

BEREAVEMENT SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2023–2026

The Bereavement Services Business Plan details the projects and activity undertaken in support of the Broxtowe Corporate Plan priorities. It also considers the equivalent corporate objectives of Erewash Borough Council.

The Corporate Plan prioritises local community needs and resources are directed toward the things they think are most important. These needs are aligned with other local, regional and national plans to ensure the ambitions set out in our Corporate Plan are realistic and achievable.

The Business Plan covers a three-year period but will be revised and updated annually. Detailed scrutiny of Bereavement Services functions and performance, especially the Crematorium, is undertaken by the Bramcote Bereavement Services Joint Committee.

The Council's Vision for Broxtowe is 'a greener, safer, healthier Broxtowe where everyone prospers'.

The Council's Values are:

- Going the extra mile: **a strong, caring focus on the needs of communities**
- Ready for change: **innovation and readiness for change**
- Employees: **value our employees and enable the active involvement of everyone**
- Always improving: **continuous improvement and delivering value for money**
- Transparent: **integrity and professional competence**

Broxtowe Borough Council's Priorities and Objectives are as follows:

Housing – A good quality affordable home for everyone

Business Growth – Invest in our towns and people

Environment – Protect the environment for the future

Health – Support people to live well

Community Safety – A safe place for everyone

The Erewash Borough Council Vision is to be "A first class borough in which people have pride and where they choose to live, work and play".

Erewash's Priorities are to:

- Be a welcoming borough, that is clean and safe
- Support our communities
- Plan for the future
- Be a well run efficient Council

1. PUBLISHED STRATEGY AND POLICY DOCUMENTS SUPPORTING THE DELIVERY OF PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

Strategy/Policy Document	Purpose of Document	Renewal Date	Responsible Officer/Contact
Corporate Plan	The Council's overarching plan for its priorities, targets and objectives. The plan sets out priorities to achieve the vision for 'A greener, safer, healthier Broxtowe where everyone prospers' with focus on the priorities of Housing, Business Growth, Community Safety, Health and Environment.	April 2024	Chief Executive
Business Strategy	Designed to ensure that the Council is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lean and fit in its assets, systems and processes • Customer focused in all its activities • Commercially minded and financially viable • Making best use of technology. 	Updated annually	Deputy Chief Executive
Medium Term Financial Strategy	The Council's key financial planning document. In detailing the financial implications of the Corporate Plan, the MTFS provides a reference point for corporate decision-making and helps to ensure that the Council can optimise the balance between its financial resources and the delivery of its priorities. The MTFS informs the annual budget-setting process, ensuring that each year's budget is considered within the context of the Council's ongoing sustainability over the entirety of the planning period.	Updated annually	Deputy Chief Executive Head of Finance Services
Capital Strategy	An overarching summary document which encompasses all capital and treasury activity including the capital programme, financing planning, accounting policies and asset management.	Updated annually	Deputy Chief Executive Head of Finance Services
Cemetery Rules and Regulations (Broxtowe and Erewash)	Rules and regulations for the cemetery activity.	Reviewed every 2 years	Parks and Green Spaces Manager Erewash BC

Strategy/Policy Document	Purpose of Document	Renewal Date	Responsible Officer/Contact
ICCM Charter for the Bereaved	Sets standards for cemeteries and crematoria.	Updated annually	Bereavement Services Manager
Cremation (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2017	Legislative framework.	Reviewed throughout the year	Bereavement Services Manager
Bramcote Bereavement Services Joint Committee reports	Various reports, especially investment priorities.	Quarterly	Head of Environment
Climate Change and Green Futures Programme	A strategic document detailing actions that aim to reduce the Council's carbon footprint to net zero by 2027. It outlines how the Council will influence, encourage and assist households, businesses and schools across the Borough to achieve the same goal.	Reviewed regularly by Working Group	Executive Director

2. SERVICE LEVEL OBJECTIVES LINKED TO CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

Bereavement Services

- **Bramcote Crematorium**
 - Undertake cremations, scatterings, memorialisation, services of remembrance, open days and all associated administration and record-keeping on behalf of the Bramcote Bereavement Services Joint Committee (Broxtowe and Erewash Borough Councils)

- **Broxtowe and Erewash Cemeteries**
 - Undertake cemetery bookings and all associated administration and record-keeping for both Broxtowe and Erewash Borough Councils, and deal with first level complaints, queries and site visit issues

- **Broxtowe Cemeteries**
 - Undertake cemetery inspections, attend burials and scatterings, and undertake memorial inspections for Broxtowe Borough Council.

