

Committee: Merton and Sutton Joint Cemetery Board

Date: 22nd February 2022, 2pm

Wards: ALL

Subject: Client Report

Lead officer: John Bosley, Assistant Director of Public Space

Contact officer: Andrew Kauffman

Recommendations:

- A. That the Committee note the continued positive work being undertaken by both the service provider's (Idverde) cemeteries management team and client officer team for the continued delivery of excellent services throughout the pandemic recovery period.
 - B. That the Committee note and feedback on the programme of works for 2021/22.
 - C. For the Committee to note the next programme of works to remedy the headstones made safe by being laid down in Section MU.
-

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Cemeteries Service continued to experience Covid challenges during the period since the last report although the service saw the benefit of Covid19 forward planning procedures put in place by the team during 2021 and the impact that this has had on the positive movement of the capital works programme.
- 1.2. The Public Space division, Facilities Management and Idverde's proposed programme of improvement works for the 2021/2022 period continued with the below agreed sections now complete including **Section M, Section F, Section X, Section BX** with **Section KX** and **Section MU** still outstanding but planned to commence in February 2022.
- 1.3. The review of the Memorial Safety Testing Programme (MSTP) procedure has been agreed between LBM Officers and Idverde with Section M failed headstones having been reinstated on individual landing stones in front of the old concrete landing beam that was no longer fit for purpose. The Section MU has now been scheduled for late February and propose to reinstate failing memorials onto the concrete beam where possible.
- 1.4. Highways road surfacing contractor has commenced cemetery roadway improvements running parallel to Green Lane and other roads and footways have been inspected for future planned works.
- 1.5. Cemeteries and Boundary Improvements; Idverde are talking with Suez to improve the boundary fence between the cemetery and Suez recycling centre. It is intended that new fencing and improved landscaping be considered. Garth Road Boundary hedge line. Visual improvements could be undertaken to improve the appearance of the cemetery running along Garth

Road and within the cemetery, which will be considered in this forthcoming year's work programme.

2 DETAILS

2.1. **Managing the Service during the Pandemic**

- 2.1.1 In order to maintain services through the Government roadmap out of restrictions, the Business Continuity Plans remain in place and Idverde are ensuring suitably trained staff are available to undertake the service.
- 2.1.2 The governance of the service continues to be supported through regular monthly contract meetings and weekly burial capacity updates.
- 2.1.3 Additional resources have been made available to the Cemeteries Service to ensure that demand could and can be managed throughout any peak periods of the challenges brought by the pandemic. The service shall be returning to a normal business model in the new municipal year and with the loosening of governmental restrictions.
- 2.1.4 Following the latest government guidance, there are now no restrictions to the number of mourners in the chapel or at graveside. Hand sanitiser stations are in place at the entrance of the chapel. A Bluetooth speak is provided to the family to play music.

2.2. **Merton and Sutton Joint Cemetery (M&SJC) Update Programme of Works 2021/22 and Proposed Programme of Works 2022/2023**

- 2.2.1 The 2021/2022 program is still on track for practical completion within the 2021/2022 financial year, progress update below and pictorial summary to follow ahead of next M&SJC board meeting.

Section M This section has now been completed. Failed headstones have now been reinstated on individual concrete landing stones in front of the old concrete beam, as this is no longer fit for purpose.

Section F Replacing old beams and an installation of the new beam is now complete.

Section X Work has started to replace two beams in this section.

Section BX New beams have now been installed in this section.

Section KX Requires beams which is the next general Muslim section.

Section MU The MU section has been inspected and price sought with works expected to commence in late February.

