

Video – Mortonhall multi agency group to be set up



Edinburgh Council [agreed this morning](#) to set up a multi agency group with representatives from NHS Lothian, Sands Lothian and The Scottish Government to discuss and produce a plan of action in the wake of the Mortonhall report.

The Edinburgh Reporter spoke to Councillor Lesley Hinds who is responsible for council-run crematoria after the meeting to find out what the decision really means.

Meantime down the road at Holyrood The Scottish Government has approved £100,000 for bereaved families coping with bereavement in the wake of the baby ashes investigations.

This was announced by First Minister Alex Salmond, as he confirmed counselling organisations would benefit from £100,000 in Scottish Government funding.

The First Minister told the Scottish Parliament that the extra money would be made available to organisations that have been closely involved in helping families affected by tragedies such as those at Mortonhall Crematorium.

Mr Salmond said Scottish Government officials have already contacted two such groups – SANDS Lothian and Forget-Me-Not Care and Counselling – to discuss the best way to ensure continued support for parents.

The First Minister also confirmed that the Lord Advocate had now referred Dame Elish Angiolini's report into the events at Mortonhall to the police for further investigation.

The First Minister said:

“I know the thoughts of all of us are with the families affected who have not only suffered the loss of a child, but the additional trauma that the Mortonhall report highlights.

“No one should have had to experience this pain, and we are determined that no-one ever will again. That’s why the outcome of Lord Bonomy’s Infant Cremation Commission, along with those of Dame Elish Angiolini, will lead to new burials and cremation legislation.

“Action to stop these terrible events happening again in the future is a priority of this parliament, but we must care for those who are affected in the here and now. We provided additional funding last year to assist the two counselling organisations that have done such sterling work and have been closely involved with the parents affected by the issue.

“Today, I can announce that I am making available an additional £100,000 for counselling services for the families affected and Scottish Government officials have already begun discussions with counselling organisations to take this forward.”

The First Minister continued:

“The Scottish Government will implement the recommendations of Elish Angiolini’s report as regards the Government. Edinburgh Council have also made a similar commitment and we will take forward Lord Bonomy’s infant cremation commission and its recommendations into legislation at the earliest possible moment so these events never befall any family in Scotland again.

“There are a number of key priorities regarding this issue. Firstly, to find out exactly why, over a period of many decades, the processes at Mortonhall and perhaps elsewhere, were allowed to continue in the way that they did.

“Secondly, The Lord Advocate has referred Dame Elish

Angiolini's report to the police for further investigation. We have to allow that investigation of any possible criminality to properly take its course.

"Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly of all, having met a number of the parents, one of the key priorities is to establish that every possible investigation has been made into every individual case. That is absolutely predominant in the Scottish Government's consideration of how we proceed from here."