

Deceased Management Advisory Group

Update 15th October 2020

The members of DMAG held a video conference on 15th October, with representatives from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and a representative from Opus Xenta present for the open part of the meeting. APCC chaired the meeting.

DMAG Wider Consultation

1. Presentation from Opus Xenta

A representative from Opus Xenta, a global technology company serving the death care profession and its suppliers, with offices in Australia, New Zealand, Europe, and North America made a presentation to the meeting concentrating on their 'cloud' based system, whereby instead of Funeral Directors telephoning the Crematorium to make a booking, they make the booking online through byondcloud. A dashboard showing the capacity position nationwide will also be available to all members of DMAG and Government Departments.

While the system appeared comprehensive, the FBCA and ICCM had concerns, given the cultural impact of such a change, that it was likely to be difficult to get it accepted on wholesale basis by their members. SAIF raised a number of points relating to induction and training on the system and the backup service arrangements for it. APCC asked about costs and it was stated that there were no cost implications at this stage although it would appear that the intention is to generate income through advertising from complementary service suppliers such as florists. ICCM also thought that the controls on the operating of the system would need to be very carefully evaluated and APCC, while fully accepting the advantages of the system, believed that there would be a considerable amount of work involved in establishing a widely accepted system.

The representative agreed to provide a summary of the presentation and was thanked for providing a clear insight into the product.

2. Ministry of Justice update.

It was reported by the usual attendee that the intention was to provide a dashboard for DMAG in order to identify capacity 'hotspots' and the FBCA made it clear that the highest possible standards of governance would need to be applied so that all the respective memberships could have full confidence in the system.



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The Cremation Society

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A representative from DIAL (Death Management, Inquests & Administrative Law) from within the MOJ also attended the meeting. It was made clear that the MOJ continued to work closely with the Civil Contingencies Secretariat. An email and an attachment had been circulated earlier in the day, the purpose of which was to try and establish what mitigation measures are in place across the sector with particular emphasis on the Christmas and New Year Holiday period and the forward availability of PPE, in order to establish whether or not any additional assistance and support is required from government. While apologising for the short notice being given, responses were required by midday on Monday 19th October in the first instance.

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.

It was agreed that invitations would be issued to the Welsh and N. Ireland representatives for the meeting next Thursday - 22nd October so the matters that we wish to raise with them can be discussed and confirmed at next Monday's meeting.

3. CMA

APCC advised that the following issues would be highlighted with the CMA in their meeting with them the next day:

- That all intended remedies and monitoring systems must equally employed throughout the public and private sector.
- The need to develop and agree a single monitoring system of current trends.
- The hope that the CMA would work in close co-operation with DMAG with the objective trying to reduce the burden of reporting for their members and hopefully obviate the need for them to introduce an additional layer of bureaucracy.



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4. Remote Access

As this had been discussed when the MOJ representatives had been present, it was not felt necessary to take the matter any further at this point.

5. AOB round Robin

As NAFD were unable to attend the meeting, FBCA requested that APCC bring them up to date on the presentation and this was agreed.

The Cremation Society will chair the next meeting on Monday 19th October and the FBCA will chair the meeting to be held on Thursday 22nd October 2020.



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