

I am writing on behalf of the Child Funeral Charity, which has been helping bereaved parents to pay for their child or baby's funeral since 2013.

We work alongside the government's Children's Funeral Fund, set up in 2019, which has been a great help to families. However, the CFF only pays for cremation and burial fees and £300 towards the cost of a coffin, plus a few other items and does not help with funerals where a baby is lost before 24 weeks of pregnancy.

Our charity helps with pre-24-week funerals and supplies other finance and numerous other items such as flowers, orders of ceremony, plaques etc. However, we do **not** pay for funeral director's fees. It is a myth that funeral directors do not charge for child and baby funerals, some do and some don't, and bereaved parents need to know this.

The main point in writing to you is to point out the large hole in your draft order concerning child and baby funerals because funeral directors need to be forced to say **what they charge** as professional fees for these funerals.

Our charity could show you cases where we have saved families many thousands of pounds by recommending that they change funeral director, and sadly we see funeral directors charging very high fees to bereaved parents where we have not been involved. The big chains do not tend to charge professional fees, and usually supply a hearse and a coffin free of charge. However, many independents do charge – a great deal. They also markup disbursements, such as child coffins to a huge extent. We have one example where a funeral director paid £170 for a small coffin and then tried to claim £1200 for it back from our charity as that was what the family was being charged.

We would like to at least see the funeral director's professional fees charged for child and baby funerals put in the same price list as other fees as you propose, along with an indication of what age this applies to. Some funeral directors charge a fee if aged over 5 or 8 or 12 or 16 or 18. There is no consistency in the industry whatsoever.

We would be more than happy to talk to you in detail about this and would also suggest that it would be most useful to contact [✂] at the Children's Funeral Fund for his views.

Thank you for your time in reading this request.