

Domestic Abuse Team  
Sandwell Council House  
Freeth Street  
Oldbury  
B69 3DE

23 August 2024

Dear Domestic Abuse Team,

Thank you for submitting the Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) report (Angela) for Sandwell Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to the Home Office Quality Assurance (QA) Panel. The report was considered at the QA Panel meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

The QA Panel felt that this was a thorough and probing review. They commended the numerous attempts to involve the victim's family and friends. The report also evidenced that efforts had been made to learn from Angela's experience and gave a good sense of who she was, and the caring role she had for her son.

The Panel felt that the key lines of enquiry were of a high standard, targeting particular agency responses. The third sector representation on the panel was also noted as good practice. The Panel also commended the references to the demography of the area, reflecting deprivation and links to domestic abuse.

The Terms of Reference section was effective in referencing other Sandwell DHRs, and the panel welcomed the request for an update on progress of common themes within the IMRs. The QA Panel felt the action plan was detailed and the report recommendations were targeted and responsive to the findings of this review.

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 equality and diversity section requires review – the report does not currently recognise or discuss any relevant protected characteristics (such as age, sex and race) which should be covered within the analysis.

- The report should include more detail around the timescales for the review, such as when the decision was made, when the panel first met, when the report was signed off and so on. Any delays should also be detailed with an explanation.
- Section 3.1 states that the panel chose the pseudonyms, it would be helpful to state if there were any considerations around making sure these were culturally appropriate.
- Whilst the report identifies possible evidence of a lack of understanding of cross-cultural working in relation to responses to domestic abuse, currently lacking is acknowledgement of the risks and barriers faced by women from a minoritised background that may have shaped the victim's experiences, of which there is much research and evidence to draw upon.
- The front page of the report does not provide a date of completion. This should be added.
- The report should expand upon the decision to undertake a DHR.
- The report should specify the roles of all panel members – it is not currently clear on the roles of those present from Sandwell Children's Trust.
- The report should detail the definition of 'IRIS' when first mentioned.
- The actual date of the victim's death needs to be obscured, the report should only reference the month and year. The victim's initials are also detailed (page 9 of ToR and Section 10.1).
- The report suggests friends and family were approached in writing at different stages of the DHR, but there is currently no information on the response of friends.
- Section 7 of the report is unclear regarding the CPS refusing to charge with another offence. It is not currently clear what kind of offence this was.
- The methodology section of the report does not currently explain the methodology of the report.
- The report should include an independence statement for IMR and report authors.
- The section of the report detailing dissemination should include the plans for disseminating the learning beyond circulating the final report to participating agencies.
- Section 16.1.5 of the report recognises that the GP's belief that counselling 'suggests a lack of broader understanding of domestic abuse', the report

should recognise that this signposting to relationship counselling is inappropriate and can be dangerous in domestic abuse cases.

- The report would benefit from broader considerations as to why other services were not involved with the subjects of this review, when they may reasonably have been expected to do so, or detailed consideration as to what the victim and perpetrator may have needed, and further exploration of their community, culture and social networks.
- The report would benefit from further information regarding the deprivation in Sandwell, exploring the impact of this on the victim and her economic situation.
- The recommendations detailed in the report require more robust wording.
- The report requires a thorough proofread. The table of contents also requires re-formatting.

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