

Councillor Michael Hill OBE,
Kent County Council
Room G.60
Sessions House
County Hall
Maidstone
ME14 1XQ

1 November 2013

Dear Councillor Hill,

Thank you for submitting the Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) report from Kent to the Home Office Quality Assurance (QA) Panel. The review was considered at the QA Panel meeting in October.

The QA Panel would like to thank you for conducting this review and for providing them with the final report. In terms of the assessment of DHR reports the QA Panel judges them as either adequate or inadequate. It is clear that a lot of effort has gone into producing this report and I am pleased to tell you that it has been judged as adequate by the QA Panel.

The QA Panel would like to commend you on the efforts made to obtain information from the area in which the perpetrator previously lived, and where there had been engagement with a number of statutory agencies. The QA Panel commends the CSP on taking this step and considers it to be an example of good practice.

There were some issues that the Panel felt might benefit from more detail and/or analysis, and which you may wish to consider before you publish the final report:

- The QA Panel considered that although the murder of the perpetrator's mother was unpredictable, the lessons learnt section needs revisiting, as two of the three lessons are actually statements, and these are contradicted by the information set out in the earlier pages, and at 7.3. Consequently the Panel suggests the "no lessons learnt" comment at paragraph 7.1 be removed;
- The QA Panel strongly advises some further analysis be conducted regarding the lessons learnt section of the report, and wording at paragraph 7.1 saying there were no lessons to be learnt, be removed. The Panel suggest including some of the lessons from the conclusions set out at earlier points in this report. For example, the report identified that the perpetrator did not undergo

a mental health assessment after 2005 even during the period when the child protection plan for his children was being put in place. Given the level of concern his aggressive behaviour towards the health visitor and social worker behaviour generated, an opportunity seems to have been missed to have conducted a core assessment of him then. This the Panel considered to be an example of lesson to be learnt;

- Please consider updating the information on the allegation of historical abuse, by adding the information that came out at trial, to the report. For example, where it references the person the perpetrator alleged to have historically abused him, a note should be added to include the trial outcome, judges summing up and the prosecutor's remarks on court record regarding those allegations (that the perpetrator now accepts that this was part of his delusional state of mind and that those things didn't happen). In light of this it would also be advisable to change the wording of references to child abuse victim to alleged child abuse victim;
- Please consider revisiting the wording at paragraph 6.2.4 as it may appear to some to suggest his behaviour was somehow appropriate or acceptable; and,
- Please attempt to further anonymise the report by referring to only the year of birth of those children involved rather than their dates of birth; remove genogram (and reference to it at paragraph 4.5.5) when publishing, and reference to children's gender, as all identifiable references, should be removed from all the documents intended for publication, in order to protect identities and comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with paragraph 9.2 of the Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews.

The QA Panel does not need to see another version of the report, but I would ask you to include this letter as an appendix to the report when it is published.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Cooper, Chair of the Home Office Quality Assurance Panel
Head of the Violent Crime Unit