

Tony Kenyon
Bolton Council Community Safety Services
Chief Executive's Directorate
3rd Floor, Bolton Town Hall
Victoria Square
Bolton
BL1 1RU

25 October 2021

Dear Tony,

Thank you for submitting the Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) report (Margaret) for Bolton 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 22nd September 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 felt the review was respectful, probing and sensitive featuring active family involvement throughout. The familial contributions help to add Margaret's voice to the review and give a good sense of the lives of the victim and perpetrator. The family members were supported in their involvement in the review and had time to read the DHR which is commended as good practice.

There is good panel involvement, interaction and challenge and the panel included a specialist domestic abuse (DA) agency and Age Concern which is commended. The report recognises potential economic abuse and analyses this, recognises missed opportunities, and presents appropriate recommendations and the action plan based on the information in the report. The combined chronology is also very useful and allows the events to be seen as a whole rather than fragmented by agency.

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:

- Equality and Diversity:
 - The Equality and Diversity section only considers disability and does not consider other relevant protected characteristics such as sex or age.

- There was no recognition of Margaret's gender being a significant factor in the diversity section even though women are overwhelmingly the victims of domestic abuse and men the perpetrators. The additional barriers she faced as a disabled woman and how this increased the potential for her to experience domestic abuse and impacted on her chances of seeking/receiving help should have been explored in the report.
- Language and anonymity:
 - The terminology around the victim having 'died' is not appropriate and should be referred to as murdered.
 - The gender of the grandchildren appears at 2.1. There is later reference to them speaking to social workers, so it could be clarified here if they are adults.
- It would be useful to detail if anyone else was approached to take part in the review such as friends or the cleaner that is mentioned, especially as they had spoken to the GP regarding concerns at one point.
- The action plan in the appendix does not have any dates. Similarly, Appendix B refers to the 'new definition' of domestic abuse but there is no date for this reference. A date could be added here, or it could be updated to match the definition from the Domestic Abuse Act.

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.

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