

Nicolette Richards  
Domestic Violence Co-ordinator  
Bassetlaw, Newark & Sherwood Community Safety Partnership  
Public Protection Business Unit  
Newark and Sherwood District Council  
Castle House  
Great North Road  
Newark  
NG24 1BY

19<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Dear Nicolette,

Thank you for submitting the Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) report (VZ) for Bassetlaw, Newark & Sherwood Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to the Home Office Quality Assurance (QA) Panel. The report was considered at the QA Panel meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

The QA Panel felt that the report enquiry was appropriately broad and relevant to the case. The analysis was presented in themes, which is helpful. The agencies sought to understand the culture and how it may have had an impact on the victim. This was evident by the agencies understanding of the victim's lived experience. It was good to see the victim's niece provided contribute to the DHR and provided an insight into her aunt and the barriers she may have experienced.

The QA Panel felt that there are some aspects of the report which may benefit from further revision, but the Home Office is content that on completion of these changes, the DHR may be published.

**Areas for final development:**

- The victim had injuries on her which were not sufficiently explored, and domestic abuse was not considered due to a lack of professional curiosity by professionals. This could be because of the victim not being registered with a GP Practice and no one was able to collate her medical situation, substance issues and out of area presentations for medical care.
- The report was not anonymised. The dates of birth and death need to be removed from the report. The initials of the victim and perpetrator were used in the report rather than pseudonyms. The redaction in the terms of reference

should be changed as the date of death, date of birth and initials of the victim and perpetrator can still be read.

- The report does not follow the statutory guidance template and much of the information which should be in a chronology is in background information, so it is hard to know if this is the full information known.
- It may be helpful if the Equality and Diversity section of the report had more explicit acknowledgement of the victim and perpetrator's Lithuanian heritage.
- More effort should have been made to understand the Lithuanian experience rather than relying on more generic research into Black and minoritised women's experiences. At the very least, data on women from Eastern Europe should have been used.
- Section 7 of the terms of reference limits what the family could/ should have been offered. For example, it does not appear that the family was contacted within one month of the decision to undertake a DHR as required, and section 7 does not include an invitation to meet with the Panel or to comment on the Overview report.
- Paragraph 9.1.2: '*The area has the highest rate of domestic abuse in the East Midlands*' should be amended as follows: *It has the highest rate of reported and recorded domestic abuse in the East Midlands.*
- The report has not followed the template. The report, in certain sections, uses the SILP methodology instead of the relevant statutory DHR framework. Examples of these are found in two paragraphs - 7.1 of the terms of reference (appendix 1) '*A key element of SILP is engagement with family members*' and 5.2 of the terms of reference (appendix 1) '*Agencies will be requested to use a SILP Report*' even though a template is made available in the statutory guidance.
- The report keeps using the phrase 'the lead reviewer', this is taken from Safeguarding Reviews and is not DHR terminology, and not clear whether it means the Chair or author.
- The key lines of enquiry for the review were not included in the main body of the report. It would be helpful to have the key lines added prior to publication.
- There was no mention in the report about the DHR training of the chair and author. Both are retired police officers and will need further information on training and domestic abuse related experience.
- Information about the decision to undertake a DHR is missing. This should include: the date, who was involved, whether local domestic abuse specialists were consulted, when the Home Office was informed and when and if the family were informed of the decision. If any of this information deviated from the standards set out in the statutory guidance, please include an explanation.

Once completed, the Home Office would be grateful if you could provide us with a digital copy of the revised final version of the report with all finalised attachments and appendices and the weblink to the site where the report will be published. Please ensure this letter is published alongside the report.

Please send the digital copy and weblink to [DHREnquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:DHREnquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk). This is for our own records for future analysis to go towards highlighting best practice and to inform public policy.

The DHR report including the executive summary and action plan should be converted to a PDF document and be smaller than 20 MB in size; this final Home Office QA Panel feedback letter should be attached to the end of the report as an annex; and the DHR Action Plan should be added to the report as an annex. This should include all implementation updates and note that the action plan is a live document and subject to change as outcomes are delivered.

Please also send a digital copy to the Domestic Abuse Commissioner at [DHR@domesticabusecommissioner.independent.gov.uk](mailto:DHR@domesticabusecommissioner.independent.gov.uk)

On behalf of the QA Panel, I would like to thank you, the report chair and author, and other colleagues for the considerable work that you have put into this review.

Yours sincerely,

Home Office DHR Quality Assurance Panel