopsy were done digitally, without the need for an invasive being undertaken. A further 15% were resolved by combination of the digital scan and toxicology results.
- Pathologists are required to report the findings of an autopsy within 24 hours to the Coronial Service. The key performance target (KPT) for this is a target of 80%. The current achievement against this KPT is 96%.
- The service provider (iGene) is required to undertake the digital autopsy on a weekday as soon as possible but in any case, within 48 hours of notification from the Coronial Service to the service provider. The current achievement against this KPT is 100%.

2.7 Death Management

- 2.7.1 Bereavement Services oversee the management of death management in peak periods following the disbanding of the wider COVID emergency response workstream formed to manage excess deaths in the Borough 2020-2021.
- 2.7.2 On a monthly basis Bereavement Services collate mortuary capacity usage figures from the public mortuary at Rotherham Hospital, funeral director mortuary capacity usage and the numbers of burials and cremations available including total used at Rotherham Crematorium and municipal cemeteries.
- 2.7.3 The death management working group is made up of representatives from the following services; RMBC Registration & Bereavement Services, Dignity, Public Health, Hospital Mortuary, Integrated Care Board, Hospice, Medical Examiner and Senior Coroner.

2.8 Religious Awareness Training

2.8.1 Bereavement Services have worked in conjunction with community engagement to commission staff training sessions on faith-based practices and requirements around bereavement. Two successful staff facing events have taken place at Ridge Road Mosque and were attended by Council staff, coronial staff, other faith leaders, and Dignity and Glendale staff. Further sessions will take place periodically.

2.8.2 In addition to training for staff and professional stakeholders, training and guidance will be provided for the public to create a better awareness of different legal requirements and processes that need to be followed following the death of a loved one. This will help inform the public about Registration, Medical Examiner and Coronial practices and create a better understanding of why and how these duties are required to be undertaken. This will be undertaken in 2024 once further information about the statutory Medical Examiner service has been released by central government.

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

6.1 This report introduces no additional financial or procurement implications other than those highlighted at 2.2.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

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 has no specific implications in relation to Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 The Equality Screening Analysis is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 10.2 There are no Equalities or Human Rights Implications identified.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 A Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) has been completed setting out the potential impacts on emissions and how these can be addressed, refer to appendix 2 of this report.
- 11.2 The gaps identified within the CIA will be progressed via the Project Liaison Group.

12. Implications for Partners

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

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Risks relating to the Dignity Funerals Contractual Agreement are monitored via a performance management framework and Annual Performance Report.
- 13.2 Financial risks relating to the Dignity Funerals Contractual Agreement are monitored via the Council’s annual review of the finance model.

Accountable Officer(s)

Bal Nahal, Head of Legal, Registrars and Bereavement Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Name	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	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)	Phillip Horsfield	04/12/23
Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.

The Strategic Director with responsibility for this report	Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services	Click here to enter a date.
Consultation undertaken with the relevant Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance - Councillor Alam	Click here to enter a date.

Report Author: Ashleigh Wilford, Superintendent Registrar & Bereavement Services Contract Manager

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

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting
Improving Places Select Committee – 12 th December 2023
Report Title
Report from Dignity Funerals Limited on 2022-2023
Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report
Report Author
Dignity Funerals Limited 4 King Edwards Court King Edwards Square Sutton Coldfield West Midlands B73 6AP Richard Shepherd– Business Leader – Rotherham Crematorium & Cemeteries Tel: 01709 850344 Email: Richard.Shepherd@dignityuk.co.uk Mark Williams – Operations Director Email mark.b.williams@dignityuk.co.uk
Ward(s) Affected
Borough- Wide
Report Summary
This report provides an update on the contractual agreement between Dignity Funerals Limited and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. It includes the Dignity Funerals Annual Performance report (APR) for 2022-2023
Recommendations
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members note the content of this report 2. Members note the content of the Dignity Funeral Limited Annual Performance Report 2022-2023 3. Members note the Five-Year Service Development Plan
List of appendices included
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Five-year service development plan. Rotherham Crematorium and Municipal Cemeteries managed by Dignity with subcontractors Glendale on behalf of Rotherham Council 2. Dignity Funerals Limited Performance Report 2022-2023
1. Update report on Bereavement Services within the Agreement between Dignity Funerals Limited and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Background <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 this report provides updates on the progress made in relation to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actions set in relation to Dignity Funeral Limited at the Improving Places Select Commission dated 7th September 2021 - The Annual Performance Plan for Dignity Funerals Limited 1.2 On the 1st August 2008, the Rotherham Council entered a 35-year contractual agreement with Dignity Funerals Limited for the provision of Bereavement Services for Rotherham. This agreement saw Dignity take on responsibility for the capital works and maintenance of East Herringthorpe Cemetery and Crematorium along with the maintenance of eight other municipal cemeteries located throughout the borough. Rotherham Council retained cemetery chapels, associated buildings, and boundary walls on some cemetery sites 1.3 Dignity provides annual assurance to Rotherham Council that that Key Performance targets are being met and service improvements are being made and are documented in the Annual Performance report.
2. Key issues
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Dignity is required to maintain hard and soft landscaping including roads and footpaths, grave areas, memorial gardens, arboriculture, and all horticultural features. During the period significant improvements have been made to all cemeteries and Dignity has worked with its contractor, Glendale, to develop a five-year development and improvement plan. The driveway and footpaths at East Herringthorpe Cemetery have been resurfaced to improve access, safety and general appearance of the site.

<p>All existing drainage at East Herringthorpe Cemetery has been repaired and a new drainage system has been installed within the Muslim burial section to prevent the reoccurrence of historic groundwater issues in this area.</p>
<p>2.2 Dignity is committed to assessing customer satisfaction levels to agreed targets. The customer engagement log is regularly updated and shared with the Rotherham Council at monthly meetings.</p> <p>To improve reporting a revised customer survey was developed during July 2022. Information boards have been installed in every cemetery to encourage feedback from customers. Dignity has proactively engaged with Friends of Cemetery Groups and the Muslim community to better understand their needs.</p> <p>Serious complaints are referred to Rotherham Council within 1 working day.</p>
<p>3. Expansion update</p>
<p>3.1 Dignity submitted planning applications in September 2022 for the expansion of the Wath and East Herringthorpe cemeteries to satisfy the future needs for burial space.</p> <p>Wath Cemetery requires expansion for opening in 2023 so Dignity and Rotherham Council are agreeing the terms of the modelling currently and Dignity will commence the procurement and tendering process for the development whilst the planning process proceeds.</p>
<p>3.2 Both planning applications received positive pre-application approval earlier this year.</p>
<p>3.3 Planning consent for East Herringthorpe is still under consideration.</p>
<p>3.4 planning permission was granted at Wath in October 2023. Works now to commence on landscaping and preparing site ready for 2024.</p>
<p>4. Capital investment</p>
<p>4.1 In 2023, Dignity have invested heavily at East Herringthorpe, Greasbrough lane, Greasbrough Town Lane, Haugh Road and Maltby to make significant improvements to the driveway and footpaths to improve the access, safety and appearance for visitors. Improvements ongoing at Wath, Masbrough and Moorgate Cemetery.</p>
<p>4.2 An additional £250,000 has been invested in the in the Muslim burial area of the cemetery to improve access, provide land drainage and create tombs to improve the facilities provided to this community. This development was completed, however Dignity are continuously looking to improve the area through further landscaping. Working alongside the Muslim Community, work will commence in Spring 2024</p>
<p>4.3 Dignity are also considering investing in new cremator equipment at the East Herringthorpe site. Site visits to consider proposals taking place in December 2023.</p>
<p>5. Service improvements</p>
<p>5.1 Removal of additional fee for weekend burials</p> <p>In common with other cemetery operators across Yorkshire, there has traditionally been an additional fee in Rotherham if a family required a burial at a weekend. This was intended to cover the overtime rates of the gravediggers and to pay for the Cemetery Supervisor to identify the burial site and oversee any practical requirements during the service.</p> <p>Dignity has reviewed its cemetery prices in Rotherham, and after consulting the Rotherham Council and local community, has decided to waive the additional fee of £481 and absorb the extra costs. Dignity has also offered a refund for any grave owner that has previously paid the additional weekend fee from when Dignity entered the contract on 1st August 2008.</p>
<p>5.2 Extension to last burial times</p> <p>Improvements to services have also been introduced to assist those whose religious beliefs require a deceased persons to be buried within 24 hours of their passing. The last burial time of the day has been extended to 6.30pm.</p> <p>Portable lighting will be made available to maintain the safe conditions for visitors when burials take place during the late afternoon or early evening during the autumn and winter.</p> <p>We hope that this will provide additional capacity to meet this need from local residents and ensure loved ones can be buried within 24 hours. Dignity have also introduced, alongside the Muslim Community, grave covers which allow for graves to be dug prior, to negate logistics and time issues previously experienced. These were introduced in July 2023 and have received a positive response from the Muslim Community.</p>
<p>5.3 Provision of a natural burial ground</p> <p>An area of Greasbrough Lane Cemetery has been identified to provide a natural burial ground for those that want this option. Test digs were conducted for the suitability of the area. Once completed, a meadow area was created. Due to ground conditions, certain shrubs that were planted failed, however, the seeded meadow was a success and wish to improve on that Spring 2024 alongside future planting. This area will be a very welcome addition for the community. Renewed marketing campaign will commence in Spring.</p>

6. Friends Groups and Communities
5.1 Diversity and inclusion are integral parts of our business, and we are happy to seek ways to ensure our crematoria and cemeteries are inclusive and welcoming for all faiths and beliefs.
5.2 Monthly meetings have taken place with all Cemetery Friends groups. By working closely with the community, plans have been put in place to provide an improved service provision based off Community feedback.
5.3 Special meetings and invites have been granted to Dignity to visit several Mosques. These meetings were invaluable and have created a good working relationship with the community and a positive platform to build upon.
5.4 Dignity's Central Operations Centre in Sutton Coldfield is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to assist with any public enquiries and funeral arrangements if required.

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Annual Performance Report

1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

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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. Performance is monitored via the Council by using the Performance Management Framework and is reviewed and updated as necessary monthly by Bereavement Services on behalf of RMBC. Quarterly formal meetings are held of the Project Liaison Group to assess performance and service improvements.

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

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.

2. Key Performance Targets

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

KPT	Priority	Security and Management Services	RAG
1.1	Low	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	Medium	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	High	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	Low	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	Low	Unauthorised parking, including unauthorised disabled space parking, shall be deterred wherever Dignity has reasonable opportunity to do so.	
1.6	High	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	Low	Fire Risk Assessment to be carried out in accordance with The Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997/1999.	
1.7- Fire Risk Assessment to be carried out in April 2022. Fire Officer visit 3rd March 2022. Last fire risk assessment carried out on 08/10/2022 Health and safety emailed on 28/11/2023 to get an update on this.			

KPT	Priority	Planned Maintenance	RAG
2.1	High	Disruption to effective delivery of operation of facilities to be limited to the extent identified in the Annual Maintenance Plan.	
2.1-Annual maintenance plan in the process of review and to be shared with RMBC once this is completed and finalised.			
2.2	Low	Carry out planned maintenance and asset renewal work in accordance with the Annual Maintenance Plan. Maintenance on going and monitored.	
2.2-Dignity currently looking at all assets responsible for, all cemeteries are checked by Glendale Wardens, and reported back on the daily event logs.			
2.3	Low	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	Medium	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	High	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	High	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.	
KPT	Priority	Signage	RAG
3.1	Medium	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.	
3.2	Medium	All external light fittings to be working at all times.	
KPT	Priority	Grounds Maintenance	RAG
4.1	Medium	All sites to be maintained in accordance with the agreed method statements and to a minimum standard, with particular attention being paid to, Grass Maintenance, Hedge Maintenance, Horticultural Features Maintenance, Arboriculture Work, Litter and Cleanliness, Pesticides.	
4.1 This has been addressed with Glendale. Glendale live continues to be a good tool to monitor completed works and scheduled works in place. Wardens continue to do Event logs where any performance failures are noted, and any actions they have done to better the site, e.g., Litter Picking and cleanliness, taps and gates.			
4.2	Medium	All site road and footway surfaces to be maintained with a smooth, unencumbered surface.	
4.2 Issues from complaints about paths are being investigated, specifically a path at one site which is cause of concern due to tree roots emerging from old tarmac. An updated plan of remaining paths will be made as soon as these dates are confirmed by Property. New quotes have been acquired from another company for the rest of the remaining paths.			
4.3	Medium	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.	
4.3 Weeds and moss continue to be ongoing throughout the year and is monitored. Glendale are trialling different moss clearance method, the one being most effective up to date is the spreading of lawn sand in the problematic areas. Weekly inspections are carried out, this will allow us to monitor the work that Glendale are doing on a more frequent basis. Access to Glendale live is now available, so this will help us monitor Glendale alongside the weekly cemetery inspections carried out by the Cemetery Supervisors.			
4.4	High	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.	
4.4 Drains are checked daily and are unblocked as much as possible when this is an issue. All issues regarding drains are raised with Glendale ASAP when cemetery inspections are being done. Area at Haugh road that was suspected natural spring is now being re-assessed, contractor came out to site to look at other possibilities of where the water could be coming from.			

KPT	Priority	Building Cleaning	RAG
5.1	Medium	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	Medium/High	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	High	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	Medium	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	Medium	Drains and gullies, scum channels and outlets, pumps and filters are to be kept free from obstructions or contaminants.	
KPT	Priority	Pest Control	RAG
6.1	Medium	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.	
KPT	Priority	Emergency/Contingency Planning	RAG
7.1	High	Provision of an Emergency and out of hour's response and access to information in accordance with required outcomes and the performance standards required for key holder responsibilities.	
7.2	High	Provision of an agreed, effective business continuity plan identifying key areas of risk, resource implications and planned action to negate risk.	
7.3	Low	Specific plans for a pandemic which feeds into the Council's plans for a pandemic.	
KPT	Priority	Customer Satisfaction	RAG
8.1	Medium	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. Complaint log is 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.	
8.2	High	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	Medium	Provide annual statement on customer satisfaction levels including plan for improvements.	
KPT	Priority	Burial Services	RAG
9.1	Low	Provision of environmentally friendly burial options.	
9.2	Low	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	Low	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.	

KPT	Priority	Records Management	RAG
10.1	Low	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	Low	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	Low	Restoration of and redrafting of cemetery plans in line with agreed proposals	
10.3 Still currently waiting for the electronic copies of plans. Once received this will be sent, alongside any other supporting documentation. Work aligned with Towns web (see 10.4)			
10.4	Low	Digitized capture of registers to be made available on the internet in line with agreed proposals.	
10.4 Burial Registers last digitised in October 2005, this is ongoing and currently working with the specialist company to get the next stages completed ASAP. Meetings taking place to sign off the required ledgers. Currently on the last stages of this process.			
KPT	Priority	Management Information	RAG
11.1	Low	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	Low	Demonstrate compliance with the Council's Customer Care Standards through annual statements providing detail of outputs.	
11.3	Low	Provide annual statement on business continuity arrangements including action plan for pandemic and risk assessment. Annual statement on business continuity. Statement provided	
KPT	Priority	Bereavement Charter Improvement Plan	RAG
12.1	Low	Submit Annual Charter for the Bereaved assessment by 31st January 2022	
12.2	Low	Provide the Annual Charter for the Bereaved Improvement Plan within 28 days of the receipt of the Charter report.	
KPT	Priority	Administration	RAG
13.1	Low	Response to enquiries by person, telephone, email and post should be in accordance with the Council's Customer Care Standards	
KPT	Priority	Cremation Services	RAG
14.1	Medium	Cremation booking system available 24/7. An electronic booking system is in place 24/7.	
KPT	Priority	Memorial Options	RAG
15.1	Low	Provision of an affordable range of memorials in accordance with the proposals and prices of existing schemes agreed with the Council.	
15.2	Low	Provision of an effective Memorial Masons Registration scheme with an annual system of registration.	
15.3	Medium	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	Low	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. Memorial testing completed.	
15.4 Currently in the process of checking all data with wardens from their systems. This will give us an accurate figure of memorials that have been fixed and ones that still remain to be fixed. Meetings with Gary Partner have been scheduled in, so we can look at the programme and work on a newer more up to date testing plan. This is being made a priority. Plan sent to Gary Partner for review and consultation 04/10/2023 A time scale of completion October 2024			

KPT	Priority	Community Engagement	RAG
16.1	Low	Minuted meetings of liaison group to take place at least biannually.	
16.2	Low	Evidence of consultation with, and support, to Friends groups within each cemetery site (where appropriate).	
KPT	Priority	Cemetery Management	RAG
17.2	Low	Carry out a review of Policies annually or when a new policy is formulated. Consult Council on changes and update documentation accordingly.	
17.2	High	Report to Council appointed officer on any breaches of statutory provisions, policies rules and regulations within 24 hours of a breach.	

