

**Appendix H:**

**CEMETERY STRATEGY  
EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

This document frames the existing guidance on conducting equality and human rights impact assessments (EqIA) in a template which can be used to inform the budget process. It has been developed based upon the existing guidance on equality and human rights impact assessments from the council's Equalities and Human Rights Scheme (2008-2011).

**STAGE ONE: INITIAL SCREENING OF STRAETGY OPTIONS**

<b>1 Basic information</b>	
<b>Name of organisation</b>	Southwark Council, Environment & Leisure Department
<b>What is being assessed?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Organisation?</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Department?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is it a new/existing service</li> <li>○ Is this a statutory or discretionary service?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Service area/function?</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Budget proposal?</b></li> </ul>	<p>The burial strategy proposed for the Cemetery and Crematorium Service provides the council with a strategic approach to addressing the shortfall in burial space in Southwark and enables the council to continue its existing burial provision.</p> <p>The strategy includes a recommendation to implement projects that will provide burial space until 2035 whilst simultaneously exploring identified opportunities for the future development of the service.</p> <p>Providing space for burial in the borough's cemeteries is a discretionary service. However the council has a statutory responsibility to continue to maintain the three LBS owned cemetery sites.</p> <p>The implementation of the strategy will require an allocation of £5 million from the capital programme over the next 25 years.</p>
<b>Aim, objectives and <u>users</u> of service/function</b>	<p>1. The purpose of this strategy is to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a strategic approach to managing the development of the council's burial provision.</li> <li>• Ensure the implementation of a programme of planned development in the boroughs cemeteries that is sensitive to the needs of residents, cemetery stakeholders, local neighbourhoods and the business community.</li> </ul> <p>2. Southwark's three cemeteries are Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SiNCs). As well as catering for bereaved families the cemeteries are valued as recreational spaces and heavily used for play, nature walking, sports, dog walking.</p> <p>3. Grave spaces are required by approximately 30% of bereaved families accessing the Southwark's Cemetery and Crematoria Service. This amounts to a demand for around 210 new grave plots per year.</p> <p>4. A recent public consultation showed that the preference for burial over cremation is linked to religious and cultural traditions.</p> <p>Cremation is forbidden in Islamic Law and burial is particularly favoured in African, African-Caribbean, and Chinese communities where there are specific cultural practices around interment. The majority of funerals conducted in Southwark's cemeteries are for residents from these Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.</p> <p>Those of Catholic, Muslim and traditional Christian faith also choose to be buried rather than cremated.</p>

	<p>The strategy aims to ensure that the needs of all sections of the community continue to be met by the cemetery and crematorium service, by ensuring that burial remains an available choice.</p> <p>5. Consultation has shown that having a cemetery as a <u>local</u> amenity is particularly important to elderly residents. Proximity to the cemetery is particularly important for the recently bereaved amongst this group who, often wish to visit the grave of a spouse for example, once or more than once a week and for whom travel may be an issue.</p> <p>The strategy ensures that elderly residents will continue to have access to grave space in a local cemetery</p>
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<b>2 Budget option detail</b>	
<b>What is the proposed funding reduction?</b>	N/A
<p><b>What will be the impact of the proposed funding reductions on (complete as applicable):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Organisation?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is it wholly dependent on Council funding?</li> <li>○ What reserves does it have? (March 2010)</li> <li>○ Other funding known to be at risk?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Department?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is it a new/existing service</li> <li>○ Is this a statutory or discretionary service?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Service area/function?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are there other organisations offering a similar service/function?</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Service users?</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Other services or departments in the Council that are considering budget reduction options?</b></li> </ul>	N/A

<b>3 Previous equalities impact assessment (EqIA)</b>	
<b>Has this service/function previously been impact assessed?</b>	Yes
<p><b><u>If yes</u>, please summarise the findings/action plan of your current EqIA in relation to this service.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Did it identify any barriers preventing certain groups from benefiting fully from your service/function?</li> </ul>	<p>a) The shortage of burial space has meant that cemetery space allocated for Muslim burials has been exhausted. This means that residents observing Islamic funeral rites and requiring graves prepared in adherence to Islamic law, must seek interment outside of the borough.</p> <p>The burial strategy will allow the council to better meet the needs of the Muslim community and other religious / faith groups.</p>
<b><u>If no</u>, what other evidence is there regarding the impact (positive/negative) of the service on equality groups</b>	

4 Establishing Relevance	
<p>Indicate on the following grid whether the proposed strategy have an adverse impact on communities related to <u>each</u> of the equality areas listed below. Where possible, address each equality strand in turn.</p> <p>Will it contribute to <u>inequality</u> or have a negative impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>equal opportunities</b> i.e. will it benefit or disadvantage certain groups on the basis of the grounds listed below?<sup>1</sup></li> <li>▪ <b>the elimination of discrimination</b> i.e. will it have a disproportionate impact on any of the groups listed below?</li> <li>▪ <b>promoting good relations</b> i.e. is there are risk that it will lead to worsening relations between members of different groups or exacerbate tensions between communities?</li> </ul>	
EQUALITY STRAND	MIGHT THERE BE AN ADVERSE IMPACT? Briefly explain why
Race	In general the burial strategy will not specifically benefit or disadvantage BME groups, nor is it likely to lead to worsening tensions between communities. The strategy aims to maintain and improve a service already provided by the council. If this service were to cease, it would disadvantage some BME groups for whom burial is an important cultural tradition.
Gender	In general the burial strategy will not specifically have an impact which will benefit or disadvantage different genders, nor is it likely to lead to worsening tensions between communities.
Disability	The burial strategy aims to maintain and improve a service currently provided by the council. If this service were to cease and grave space was not available in local cemeteries, this would disadvantage some disabled residents for whom accessibility and travel are an issue.
Religion/belief	The burial strategy is likely to offer benefits to some religious or faith groups for whom burial is required. This will support equality of choice and the freedom to practice religion. In general it will not disadvantage other groups and is not likely to lead to worsening tensions between communities.
Sexual Orientation	In general the burial strategy will not specifically have an impact which will benefit or disadvantage this equalities group, nor is it likely to lead to worsening tensions between communities.
Age	The burial strategy will ensure that grave plots continue to be available in cemeteries that are local to Southwark residents. If this provision were to cease, the need to travel outside of the borough to visit a relative's grave would disadvantage elderly residents.
Human Rights <sup>2</sup>	The burial strategy by ensuring burial remains a choice for residents supports Article 9: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Human Rights Act (1998)
Gender re-assignment <sup>3</sup>	n/a

