

CABINET – 25 FEBRUARY 2020**PROCEDURAL MATTERS****Public Questions****Question (1) Resident:**

Please can the committee explain to me why families are having to wait unacceptable times for Post Mortem's to be carried out? Please discuss, debate and sort this problem within the Coroner's Department.

Reply:

The Coroners service has experienced an unusually high number of referrals during the winter months, at the same time as there has been a reduction in the numbers of pathologists prepared to undertake post-mortems. This has regrettably resulted in a number of post-mortems having to be cancelled and rescheduled, leading to unavoidable delays.

Recent discussions with pathologists working in Surrey (including an additional two) have concluded with new agreements and terms being put in place that will give greater certainty over post-mortem arrangements going forwards. In addition, the Coroner's service has allocated more staff to deal with the high number of referrals.

These measures have led to an ongoing improvement in the situation since January. The steps being taken will continue to reduce the time between a referral being received and it being actioned.

Dr Zully Grant-Duff
Cabinet Member for Corporate Support
25 February 2020

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