3. Service Improvement Proposals

This section reports on the service improvement proposals for the year 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

SIP	Service Improvement Proposal	RAG
1	Wath and East Herringthorpe Expansion plan	
1	A project group was established April 2020 consisting of Bereavement Services, Dignity, Asset Management and Legal Services to review previous work carried out in 2008 and 2018 to identify existing land within contract or available new land to increase burial capacity across Rotherham. A two-site expansion plan has been proposed and papers submitted. Operational years remaining at each site attached. Land identified is now under review with the Environmental Agency regarding suitability.	
2	Increased involvement with cemetery Friends groups	
3	Use of updated Customer Satisfaction Log New Format designed by RMBC for Dignity to use from 1st April 2022 to monitor customer satisfaction, ongoing procedure in place at Dignity to get updated means of customer feedback.	
4	Produce a strategic plan for burial capacity to the end of the contract term. Dignity have not yet produced a strategic 35-year plan to cover future burial land. This was contractually agreed to be provided at the contract commencement in August 2008.	
5	Introduce rolling last burial times during the Winter period (November-March) to be considered in line with daylight hours. Increase available hours for burials during winter periods. This will assist greatly with short notice burials.	
6	Provide an onsite Florist/Refreshment facility at East Herringthorpe Cemetery.	
6	There have been discussions about looking at other potential possibilities for the old office block and to look at having the onsite café and florist elsewhere in the grounds. Plans are currently being looked at and new ideas put forward to council.	
7	Adequate performance management of sub-contractor using KPIs	
7	Regular meetings are to be held weekly, so we can monitor and get a more up to date report on KPIs, inspections are carried out with a focus being key performance.	
8	Improved customer feedback reporting.	
8	Currently in review, as a new survey was produced that is more user friendly and something everyone can participate in. Update for progress was chased on 28/11/2023. This is in the final stage of completion and should be available to the public by the end of February. This will be available on social media and through the cemetery notice boards.	
9	Improved working with Faith leaders to provide reasonable adjustments and engagements during religious festivals	
9	List of key religious festivals to hand, currently working with faith leaders to make reasonable adjustments and provide support if needed. Current plans are to visit local Mosques and meet with the community.	
10	Periodic Liaison meetings to take place with Funeral Directors.	
10	We will be looking at trying to get meetings together with Funeral Directors moving forward, sticking to a twice-yearly schedule, with the potential of extra if the need arises.	

Memorials that have failed safety testing:

Cemetery	Number of memorials unsafe
East Herringthorpe	199
Greasbrough Town Lane	20
Greasbrough Lane	32
Haugh Road	30
Maltby	123
Masbrough	34
Moorgate	15
Hight Street	0
Wath	143
Total	596

4. Events Monitoring (As defined within schedule 4 of the partnering agreement)**4.1-Availability Requirements**

Availability events	Priority level		
	Super	High	Medium
Number of events logged in the period 1 st April 2022 to 31 st March 2023.	0	0	0
Availability events	Priority level		
Percentage of events logged within 24 hours.	Super	High	Medium
	0	0	0
Availability event failures	Priority level		
Number of event failures logged in the period 1 st April 2022 to 31 st March 2023.	Super	High	Medium
	0	0	0
Availability event failures	Priority level		
Percentage of event failures logged within 24 hours.	Super	High	Medium
	0	0	0

4.2-Performance Standards

Performance Events	Priority level		
	Super	High	Medium
Number of events logged in the period 1 st April 2022 to 31 st March 2023.	7	9	6
Performance events	Priority level		
Percentage of events logged within 24 hours.	Super	High	Medium
	100%	100%	100%
Performance event failures	Priority level		
Number of event failures logged in the period 1 st April 2022 to 31 st March 2023.	Super	High	Medium
	7	7	6
Performance event failures	Priority level		
Percentage of event failures logged within 24 hours.	Super	High	Medium
	100%	100%	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	365	365	365
Cemeteries	365	365	365
Masbrough	365	365	365
Greasbrough	365	365	365
Rawmarsh Greasbrough Lane	365	365	365
Rawmarsh High Street	365	365	365
Rawmarsh Haugh Road	365	365	365
Wath	365	365	365
Maltby	365	365	365
Moorgate	365	365	365
Service Area	Target number of operational periods	Number achieved	
Book of Remembrance.	365	365	
Administration.	252	252 – no closures throughout pandemic	
Interments.	360	360	
Cremations.	1 st April 2022 to 31 st March 2023	Generally, 21 services available each weekday, 7 are for direct cremations, 1 is for intimate service at 30 minutes, 1 is for early morning (45 minutes service time and 12 are for 45 minutes service times. Target operational services therefore = 253 x 21 = 5313	

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

- Monday to Friday 9:00am to 4.15pm
- Saturday, Sunday, and Bank Holidays 10:00am to 4:00pm

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

5.3-Cremations – (see information given above relating to additional service throughout the Covid-19 pandemic):

- 252 x 21 based on first booking times of 8:00 – 8.30 for direct cremations, 9:00 for intimate service, 9:30 for early morning service and 10:15 through to 18.30 at 45-minute intervals for remaining days services.
- 21 x (365-105) (Sat & Sun) - 8 (bank hols) = 21 x 252. 21 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, Compliments & Reports of Theft/Vandalism.

Number in the period 1st April 2022-31st March 2023.	Overall Complaints	Upheld Complaints	Comments/Request for service	Compliments	Theft/Vandalism reports
	94	85	44	43	82

6.1- 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. These are logged when notified. All complaints are referred to the Council and reviewed Monthly at the performance meetings.

6.2- All requests for service, such as grass cutting, leaking taps, topping up or seeding of graves are addressed in an agreed timeframe with the ground's maintenance contracts, and recorded as needed through Glendale live and other logs.

6.3- Dignity have a logging system in which the Cemetery Supervisors keep updated at all times.

6.4- Dignity have a 24/7 Client Services Department that logs all calls and messages. There specific timescales in which responses must be given. Complaints that are received by Head Office are handed over to the Client Relations Team, who log the details according to Dignity policy and will then pass onto the Regional Manager and Local Manager. The target response time is 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. These logs are also added to the complaints log to be sent to the Council.

6.5- Dignity uses a mystery shopper service, which has a 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 allow staff to gain feedback on both a negative and a positive level.

6.6- 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>

6.7- Actions taken to improve services based on the customer feedback reported. Training needs which are identified from the customer feedback where relevant, are scheduled in as needed.

6.8- Policy and procedures are reviewed if necessary. For example, following a complaint that was received and investigated in November 2021, new burial procedures were looked at and amended to ensure that this same situation did not arise again in the future.

7. Funeral Director Liaison Meetings

The Council had previously taken responsibility for the arrangements of meetings with the Funeral Directors on a Monthly and sometimes two weekly basis throughout the Pandemic. Dignity is

now responsible for the organisation of these meetings and will be run on a 6-month basis, with the need of more if required. Communications with the Funeral directors are had with the staff in the main office daily.

8. Business continuity

8.1- Dignity's business continuity and strategic plans are classed as business sensitive and are not to be shared. The following statement has been made by Dignity in respect of business continuity:

'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. During the pandemic staff from our other Crematoriums have worked at our site to provide support when required.'

8.2- Business continuity is ensured by the Board of Directors by regular reviews being undertaken of relevant plans and procedures as appropriate. The full Business Continuity Plan has been submitted to the Council, but this is to remain out of the public domain in accordance with the above statements regarding business sensitivity.

9. Health and Safety

- 9.1- Dignity complies fully with all health and safety regulations and are regularly monitored by Health and Safety auditors.
- 9.2- Dignity have a company Health and Safety Department and a designated person for the Crematoria Health and Safety.
- 9.3- The Manager has Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) Certificate and there is a trained Health and Safety representative on site. Dignity has 3 trained first aiders on site.
- 9.4- Dignity have trained persons for ladder use and inspection
- 9.5- All contractors used are on the company approved list.
- 9.6- There is a monitoring system in place for when works are carried out, for example any refurbishment works, roof works and any servicing of cremator equipment etc.
- 9.7- All security alarms are regularly serviced and maintained. Weekly, monthly, and six-monthly checks are done in the offices and the chapel, to ensure all alarms and emergency lighting is in good working order. Fire alarm and detection systems serviced on 04/04/2023
- 9.8- Crematorium and Chapel serviced 17/05/2023
- 9.9- All documents related to servicing is available on site or Via Dignity head office.
- 9.10- PAT testing is up to date, and last test was 8/06/2023, the next test being 8/06/2025. Fixed wire testing was carried out in June 2022, and will be tested again in June 2027, as this is conducted every 5 years.
- 9.11- Cremator is serviced on 09/05/2023 Daily maintenance checks are done down at the crematorium and any issues are reported ASAP.
- 9.12- Emissions testing was carried out on 8/08/2023, next scheduled testing is due August 2024.
- 9.13- All reports are up to date and have been issues to the Environmental Health Officer. Quarterly Health and Safety returns are submitted.
- 9.14- All accident reports are up to date and are submitted to the Dignity Health and Safety officer on time, along with incident of truth statements.
- 9.15- The lone working policy and risk assessment is reviewed periodically and updated as and when required.

10. Building Condition

- 10.1- The office block has been in use for 14 years and remains in very good condition. Regular servicing and maintenance are carried out and hot water heaters have been replaced.
- 10.2- Rainwater goods and problems regarding blockages are always addressed as and when required.

11. Cremator Compliance checks

All cremator checks and documents are held on site, the Council are always kept up to date with servicing, emissions testing, and any changes to the disruption of operation of the crematory.

12. Equality and Diversity

- 12.1- The Equality Analysis (EIA) has been submitted to the Council 28th February 2023.
- 12.2- Dignity staff completed the Equality and Diversity e-learning module and have annual refresher training.
- 12.3- Dignity adheres to policies and procedures that ensure respect is given to the deceased and their grieving families.
- 12.4- A short notice burial service is offered at all cemeteries in Rotherham that Dignity manages on behalf of the Council. This is often required for religious purposes.

13. Memorial Masons Registration Scheme

13.1-The Memorial Masons Registration Scheme has been updated since March 2022 to allow cleaning of Memorials on site. Previously Memorial Masons had to remove the memorials from site to be cleaned.

13.2-Cleaning can now be undertaken by contractors who are not NAMM or BRAMM registered but comply with the Memorial Cleaning Registration within the scheme and apply for the relevant permit.

13.3-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 cemetery wardens who are employed by Glendale ground maintenance.

13.4-Any Stone Mason who is a member of the National Association of Memorial Masons or British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons can apply to join the permit registration scheme and appropriate paperwork will be issued for completion. Once received and validated the applicant is added on to the list.

13.5-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.

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

13.7-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. Prior to the pandemic these appointments were only carried out in the office, since covid 19 we now offer the appointments by telephone for the safety of staff and the public. Telephone appointments have been successful and have been adopted as a permanent practise.

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 to use where possible even if for a grave depth for one or for a baby.

14.2-Work is ongoing with the Council to extend burial provision at Wath and developing land at East Herringthorpe.

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.

Cemetery	General Section		Catholic Section		Muslim Section			Est No. of operational years on developed land
	Full Graves	Cremated Graves	Full Graves	Cremated Graves	Earthen Graves	Lined Graves	Baby Graves	
East Herringthorpe	100	43	11	21	10	13	3	3
Wath Cemetery	22	12	14	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
Greasbrough Town lane Cemetery (Grave re-opens only)	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Greasbrough Lane	20	29	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
Haugh Road Cemetery	22	35	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	10
High Street Cemetery	No Availability							
Maltby Cemetery	143	36	30	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7
Masbrough Cemetery	0	6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
Moorgate Cemetery (Mainly grave re-opens)	0	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1

14.4-East Herringthorpe

Dignity has developed a new burial and cremated remains section in 2021. This area was previously occupied with shrub beds. There are plans to mirror this on the other side of the road by removing more shrub beds. Dignity is in the process of planning an extension of the cemetery at the west side of the site. Current availability will provide burial space for approximately 3 years in the Cemetery as a whole.

14.5-Maltby

Dignity estimate approximately 6 years of burial space is left in the cemetery.

14.6-Moorgate

Moorgate cemetery now has no space for new graves. The only burials that can take place are in existing plots. There is 1 new cremated remains plot available.

14.7-Haugh Road, Rawmarsh

The new burial section we opened has been very popular and we have had great feedback from Funeral Directors and Service users. Many plots have also been pre purchased.

14.8-Town Lane, Greasbrough

This cemetery has no space for new graves. The only burials that can take place are in existing graves. The community have a choice of purchasing a new grave at other local cemeteries including Greasbrough Lane and Haugh Road.

14.9-Greasbrough Lane, Rawmarsh

A new burial section has been planned out for Greasbrough Lane. This will provide families with another choice of location within the cemetery. This section will be situated at the top of the cemetery where works have recently been completed to give access to the public through a new gate and access to digging equipment through a separate gate. This section will be available for burials from May 2022.

A provision for environmentally, friendly burials is in the planning stages incorporated within the cemetery expansion plan for this site. A new section will be created to give families another choice when laying their loved ones to rest. The section will have a woodland theme and will not allow traditional Headstone memorials.

14.10-Masbrough

There is no full burial space available at Masbrough cemetery. Cremation plots are an option or alternatively families are directed to East Herringthorpe or Greasbrough Lane cemetery for more options.

14.11-Wath

Wath cemetery has approximately one year left of burial space. A Cemetery Expansion Plan meeting took place March 2022 to discuss the new burial extension. Dignity have agreed to pay for the planning of the new section which will accommodate more graves for the future. Currently awaiting the Environment Agency report to deem suitability for burial

14.12-High Street, Rawmarsh

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

15. Benchmarking

15.1-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. The benchmarking document was submitted 3rd May 23

16. Staffing

Name	Role	Hours	FTE
Richard Shepherd	Business Leader	38.33	1
Suzie Shone	Cemetery Supervisor	38.33	1
Maxine Cardow	Administrator	38.33	1
Martin Lowe	Cemetery Supervisor	38.33	1
Mandy Crosthwaite	Administrator	20.00	.52
Leona Steer	Administrator		
Amelia Hodgetts	Head Cremator Technician/Verger	38.33	1
Wayne Fell	Cremator Technician/Verger/Grounds worker	38.33	1
Christopher Hodgetts	Grounds Person/Verger/Cremator Technician	38.33	1
Simon Freeman	Verger/Cremator Technician/Grounds person	38.33	1
David Moxon	Memorials Consultant	38.33	1

17. Financial Performance

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

17.2-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.

