

## **Bradford Community Safety Partnership to Home Office Letter regarding Domestic Homicide Review 'Daisy' Jan 2016**

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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.

We thank the QA panel for taking the time to read the report and comment in detail, this adds to our learning and is much appreciated.

We thank the QA panel for recognising this report as well written. We apologise for the delay in returning the response, however we needed to relay some of your queries and questions to the Chair, this took time and getting this response through local governance and sign off has added an additional delay.

We are aware in the delay in originally initiating this DHR, this was due to unexpected changes to staffing due to Critical illness, we have now mitigated against this and have more robustness in our ability to respond to the unexpected nature of DHRs and the amount of work and support the process requires.

The Panel is correct to point out that the Action Plan was not included, and this is now attached. We have not incorporated their first point as this was not the case in this DHR – at no time did police suggest there was mutual abuse; but the other two points – NICE guidance and police use of information – certainly contribute to practice development.

The Executive Summary is not presented in the statutory guidance template.

However, as it has been signed off by the Partnership, it would not be helpful to change it. To do so would require it to be signed off again and it does contain the relevant information. However, it is redacted for publication.

Equality and diversity: was discussed at length in the Panel and reflected on the fact that Daisy, whilst of European parentage, was in fact in class, educational and professional achievements, and socially not disadvantaged. Whereas the perpetrator, a working class male that consistently failed to achieve, educationally and professionally, could be seen as disadvantaged.

This was clear when meeting with Daisy's mother, who expressed that, his family was below Daisy's and her standards in a number of ways. As such, discussing E&D in the report could have contributed to the view that was sympathetic to the perpetrator and we were already dealing with allegations of abuse by the victim, so it was a keen balance which we tried to reflect in the Report without expressly referring to E&D.

The QA panel state that "they were concerned about how the victim is portrayed as a perpetrator of abuse and control with no specific evidence to support this theory". The Report puts forward not only anecdotal evidence of friends, family and neighbours, but the evidence of health visitors who were of the belief that Alex was being abused on the basis of his disclosures and the way he presented. We discussed this fairly robustly in our Panel.

We concluded that up to a crucial point when Daisy became worn down and Alex gained power, there had been a balance of behaviours which had included physical fighting and verbal abuse. We also believed that, given the inequalities in achievements and income, and his reluctance to perform certain household duties, Daisy could have been financially

controlling, her mother believed this, when she said father had loaned Alex money, and believed it was appropriate.

The description of these dynamics had to be finely balanced in order to avoid victim blame. Even so, the Panel is right to say that there are phrases in the Report which could be read as victim blaming, and we have carefully read through the report and changed/removed all references to this. It was not our intention to present the victim in this way. We hope the amendments resolve this issue, we very appreciative of the opportunity to reflect on these sections and try to achieve a more neutral narrative.

In this regard, we have explored these complex dynamics with both cross referencing to other information in the Report, and with reference to relevant research (see conclusions), and again, this was constructive feedback and a good opportunity to improve the Report.

In terms of confidentiality, the Panel makes a point by asking for confidentiality to be applied before the Report goes to the Home Office. It has been practice, to redact the report after it is deemed acceptable by the Home Office, in preparing for publication. If this is a change of policy, we are happy to embrace it, and produce an anonymised version at the outset. It does, after all, save work later. Either way, we have anonymised both the Overview Report and the Executive Summary, and the versions attached have no reference to dates or other information that might identify members of the family.

In relation to the chronology (previously at Appendix 1), the Panel asked for this to be written in as a narrative chronology, In fact, it was, and the Appendix was therefore superfluous. We have removed it. The other Appendix was the Terms of Reference. As these are written in to the Lessons Learned section of the Report, this Appendix is also superfluous and we have removed it. Therefore, the only appendix remaining is the glossary, and we have added it to the end of the Report, so there is now just the one document and no appendices.

There are other changes to the updated Report attached; it has been proofed and a number of typos discovered; language such as 'working girl', which was a direct lift from the police summary, was rightly challenged and has been changed. We have also removed 'subjects' and if this is a change of language – the word having been used in many DHRs to my knowledge – then that is to be welcomed; there are more personable/respectful terms.

Overall, then, this was constructive feedback and I have appreciated the opportunity to improve the Report. One of the benefits of such a very long delay in receiving that feedback has been that is also improved by reflection from a distance.

We try to adhere to the guidance as set out by the Home Office, the real issue is that our specialist providers are overwhelmed with work, they are small organisations with finite resources to release experienced individuals for a homicide review. We would like to however reassure the panel that those who were on this Overview panel have long experienced practitioners and senior managers in the fields of safeguarding and Domestic and sexual abuse.