

SWGFP Minutes – 4 December 2018

1. Welcome, apologies, membership

i. Present:

Ruth Mendel, Chair

John Birrell, Bereavement consultant

Eleri Birkhead, Church of Scotland

James Blackburn, NAFD

Donald Bulloch, SOPA

Stuart Murdoch, Association of Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplains (AHPCC)

Caroline Pretty, NHSS Bereavement Coordinators

David Robertson, Stirling Citizens Advice Bureau

ii. Apologies:

Karen Dickson, Humanist Society Scotland

Joy Elliott, Association of Bereavement Service Coordinators (ABSCO)

Robert McGregor, Scottish Bereavement Benchmarking Group

Richard Meade, Marie Curie

Rebecca Patterson, Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care (SPPC) and Good Life, Good Death, Good Grief

iii. In attendance:

Thomas Rennie, Stirling Council

2. Agenda

3. Minute of meeting held on 4 September 2018

- i. Ruth Mendel summarised the minutes of the last meeting
- ii. Minutes were agreed to

4. Matters arising from 04.09.18

- a. The new terms for membership are now on the web page
- b. It was noted that the consultation on the draft guidance on funeral poverty is now closed

Action: Bryan Kerr to bring information on ongoing care for the bereaved to the next meeting

5. Action points from 04.09.18

- i. Ruth gave an update on the Cross-Party Group on Funerals and Bereavement. Richard Lyle is now convening the group – we welcome this appointment.

It was noted that there is room for a representative from SWGFP to be on this group. If you are interested please speak to Ruth.

Action: If interested inform in being a representative let Ruth know

#	Holder	What	By
1	RM	Add information about the membership process (including forms with deadlines corresponding to the dates of future meetings) to the web page to make the process clear and public	Ongoing
2	RM	Change Terms of Reference to include 'Application and Approval'. Inform members of change.	Ongoing
3	RM	Members are encouraged to respond to the consultation on the Draft Statutory Guidance on Funeral Costs.	Complete
4	RM	Ruth Mendel to provide update on the CPG on Funerals and Bereavements.	On Agenda
5	BK	Bryan Kerr to bring more information on ongoing care for the bereaved to the next meeting.	Ongoing

6. Presentation by Thomas Rennie, Stirling Council

- a. Thomas shared information about Direct Funerals which he hopes will be made available through Stirling Council.
- b. Direct Funerals with Stirling Council will cost approximately £1,800. This price includes a combination of the existing internment and lair fees, while council staff will take on extra responsibilities such as liaising with the bereaved, contacting funeral directors and carrying the coffin.

7. Presentation by David Robertson CAS

- a. David gave an overview of his findings after conducting research on funeral poverty across Scotland. This included looking at decisions made by Local Authorities, figures from the DWP, and burial and cremation costs
- b. Burial costs in Scotland have increased 7.5%, and cremation costs are up by an average of 5%. There were some Local Authorities whose costs had risen way above the average, such as Highland, whose cremation costs had gone up 86%

- c. David's report will be finished before Spring

Action: Members are encouraged to read the [CMA's Funerals Market Study](#)

Action: Tam will keep us up to date with progress on Direct Funerals at Stirling Council

Action: David's report to be shared when complete

8. Terms of Reference

- a. The Membership section has been changed to reflect the new system of application and approval
- b. Everyone is happy that the group's 'core aim' is appropriate.
- c. 'We will provide secretariat support' will be removed as we do not have the capacity for this at the moment
- d. Creating an annual work plan is challenging to do without secretary. We will discuss what we would like to achieve in the new year. There was a discussion on thinking about where we would like to be in 5 years.

9. Membership application process

- a. The group talked about ensuring that processes were in place to ensure that the requirements for membership are clear

Action: James will turn the application form into a PDF

Action: Once the form is ready Ruth will put it on the web page.

10. AOCB

- i. Caroline raised the concern of still birth and pregnancy loss not being included in policy on child funerals. It was suggested that a wider discussion on this could be held at the next meeting.

Action: To be followed up on.

- ii. We welcome the CMA report and encourage those who can to respond. We look forward to the next investigation which will take place in 2019.
- iii. The Inspector of Funeral Directors will be releasing a report imminently. Members are encouraged to contact Natalie McKail directly, or via Ruth.

11. Dates of Future Meeting (all at 1030 -1300)

5 February 2019

14 May 2019 (moved because of school holidays)

3 September 2019

3 December 2019