17.3-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.

17.4-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.

17.5-All financial affairs are managed via the Dignity accounts department.

17.6-Any financial penalties levied by the Council in line with Schedule 4 of the contract are submitted directly to the Dignity accounts department.

18. Declaration

I hereby confirm that this document provides an accurate reflection of Dignity Funerals Ltd performance.

Name: Mr R Shepherd on behalf of Dignity – responsibility to oversee the service provision was passed from the previous manager Claire Chisholm – 10th October 2023

Signature: *R Shepherd*

The completed report should be returned to ashleigh.wilford@rotherham.gov.uk / chris.willis@rotherham.gov.uk by 4th April 2023.

FIVE YEAR SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Rotherham Crematorium and Municipal Cemeteries



Overview

Dignity Plc and sub-contractors Glendale are committed to their working relationship with Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and continue to collaborate together in order to develop the service, and to bring the best possible outcomes the community of Rotherham through our crematorium and cemeteries.

The five-year service development plan has been developed to demonstrate collective commitment to ongoing projects, future projects, and overall grounds maintenance.

The performance of this plan will be managed on a quarterly basis and reviewed by RMBC. Considerations will be given to the current progress of the proposed developments, and the plan will be updated and amended where required. A more detailed plan for the current years developments will run from the 1st of April until the 31st of March, with the plan being refreshed in its entirety and submitted annually. This will be presented at the Improving Places Select Committee each year as part of the annual Bereavement Services update.

In Year Service Improvements

Increased Involvement with local Cemetery Friends Group

Dignity have continued plans to be proactively involved and engaged with local friends' groups. An updated and relevant strategy plan was submitted to the Council on 21/07/2023. The plan outlines key stakeholders, timescales, and a plan of action. Dignity have met and contacted many of the groups already this current year. Dignity will continue to hold meetings on a frequent basis moving forward.

A calendar of all meetings and other locally booked events will be sent to the Council Monthly. This will demonstrate Dignity's keen desire to work with the community. Any requests or feedback will be fed back to RMBC to monitor the working partnership. Glendale have and will continue to hold a seat at those meetings, which demonstrated a unified approach. It allows transparency and honest conversations to take place within the community.

Please find below a small snapshot of examples of collaborative projects undertaken so far in 2023

- Dignity supported and attended the two events commemorating the 100th anniversary of the miner's disaster at Maltby, in partnership with the local friends group.
- A new blue plaque was unveiled by John Healey MP for the late Sir Charles John Stoddart. Dignity worked alongside the Rawmarsh friends' group in helping to get this advertised throughout the community.

Improved Customer Feedback Analysis

Dignity will utilise online survey forms to capture customer views of funeral services provided for both burials and cremations, this will allow for greater accessibility for service users to provide feedback. All noticed boards within the cemeteries have been updated to explain how service users can undertake this.

Alongside this work a QR code is currently being produced which will link visitors to an online survey. This will be accessible to all cemetery users to provide feedback. We have changed the layout of the questions to better suit all cemetery users, and not just people having used one of the services. This is currently in the final stages of completion.

Produce a strategic plan for burial capacity to the end of the contract term

Dignity have produced a strategic 35-year plan to RMBC. The plan is designed to give insight into future burial capacity for the borough. It provides a great understanding of the needs and challenges that RMBC may need to consider continuing providing burial provisions for future generations. The report explains the potential to expand within existing cemetery boundaries, but it also highlights the needs to look into virgin ground for certain local areas within the borough. The report was submitted to RMBC on 01/10/2023.

Dignity will continue to work alongside the cemetery wardens and Glendale to establish and estimate of burial capacity within each site and report annually via the Annual Performance Report.

Extension of last burial times

Improvements to services have been introduced to assist those whose religious beliefs require a burial within 24 hours of their passing, granted all legalities are met. The last burial time of the day has been extended to 6:30pm. Additional lighting is being discussed to improve the late burials during the darker months. Dignity have introduced grave covers by working with the community to better understand needs. The covers negate the need to dig graves at short notice and ensures two graves are always ready if a request comes in from a family.

In Year Service Improvements

Renovation of old office block at East Herringthorpe and the installation of a café and on site florist

Initial plans previously put forward are now being re-assessed and discussed. New proposals have been sent to RMBC for review and the feedback given was positive. Consultations took place previously to look at renovating and old office block at the entrance to East Herringthorpe. Upon review a new idea was proposed which would not only fulfil the needs of the community but also allow for much safer parking.

The land at the entrance could then be better utilised, and if deemed the best course of action, cleared and used to expand the memorial options in its place.

Consultation with the local groups and appropriate tenders will continue, and the aim is to complete this action point by Summer 2024.

Adequate performance management of sub-contractor using KPI's specified within the Facilities Management Agreement

Agreement

Implemented by Dignity for Sub-Contractor Glendale by 31st of October 2022. Updates by exception have been provided to the Council in the Monthly Performance Meetings. Meetings take place with Glendale on a frequent basis, during these meetings both Dignity and Glendale share ideas and solutions in order to support the performance frameworks and updated for the Five Year Plan.

Improved working with Faith leaders to provide reasonable adjustments and engagements during religious festivals.

Dignity have established a list of key religious festivals and dates with Faith leaders. Reasonable adjustments have been recorded to help facilitate them. Meetings have taken place prior with Faith leaders before these key events.

Dignity have been regularly meeting with members of the Muslim Community, and considerable efforts have been made to visit each of the mosques within the area, this is still ongoing. So far the visits have gone a long way and have been received well with the community. Dignity in recent months in partnership with the community, have installed a handrail at the entrance of the Muslim section, to make paths more accessible to visitors. Additional taps where possible have also been installed.

Landscaping will continue in the new year to improve the overall feel and RMBC have approved the approach planned.

Improvements are being identified across the entire estate and a rolling programme identifying key areas is under way. All faiths and beliefs are considered, and the improvements are not isolated to just within the Muslim section of the cemetery. Consultation with all local friends' groups is a rolling programme and Dignity welcomes any and all feedback.

New railings were installed in Wath Cemetery in July 2023 as an example of such a request and improvements to infrastructure and boundaries continue across all sites.

Dignity continues to support religious events and the office was decorated earlier in the year in good taste to celebrate Eid-al-Adha and we have the popular Christmas Carol service coming up in December at East Herringthorpe.

Overall Service improvements- Dignity

Restoration of and re-drafting of cemetery plans in line with agreed proposals

Work currently being undertaken by Dignity, meetings are to be had about the current status of this.

Digitized capture of registers to be made available on the internet In line with agreed proposals

This work is currently being undertaken by Dignity in conjunction with TownsWeb and is on target for completion 2023, regular meetings have been had with TownsWeb in order to keep track of their progress. There have been delays to original proposed dates due to the volume of work required and TownsWeb are working through the remaining ledgers. However, TownsWeb are nearing completion and updates are provided to RMBC on a monthly basis.

TownsWeb confirmed on 10/08/2023, that they are currently on phase ¾ of process.

Tree Works

Year on year in March, Glendale will assess all tree works at all cemeteries. A maintenance plan will be scheduled for each month of the year to maintain the trees. All emergency tree works will be carried out within 24 hours. Meetings with Glendale have taken place, in order that Dignity can fully understand the scope of works to be carried out in all sites moving forward. The initial meeting to discuss 2024 was held on 14/08/2023. Regular weekly inspections carried out by Dignity will also monitor and identify any urgent works. Any requests from the community will be acted upon accordingly if legitimate and safe to do so.

Out of hours burial fees

Dignity has reviewed its cemetery prices in Rotherham, and after consulting the Council and local community, has decided to waive the additional fee of £481 for out of hours and absorb the extra costs. Dignity also plans to refund any grave owner that has previously paid the additional weekend fee. Several residents have come forward and have received a refund if legitimately the rightful owner.

New equipment

Glendale continues to invest in new equipment to be used in maintaining cemeteries roads and footpaths and to keep them clear from moss, blossoms, and other growth.

Glendale have held discussion regarding the equipment that is currently being used for moss clearance, and if there are any better alternatives for this, as well as laying lawn sand down. Moss in the winter months is common problem and Glendale's and Dignity wish to protect visitors and look after the new invested pathways and roads.

Cemetery notice boards

RMBC Bereavement Services have installed lockable notice boards within each cemetery which RMBC, Dignity have access to these in order to relay messages, events and other important notices to visitors as needed. This improvement will help information reach a wider audience as many will not regularly check or have access to webpages, particularly if it is somewhere they visit often. RMBC reinstalled a notice board in October 2023, that had been badly vandalised at Haugh Road.

The notice boards continue to be updated on a regular basis, helping friend's groups display posters for upcoming events within the sites and around Rotherham. They will also once in place display the QR code previously mentioned.

Future Improvements 2022-2027

Dignity's contractual Asset responsibilities

Dignity will undertake a survey of the assets they have responsibility for as defined in the contract within the Cemetery and provide a full report to the Council on these which includes any necessary remedial works and the relevant commencement dates of these works where appropriate. Monthly Performance Framework meetings will ensure that this is constantly monitored by RMBC.

Drainage Surveys

CCTV drainage surveys to be undertaken in all cemeteries to assess the condition of existing drainage. This will inform Dignity of any remedial works required and enable a thorough maintenance plan to be prepared and carried out by Glendale during their maintenance duties. Further CCTV drainage surveys will be undertaken periodically by Dignity to ensure all drainage systems are in full working order. Heavy rainfall over the summer of 2023 was contained and no reports of drainage issues were raised at any of the sites. This indicates a healthy system, but the reports will confirm.

Customer information

RMBC Bereavement Services have already improved the Council website in order to keep interested parties fully informed on matters regarding each cemetery. Dignity will also update their own website to reflect the same information as the Council in tandem.

East Herringthorpe Crematorium and Cemetery

In Year Projects 2024-2025

Baby Section within site

- Dignity have undertaken significant works within East Herringthorpe Cemetery to improve the condition of the roads and footpaths. This work was completed in 2022
- New plans in place to make the Baby section within the cemetery look better. Plans to have memorial stones cleaned, paths cleared, and flowers planted in bedding areas. A new plan will be made and sent to RMBC to see future developments within this area. Meeting to be had with Dan Fleetwood at Barnsley to discuss his previous project 'The Forget You Not Garden' on 11/08/2023. Hopes to have Dan Visit and share ideas on how the section at East Herringthorpe can be improved and give input on ways we can help this become part of the cemetery.
- Glendale will create additional flower beds at the top of the cemetery near the children's section and tidy up the Fellowship area which is situated in the August section of the Gardens of Remembrance.

Muslim Burial Section

- Dignity have undertaken significant developments within the Muslim burial section of East Herringthorpe Cemetery to improve drainage in the existing burial section.
- A gabion wall and 32 new burial tombs have been installed, with a further 73 to follow.
- Regular meetings had with the Muslim community on how we can improve this section of the cemetery. It was discussed that there could be a potential for flowers on the gabion wall leading up to the top section. Dignity have taken some feedback from the community and purchased X2 grave covers. This will help save time when it comes to digging spaces in future. This is currently on trial.

Renovation of old office block

- Dignity will propose new ideas to either renovate the old office block and seek to install an onsite Florist and Café for visitors or provide a suitable alternative. Initial plans to be re-visited and discussed.
- Alternative plans were discussed about other uses for the old office block. A new presentation of alternative ideas will be presented to the Council and to the public. This will be discussed further with property to discuss steps moving forward.

Friends Groups

- Dignity will increase engagement with the newly formed Friends group to arrange events and small-scale activities within the cemetery such as tidy up events and making bird or bat boxes and bug hotels to increase biodiversity in the cemetery.
- Dignity will start to be more involved within the Friends Group and support as many events as possible, with hopes to support a minimum of four events per year but the aim to support many more. Meetings will be held at least once a Month.

Signage

- Dignity have installed improved signage to direct visitors to the car park to ensure that inappropriate parking on site is managed allowing better access to the crematorium chapel for funeral corteges. Looking at sourcing another company for signage moving forward.
- Dignity will look at installing signage throughout the cemetery which will indicate which section visitors are in. This will hopefully make its easier for sections and plots within the sections easier to locate.

East Herringthorpe Crematorium and Cemetery

In Year Projects 2024-2025

Burial Land

- Dignity will ensure that a review is undertaken of all potential burial land in other areas of East Herringthorpe and prepare this for burials or ashes interments.
- This will be added and into the 35 strategic plan in more detail once identified.

Cemetery Expansion

- Dignity will complete Cemetery expansion works and open the new section for burials by 31st December 2024. Planning was submitted on 30th September 2022.
- Meeting to be had with property to discuss current stages of planning and next steps to take to get works in place to start.

Green recycling and Biodiversity

- Glendale re-use most of the soil in the cemeteries, the rest of the soil and green waste is collected locally. Glendale's aim is to increase their recycling program and create a plan of how this will be implemented.
- It has been mentioned about implementing a wreath recycling scheme, and all parts separated into the correct category of recycling. For example, the oasis can often be donated and re-used for other wreaths.
- Dignity will commission a Biodiversity survey of the cemetery and will implement recommendations to encourage biodiversity at the site.
- Plans in place to get more bird boxes, bug hotels, and seed feeders in place. It was mentioned during a meeting on site, that it would be a good idea to partner up with local schools in the community to help decorate some bird boxes to be placed throughout the cemetery.

Tree Works

Having had numerous meetings with the tree team at Glendale, it has been discussed that the tree works are to run from March 2023 to April 2024. The works carried out will be routine maintenance, with attention to any trees that pose a health and safety risk. Any request for service that involves any trees throughout the site, are dealt with accordingly.

There are currently plans to have the Cherry tree by the main office removed and the deadwood Cherry tree at the back of the old office removed. There are trees hanging over the boundary that will also be cut back.

Routine Maintenance 2022-2027 updated

East Herringthorpe Crematorium 2023/2024														
		WINTER		SUMMER								WINTER		
Job Description	Indic Freq	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Comments
RIDE ON MOW GRASS AREAS	32			3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1		
STRIM OBSTACLES AND GRASS EDGES	32			3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1		
SWEEP/ BLOW PATHS AND KERBS NEAR GRASSED AREAS	48	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
LEAF CLEARANCE ROADS/PATHS/GRASS AREAS	When Required													
APPLY HERBICIDE SPRAY AROUND OBSTACLES/HEADSTONE STRIPS/SHRUB BEDS	8			2		2			2		2			
LIFT LOW BRANCHES UP TO 8FT	2		1									1		
REMOVE EPICORMIC GROWTH FROM TREES	4	1	1									1	1	
CULTIVATE SHRUB BEDS	8	2	2									2	2	
EDGE SHRUB BEDS	8	2	2									2	2	
DEAD HEAD ROSES												1		
SOFT PRUNE ROSES												1		
HARD PRUNE ROSES												1		
PRUNE VARIOUS OTHER SHRUBS	3	1										1	1	
PRUNE INTERNAL HEDGES	2		1								1			
LEAF CLEARANCE FROM SHRUB BEDS	8	2	2									2	2	
HALF MOON GRASS EDGES	8	2	2									2	2	
CLEAR MOSS OFF PATHWAYS USING MECHANICAL BRUSH / CHEMICAL	8	2	2				2					2	2	
SUPPLY AND PLANT SUMMER BEDDING	2						2							
SUPPLY AND PLANT WINTER BEDDING	2										2			
GRIT HEARSE ROUTE AND TOP CAR PARK AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required													
SNOW CLEAR ALL HARDSTANDING AREAS AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required													



Maltby Cemetery

In year Projects 2024-2025

Operational Works

- Dignity have undertaken a site survey of the roads and paths within Maltby cemetery. The survey highlighted all areas of the cemetery where resurfacing repairs and improvements are required. The work to improve the condition of the roads and footpaths will commence 5th of September 2022 and is estimated to be complete by March 2023. Works completed Feb 2023
- Dignity surveyed the boundary wall of Grange Lane and Maltby Cemetery. The re-pointing of the wall was completed in August 2022. The remaining works to stabilize the pillars was completed in November 2022

Proposed future projects 2022-2027

Friends Groups

- Dignity will become more actively involved with the Maltby Friends group and will arrange events and activities with the group throughout the year, each year, with a goal to encourage the Friends group to operate autonomously.
- Dignity will attend a minimum of four meetings or events of the friends group per year with the hopes of having these on a more regular basis, once per Month.
- The friends of Maltby have become quite an independent group, however they will always reach out to Dignity if they need any support with events or activities.