3. MEASURES OF PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE DATA

Context – Baseline Service Data

Service Data / Description (Pentana Code)	Actual 2019/20	Actual 2020/21	Actual 2021/22	Comments including benchmarking data
Cremations at Bramcote Crematorium (BSDData_01)	2,532	2,797	2,478	The outturn reflects the number of adult cremations relating to a full, committal, direct, hospital body, hospital body part and low cost services. The 2021/22 figure was previously reported as 2,506 but data has been reviewed.
Ashes scatterings at Bramcote Crematorium (BSDData_01a)	321	309	401	Data represents data extracted from the reporting system. Changes have been made to previous figures in 2019/20 and 2020/21 to ensure consistency in the reporting method of the data.
Burials – Broxtowe cemeteries (BSDData_02a)	118	133	91	Whilst there was an increase in the number of burials as a result COVID the general trend is that full burials are reducing.
Ashes burials – Broxtowe cemeteries (BSDData_02b)	85	99	154	Ashes interments were suspended for a period during COVID. Following the easing of restriction the number of interments increased as shown in the data.
Burials – Erewash cemeteries (BSDData_03a)	77	91	83	The data suggests that the number of Burials in Erewash remains relatively consistent. This is different to the trend for Broxtowe.
Ashes burials – Erewash cemeteries (BSDData_03b)	78	91	79	The data suggests that the number of ashes interments in Erewash remains relatively consistent. This is different to the trend for Broxtowe.

CRITICAL SUCCESS INDICATORS (CSI)

Priority leaders should work corporately to **define the outcome objective** for each priority area and **identify an outcome indicator** or indicators which will be **Critical Success Indicators**. There will be a maximum of two CSI for each corporate priority.

Indicator Description (Pentana Code)	Achieved 2019/20	Achieved 2020/21	Achieved 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Future Years	Indicator Owner and Comments (incl. benchmarking)
Net surplus/(cost) of bereavement services to Broxtowe * (BSLocal_06)	£364k	£196k	£196k	£265k	£265k	£300k	Head of Finance Services. Positive outturn in 2021/22 with additional revenues. Overall increases in employee and supplier costs in 2022/23 and 2023/24 only partially mitigated by proposed fee increases.

* Does not take account of the net cost of welfare funerals

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Priority leaders should identify two sets of performance indicators namely **Key Performance Indicators (KPI)** for reporting to GMT and Members and **Management Performance Indicators (MPI)** for use in business planning and performance monitoring at a service level.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

Indicator Description (Pentana Code)	Achieved 2019/20	Achieved 2020/21	Achieved 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Future Years	Indicator Owner and Comments (incl. benchmarking)
Crematorium surplus revenue distribution to Broxtowe (BSLocal_06a)	£500k	£300k	£400k	£400k	£400k	£350k	Head of Finance Services Current pay and price inflation pressures on potential surplus distributions in the medium-term

Indicator Description (Pentana Code)	Achieved 2019/20	Achieved 2020/21	Achieved 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Future Years	Indicator Owner and Comments (incl. benchmarking)
Net surplus/(cost) of Broxtowe cemeteries (BSLocal_06b)	(£136k)	(£104k)	(£51k)	(£104k)	(£140k)	(£140k)	Head of Finance Services A slight reduction in costs achieved in 2021/22 due to income and changes to internal recharges. An increase in employee and supplier costs in 2022/23 and 2023/24 are only partially mitigated by proposed fee increases.

