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Thank you for the opportunity to comment. As we read the report we very much resonated with the analysis in relation to crematoriums and the Funeral Directors. To set our comments within a context the Sikh tradition is to cremate and there are a growing number of Funeral Directors that have an understanding of the Sikh funeral rites and are therefore able to engage with sensitivity with the bereaved. However; in relation to issue of charges and transparency the Sikh experience is similar to that of other communities.

Our response to specific in 9.6

- We do consider the CMA's analysis as being correct both in relation to concerns relating to supply of services by funeral directors at the point of need and the crematoria services.
- We do consider the CMA's analysis as being correct with respect to the reference test being met in relation to the supply of services by funeral directors at the point of need and the crematoria services.
- Yes we agree that the CMA should exercise its discretion to make a reference in relation to supply of services by funeral directors at the point of need and the supply of crematoria services.
- Appendix F: proposed scope is adequate
- UIL's: possibly but would need monitoring. We are not confident the UIL's could deliver the level of change required.
- MIR agrees with those set out.

Other comments:

Local authorities set charges as income targets to balance their budgets. These charges are often difficult to justify for they should not be seeking to make a profit from the service. Concern has been expressed to us about rising crematorium charges and slot duration.

There is no transparency and people only become aware of the charge increases if they are regularly involved in organising funerals - which most people are not.

Slot duration - crematoria are busy in areas of high Sikh, Hindu and Jain populations. The slot duration is kept short to allow more funerals. There needs to be minimum time set which takes account of the actual faith community needs.

A frequent complaint is that the toilet facilities and main room sizes are very limited at crematoriums where you may have several hundred people attending the funeral - this is a case particularly for some BME communities. For improvements and new builds there needs to be standard set for min no of toilets and internal space size.

Kind Regards

**Sikh Council UK**

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