Green recycling and Biodiversity

- Dignity and Glendale will assess the feasibility of recycling and waste throughout this Cemetery and produce an appropriate plan for implementation.
- Dignity will commission a biodiversity survey of the cemetery and will implement any recommendations to encourage biodiversity through the site.
- Get a plan together with the Friends Group and establish ways in which we can work together with the community to help encourage nature through the area.

Tree Works

Meeting had with the tree team at Glendale and have established that alongside the routine tree maintenance throughout the year, there is only need for the cherry tree near the bus stop to be trimmed. There will also be tree works done as and when require by the community if needed and is safe to do so. Regular tree maintenance and works will be through March 2023 to April 2024.

Maltby Cemetery

Routine Maintenance 2022-2027 updated

Maltby Cemetery 2023/2024													
Job Description	Indic Freq	WINTER		SUMMER								WINTER	
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
RIDE ON MOW GRASS AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
STRIM OBSTACLES AND GRASS EDGES	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
SWEEP/ BLOW PATHS AND KERBS NEAR GRASSED AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
APPLY HERBICIDE SPRAY AROUND OBSTACLES/HEADSTONE STRIPS/SHRUB BEDS	6	1	1	1							1	1	1
APPLY HERBICIDE SPRAY AROUND OBSTACLES/HEADSTONE STRIPS/SHRUB BEDS	4			1		1			1		1		
LIFT LOW BRANCHES UP TO 8FT	1		1										
REMOVE EPICORMIC GROWTH FROM TREES	1		1										
DEAD HEAD ROSES			1										
SOFT PRUNE ROSES			1										
HARD PRUNE ROSES	1		1										
PRUNE INTERNAL HEDGES	2		1							1			
HALF MOON GRASS EDGES	1		1										
CLEAR MOSS OFF PATHWAYS USING MECHANICAL BRUSH / CHEMICAL	2		1									1	
GRIT HEARSE ROUTE AND TOP CAR PARK AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required												
SNOW CLEAR ALL HARDSTANDING AREAS AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required												



Moorgate Cemetery

In year projects 2023-2024

Operational Works

- Dignity have undertaken a site survey of the roads and paths within Moorgate cemetery. The survey highlighted all areas of the cemetery where resurfacing repairs and improvements are required. The original historic cobble stones will be left.
- The commencement of the work to improve the condition of the roads and footpaths will be scheduled and timescales and dates will be published once these have been established.
- Currently Moorgate is one of 3 cemeteries that still require new paths throughout the site. Dignity will revise current quote and company used and look at getting a more up to date figure for remaining paths with other local businesses.
- Green paths have been identified throughout the site (pictured below) these will be seeded and soiled during the appropriate times and eventually turn back to nature.
- There have also been some bedding areas identified, and there are discussions to be had to get these areas tidied and flowers planted.

Friends Groups

- Dignity and Glendale will work with the Friends Group to improve the relationship and encourage cohesive working between all parties, through different events and activities undertaken with the cemetery.
- As well as working alongside the friend's group, Dignity have also partner with community payback services, who have helped carry out works within the cemetery alongside Glendale and the group.
- An up-to-date plan for Moorgate was sent to the council for review on 24/08/2023.
- There are many graves within the site and Dignity are working alongside the Friends of Moorgate in order to help get as many of these identified as possible and help with grave clearance when needed.

Proposed Future Projects 2022-2027

Green recycling and Biodiversity

- Dignity will commission a biodiversity of the cemetery and will implement recommendations to encourage biodiversity at the cemetery.
- Dignity and Glendale are to assess the feasibility of recycling waste within the cemetery at a local level and produce an appropriate plan for implementation.
- It has been Discussed in meetings about implementing a wreath recycling scheme, wreaths will be collected and then separated into the correct category of recycling. For example, the oasis that is often used can be recycled and used for other wreaths.

Moorgate Cemetery

Proposed Future Projects 2022-2027

Operational Works

- Dignity will undertake a survey of the assets they have within the cemetery and provide a full report to the council. This will include any necessary remedial works and the commencement dates of these works where appropriate

Historic projects

- Dignity have worked with Historic England and the cemetery is now Listed as a Grade II listed Park and Garden, listed 13th November 2002, Entry Number-1001643 Historic England
- Commonwealth War Graves to be commemorated as at the other cemeteries on key dates, such as VE day and Remembrance Day. Dignity will work on getting a list of key dates together in order to better plan for these events and contribute wherever possible.

Tree Works

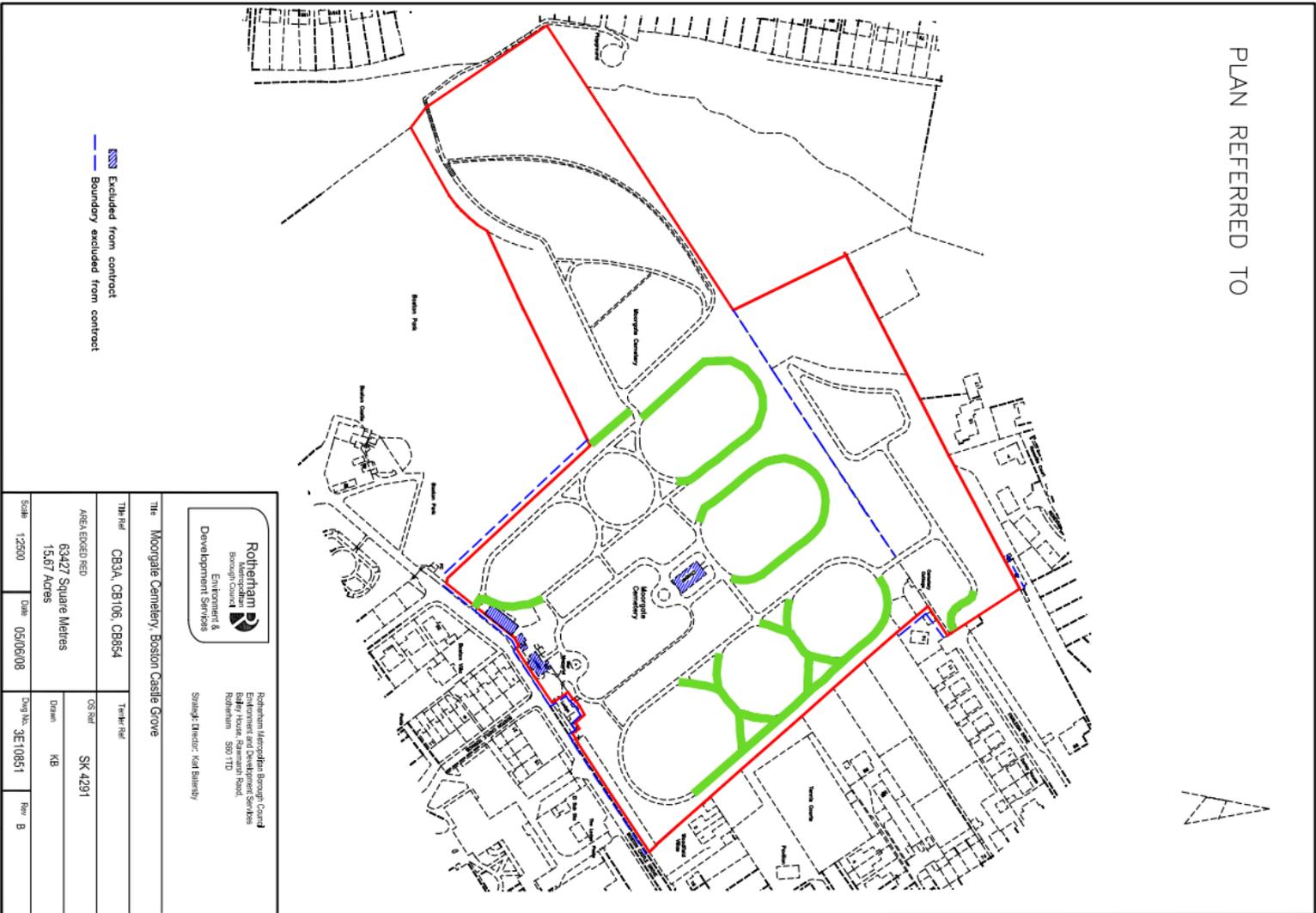
A meeting with the tree team at Glendale at the site took place and it was discussed that the Chery tree by the entrance will be reduced and some deadwood sycamore trees are to be removed that are encroaching over the path. Tree works will be carried out between March 2023 to April 2024. Wherever needed, tree works requested by the community will be looked at and acted upon if needed and safe to do so.

Moorgate Cemetery Routine Maintenance 2022-2027 updated

Moorgate Cemetery 2023/2024													
Job Description	Indic Freq	WINTER		SUMMER								WINTER	
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
RIDE ON MOW GRASS AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
STRIM OBSTACLES AND GRASS EDGES	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
SWEEP/ BLOW PATHS AND KERBS NEAR GRASSED AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
LEAF CLEARANCE ROADS/PATHS/GRASS AREAS	5	1	1	1								1	1
APPLY HERBICIDE SPRAY AROUND OBSTACLES/HEADSTONE STRIPS/SHRUB BEDS	4			1		1			1		1		
LIFT LOW BRANCHES UP TO 8FT	1		1										
REMOVE EPICORMIC GROWTH FROM TREES	1		1										
CULTIVATE SHRUB BEDS	1		1										
PRUNE VARIOUS OTHER SHRUBS	1		1										
HALF MOON GRASS EDGES	1		1										
CLEAR MOSS OFF PATHWAYS USING MECHANICAL BRUSH / CHEMICAL	2		1									1	
GRIT HEARSE ROUTE AND TOP CAR PARK AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required												
SNOW CLEAR ALL HARDSTANDING AREAS AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required												



Green Paths



Haugh Road Cemetery, Rawmarsh

In Year Projects 2023-2024

Operational Works

- Dignity have undertaken a site survey of the roads and paths within Haugh Road Cemetery. The survey highlighted all areas of the Cemetery where resurfacing repairs and improvements were required. Path works completed by 28/05/2023
- Dignity have enquired about getting 'anti-vandal' taps installed throughout the whole of the cemetery as it has been more common for taps to be vandalised within this site. The taps will operate via a push button system. One has already been installed and has been a great success up to date.

Green pathways

- In July 2022, Dignity, RMBC Bereavement Services and Glendale visited the cemetery to identify which pathways will be left to nature. Dignity are undertaking updated to these cemetery maps in order to reflect these pathways.
- The remaining paths that were left from the completed tarmac works, are to be soiled and seeded at during the appropriate months.

Friends Groups

- Dignity have been more involved with the Friends of Rawmarsh, which help cover Haugh Road, Greasbrough town and Highstreet cemetery. Regular meetings have been taking place with the Friends of Rawmarsh, and together with Glendale, are working on getting ideas and plans together to help better the cemetery.

Proposed Future projects 2022-2027

Green Recycling and Biodiversity

- Dignity will commission a biodiversity survey of the cemetery and will implement recommendations to encourage biodiversity at the Cemetery.
- Dignity will work with the community to get more bird boxes, bug hotels and other options that can help encourage more wildlife within the site.
- Dignity alongside Glendale will look at the feasibility of recycling waste within the cemetery at a local level and produce and appropriate plan for implementation.
- As mentioned previously above about the possibility of implementing a wreath recycling scheme. wreaths will be collected and then separated into the correct category of recycling. For example, the oasis that is often used can be recycled and used for other wreaths.

Burial Land

- Dignity will assess the bottom corner of the cemetery which is currently unused and determine whether this will be suitable land for burials or ashes interments, and the potential for a communal seating area or memorial feature.

Haugh Road Cemetery, Rawmarsh

Tree Works

Having had numerous meetings with the tree team at Glendale, it has been discussed that the tree works are to run from March 2023 to April 2024. The works carried out will be routine maintenance, with attention to any trees that pose a health and safety risk. Any request for service that involves any trees throughout the site, are dealt with accordingly.

There are a few areas within the site that have deadwood trees, these will be removed, and any branches encroaching onto boundaries will be trimmed and lifted. Epicormic growth treated as and when by grounds maintenance as and when needed.

Haugh Road Cemetery Routine Maintenance 2022-2027 updated

Haugh Road Cemetery 2023/2024													
Job Description	Indic Freq	WINTER		SUMMER								WINTER	
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
RIDE ON MOW GRASS AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
STRIM OBSTACLES AND GRASS EDGES	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
SWEEP/ BLOW PATHS AND KERBS NEAR GRASSED AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
APPLY HERBICIDE SPRAY AROUND OBSTACLES/HEADSTONE STRIPS/SHRUB BEDS	6	1	1	1							1	1	1
LIFT LOW BRANCHES UP TO 8FT	1		1										
REMOVE EPICORMIC GROWTH FROM TREES	1		1										
PRUNE INTERNAL HEDGES	2		1							1			
HALF MOON GRASS EDGES	2		1										
CLEAR MOSS OFF PATHWAYS USING MECHANICAL BRUSH / CHEMICAL	3		1									1	
GRIT HEARSE ROUTE AND TOP CAR PARK AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required												
SNOW CLEAR ALL HARDSTANDING AREAS AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required												

Greasbrough Lane Cemetery, Rawmarsh

In year projects 2023-2024

Environmentally friendly burial area

- Due to water issues in the past, several test digs have taken place this year to get a better understanding of the current state of the ground, and whether this is still suitable for burial. This was completed by the end of September, and the outcome suggested that this will still be a suitable area to allow for burials.
- Glendale soiled and seeded with wildflower seed, and this allowed for some good growth throughout the summer.

Operational Works

- Dignity alongside Glendale looked at improving the tree coppice area and how this could be better maintained. Wood chippings were laid under this area and is currently a work in progress until the area is covered. Glendale are using trees and branches that have been cut down within the cemetery, as a way of recycling the wood and repurposing it within the site.

Proposed Future Projects 2022-2027

Green Recycling and Biodiversity

- Dignity will commission a biodiversity survey of the cemetery and will implement recommendations to encourage biodiversity at the cemetery.
- Since having the woodchips spread underneath the tree coppice area, there have already been growth of wild mushrooms and burrows.
- Dignity alongside Glendale will look at the feasibility of recycling waste within the cemetery at a local level, and to produce an appropriate plan for implementation by the 31st of March 2024
- Begin looking at the possibility of implementing a wreath recycling scheme, where all parts of the wreath can be recycled and repurposed elsewhere.