Management Performance Indicators (MPI)

Indicator Description (Pentana Code)	Achieved 2019/20	Achieved 2020/21	Achieved 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Future Years	Indicator Owner and Comments (incl. benchmarking)
Number of full adult cremations (18 plus years) This includes, Full Service, Committal Service, Direct Cremations, Hospital Bodies and Parts, Low Cost funeral (BSLocal_07)	2,546	2,808	2,478	2,450	2,601	2,731	Head of Environment Bereavement Services Manager Ambition for 2023/24 onwards is to grow the number of services year on year by 5%, from a baseline figure of 2,478. To facilitate the growth a marketing strategy was adopted in September 2022 which identified measures and actions support business growth. The 2021/22 figure was previously reported as 2,506 but data has been reviewed.

Indicator Description (Pentana Code)	Achieved 2019/20	Achieved 2020/21	Achieved 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Target 2023/24	Future Years	Indicator Owner and Comments (incl. benchmarking)
ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Assessment Process for Burial and Crematorium award (BSLocal_08) (New)	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Gold	Target is to maintain gold award standard

The Bramcote Bereavement Services Joint Committee receives quarterly detailed reports on the performance of Bramcote Crematorium, and the Crematorium also seeks feedback at its Services of Remembrance and Open Days. This feedback is also reported to the Joint Committee.

4. KEY TASKS AND PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT 2023/24 – 2025/26 INCLUDING COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

Priority leaders are asked to consider potential **commercial activities** in their priority areas when setting the key tasks and priorities for the next three years. In doing so priority leaders should consider:

- In which service areas could new commercial activities be undertaken?
- How much additional income could be generated from the new commercial activities?
- Would additional resources (employees, equipment, systems etc.) be needed to undertake the new commercial activities? If yes, outline these with estimates of costs.
- How will these new commercial activities link into the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy, Capital Programme, Business Strategy and Commercial Strategy?
- Will the new commercial activities affect existing Revenue and Capital budgets? If yes, then remember to include the net income or costs to Section 5 ‘Link Key Tasks and Priorities for Improvement to the Financial Budgets’.
- Please identify new ‘**commercial activities**’ in the comments column.

Action (Pentana Code)	Targeted Outcome	Partnership / Procurement Arrangement	Officers Responsible / Target Date	Budget Implications / Efficiencies / Other comments
Implement Crematorium works programme to the infrastructure 2022-2025 BS2124_01	As per the Bramcote Bereavement Services Joint Committee reports. The works programme identifies the planned maintenance to the infrastructure at the Crematorium.	Variety of external contractors	Capital Works Manager Bereavement Services Manager March 2025	All fully funded via the approved medium term financial strategy
Investigate potential to connect to main sewer within the new development at the land adjacent to the crematorium BS2124_02	Improved foul and surface water drainage system to reduce maintenance costs and the possibility of flooding	External Developers	Head of Asset Management and Development March 2024	Funding implications to be considered as part of medium term financial strategy

Action (Pentana Code)	Targeted Outcome	Partnership / Procurement Arrangement	Officers Responsible / Target Date	Budget Implications / Efficiencies / Other comments
Make Bramcote Crematorium the crematoria of choice within the local area BS2124_04	Fully implement the actions within the marketing strategy. Increase number of cremations and the income received.	External Parties Internal Communication Department	Head of Environment Bereavement Services Manager March 2024	Funded from existing budgets
Installation of new cremators at Bramcote Crematorium BS2225_01	Installation of new cremators following completion of the following project elements: 1. Creation of tender documentation 2. Tender and order process 3. Installation	External Specialist and developers	Head of Environment Head of Asset Management and Development Bereavement Services Manager March 2025	Funded from receipts from sale of surplus land or from Broxtowe Borough Council and Erewash Borough Council. Efficiency saving on maintenance budget and energy consumption.
Woodland Burials BS2225_02	Provision of a woodland burial service within the Borough Increase the number of trees in the Borough	External suppliers Internal Communication Department	Head of Environment Bereavement Services Manager March 2025	Increase in income through services not currently provided. Contribution towards the Council tree planting targets and carbon off setting implications.
Pet Cremations BS2225_03	Provision of a pet cremation service	External suppliers Internal Communication Department	Head of Environment Bereavement Services Manager March 2025	Increase in income through the provision of a service not currently provided.
Structure review BS2225_04	Creation of a structure which enables the services provided by Bereavement Services to grow.	Human Resources	Head of Environment Bereavement Services Manager March 2023	Create a structure that will facilitate the crematorium being able to grow as a business and improve service resilience.