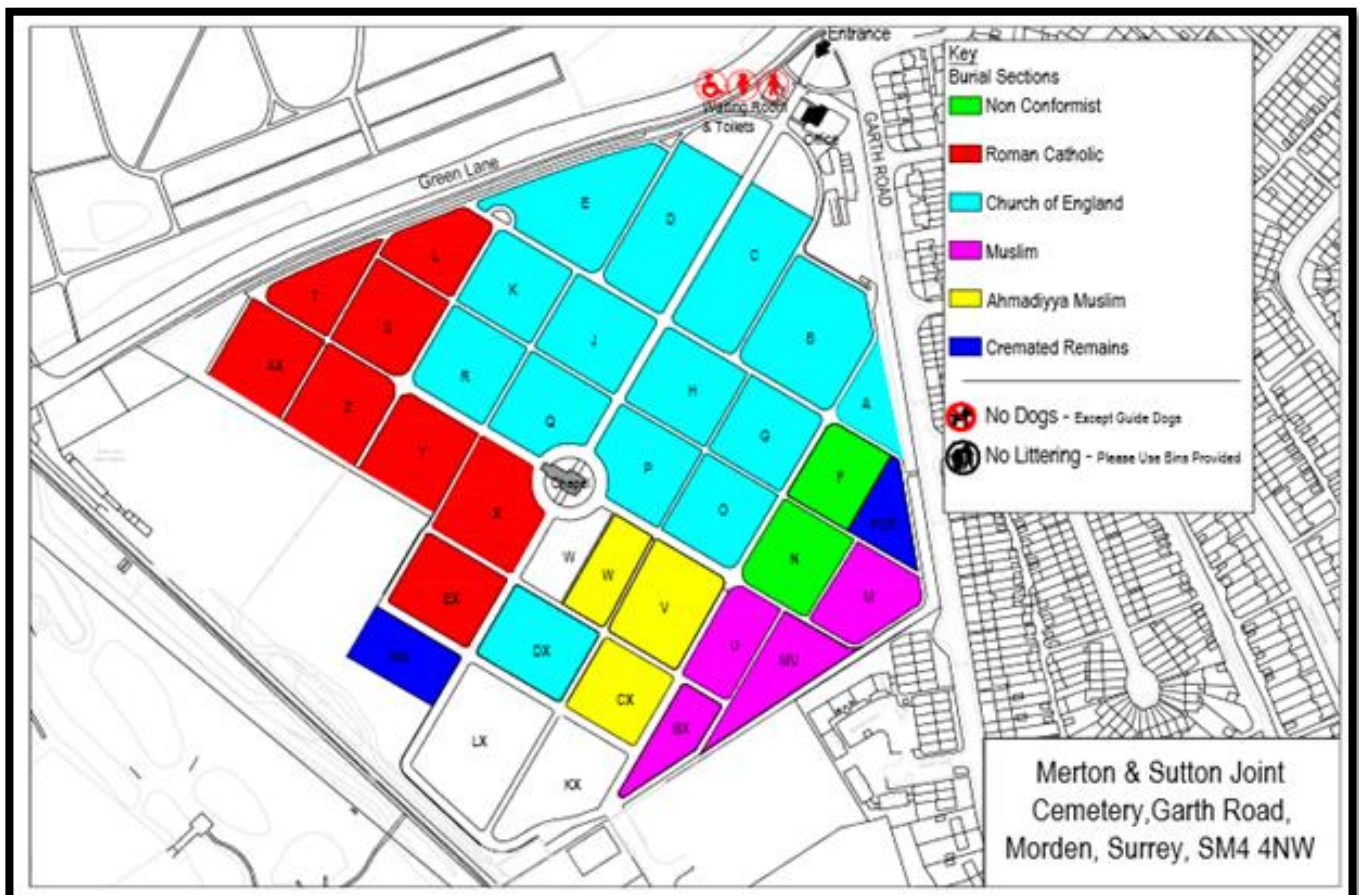


Pictures: Section F Beam Installations in progress

2.2.2 The working relationship between the Public Spaces Team and Facilities Management Team working with service providers idverde has strengthened during the period and the Memorial Safety Review Meetings (12th January 2022) continue to share progress updates of the ongoing memorial safety programme.

2.2.3 Figure 1. below is a map of the sections within M&SJC. This map is included to aid with referencing the locations of the programme of works.