<sup>2</sup> The following two links provide useful guidance on the relevance of human rights generally, and specifically within the public sector: [www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/docs/human-rights-making-sense-human-rights.pdf](http://www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/docs/human-rights-making-sense-human-rights.pdf), [www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/docs/human-rights-handbook-for-public-authorities.pdf](http://www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/docs/human-rights-handbook-for-public-authorities.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> This strand or 'protected characteristic' is part of the new 2010 Equality Act and requires consideration

<b>Pregnancy and Maternity<sup>4</sup></b>	n/a
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<b>5 Conclusion of Stage One: Screening</b>
<b>Please attach this EqIA to your presentation to cabinet</b>

<b>Assessment completed by:</b>	
Name & Division	
Date	

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	
Name	
Date	

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

## STAGE TWO: FULL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL

<b>1</b>	<b>Please attach your Stage One equality impact assessment</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Strategy proposal detail</b>
<b>Please provide details of your strategy proposal.</b>	The burial strategy proposed for the Cemetery and Crematorium Service provides the council with a strategic approach to addressing the shortfall in burial space in Southwark and enables the council to continue its existing burial provision.
<b>Please provide justification for the above proposal.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How has the screening process informed this proposal?</li> <li>○ Has anything changed since stage one screening?</li> <li>○ Have you consulted with other departments on any potential cross cutting impacts arising from stage one screening? [particularly in relation to multi-funded organisations]</li> </ul>	<p>The strategy has been formulated to ensure that the cemetery and crematorium service continues to meet the needs of all sections of the community, by addressing the shortfall in burial space.</p> <p>Initial scoping and evidence from the borough-wide public consultation shows that if the council were to cease providing burial in its cemeteries, some BME communities, religious and faith groups would be disadvantaged.</p>
<b>3</b>	<b>Assessment of impact</b>
<p>Which equality groups will be disproportionately affected by the proposed funding reduction? Why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the <u>level of need</u> for the service or function in relation to the equality group?</li> <li>▪ What is the <u>level of use</u> of the service or function in relation to the equality group?</li> </ul>	<p>The strategy will allow the council to continue with its existing service provision and therefore no equality group is disproportionately affected.</p> <p>Grave spaces are required by approximately 30% of bereaved families accessing the Southwark's Cemetery and Crematoria Service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approximately 65% of people purchasing graves are from the BME communities</li> <li>• 71% of people purchasing a graves state a religion or faith</li> </ul>
<b>What evidence has informed your conclusion of disproportionate impact?</b> (e.g. surveys, research, feedback, Fairer Future or Spending Challenge consultations, monitoring)	Analysis of the responses from the public consultation conducted during July – September 2011.
<b>Are there any evidence gaps?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do we need qualitative analysis e.g. consultation/focus groups</li> </ul>	No
<b>If there is potential for disproportionate impact or discrimination</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What kind of discrimination is it (direct/indirect)?</li> <li>▪ Can it be justified? How?</li> </ul>	There is no evidence of a disproportionate negative impact of the burial strategy proposed.

### STAGE THREE: ACTION PLAN

What action will be taken as a result of this Impact Assessment to mitigate the adverse impact of the funding proposal on the specific group/s?	Action	Intended Outcome	Completion date	Officer
<p>What practical changes could be made to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure everyone who needs service is able to</li> <li>▪ Improve the positive effects for people of the equality strands</li> <li>▪ Eliminate any negative effects or impacts</li> <li>▪ Improve how you communicate the service to existing/potential users</li> <li>▪ Promote community cohesion</li> </ul> <p>For commissioned services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What coordination around funding and support has been provided?</li> </ul>	<p>The strategy will be closely monitored to ensure that its implementation does not have a negative impact or discriminate against communities.</p>	<p>Implementation of the strategy will be sensitive to the interests of all sections of the community.</p>	<p>March 2013</p>	<p>Delegated officer of Parks and Open Spaces Team.</p>
	<p>Officers will be required to undertake regular and ongoing consultation with stakeholders throughout the delivery of each element of the strategy.</p>	<p>To increase awareness of the strategy and opportunities to address concerns and promote dialogue and community cohesion.</p>	<p>March 2013</p>	<p>Delegated officer of Parks and Open Spaces Team.</p>

<b>Assessment completed by:</b>	
Name & Division	John Wade, Public Realm
Date	25 April 2012

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	
Name	Barrie Hargrove
Date	