

Bradford Community Safety Partnership to Home Office Letter regarding Domestic Homicide Review Adult W - May 2015

This paper sets out the Home Office points as detailed in a letter to Bradford Community Safety Partnership in response to submission of Domestic Homicide Review Overview Report Adult W. Home Office narrative is set out in black text.

The QA Panel would like to thank you for conducting this review and for providing them with the final report. The Panel commended the use of family contributions particularly that of the victim's partner, as it gave insight into her thoughts and actions helping to see events through her eyes.

There were, however, some aspects of the report which the Panel felt could benefit from further analysis or be revised, which you will wish to consider:

1) The Panel concluded the report primarily focuses on the child protection process and may need to be rebalanced with additional analysis on the dynamics of domestic abuse and intimidation. For example, the report could highlight the risks following separation, such as texting and the attempted break-in;

The focus on child protection processes was intentional and very necessary – the abuse was perpetrated on and through the child. The report explains this in 5.9 of the report - 'Case Specific Issues'.

The overview panel and chair did consider the additional analysis on the dynamics of domestic abuse and intimidation and they have based their findings and recommendations on the evidence available without making assumptions.

2) The Panel suggested probing the safeguarding actions further and reflecting this in the recommendations. For example, you may wish to consider including a recommendation to address the finding that information was not shared adequately between the police and social care;

The overview panel feel points made in section 15 sufficiently address these issues. These include:

- Children's Social Care and the Police should review and agree their respective roles when Joint S47 enquiries are undertaken, particularly in respect of interviewing children, parents and suspects.
- The two organisations should also attempt to bring some clarity to the issue of when a child's disclosure reaches the threshold to warrant further action being taken. (Child One disclosed abuse several times, both to family members and a CSC professional).
- Both agencies should agree a policy around the recording of communications between them, decisions made and the outcome of any action taken and in particular, the Police should ensure that in Child Protection Investigations, a clearly defined investigative plan is documented within their Niche OEL.

- The Police should strive to ensure that an officer who has been involved in the child protection investigation attends the initial Child Protection Conference and subsequent reviews, irrespective of whether the criminal investigation has closed. Providing written reports for the Conference Chair instead of attending in person should only happen in genuinely exceptional circumstances.

3) You may wish to review the conclusions set out on page 47 as the Panel's view was that some may be open to challenge, e.g. 11.21 and 11.22;

The review panel members debated at length and were comfortable and in agreement with the review conclusions.

4) A separate lessons learned section which clearly feeds into the recommendations would be helpful;

The report format used is devised by Bradford Council in 2015 and did not include a separate lessons learned section; the report format has now been updated

5) Please consider enhancing the anonymity by removing specific dates, the genders of the children, and pronouns identifying the gender of the social worker;

The report has now been re-edited to enhance anonymity of the report.

6) Please also note that the chronology contains real initials and full addresses. The Panel suggested that, in line with the statutory guidance, a DHR report should contain an anonymised combined narrative chronology charting relevant key events rather than a full chronology spreadsheet with non-anonymised details;

The chronology has been anonymised. The narrative chronology can be found in section five of the report.

7) The Panel noted that there was no voluntary sector representation on the review panel and felt it may have benefited from input from a domestic violence organisation.

This was one of a number of DHRs been undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership at that time. Although the panel recognised that voluntary sector representation would have been beneficial they had no capacity to offer representation, there needs to be an acknowledgement and recognition that voluntary Sector organisations may struggle for requests to take part in DHR's due to the size and capacity of appropriate staff members to sit on an overview panel.

8) Regarding the issue of non-publication of the Overview Report, the Panel would welcome further information to support this request as they felt the report could be published in full subject to the genders and ages of the children being removed and precise dates redacted.

It was never the intention of the panel for the report not to be published. The plans are to publish.