Figure 1 - Merton and Sutton Joint Cemetery (Section MaP)



2.2.4 Table 1. below is the programme of works and expenditure for 2021/2022 period.

Table 1 is the programme of works for 2021/2022

Cost Centre	Nom.	Project	Description	Original Budget 2021/22	Virement	Revised Budget 2021/22
830010	1002	00001516	New Bearer Beams	25,000	20,000	45,000
830010	1002	00001517	Replacement Bearer Beams	65,000	75,000	140,000
830010	1002	00001590	Demolition of Greenhouse	10,000		10,000
830010	1002	00001591	Restructuring (incl. Tenancy Arrangements)	0		0
830010	1002	00001592	Memorials	30,000		30,000
830010	1002	00001593	Roads and Footpaths	20,000		20,000
			Total Special Projects	150,000	95,000	245,000

2.2.5 Table 2 is a Gantt chart to illustrate the schedule of the M&SJC programme of works for 2021/2022 that is still on track for practical completion before year end.

Table 2 - Gantt Chart of Schedule of Bearer Beam Works 2021/2022

Task	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Production of Tender Documents									
Tender Period									
Tender Analysis and Production of Tender Report									
Award of Contract(s)									
Mobilisation Period for Contractor									
Works Undertaken Within Contract									
Contingency Months (weather, pandemic)									

2.3. **Memorial Safety Testing Programme**

2.3.1 Local Authorities have a duty, both to members of the public and their own workers, to make sure that cemeteries and graveyards for which they are responsible are safe. Memorials can become unstable over time and cause accidents to people.

2.3.2 To prevent this and reduce risk, the safety of memorials is tested at prescribed intervals by the service provider (Idverde). Memorials identified as unsafe are made safe in the interim. The make safe method applied is dependent on the nature of the risk. The process of testing memorials and mitigating any risk identified is called the Memorial Safety Testing Programme (MSTP) and the Client and Service provider Idverde meet regularly to review the Memorial Safety Programme.

The client team met with the contractor on the 12 January 2022 to review the agreed processes and refined approach to memorial failures as agreed (see [M&SJC Board Meeting June 2021 \(section 2.4.5\)](#)) in order to recommence the programme and progress through the year to provide assurance of site safety with memorial headstones.

3 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

3.1. Not applicable for this report.

4 **CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

4.1. Not applicable for this report.

5 **TIMETABLE**

5.1. The timetable of the M&SJC 2021/2022 programme of works is in Table 2.

5.2. The works outstanding from the 2021/2022 programme of works are Section KX and MU which should be complete before the end of the financial year

6 **FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1. The estimated budget for the **M&SJC Programme of works** 2021/2022 is detailed in Paragraph 2.2.4, Table 1. The proposed programme for 2022-23 is detailed within the Budget Monitoring 2021/22 and Revenue Estimates 2022-23 (paragraph 2.6.2) Report elsewhere on this agenda

7 **LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1. The Cemeteries Service will continue to be up-to-date with all Government guidelines to manage the pandemic in this current recovery phase. All services and facilities will be provided within these guidelines.

7.2. The Cemeteries Service will continue to ensure that it fulfils its Health & Safety duties regarding memorial safety.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. We positively welcome and aim to support the growing diversity of the community we serve and the people we employ.
- 8.2. We aim to provide an inclusive service and will not discriminate (indirectly, directly or by association) on the grounds of race, sex, gender reassignment, marital or partnership status, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, HIV status, or disability (e.g. sensory and physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health status).
- 8.3. Quality means equality in the services we plan and provide, and in the staff we employ to provide those services. The Cemeteries Service is culturally sensitive and is also respectful of faith and belief considerations.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Not applicable for this report

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. Councils have a duty under Health & Safety legislation and under the principles of occupier's liability, both to members of the public and their own workers, to make sure that cemeteries and graveyards for which they are responsible are safe. Memorials can become unstable since erection and cause accidents to people.
- 10.2. The Memorial Safety programme process across the Partnership is based on *Ministry of Justice Memorial Safety Guidance (2009)*.
- 10.3. Staff undertaking the testing (MSTP) are suitably trained. All inspectors are trained to meet the standards specified in the Ministry of Justice guidance entitled "Managing the Safety of Burial Ground Memorials". Training is refreshed as required.
- 10.4. When memorial testing is being undertaken, staff wear appropriate PPE. This includes gloves, steel toe-cap boots and high-vis jackets.

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- 11.1. None

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1. None

END OF REPORT