Environmentally friendly burial area

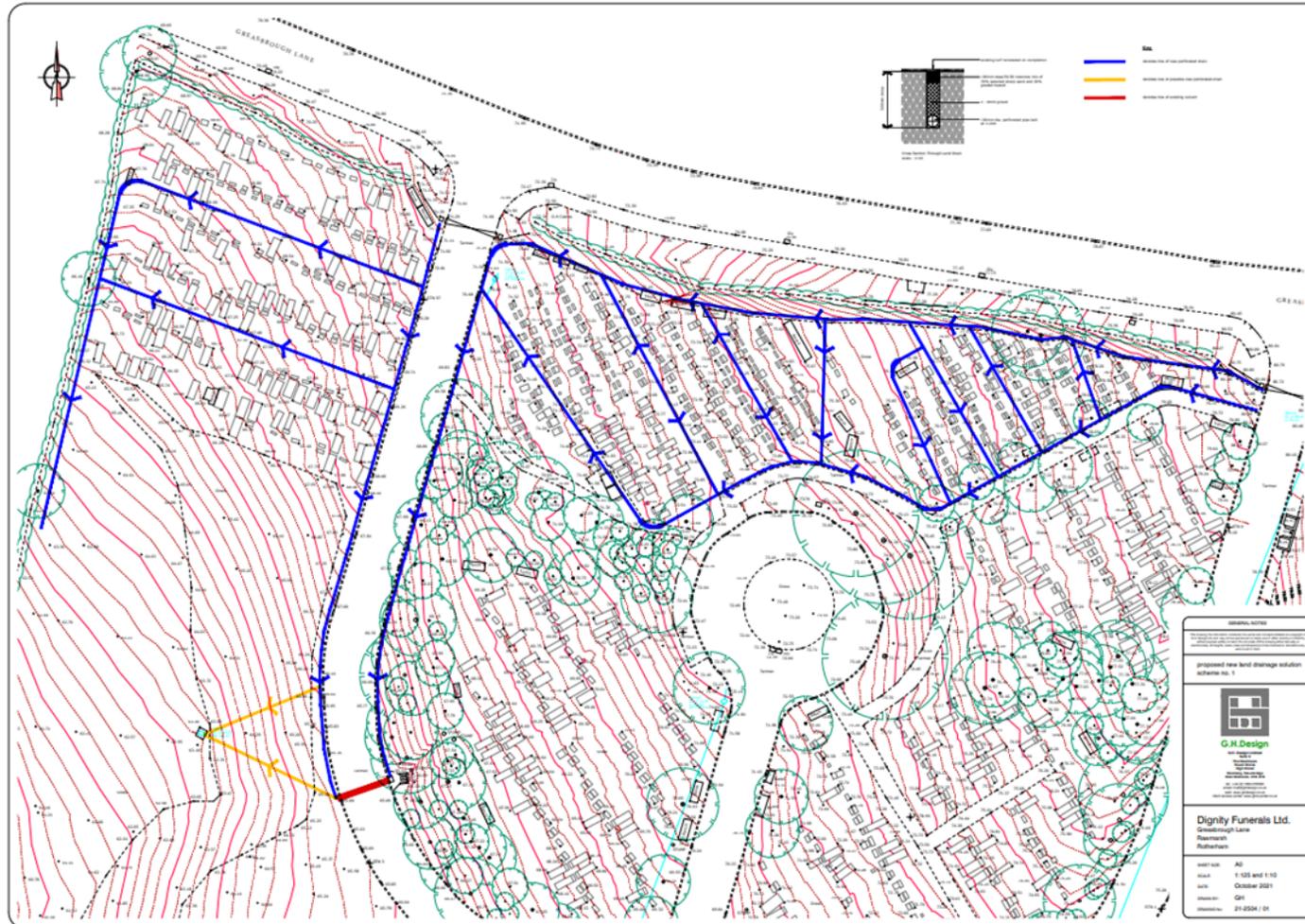
- Since re-visiting the Environmentally Friendly Burial area, Dignity is working alongside Glendale to look at other options of tree and shrub that can be used to separate this section from the rest of the cemetery. Currently there are still red robins within the ground, these dead shrubs will need removing and replaced with shrubs that are better suited to the ground.
- There is currently an area within the corner

Tree Works

There are a few trees within the tree coppice area that require trimming or removing. The trees within this site aren't a cause for concern. Ongoing maintenance will be carried out March 2023 to April 2024, as with other sites.

Greasbrough Lane Cemetery, Rawmarsh

Land Drains



Greasbrough Lane Cemetery, Rawmarsh

Greasbrough Lane Cemetery, Rawmarsh Routine Maintenance 2022-2027 updated

Greasbrough Lane Cemetery 2023/2024														
Job Description	Indic Freq	WINTER		SUMMER								WINTER		Comments
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
RIDE ON MOW GRASS AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
STRIM OBSTACLES AND GRASS EDGES	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
SWEEP/ BLOW PATHS AND KERBS NEAR GRASSED AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
LEAF CLEARANCE ROADS/PATHS/GRASS AREAS	2	1											1	
APPLY HERBICIDE SPRAY AROUND OBSTACLES/HEADSTONE STRIPS/SHRUB BEDS	3			1				1				1		
LIFT LOW BRANCHES UP TO 8FT	1		1											
REMOVE EPICORMIC GROWTH FROM TREES	1		1											
PRUNE INTERNAL HEDGES	2				1						1			
HALF MOON GRASS EDGES	2	1	1											
CLEAR MOSS OFF PATHWAYS USING MECHANICAL BRUSH / CHEMICAL	3		1				1						1	
GRIT HEARSE ROUTE AND TOP CAR PARK AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required													
SNOW CLEAR ALL HARDSTAN DING AREAS AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required													



Wath Cemetery

In year Projects 2023-2024

Operational Works

- Dignity have undertaken a site survey of the roads and paths within Wath Cemetery, the survey highlighted all areas of the Cemetery that needed resurfacing, repairing, and improving where required. The commencement of the works to improve the condition of the roads and footpaths will be scheduled, and timescales and dates will be published once these have been established.
- Dignity have looked into sourcing other local businesses to get other quotes for the works, and these are currently being reviewed and discussed with the properties team.
- Dignity's planning consultants have submitted a pr-application to the Council to expand Wath Cemetery, with a full planning application submitted on the 20th of September 2022. This is still with the contractor and updates will be given, so the community will be aware of the works to proceed.

Friends Groups

- Dignity have been actively involved with most friends' groups. There have been communications with the Friends of Wath, and they have become quite an independent group. Dignity will actively continue to offer support regarding events and other activities if they require assistance.

Proposed Future Projects 2022-2027

Green Recycling and Biodiversity

- Dignity will commission a biodiversity survey of the Cemetery and will implement any of its recommendations to encourage more biodiversity through the site.
- Dignity will work with the friend's group and other local communities such as schools and colleges to install more bird boxes, bug hotels and seed feeders, to encourage more wildlife within the area.
- Meeting have taken place about the potential to implement a wreath recycling scheme, to help encourage better recycling within the cemetery. There needs to be more discussion about this idea, and how Dignity can effectively implement this within Wath Cemetery.

Tree works

Trees within Wath cemetery have been assessed, there are a few trees within that site that require removal. There is a cherry tree near the entrance that will be removed during the yearly tree works and other deadwood trees throughout. Maintenance will also be carried out as and when needed, if requested by the community and if this is safe to do so. The scheduled works will run from March 2023 to April 2024.

Wath Cemetery

Wath Cemetery Routine Maintenance 2022-2027 updated

Wath Cemetery 2023/2024													
Job Description	Indic Freq	WINTER		SUMMER								WINTER	
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
RIDE ON MOW GRASS AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
STRIM OBSTACLES AND GRASS EDGES	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
SWEEP/ BLOW PATHS AND KERBS NEAR GRASSED AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
LEAF CLEARANCE ROADS/PATHS/GRASS AREAS	6	1	1	1							1	1	1
APPLY HERBICIDE SPRAY AROUND OBSTACLES/HEADSTONE STRIPS/SHRUB BEDS	4			1		1			1		1		
LIFT LOW BRANCHES UP TO 8FT	1		1										
EDGE SHRUB BEDS	1		1										
DEAD HEAD ROSES	1		1										
SOFT PRUNE ROSES	1		1										
HARD PRUNE ROSES	1		1										
PRUNE INTERNAL HEDGES	2				1					1			
HALF MOON GRASS EDGES	1	1											
CLEAR MOSS OFF PATHWAYS USING MOSS BRUSH / CHEMICAL	2		1									1	
GRIT HEARSE ROUTE AND TOP CAR PARK AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required												
SNOW CLEAR ALL HARDSTANDING AREAS AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required												



Wath Cemetery

Wath Cemetery Expansion



Masbrough Cemetery

In year Projects 2023-2024

Operational Works

- Dignity have undertaken a site survey of the roads and paths within Masbrough Cemetery, as with all other sites, this survey highlighted all areas within the cemetery that needed improving. The commencement of these works will be scheduled in and timescales and dated will be published once these have been established.
- Dignity and Glendale have devised a plan to be implemented to tackle the onsite Japanese Knotweed, and to dispose of this correctly. The treatments will take place in August 2023, 2024, 2025. Any knotweed will be monitored during the treatment process for 2 years following a successful treatment of the knotweed. First treatment on 11/09/2023

Friends Groups

- Dignity to engage with the established friends group. The group remains inactive, and several contacts have been made to the friend's group to get meetings in place to get up to date with current activities within the area.
- Dignity will continue to show support to the friend's group if they require assistance for any events or activities.
- There have been a few ideas discussed during other meetings with the with other Friends Groups, which involve ways in which Dignity can be more actively involved.

Proposed Future Projects 2022-2027

Green Recycling and Biodiversity

- Dignity will commission a biodiversity survey of the cemetery and will implement any of its recommendations.
- Dignity will look at the feasibility of recycling any waste within the cemetery at a local level and get a plan in place for implementation.
- Wreath recycling scheme to be discussed with Glendale, and the feasibility of this being actioned throughout Masbrough Cemetery.
- Dignity will look at working with the community to add bird boxes and to implement other methods that will encourage wildlife in the cemetery.

Operational Works

- Dignity to undertake a survey for any potential burial land within the cemetery. This has been looked at and further detail added within the 35-year plan.
- Dignity to look at ways to manager vehicle access within the site, as issues still present of people using the site as a car park during school run hours. This can cause access issues to anyone wishing to visit the cemetery alongside staff members.
- Dignity will work alongside the Wardens at Glendale, to undertake and assessment of whether there are any public graves on site, and if so, commission an install a plaque to identify these areas. Discussions have already taken place with the Cemetery Wardens about the best methods to identify these graves.

Masbrough Cemetery

Tree Works

During the ongoing tree maintenance through March 2023-April2024, there will be a few trees that are going to be monitored and their condition to be reassessed in the coming year. There will be day to day maintenance and upkeep of the trees during this period. As mentioned in other sites, any request for tree works by the community will be looked at and assessed, and then acted upon if needed and if safe to do so.

Masbrough Cemetery Routine Maintenance 2022-2027 updated

Masbrough Cemetery 2023/2024														
Job Description	Indic Freq	WINTER		SUMMER								WINTER		Comments
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
RIDE ON MOW GRASS AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
STRIM OBSTACLES AND GRASS EDGES	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
SWEEP/ BLOW PATHS AND KERBS NEAR GRASSED AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
APPLY HERBICIDE SPRAY AROUND OBSTACLES/HEADSTONE STRIPS/SHRUB E	2	1											1	
APPLY HERBICIDE SPRAY AROUND OBSTACLES/HEADSTONE STRIPS/SHRUB E	3			1				1				1		
LIFT LOW BRANCHES UP TO 8FT	1											1		
REMOVE EPICORMIC GROWTH FROM TREES	1											1		
CULTIVATE SHRUB BEDS	1												1	
EDGE SHRUB BEDS	1												1	
PRUNE INTERNAL SHRUBS	1												1	
PRUNE INTERNAL HEDGES	1										1			
HALF MOON GRASS EDGES	1												1	
CLEAR MOSS OFF PATHWAYS USING MECHANICAL BRUSH / CHEMICAL	2		1										1	
GRIT HEARSE ROUTE AND TOP CAR PARK AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required													
SNOW CLEAR ALL HARDSTAN DING AREAS AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required													



Town Lane Cemetery, Greasbrough

In Year Projects 2023-2024

Friends Groups

- Dignity will work towards establishing a Friends Group for this Cemetery. There have been conversations had with the public where the friends' groups have been introduced to people visiting the Cemetery. There will be plans to Discuss this with the already establish Friends of Rawmarsh, and to gather any ideas that this community may have to help encourage other people in the area to join this group.

Proposed Future Projects 2022-2027

Operational Works

- Dignity had a survey of the roads and paths within this Cemetery, and the works were completed throughout this site. However, there is one pathway that was left. Dignity are working at looking to get this path refurbished, due to protruding roots from the nearby trees. This has been a common topic for discussion with the community. Discussions are to be had with the properties team and establish a plan of action that can get this rectified in the coming years.
- Dignity have already looked into potential burial land for this site, and more detail is given within the 35 years plan.

Green Recycling and Biodiversity

- Dignity will commission a biodiversity survey of the cemetery and will implement any of its recommendations.
- Dignity will look at the feasibility of recycling any waste within the cemetery at a local level and get a plan in place for implementation.
- Wreath recycling scheme to be discussed with Glendale, and the feasibility of this being actioned throughout Greasbrough Town Lane.
- Dignity will look at working with the community to add bird boxes and to implement other methods that will encourage wildlife in the cemetery.

Tree Works

Tree works ongoing through the year March 2023 to April 2024, there are currently no trees that pose health and safety issues, however with all sites, this will be monitored at all times. Requests for any tree works by the community will be acted upon if necessary and if this is deemed safe.

Town Lane Cemetery, Greasbrough

Town Lane Cemetery, Greasbrough, Routine Maintenance 2022-2027

Greasbrough Cemetery 2023/2024		WINTER		SUMMER								WINTER	
Job Description	Indic Freq	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
RIDE ON MOW GRASS AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
STRIM OBSTACLES AND GRASS EDGES	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
SWEEP/ BLOW PATHS AND KERBS NEAR GRASSED AREAS	16			1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	
LEAF CLEARANCE ROADS/PATHS/GRASS AREAS	4	1	1									1	1
APPLY HERBICIDE SPRAY AROUND OBSTACLES/HEADSTONE STRIPS/SHRUB BEDS	3			1				1			1		
LIFT LOW BRANCHES UP TO 8FT	1		1										
REMOVE EPICORMIC GROWTH FROM TREES	1		1										
DEAD HEAD ROSES	1										1		
SOFT PRUNE ROSES	1			1									
HARD PRUNE ROSES	1										1		
PRUNE VARIOUS OTHER SHRUBS	1		1										
PRUNE INTERNAL HEDGES	2				1					1			
HALF MOON GRASS EDGES	2	1											1
CLEAR MOSS OFF PATHWAYS USING MECHANICAL BRUSH / CHEMICAL	2		1									1	
GRIT HEARSE ROUTE AND TOP CAR PARK AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required												
SNOW CLEAR ALL HARDSTANDING AREAS AS AND WHEN NECESSARY	When Required												



High Street Cemetery, Rawmarsh

In Year Projects 2023-2024

Historic Projects

- Dignity have started working with the community payback services and who have started uncovering the historic cobbled path throughout the site. There is currently only one more side left to uncover.

Operational Works

- The front entrance to the area is to be maintained since this was cleared, Dignity will communicate with the friend's group and Glendale in order to keep this clear.
- Glendale have since cleared the nettles and overgrowth down the edge of the public footpath, this is now a safer route for cemetery visitors.

Green Recycling and Biodiversity

- Biodiversity to be respected by leaving some areas of the site to nature. Once big cut to be done During the winter months, as picture don the maintenance schedule below.
- Discussions had with the local Friends groups about ways in which more biodiversity could be encouraged within the site, alongside the wildflowers that grow there. This will be a good project to start in time for summer.

