

# Deceased Management Advisory Group

## Update 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020

The members of DMAG held a video conference on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020, with a representative from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), present for the open part of the meeting. APCC chaired the meeting.

### DMAG Wider Consultation

#### **1. Ministry of Justice update.**

It was confirmed that the contact at the General Register Office (GRO) was looking into the variable lead times which currently appear to apply to the electronic transmission of the 'Green' form and was asking if examples of delays in specific areas could be cited. It was thought that significant delays had been experienced in Newport, Wales.

MoJ reported that they were still awaiting more detail from MHCLG on solo and congregational singing and live music performances at funerals.

On the subject of PPE supply in relation to a second wave of Covid 19 it was stated that this was very much a central government initiative which was being conducted with LRF's and therefore contributions were not currently being sought from the wider sector. APCC pointed out that when, over ten years ago, measures were being put in place in readiness for an epidemic of bird flu, some LRF's held datum stocks of PPE which could be replenished automatically and hoped similar measures could be considered. MoJ stressed that a key objective of the exercise was to try and assess the impact of PPE availability on key sectors in comparison with its more general use.

SAIF enquired whether if, through test and trace, chapel attendants were found to have been in contact with someone who had contracted Covid 19, did they still remain exempt from wearing PPE. The MoJ will try and establish the correct position.

The MoJ representative asked the member representing APCC if they could arrange a video meeting to discuss the latter's briefing paper and it was agreed this could be held p.m. on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August and for which MoJ will forward the necessary details to him. He also informed the meeting that while his immediate successor would not be in place when he moves to new duties in early September, the incumbent for the newly created more senior Grade 6 post will have already taken up his position. He agreed to



# Deceased Management Advisory Group

circulate the individual's contact details and hoped to introduce him to members of DMAG probably at the meeting scheduled for Thursday 3rd September.

## 2. Scottish Government update

While the representative from Scottish Government was not able to attend the meeting, they had notified DMAG of their intention to be present at the meeting to be held this coming Thursday – 27<sup>th</sup> August.

## 3. Northern Ireland Government update

SAIF reported that nothing further had been heard from the Northern Ireland representative in relation to revised legislation and accompanying guidance, but further enquiries would be made as to their progress.

### DMAG closed meeting

#### 1. Notes from previous meeting.

The notes of the previous meeting were agreed, and these can now be placed on the DMAG website.

#### 2. Items for future meetings with Cabinet Office/Devolved Governments.

SAIF, having led the DMAG response at the meeting with the Cabinet Office held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> August will update the NAFD representative on the current key topics of financial assistance for funeral firms; modelling for the forecast progress of Covid 19 throughout the Autumn and the LRF's 'Lessons Learned' document which to date has been shared confidentially with the NAFD, rather than with all members of DMAG. The NAFD representative will lead the DMAG response at the next meeting with the Cabinet Office, however doubt has arisen as to whether the meeting scheduled for Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September has been cancelled or not. SAIF agreed to check the position with the Cabinet Office.

#### 3. Draft letter to CMA

The NAFD suggested some amendments to the draft letter to the CMA in relation to the truncated timetable for responses to their provisional report. It was thought to be



# Deceased Management

## Advisory Group

important to retain the background to DMAG but there was agreement that the letter should be as constructive as possible but firm in its intent. The advisors had supported the proposal that an informal approach, preferably made verbally, should be made to a member of the team in the first instance to try and reinstate the revised schedule published by the CMA on 28<sup>th</sup> May while also making it clear that more formal measures are under serious consideration. It is felt that one reason for this change of programme may be that the CMA do not think, due to Covid 19, that they have been able to collect all the evidence they intended to amass. Consideration should therefore also be given to establishing exactly what material they think they are still short of.

It was agreed that the NAFD and APCC should redraft the letter and recommend who should be approached in the first instance and send out their recommendations well before Thursday's meeting when hopefully everything can be agreed and acted on before the end of this week.

#### 4. CO draft on reducing funeral delays.

This matter will be tabled for DMAG meeting on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> August for further discussion.

#### 5. AOB Round Robin.

ICCM asked if anyone had any details of the recent incident which it is thought may have resulted in the temporary closure of Charlton Park Crematorium, near Andover. APCC agreed to make enquiries as they have a contact who might be able to assist.

CSGB said that today they had tweeted the Lessons Learnt document and had received an initially encouraging response.

FFMA had understood that one of the LRF's had expressed concern over imports of materials if no trade deal was reached with the EU.

SAIF said that Paul Allcock, a member of their Executive and a funeral director in Norwich would attend the DMAG meeting on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> August at 4pm and will be chaired by the FBCA.

