

## The City of Edinburgh Council

10.00am, Thursday 26 June 2014

Present:-

### LORD PROVOST

The Right Honourable Donald Wilson

### COUNCILLORS

Elaine Aitken  
Robert C Aldridge  
Norma Austin Hart  
Nigel Bagshaw  
Gavin Barrie  
Angela Blacklock  
Chas Booth  
Mike Bridgman  
Deidre Brock  
Steve Burgess  
Andrew Burns  
Ronald Cairns  
Steve Cardownie  
Maggie Chapman  
Maureen M Child  
Bill Cook  
Nick Cook  
Gavin Corbett  
Cammy Day  
Denis C Dixon  
Karen Doran  
Paul G Edie  
Catherine Fullerton  
Nick Gardner  
Paul Godzik  
Joan Griffiths  
Bill Henderson

Ricky Henderson  
Dominic R C Heslop  
Lesley Hinds  
Allan G Jackson  
Karen Keil  
David Key  
Richard Lewis  
Alex Lunn  
Melanie Main  
Mark McInnes  
Adam McVey  
Eric Milligan  
Joanna Mowat  
Gordon J Munro  
Jim Orr  
Lindsay Paterson  
Ian Perry  
Alasdair Rankin  
Vicki Redpath  
Keith Robson  
Cameron Rose  
Jason G Rust  
Alastair Shields  
Stefan Tymkewycz  
David Walker  
Iain Whyte  
Norman Work

## 1. Report from Mortonhall Investigation Undertaken by Dame Elish Angiolini DBE QC and Action Plan by Multi Agency Working Group

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### a) Deputation - Mortonhall Ashes Action Committee

The deputation thanked Dame Elish Angiolini for her report, Dorothy Maitland for initially raising concerns which instigated the investigation, and Sue Bruce, Chief Executive, for her prompt actions in setting up a Working Group immediately following the report being published.

The deputation indicated that some parents still wished to have a public hearing to ensure that those who were responsible were brought into a Court of Law to give evidence under oath. They also felt that some witnesses had not been heard and felt that it was important that they were.

The deputation stressed that the inconsistencies of the work practices at Mortonhall should never be repeated.

### b) Report by the Chief Executive

The Transport and Environment Committee had agreed to commission an independent investigation into practices at Mortonhall Crematorium regarding the cremation of foetuses, stillborn and neonatal babies.

Following receipt of the Mortonhall Investigation Report, the Council had agreed to set up a Multi Agency Working Group comprising representatives from Scottish Government, NHS Lothian, Funeral Directors, Edinburgh Crematorium Ltd., SANDS Lothians, Sands UK, SiMBA, Mortonhall Ashes Action Committee and Council officials to consider the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Investigation Report.

Details were provided on the work of the Group which had drawn up an action plan and programme for future collaborative working to ensure that changes were implemented across all partner organisations with the aim of improving services to bereaved parents.

## Decision

- 1) To note the contents of the Mortonhall Investigation Report produced by Dame Elish Angiolini DBE QC and in particular its conclusions and recommendations.
- 2) To recognise the significant impact on parents of what took place and to reiterate the apology from the City of Edinburgh Council for the pain and distress caused.
- 3) To endorse the Action Plan drawn up by the multi agency working group and agree the actions proposed which would include collegiate working with those

progressing the recommendations from the Infant Cremation Commission conducted by Lord Bony.

- 4) To support the way forward including participation in decision making by bereaved parents, co-operation and collaboration on policy making with all partners including Scottish Government, NHS Lothian and funeral directors and a culture of transparency and parity of esteem.
- 5) To request that the working group continue to meet to ensure that the action plan was fully discharged and report back in 12 months time.
- 6) To agree that a progress report be taken to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee on 4 November 2014.

(References; Transport and Environment Committee 15 January 2013 (item 15); Act of Council No 2 of 1 May 2014; report by the Chief Executive, submitted)

### **Declaration of Interests**

Councillor Milligan declared a financial interest in the above item as a member of his family was employed by the firm of solicitors representing some of the parents and left the meeting during the Council's consideration.