



Samantha Murray  
Assistant Director – Community Safety  
St Helens Council

26 January 2021

Dear Samantha,

Thank you for submitting the Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) report (Amy) for St Helens Community Safety Partnership to the Home Office. Due to the COVID-19 situation the Quality Assurance (QA) Panel was unable to meet as scheduled on 18<sup>th</sup> November therefore the report was assessed by a virtual process. For the virtual Panel, members provided their comments by email, the Home Office secretariat summarised the feedback and the Panel agreed the feedback.

The QA Panel commented that the report feels open, honest and transparent. Pathways and provision have been appropriately described, analysed and critiqued. The Panel suggests that the conclusions reached could be better supported with academic and practice-based references, especially with regards to training frameworks.

The review captures many missed opportunities, both for individual agencies to be more probing around questions on domestic abuse and for information sharing. Family and friends were engaged in the review which offered valuable insights into the relationship and the nature of abuse. It was helpful to see the perpetrator's previous partner engaged in the review and able to add further insight into his pattern of abuse.

Overall, the report has successfully made the victim's voice 'heard' and has identified some important lessons through its detailed overview and analysis.

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 panel may wish to consider embedding why some victims (especially those with children) consider agencies as 'hostile' with regards to the disclosure of DA.
- The E&D section is lacking and does not list characteristics, consider sex, or take an intersectional approach.

- The Panel felt that some of the wording in the report needs to be made clearer when referencing DA by stating the type of abuse, for example economic abuse or coercive and controlling behaviour.
- The action plan is mostly focussed on process, with the perennial focus on training. The third sector agencies have made a better attempt at identifying outputs than the statutory agencies, but there are no meaningful outcomes and no indication of how members of the public would ever know.
- The Panel felt that p22 paragraph 11.21 could be seen as using victim blaming language; saying that Amy failed to engage with the action plan is victim blaming. We do not have any insight as to why Amy did not want support at that point in time from the Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (RASASC), but it seems unlikely that she would have been able to accept any support given the level of control and coercion she was being subjected to by Brian.
- The review suggests some issues with the structure, timings and administration (with regards to recording the minutes) of the local MARAC. These have not been addressed fully in the report. The local CPS/panel may wish to consider a review of local MARAC practice.
- The report requires a proof read as there are typos and formatting errors throughout.

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.

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,

**Lynne Abrams**

Chair of the Home Office DHR Quality Assurance Panel