Friends Groups

- Dignity have become more involved within the group and will be participating in any litter picking events that take place, as well as supporting other events that have been organised.
- Dignity have worked with the friends Group alongside Glendale to create a more up to date plan for Highstreet, this was sent to the council on the 14/11/2023

Future Projects 2022-2027

Friends Groups

- Dignity will continue to work with the friend's group and local Historians to establish a History Trail, including permanent markers at certain historically interesting graves.
- There were discussions with the friend groups about getting information boards throughout the site, that are informative about the different wildlife that can be seen within the Cemetery.
- Dignity will work with the friend group to help locate ware graves and other historical graves within the site, and have the potential to have some paths mowed to allow access to these graves.

Operational Works

- Dignity and Glendale will work together to look at ways in which the overgrowth within the central area can be tackled, doing so will hopefully encourage more wildflower growth in this area. For example, looking into selective weedkiller as a option, however this will require more research.

High Street Cemetery, Rawmarsh

Tree Works

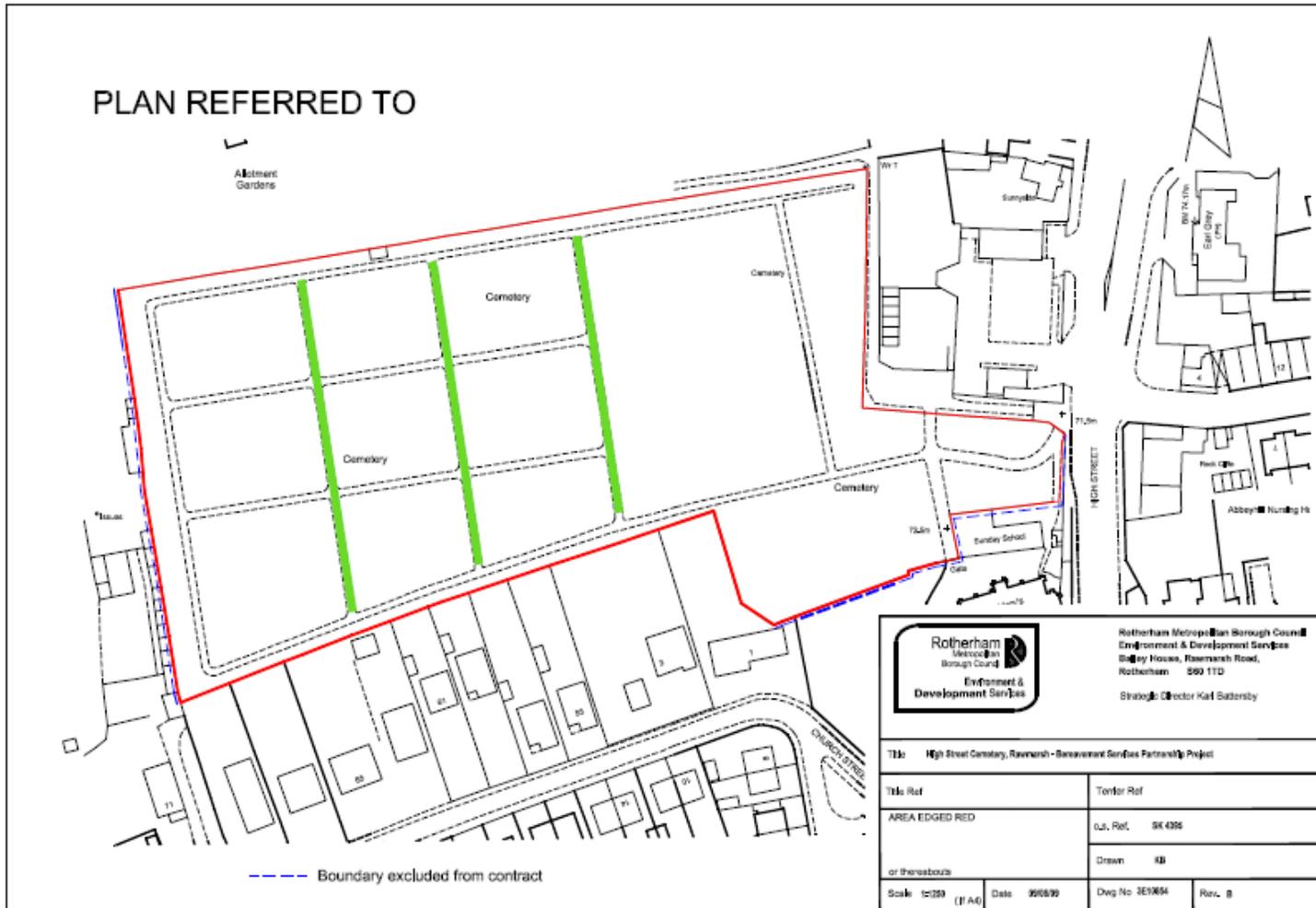
There are few trees throughout the site that are being monitored throughout the course of the tree maintenance programme. These will be regularly checked on to assess the conditions. There are some self-sets by the boundary that will be removed, as well as self-sets by the wall. Ivy growth on tress will be severed and monitored.

High Street Cemetery, Rawmarsh, Routine maintenance updated

High Street Cemetery 2023/2024														
Job Description	Indic Freq	WINTER		SUMMER								WINTER		Comments
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
RIDE ON MOW GRASS AREAS (FULL SITE CUT)	1										1			
RIDE ON MOW GRASS PATH AREAS	4			1		1		1		1				
STRIM OBSTACLES AND GRASS EDGES	5			1		1		1		1	1			
SWEEP/ BLOW PATHS AND KERBS NEAR GRASSED AREAS	5			1		1		1		1	1			
LEAF CLEARANCE	1		1											
CLEAR MOSS OFF PATHWAYS USING MECHANICAL BRUSH	1		1											
MANAGE GROWTH ON PERIMETERS	2		1								1			
LIFT LOW BRANCHES UP TO 8FT	WHEN REQUIRED													
REMOVE EPICORMIC GROWTH FROM TREES	WHEN REQUIRED													
APPLY HERBICIDE SPRAY AROUND OBSTACLES	0													
APPLY HERBICIDE SPRAY TO BUILDING LINES, PATHS, AND CAR PARKS	0													

High Street Cemetery, Rawmarsh

Green Paths



Ad Hoc Maintenance – Dignity & Glendale

- Repairing and replacing water taps in cemeteries.
- Removal of green waste from the friends group events.
- Removal of fly tipping within the cemeteries.
- Repair fencing and gates, as and when required.
- Transport heavy memorial benches to different sites.
- Removal of tributes from graves when needed.
- Re-paint gates and railings as and when required.
- Undertake emergency tree works within 24 hours when required.

Bereavement Services

Rotherham Crematorium Cremation service times:

Direct Cremations: Mon – Fri – 8.00am – 8.30am

All Cremations: Mon – Fri – 9.00am – 6.30pm

Saturday times available on request

Book of Remembrance – Monday – Friday – 9.00am – 4.15pm

Saturday, Sunday, and Bank Holidays – 10.00am – 4.00pm

Appointments available to view alternative dates

Rotherham Cemeteries include:

East Herringthorpe Cemetery – open site for interments

Maltby Cemetery – open site for interments

Moorgate Cemetery – open site for interments

Haugh Road Cemetery – open site for interments

Greasbrough Lane Cemetery – open site for interments

Wath Cemetery – open site for interments

Masbrough Cemetery – open site for interments

Greasbrough Cemetery – open site for interments

High Street Cemetery – closed site for interments

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Public Report
Improving Places Select Commission

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 12 December 2023

Report Title

Transportation – Kingsforth Lane / Cumwell Lane – Post scheme appraisal

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)

Andrew Lee

Group Lead, Local Schemes, Road Safety and Traffic andrew.lee@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

7 Dinnington

8 Thurcroft and Wickersley South

10 Hellaby and Maltby West

21 Bramley and Ravenfield

Report Summary

During the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meeting held on the 11th of May 2022, Members requested a post-scheme appraisal of the road safety intervention measures approved for implementation along Kingsforth Lane and Cumwell Lane during the 2022/23 fiscal year, following concerns raised about the safety of road users.

This report details the post scheme appraisal undertaken and is a follow up to the report submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on the 1st of December 2022 which appraised previous intervention measures following two fatal road traffic incidents during 2018 and 2019.

Recommendations

That Members note the report and consider the measures implemented.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

A petition requesting road safety improvements along Kingsforth Lane and Cumwell Lane presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meeting on the 11th of May 2022 and the 'lessons learnt' report dated 1st of December 2022.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 11 May 2022

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

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1. Background

- 1.1 During the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) meeting held on the 11th of May 2022, Members requested a post-scheme appraisal of the road safety intervention measures approved for implementation along Kingsforth Lane and Cumwell Lane during the 2022/23 fiscal year. These interventions followed concerns raised about the safety of road users, together with consideration of an average speed camera system.
- 1.2 This request was addressed in a report submitted to the OSMB meeting, held on 1st December 2022, with a recommendation 'That the current approach associated with the investigation and analysis of reported Personal Injury Road Traffic Collisions [*by the Council*], together with the prioritisation of intervention measures aimed at reducing the number and severity of collisions taking place on the highway network are noted'. Details of the investigation and analysis process is set out in paragraphs 1.5 to 1.9 of this report.
- 1.3 As background information to this report, figures produced by the Department for Transport within their annual review of Road Traffic Collisions across Great Britain indicate that during the 5-year period between 2018 to 2022, 8,265 people were killed in reported road traffic accidents across Great Britain. The figures recorded annually across the country have remained broadly unchanged since 2012 and include the period during Covid-19 lockdowns when traffic flows reduced.
- 1.4 During the same 5-year period, 44 people sadly lost their lives due to a road traffic collision in Rotherham, of which three occurred on Kingsforth Lane and Cumwell Lane. Figures covering the period since measures were implemented along the route are detailed in paragraph 2.6 of this report.
- 1.5 In addressing road safety concerns, central Government places a statutory duty on local authorities to undertake studies into road traffic collisions¹, and to take steps to reduce and prevent them. This is in line with industry best practice, using evaluation criteria defined by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA).
- 1.6 This process analyses all Personal Injury Collisions that have occurred within the Borough during the previous three calendar years to identify cluster locations, or stretches of road, where collisions have taken place. Additionally, Officers will also investigate sites of concern throughout the year via routine analysis of the collision database or reports from stakeholders.

¹ Road Safety is a statutory responsibility for all local Highway Authorities with Section 39 of the 1988 Road Traffic Act placing a requirement to prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety

1.7 In analysing the Road Traffic Collision data supplied by the Police STATS19 reporting system, the following factors are evaluated:

- Collision / Casualty severity
- Collisions per year
- Month, Day, and time of collision
- Light conditions at time of collision
- Road Surface / Weather Conditions at Time of Collisions
- Vehicle Manoeuvre at Time of Collisions
- Casualty classification (Cyclist, Driver, passenger, pedestrian),
- Causation Factors
- Vehicle speed and Traffic flows
- Description of the events associated with the collision
- Impairments
- Site assessment and review

1.8 Once a collision site has been defined, measures to treat the problem are then identified, whether this is a specific location, route, or area-wide study. Intervention measures put forward to mitigating the collision type are proportionate to the problems identified and evaluated on their overall rate of return in terms of collision reduction and cost-effectiveness, as there may be more than one way of solving a collision problem, therefore, it is important to compare the different options.

1.9 These studies identify the most appropriate way of addressing the problem, in line with the Government's Road Safety standards, the South Yorkshire Road Safety and Casualty Reduction Strategies, and the RoSPA Road Safety Manual.

2. Key Issues

2.1 The route of Kingsforth Lane and Cumwell Lane has been identified as a site for investigation through the Council's annual analysis of Road Traffic Collision sites for varying reasons, including motorists entering into the path of approaching vehicles and loss of control collisions.

2.2 During the months of July and August 2022 several further intervention measures were introduced along Kingsforth Lane and Cumwell Lane in response to recent road traffic collisions which had taken place. These included:

- Vehicle Activated Signs either side of the Fishing Ponds bend (2009 and 2022) denoting 'double bend ahead' and 'SLOW';
- Improved signage to warn motorists of bends and junction hazards;
- 50mph speed limit along the length of the road between Hellaby and Thurcroft
- Carriageway resurfacing through a bend towards Thurcroft
- Replacement of missing or damaged road traffic signs (over and above general maintenance regime)
- Introduction of Rain Line/Weather line road markings, making them more conspicuous during periods of inclement weather

- Verge marker posts through bends to improve motorist awareness of the route and tracking of the highway alignment.
- Carriageway surfacing to ensure appropriate skid resistance;
- Replacement of worn out and defective central road studs (cat's eyes) with Light Emitting Diode solution.
- Removal of hedgerows at the junction of Kingsforth Lane, Cumwell Lane and Newall Lane, to improve visibility of approaching vehicles for those entering from the side road. These hedgerows were replaced with a wall set back from the original hedge-line.
- Cutting back and clearing of vegetation along the route and clearing of general detritus and rubbish (over and above general maintenance regime)

2.3 As part of the evaluation process associated with these measures, traffic surveys were taken along the route where free-flow vehicle speeds could be recorded. The results of four surveys taken on Kingsforth Lane are set out in Tables 1 and 2 below where pre- and post- speeds have been overlaid onto a single graph for ease of comparison. Surveys along Cumwell Lane have been omitted for the purposes of this report due to ongoing site development works taking place towards Hellaby which are likely to affect the recorded free-flow speed of vehicles in the area.

2.4 Surveys were undertaken using pneumatic tubes laid across the carriageway and recorded traffic data over a 7-day period. Pre-scheme surveys were undertaken between 1st February 2022 and 8th February 2022, with post- scheme surveys being undertaken between 7th June 2023 and 14th June 2023. The location of the surveys is shown on Plan 1, below.

2.5 Although both sites show a general reduction in overall speeds during daytime hours, there has been a slight increase during the late evening and early hours. This could be down to a number of factors: a) post speeds were taken during the summer months when weather conditions were generally more favourable to road users, as opposed to February, b) lower vehicle numbers during these hours may enable motorist to travel more freely, c) the measures implemented may instil a greater level of confidence about the road layout for motorists, especially the presence of 'intelligent road studs' which self-illuminate during the hours of darkness to delineate the route better and improved road markings.

