

Cllr Michael Hill OBE,
Kent County Council
Sessions House
County Hall
Maidstone
ME14 1XQ

29 March 2023

Dear Cllr Michael Hill,

Thank you for submitting the Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) report (Leanne) for the Kent Community Safety Partnership to the Home Office Quality Assurance (QA) Panel. The report was considered at the QA Panel meeting on 22nd February 2023. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

The Panel considered this to be a good report that felt open and respectful towards both the victim and perpetrator. The inclusion of a contribution from Leanne's family provided a valuable insight into her as both a person and a mother.

The recognition of economic abuse in both the analysis and recommendations was also helpful and it was felt that good use was made of references within the report to supporting statements too, including the referencing of learning from previous DHRs. The review also benefited from the inclusion of representation from a DA specialist agency on the panel.

In addition, the timeframe of the review comprehensively includes all the relevant and significant events, including David's problems with substance misuse, deteriorating mental health, and the move to a new county.

However, the QA Panel also 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 QA panel raised concerns that the report author was previously a serving police officer in Kent until 2016. The independence of the chair will need to be clearly stated to allay any fears of a possible conflict of interest, and sensitivities around such concerns should be explicitly addressed.

- The equality and diversity section of the report correctly identifies mental health and sex as relevant characteristics. The point on the prevalence of violence against women by men could be strengthened by the inclusion of some references to the available literature on this point. Age should also be considered for inclusion, in relation to the increasing risk to older people of being harmed or killed by their children or grandchildren, as by an intimate partner.
- The sudden death of the victim's husband was a significant event in the family's life. The children had experienced loss of a parent and the victim, sudden death of her husband. The review would benefit from referencing some of the literature on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and trauma and how, without the right support, this can increase risk of negative health harming behaviour and poorer health.
- Section 16.20 helpfully mentions hospital based Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) who provide specialist domestic abuse support in a range of critical healthcare settings across Kent, and links to community support enabling effective discharge. However, IDVAs only work with survivors of domestic abuse. The report would benefit from considering what support is also available to people who present as perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- The terms 'financial' and 'economic abuse' are used almost interchangeably. For consistency (with the DA Act, as well as throughout the review) and accuracy (given the behaviours that David perpetrated towards Leanne), economic abuse should be used.
- The report at times appears to be more focussed on David rather than Leanne. It would be helpful if the report could provide a better sense of Leanne, outside of the abuse that she received from David.
- The chronology is not always consistent and sometimes reads as an opinion rather than factual details of agency contact.
- The action plan would benefit from being more outcome focussed. Some of the actions appear as not achieved with target dates in the past with no updates on progress. Actions should be time bound and subject to review.

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. This is for our own records for future analysis to go towards highlighting best practice and to inform public policy.

Please also send a digital copy to the Domestic Abuse Commissioner at 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,

Lynne Abrams

Chair of the Home Office DHR Quality Assurance Panel