

## **KCC - Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate (GET).**

### **Equality Analysis / Impact Assessment (EqIA) template**

#### **Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service:**

Renewal of contracts (1) for the removal of deceased from place of death to designated hospital mortuaries in Kent and Medway, and (2) for the transfer of deceased between designated mortuaries in Kent and Medway, and other specialist mortuaries outside of Kent.

#### **Brief description of policy, procedure, project or service**

Kent County Council (KCC) is responsible for supporting the Senior Coroners for Kent and Medway to provide the coroner service to Kent and Medway residents.

The Coroner has a duty to investigate a death where there are reasons to suspect that:

- The deceased died a violent or unnatural death;
- The cause of death is unknown;
- The deceased died while in custody or otherwise in state detention.

When a death is referred to the Coroner and such a death occurs in the community the Coroner may order the body to be removed to a designated mortuary pending further enquiries being made or to hold a post mortem examination to help establish the cause of death. The Coroner has a statutory obligation to arrange a post mortem as soon as practicable, will inform the next of kin or personal representative of the date, time and place of the examination and will advise the next of kin or personal representative that they are entitled to be represented at the examination by a doctor if they so wish.

The Coroner has physical control of the body (as evidence) from the time he/she has been informed of the death, until the time the all the necessary enquiries have been concluded, at which point the body can be released to the family. The Coroner's control of

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the body is absolute (jurisdiction) and supercedes any claim on the body by the family, or for example any other organisations such as the police.

On behalf of the Kent Senior Coroners, KCC is responsible for putting contracts in place for the removal and transfer of deceased in a respectful and secure way, having regard for the bereaved whilst at all times ensuring that the Coroner's investigation is not compromised. The current contracts expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019 and an OJEU compliant tendering exercise is underway to put new contracts in place for the period 1 February 2019 to 31 January 2023.

The removal of 'community death' deceased will normally be from their home or a care home but can also be from any other location where the death has occurred and has been referred to the Coroner. A Police Officer will always be in attendance at a community death which has been referred to the Coroner when the contracted funeral director arrives. One or more members of the immediate family (or friends if there is no family) will normally be present at the removal. The role of the contracted Funeral Director is to remove the deceased from the location in a professional, caring and dignified way, place the deceased in their vehicle and transport the body to a designated mortuary. The contracted funeral director will explain to those present that they have been instructed by the Coroner to remove the deceased to a hospital mortuary pending further investigations or a post mortem and will tell them which mortuary the deceased is being taken to and who they should contact for further information. The contracted funeral director is required to leave a leaflet from KCC entitled "where a death is referred to the coroner" which explains the role of the Coroner, why the body is being removed and what happens next including how to register the death once the Coroner has released the body to the family. If those present have any questions about the removal process the contracted funeral director will answer them. If a family member has any concerns about the conduct of the funeral director the leaflet explains how they can complain to KCC or the Coroner about this. The leaflet can be made available in alternative formats and languages.

### **Aims and Objectives**

- Ensure statutory compliance by KCC and the Kent Senior Coroners
- Ensure best value in the use of public funds through a formal procurement process

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## **JUDGEMENT**

**No major change** - no potential for discrimination and all opportunities to promote equality are currently being taken in line with KCC policies and statutory requirement. Should any issues arise they will be dealt with in accordance with KCC policies and statutory requirements.

**I have found the Adverse Equality Impact Rating to be Low**

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# GET Document Control

## Revision History

Version	Date	Authors	Comment
V0.1	27/7/18	Giles Adey	
V0.2	26/10/18	Giles Adey	Revisions to take account of Helen Foster's advice
V0.3	30/11/18	Giles Adey	Further revisions to take account of Helen Foster's advice
V0.4	19/02/19	Giles Adey	Further revisions to take account of Helen Foster's advice
V1 (this should be assigned to the version the Director signs off)			

## Document Sign-Off (this must be both the relevant Head of Service and the relevant Director)

### Attestation

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment. I agree with the actions to mitigate any adverse impact(s) that has /have been identified.

Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue
Debbie Large		Head of Service	

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Stephanie Holt-Castle		Interim Director	
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## Part 1 - Screening

Protected Group	You <b><i>MUST</i></b> provide a brief commentary as to your findings, or this EqlA will be returned to you unsigned			
	High Negative Impact	Medium Negative Impact	Low Negative Impact	High/Medium/Low Favourable Impact
Age			A Police Officer will always be in attendance at a sudden death and will always be on scene before the arrival of the Funeral Director. Prior to their arrival the contracted Funeral Director will have no knowledge of who will be present at a removal location. There is no age restriction on who can be present at a removal and the Coroner has no power to exclude anyone from being present. If a young or old person is present and requires	

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			care/support and there are no other family members or friends who can arrange or provide this, it is the responsibility of the police/social services to arrange ongoing care/support, not the Coroner or the contracted Funeral Director.	
<b>Disability</b>			If a disabled person is present and requires care/support and there are no other family members or friends who can arrange or provide this, it is the responsibility of the police/social services to arrange ongoing care/support, not the Coroner or the contracted Funeral Director.	
<b>Gender</b>			The removal of the deceased has no impact on the gender characteristic.	

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<b>Gender identity/ Transgender</b>			The removal of the deceased has no impact on the gender identity/transgender characteristic.	
<b>Race</b>			If those present at a removal cannot speak English the Police Officer in attendance will call the force 'Language Line' using a mobile phone and a translator will explain what is happening over the phone. The contracted Funeral Director will leave a leaflet on behalf of the Coroner 'Where a death is referred to the Coroner' which explains why the deceased is being removed, where to and what happens next in the Coroner's process. If the Police Officer or the Funeral Director informs the Coroners Office that those present could not	

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			<p>speak English the leaflet can be supplied in an alternative language.</p>	
<p><b>Religion and Belief</b></p>			<p>We are unaware of there being any special religious or faith requirements in as regards the removal and transportation of the deceased to the designated mortuary. However, should any of those present have any special religious or faith requests in this respect, the contracted Funeral Director will call the Coroners Office for guidance. The Coroner has discretion to agree to any such requests provided that it does not compromise the preservation of the body of the deceased as evidence for the Coroners enquiries.</p>	

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<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			The removal of the deceased has no impact on the sexual orientation characteristic.	
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>			If the spouse/partner of the deceased is pregnant or has a young child or children and they are present at the removal, or if the spouse/partner is pregnant and has any special needs these will be met by other members of the family or friends of the deceased if present. If not, it is the responsibility of the police/social services to arrange this, not the Coroner or the contracted Funeral Director.	
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>			The removal of the deceased has no impact on the marriage and civil partnership characteristic.	

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<b>Carer's Responsibilities</b>			<p>If the deceased was the lone carer of a child or an adult and they are present at the removal the Police Officer will liase with Social Services to make arrangements for their on-going care as this is not the responsibility of the Coroner or the contracted Funeral Director</p>	
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