Table 1: Speed Survey Results, Fishing Ponds bend
(exact location 125 metres north of Fishing Ponds access)

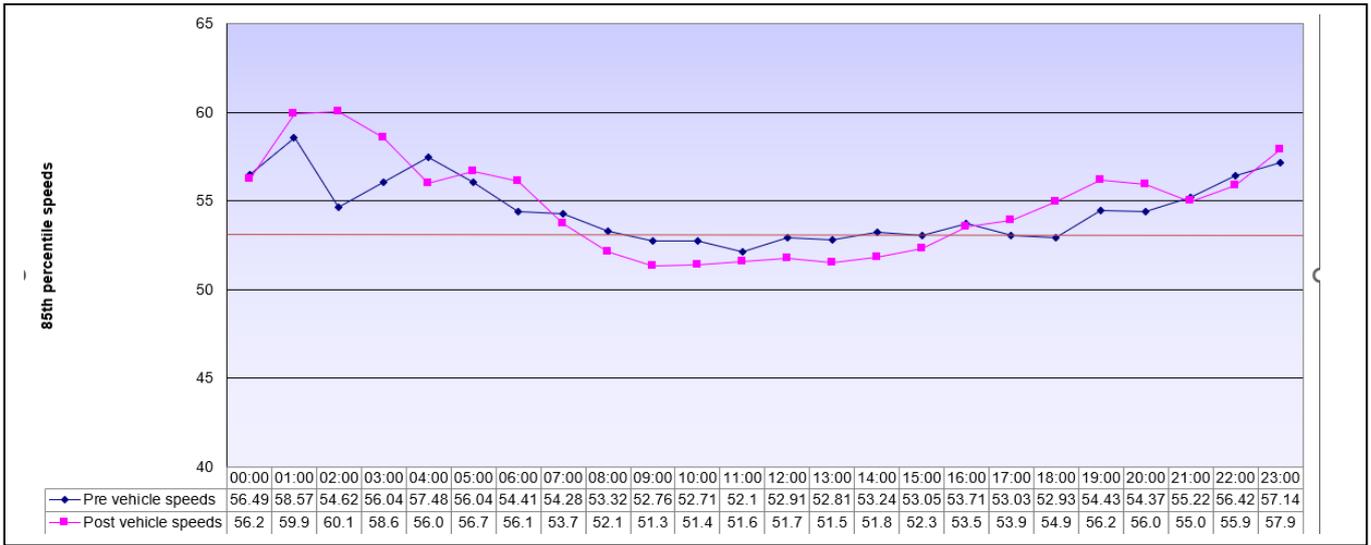
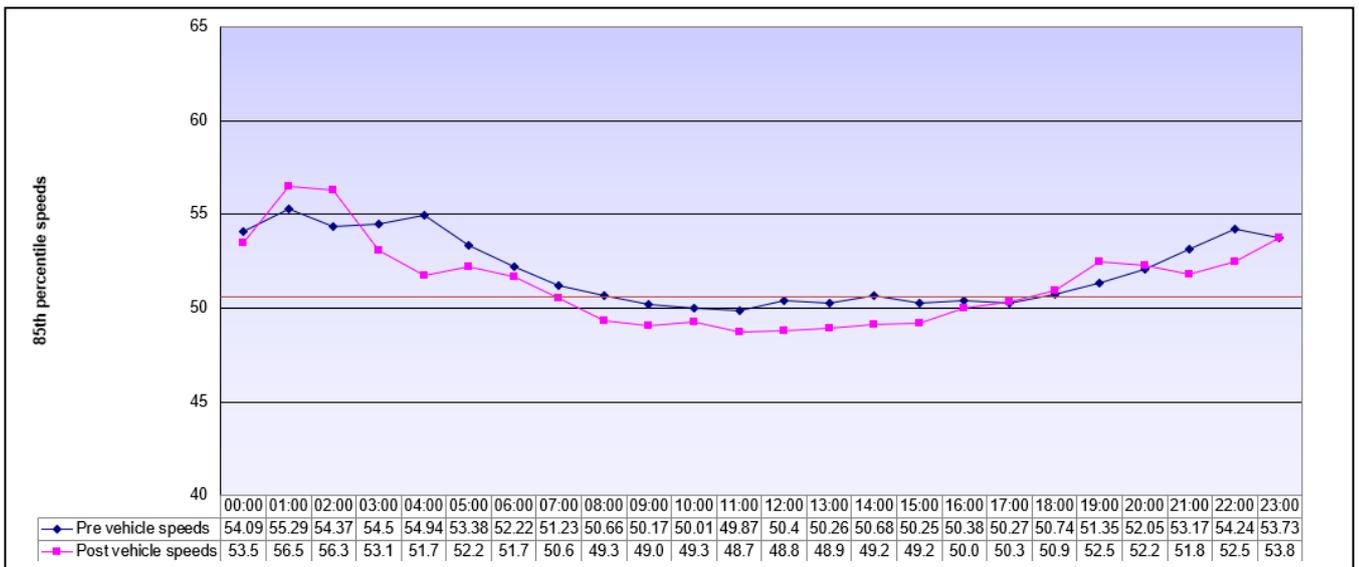
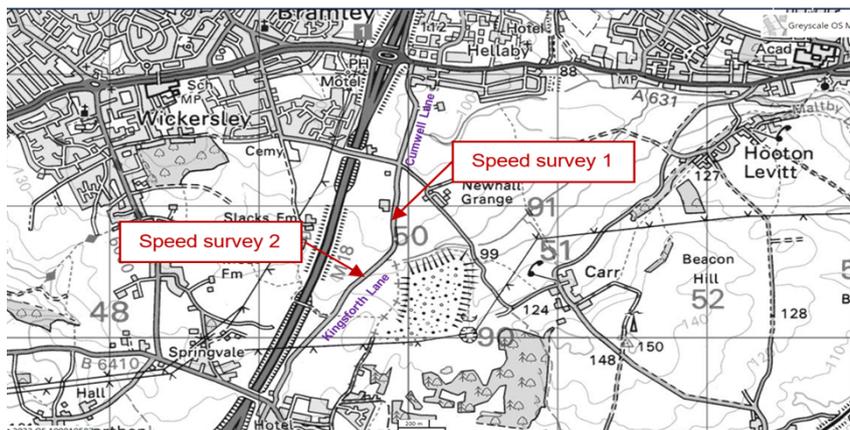


Table 2: Speed Survey Results, Thurcroft Landfill site
(exact location 190 metres south-west of access road)



Plan 1 – Speed survey locations



- 2.6 In relation to figures associated with the latest road traffic collision data, as supplied by South Yorkshire Police, since the 1st of September 2022 there has been one reported personal injury collision on Kingsforth Lane which took place near the fishing ponds bend. This involved a motorist losing control of their vehicle due to road surface contamination. During the same period two collisions occurred along Cumwell Lane, one of which was a 'failure to stop' at temporary traffic signals associated with the ongoing development works resulting in an operative being injured, and another involved a vehicle leaving the carriageway near the junction with Sandy Lane. All three collisions were recorded a 'slight' in terms of injuries sustained.
- 2.7 Inquests into the two fatal road traffic collisions which occurred on Kingsforth Lane during the 15th of December 2021 and 11th of February 2022 have now concluded. During these inquests, evidence obtained from the Police Collision Investigation Teams at the time of the incidents together with post-collision analysis of causation factors and highway surveys were scrutinised. The inquests also heard testimonies from witnesses who were present at the time of the collisions.
- 2.8 The outcome of these two inquests have not identified any further highway intervention measures at this time or questioned the structural integrity of the highway.

Compliance with Average Safety Camera criteria

- 2.9 In assessing the viability of an Average Speed Camera system along Kingsforth Lane and Cumwell Lane as requested during the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meeting held on the 11th of May 2022, the correct process is firstly to assess the effectiveness of the measures that have been introduced, based on reported road traffic collisions and vehicle speeds. Should this indicate poor compliance of the speed limit and with associated road traffic collisions, then a reassessment of an average speed system could then take place.
- 2.10 Based on the latest information available there is no indication that an Average Speed Camera system would have directly prevented the three collisions reported since the 1st of September 2022 given the recorded contributory factors.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Continue to review the effectiveness of road safety intervention measures introduced along the route between June and August 2022 using the latest validated road traffic collision data, and action as appropriate in accordance with the Council's procedure for assessing road traffic collision sites.
- 3.2 The option to introduce an Average Speed Camera system has been considered. This would cost in the region of £120,000 for a two-camera system, plus costs associated with connecting to electrical supplies and an annual costs of around £20,000 per annum.

3.3 Based on the above information, the recommendation at this stage is that the effectiveness of road safety intervention measures introduced along the route between June and August 2022 using validated collision data continues to take place, with further investigations undertaken in line with the Council's procedure for assessing reported road traffic collisions.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 Where further measures are identified to resolve a particular road traffic collision problem through the annual review of road traffic collision data, or evidence during the interim, then these would be subject to the statutory consultation process for developing projects and would include locally Elected Members and Parish Councils and other interested third parties.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Where a decision to investigate the provision of further measures, including the introduction of an Average Speed Camera system is made, this would be subject to securing appropriate resources, undertaking necessary consultations, procuring the necessary contracts for supply, installation, and commissioning of systems. Where a third-party contractor is engaged, they must be procured in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Council's own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules. Current estimates would be approximately 2 years.

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 There are no direct procurement implications arising from this report.

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

7.1 None at this stage, although this needs to be kept under review, if for instance any further road safety or intervention measures are identified or recommended following review.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 Schemes are currently delivered through existing staff resources within the Transportation Infrastructure Service within Planning, Regeneration and Transportation. Specialist consultants are called upon where required to deliver specific elements of a project.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 The existing assessment method used in the borough considers the proportion of children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults within the Accident Investigation and Prevention studies undertaken at sites identified as part of the council's annual review of Personal Injury Collision sites.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The existing assessment method takes in to account all road users at the location being investigated. Reports for 'Decision to approve' schemes include an equality screening.

11. Implications for Partners

11.1 A reduction in the number of road traffic collisions reduces pressure on the Emergency Service and Health Services, together with reducing the trauma on responders attending serious road traffic collisions.

12. Risks and Mitigation

12.1 There is a risk that further intervention measures may be required to reduce speeds and associated collisions where changes to existing conditions occur. This would form part of the normal road safety monitoring process and be subject to available funds where any additional work is identified.

13. Accountable Officer(s)

Matthew Reynolds, Head of Transport Infrastructure

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)	Karen Middlebrook	07/11/23
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Sumera Shabir	09/11/23
Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)		Click here to enter a date.

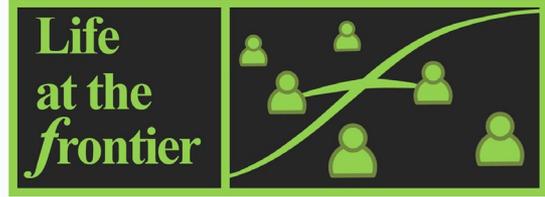
Report Author: *Andrew Lee, Group Lead, Local Schemes, Road Safety and Traffic Management*
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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

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Sheffield



Social frontiers in Rotherham West and their impacts on the community

RMCB Improving Places Select Commission, 12th December 2023

Dr Aneta Piekut, Prof. Gwilym Pryce,
Dr Zanib Rasool (RUCT) & Dr Henry Staples



NordForst



Economic
and Social
Research Council

About the project

“Life at the Frontier: Researching the Impact of Social Frontiers on the Social Mobility and Integration of Migrants” (2020-2023)

Funded by Nordforsk and the Economic and Social Research Council (ERSC)

Project Director: Prof. Gwilym Pryce

Rotherham case study lead: Dr Aneta Piekut

UK, Norway, Sweden

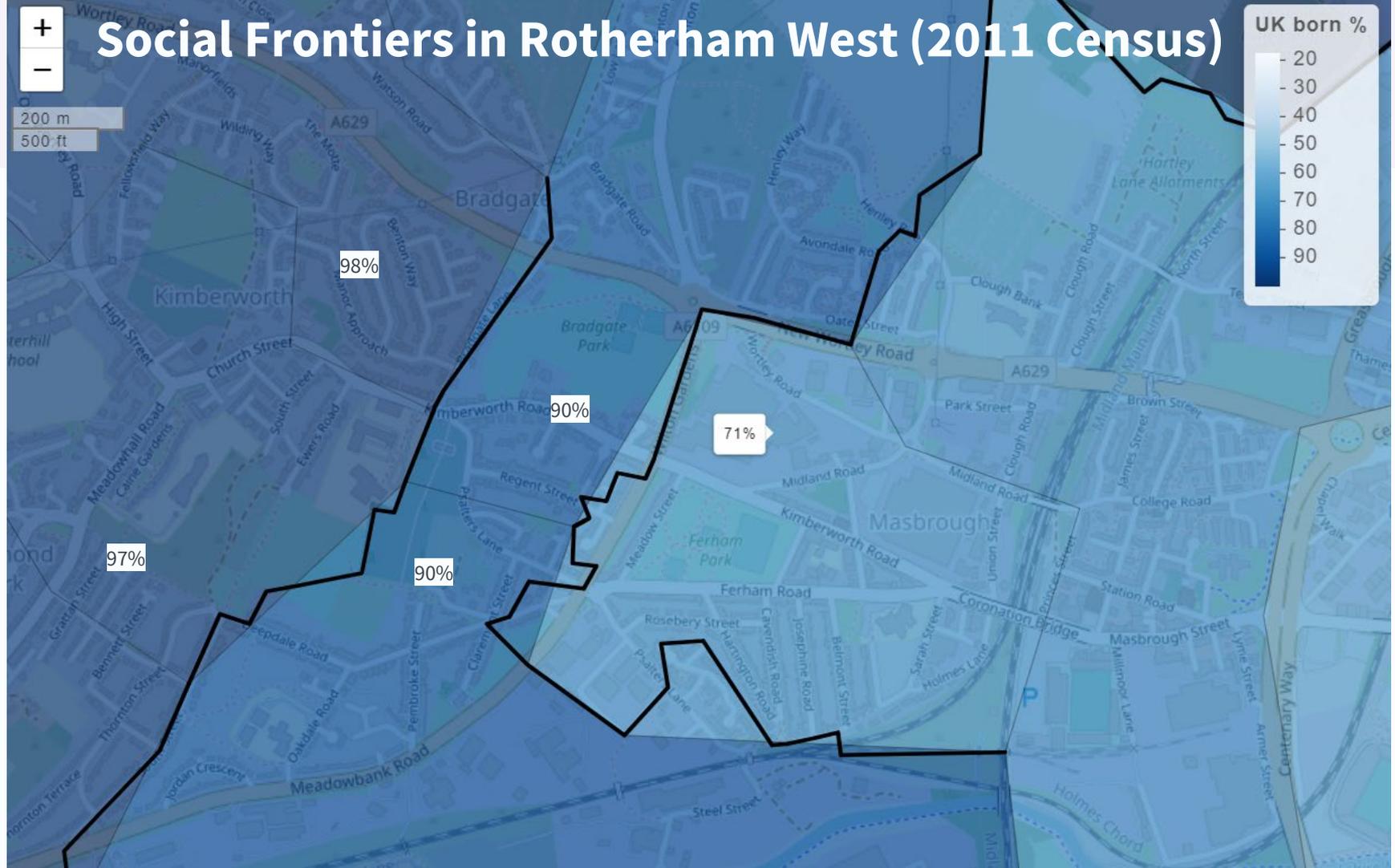
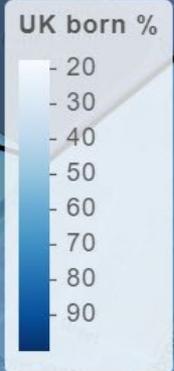
Web: <https://www.lifeatthefrontier.org/>



Social Frontiers in Rotherham West (2011 Census)



200 m
500 ft



Case study in Rotherham West

- **23 resident interviews:** Sept 2021 - Nov 2022

Neighbourhood		Gender		Age group		Ethnicity	
Kimberworth	8	Man	9	18-29	7	White British	8
Masborough	6	Woman	14	30-54	11	British Pakistani	9
Ferham	9			55+	5	Other	6
	23		23		23		23

- **11 expert interviews:** councillors (3), police (1), priest (1), local NGOs (2), community leaders (4)
- **1 focus group:** in Roma Slovak (6 female participants)
- **1 group reflection & feedback session:** held at Liberty Church in March 2023
- **2 artistic performance and Q&A sessions:** September 2022 (Sheffield) and August 2023 (Rotherham)