5. LINK KEY TASKS AND PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT TO THE FINANCIAL BUDGETS

Priority leaders should ensure that key tasks and priorities (including commercial activities) that have a financial implication are included in the analysis below.

Revenue and Capital Budget Implications/Efficiencies Generated	Pentana Action Code	2023/24 Budget £	2024/25 Budget £	2025/26 Budget £
Budget Implications				
Purchasing of a pet cremator and associated infrastructure (estimated)	BS2225_03	30,000*	-	-
Installation of new cremators at Bramcote Crematorium (estimated cost subject to tender). The cremators will be jointly and equally funded by Broxtowe and Erewash Borough Councils.	BS2225_01	1,500,000*	-	-
Increased fuel costs		45,000	-	-
Efficiencies Generated				
None	-			
New business/increased income				
Make Bramcote Crematorium the crematoria of choice within local area Increase in income from 2023/24 is based on proposed 9% increase in fees and maintaining the target number of adult services.	BS2124_04	(100,000)*	-	-
Woodland Burials – income based on £1,500 per plot	BS2225_02	-	(3,000)	(6,000)
Pet Cremations	BS2225_03	-	(2,000)	(2,000)
Net Change in Revenue Budgets		NOTE*		

* Budget implications to be considered and confirmed once project business cases have been finalised.

6. SUMMARY OF KEY RISKS

Priority leaders have identified three strategic risks for the Business area and ensured that these are considered in the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

Key Strategic Risk	Action to be taken or required to mitigate/minimise the risk or threat
Competition from new private crematoria at Gedling, Swanwick and Aston-on-Trent and proposed one in Rushcliffe	Continuously improve Bramcote Bereavement Services, implement views of service users including Funeral Directors and officiants on how to improve service, consider appropriate opportunities for cost saving and efficiency measures
National pandemic affecting service delivery	Ensure contingency plans for service delivery for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual aid agreement to use neighbouring crematorium • Working additional hours to facilitate additional cremations • Train additional staff to undertake cremations

The top five risks (strategic or operational) arising from the key tasks and priorities for improvement have also been identified. As part of the project planning process for each key task detailed risk analyses will be undertaken and mitigation actions identified. It is anticipated that there will be 'common themes' identified that are covered by Strategic Risks.

Key Task	Risk or Threat to Key Task	Covered by an existing Strategic Risk?	Action taken/required to mitigate/minimise the risk or threat
Make Bramcote Crematorium the crematoria of choice within the local area BS2124_04	Other local crematoria	Yes - Risk 2	Improved marketing of Crematorium Awareness of services offered by competitors
Investigate potential to connect to main sewer within the new development at the land adjacent to the crematorium BS2124_02	Lack of funding or resources Concept not cost effective	Yes - Risk 2	Build project into contingency plans Include the concept within the land sale agreement
Installation of new cremators at Bramcote Crematorium BS202225_01	Lack of funding or resources	Yes - Risk 2	Budgets include maintenance funds to keep existing cremators operational

Key Task	Risk or Threat to Key Task	Covered by an existing Strategic Risk?	Action taken/required to mitigate/minimise the risk or threat
Make Bramcote Crematorium the crematoria of choice within the local area BS2124_04	Loss of employees restricting the ability to deliver services and/or cremate due to the pandemic	Yes - Risk 2	Training of additional employees to provide cover. Provision of mutual aid from other crematoria

Risks as extracted from the Strategic Risk Register as at November 2022:

Risk 2: Failure to obtain adequate resources to achieve service objectives

The latest Strategic Risk Register is available in full at <https://intranet.broxtowe.gov.uk/finance/risk-management/>