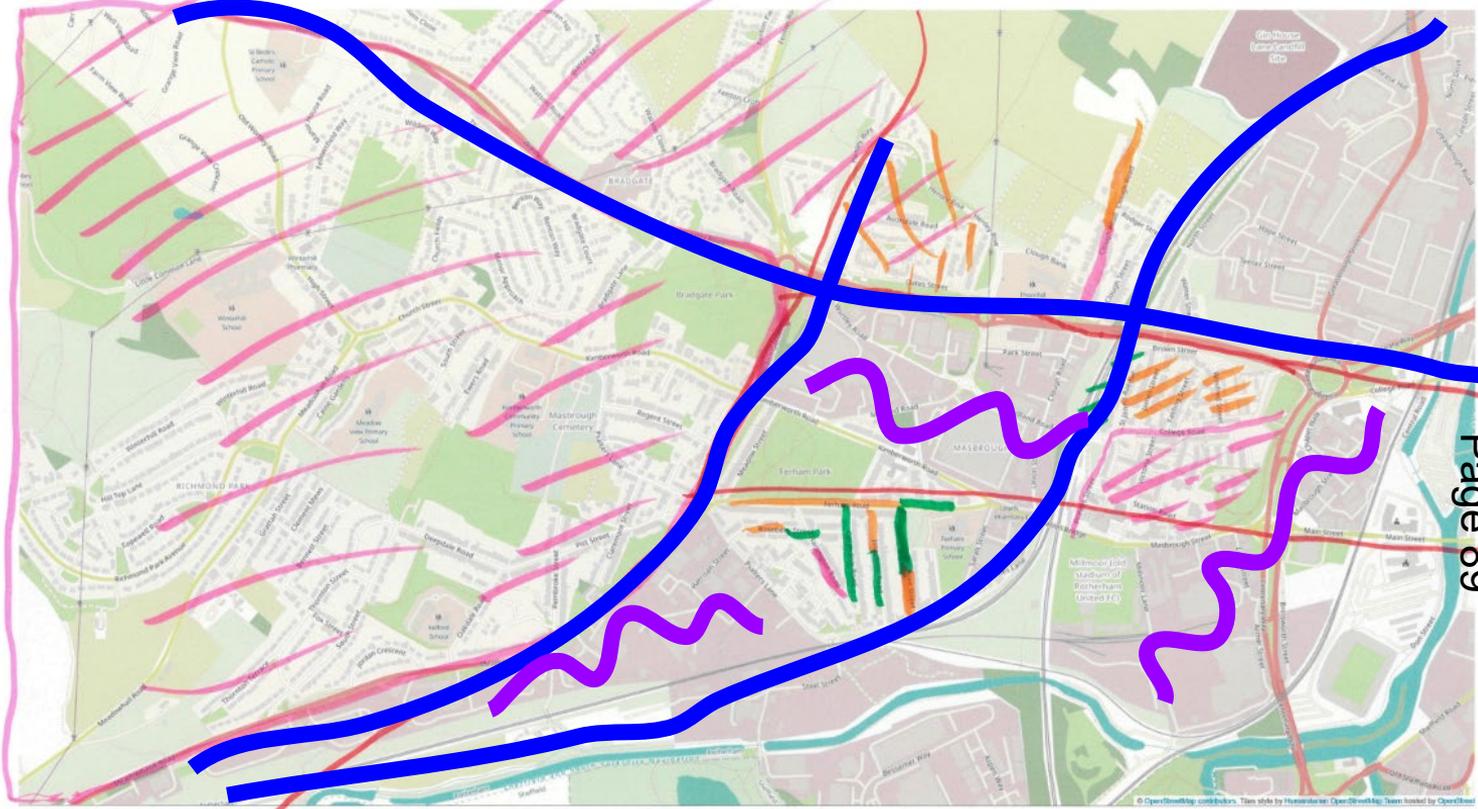
Key findings

1. Physical barriers overlapping with social frontiers

Social frontiers in Rotherham West

- SFs overlapping with physical barriers affecting community life
- Rotherham West:
 - Dual-carriageways
 - Post-industrial sites
 - Unused green spaces
 - Railway tracks





Participant-created map
(M, 20-24, not UK born, Ferham)

- Asian
- European
- English
- Boundaries

Participant code:
RES_UK_R_17

Impacts on safety, mobility and socialising

(...) Well, **they're extremely dangerous at night to walk through...** and they would have been the safest paths to town, though, because if not, you're going over the dual carriageways. So those areas I would... **I'd avoid.**

(F, 35-39, White British, Kimberworth, R21)

There's only a path here for bus, X78 ...to Meadowhall. (...) **There's no pavement from that Kimberworth Road all the way down to the other roundabout** (...) You have to **cross two sets of traffic lights to go into Bradgate Park** entrance at the top here if you're going up (...) There's literally physically not a lot of space [between], but I think **mentally**, the way they've made the design of the road and everything, it's like yeah, **don't cross over.**

(M, 20-24, not UK born, Ferham, R17)

I think it's just geographical, really... You live in Kimberworth, you mix in Kimberworth. You live in Masbrough, you know? **I think that it's geographical boundaries, and obviously there's the distance,** isn't there, in terms of walking and stuff.

(F, 55-59, White British, Kimberworth, R19)

Key findings

1. Physical barriers overlapping with social frontiers
- 2. Scarcity of social and community infrastructure**

Not many places to meet and socialise

“[New Wortley Road] created a barrier. Because a hell of **a lot of the shops, the services, got knocked down**, got demolished. So it really did **affect the whole makeup of the community**”

(W, 65-70, White British, Kimberworth, [R15])

I lived on the borderline. [*pointing to the map*] So this is Ferham and that's the main Masbrough area. (...) Ferham, of course, they have the nice park and stuff. **Masbrough have nothing. You can look there – there's nothing.**

(M, 20-25, British Pakistani, Masbrough, [R18])

“I do believe that there should be more things going on in the area, and I am sad to see **a building going to waste.**”

(W, 40-44, White Other, Masborough [R9])

“**There's nothing** really in Masbrough, Ferham or Kimberworth that you could go to...”

(W, 25-29, British Pakistani, Masborough [R5])

Key findings

1. Physical barriers overlapping with social frontiers
2. Scarcity of social and community infrastructure
- 3. Tensions related to the scarcity of community infrastructure**

Unequal distribution of resources

“One area has a high number of immigrants or people of diverse ethnicities – nothing available to them; and then, just over the border is predominantly White British, and there’s a clear contrast how the park has been maintained. **And then that raises questions. That raises insecurities. That raises a lot of, you know ... it can create a little difficult atmosphere between the neighbours**, as well, you know. So other people can start looking down on the particular neighbourhood.

It’s a shame that these basic facilities are all being taken away, especially when the crime is on the rise, the vulnerability is on the rise. Ferham has been identified as one of the most deprived areas of Rotherham, and the most deprived area of Rotherham doesn’t have a youth centre. ... doesn’t have a police station or police hub. It doesn’t have a library. ... not even a single place for the elderly to sit or congregate around”

(M, 30-34, British Pakistani, Ferham [R10])

Not enough infrastructure for all communities

That's more of a **space for White British people (Bradgate Park), and that's a space for Pakistani (Ferham Park)**. And so if there's any social events ... put on by Pakistani groups, it's always in the Ferham Park (...). If there's anything from the white community, it's either put on in that park [Bradgate], or it'll be in the park up here [in Kimberworth].

(M, 55-59, White British, Kimberworth [R15])

If one of those groups uses the building, the other group then think it's not theirs So those tensions have been played out at that level, that actually even physical spaces have become identified with one group or the other....

(Expert, religious leader [E10])

Only mixing that happens between whites and Asians is at school, and of course you go to school to learn, really, to learn lessons. **They're not really focussing on, "Ah, yeah, we're mixing communities."** So that's the only real – there's nothing, there's never been much.

(M, 20-25, British Pakistani, Masbrough, [R18])

Key findings

1. Physical barriers overlapping with social frontiers
2. Scarcity of social and community infrastructure
3. Tensions related to the scarcity of community infrastructure
- 4. The importance and limits of community encouragers/leaders**

The importance of community encouragers

I'm a chair for a community organisation that I set up in 2018. That was to increase physical participation within underrepresented groups (...) And that's currently going successful to this day. (...) It takes **time and effort** and not many people have that.

(W, 45-49, White British, Kimberworth [R01])

Just before Christmas they had a teacher up there (...) and [the teacher] did a lot of work ... **trying to pull the Roma community and the Asian community together**. Getting the children to work through music, through cultural events. (...) Unfortunately, **XXX has left**... So, whether that side of it will carry on I'm not quite sure.

(Expert, Local Councillor, [E04])

[X] offered the building up. [They] supported them with food. [They] worked alongside the mosque. So [They] really did change the face of Masbrough and then, **I think, [X] left, and then obviously it's always very person centric, isn't it**, and I think that's the thing. (...) Somebody else came in, did quite a lot of damage, and then no-one has been able to recover any engagement in that community.

(Local expert, NGO, [E05])

Support is not systematic

“[That person] left and **then the council said, “Right – we’re gonna bring another person...”** That person has looked to us once, met us **once**. They promised they’re going to see us again, we’re going to do work – never met us again. Since then, no-one’s approached us. [...]

Of course the council changes. New officers have been coming, new youth workers have been coming. **They’ve all promised us, each stage, they promised us, write down an item and they do this and they do that – nothing gets done.** And then now at the end of it they’ve just left us to it”.

(M, 20-25, British Pakistani, Masbrough, [R18])

Key findings

1. Physical barriers overlapping with social frontiers
2. Scarcity of social and community infrastructure
3. Tensions related to the scarcity of community infrastructure
4. The importance and limits of community encouragers/leaders
- 5. A vibrant and initiative-taking community**

Many community organisations and initiatives in Rotherham West

[As coded in data]

○ Community Building

- Bridge builders
- Bridge building - cross-cultural initiatives
- Community engagement
- Initiatives - Bin Amnesty
- Initiatives - Chester Hill Project
- Initiatives - Children classes
- Initiatives - Ferham Festival
- Initiatives - Food
- Initiatives - Food Bank
- Initiatives - Henley Rise Community Space
- Initiatives - Liberty Church Men's Group
- Initiatives - Masbrough Youth Forum
- Initiatives - Mental Health
- Initiatives - School Coffee Sessions
- Initiatives - Social Supermarket

- Organisations - Liberty Church
- Organisations - Artful
- Organisations - Bernardos
- Organisations - Bridging groups
- Organisations - Community building
- Organisations - Ferham Community Group
- Organisations - Kimberworth Neighbourho
- Organisations - One Voice
- Organisations - Reach
- Organisations - REMA
- Organisations - Residents' Association
- Organisations - Rother Phoenix FC
- Organisations - Rotherfed
- Organisations - Rotherham Minster
- Organisations - Rotherham United
- Organisations - Salvation Army
- Organisations - Shiloh
- Organisations - Voluntary Action Rotherha

Rotherham Plan 2025: Building Stronger Communities

- Diverse and rich local social capital / community glue
- Passionate partners to work with!



“Creating more **connected neighbourhoods** where residents and agencies come together to solve problems and make improvements”

“We will work closely together with all partners, including local voluntary and community groups, **to ensure our public spaces, buildings and other local assets are used effectively** to deliver public and community services.”

See it yourselves at <https://player.sheffield.ac.uk/>

Produced by David Sánchez Marín in collaboration with local partners:



ROAR



Our recommendations

1. Review how frontiers/barriers in Rotherham West divide the community and affect everyday life of residents
2. Create an inclusive social and community infrastructure, e.g. a community centre
3. Support local encouragers/leader in establishing sustainable structures for their work
4. Involve the community more in the decision-making process & improve transparency of the consultation process and how the council works with local groups

Thank you to all community organisations who supported us:



KRASTEVA

ROAR

KPCP
KIMBERWORTH PARK COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP



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Public Report
Improving Places Select Commission

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 12 December 2023

Report Title

Work Programme

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

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

To provide an updated outline schedule of scrutiny work.

Recommendations

1. That the report and proposed schedule of work be noted.
2. That authority be delegated to the Governance Advisor in consultation with the Chair and Vice-chair to make changes to the schedule of work as appropriate between meetings, reporting any changes back to the next meeting for endorsement.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Work Programme – Improving Places Select Commission 2022/23

Background Papers

Minutes of Improving Places Select Commission meetings 2022/23

Minutes of Improving Lives Select Commission meetings 2022/23

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meetings 2022/23

Minutes of Council meetings 2022/23

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

IPSC – Work Programme 2023/24

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.
- 1.2 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. 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.
- 1.3 The IPSC has eight scheduled meetings over the course of 2023/24, representing a maximum of 16 hours of scrutiny per year – assuming 2 hours per meeting. Members therefore must be selective in their choice of items for the work programme. The following key principles of effective scrutiny are considered in determining the work programme:
 - 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 wellbeing of local communities. Subsequent Acts have conferred specific powers to scrutinise health services, crime and disorder issues and to hold partner organisations to account.
 - 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.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Members are required to review their work programme at each meeting during the 2023/24 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.
- 2.2 An updated draft work programme for Improving Places Select Commission is appended to this report.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Members are recommended to discuss potential areas of scrutiny work to be added to the work programme.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The work programme is subject to consultation with the Chair and Members of the IPSC. Regular discussions take place with Cabinet Members and officers in respect of the content and timeliness of items set out on the work programme.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The decision to develop a work programme is a matter reserved to the Commission and will be effective immediately after consideration of this report.
- 5.2 The Statutory Scrutiny Officer (Head of Democratic Services) is accountable for the implementation of any decision in respect of the Commission's work programme. The Governance Advisor supporting the Commission is responsible on a day-to-day basis for the Commission's work programme. Members are recommended to delegate authority to the Governance Advisor to make amendments to the programme between meetings.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial or procurement implications arising from this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.
- 7.2 The authority of the Select Commission to determine its work programme is detailed within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and Responsibility for Functions parts of the Constitution. The proposal to review the work programme is consistent with those provisions.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

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

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 There are no implications for children and young people or vulnerable adults arising from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Whilst there are no specific equalities implications arising from this report, equalities and diversity are key considerations when developing and reviewing scrutiny work programmes. One of the key principles of scrutiny is to provide a voice for communities, and the work programme for this Commission has been prepared following feedback from Members representing those communities.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no implications for CO2 emissions or climate change directly arising from this report. Members will have regard to the Climate Emergency when selecting potential items for scrutiny and in developing recommendations.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 The membership of the Commission includes co-opted members from RotherFed who contribute to the development and review of the work programme. Where other matters are being considered for inclusion on the work programme, relevant partners or external organisations are consulted on the proposed activity and its timeliness.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 There are no risks directly arising from this report.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

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

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Appendix 1: Improving Places Select Commission – Work Programme 2023-24**Chair: Cllr Ken Wyatt****Vice-Chair: Cllr Adam Tinsley****Governance Advisor: Katherine Harclerode****Link Officer: Paul Woodcock**

The following principles were endorsed by OSMB at its meeting of 5 July 2023 as criteria to long/short list each of the commission's respective priorities:

Establish as a starting point:

- What are the key issues?
- What is the desired outcome?

Agree principles for longlisting:

- Can scrutiny add value or influence?
- Is this being looked at elsewhere?
- Is this a priority for the council or community?

Developing a consistent shortlisting criteria, e.g.

- T: Time: is it the tight time, enough resources?
- O: Others: is this duplicating the work of another body?
- P: Performance: can scrutiny make a difference
- I: Interest: what is the interest to the public?
- C: Contribution to the corporate plan

Meeting Date	Agenda Item
06 June 2023	Environment Act 2021 Update
11 July 2023	Draft Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy Cost-of-Living and Rent Arrears Playground Equipment: Procurement and Installation
19 September 2023	Site Visit to Ickes Lock Flooding Alleviation Update Combined Storm Overflows
24 October 2023	Neighbourhood Working Annual Report Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Update
Winter 2023/24	Review: Household Waste Recycling - Reusable Items
12 December 2023	Bereavement Services Annual Report Road Safety and Cumwell Lane Update Social Frontiers

Meeting Date	Agenda Item
6 February 2024	Markets Redevelopment Update Social Housing Regulation Act: update on Housing Services preparedness Nature Recovery Review Outcomes
19 March 2024	Tenant Scrutiny Review and Action Plan - Voids Tenant Communications Update Allotments Annual Update

Items to be scheduled:

School Road Safety

Anti-social behaviour workshop