

Alison Goodfellow  
Project & Programme Officer | Domestic Abuse  
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15<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Dear Alison,

Thank you for submitting the Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) report (Ella) for the Cumbria Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to the Home Office Quality Assurance (QA) Panel. The report was considered at the QA Panel meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2023. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

The QA Panel felt that this was a good report that felt open and honest and included some excellent analysis which led to relevant recommendations. It also demonstrated a clear understanding of domestic abuse and positively recognised Ella's strengths in attempting to engage in support with agencies. The contributions from the family also helped to humanise Ella and bring her to life in the report.

Nonetheless 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:**

- On the front page of the review the CSP is named as Cumbria, but in the data collection sheet (and in the Executive Summary) as Westmorland & Furness CSP. The ES names the CSP as South Cumbria (at 1.2.1).
- It would be helpful if an explanation could be included for the delay in the DHR process; the death occurred in March 2020 and the DHR process not starting until November 2021.
- The children's gender should be anonymised.
- The layout of the report doesn't follow the template and requires a restructure which includes a chronology and moving the equality and diversity section towards the beginning of the report, would make it easier to read.

- Dissemination of the report should also include the DA Commissioner.
- It would have been helpful to have included a public health and/or suicide prevention representative on the panel to provide a perspective on domestic abuse and increased links to suicidality.
- The report appears to include some unconscious bias which can appear to be victim blaming. This relates to expectation that Ella made changes as part of the child protection plan, with little evidence of what Ryan's role was in making changes to enhance the care and protection of the children. There is evidence that Ella was vulnerable, experiencing mental health issues and feeling overwhelmed.
- The voice of the children is unseen and unheard within the DHR report, and analysis regarding the impact of the children witness and living within a home where domestic abuse, physical abuse and coercive controlling behaviours was happening on a regular basis, especially as the children were subject to child protection procedures and were eventually removed and placed into care.
- The equality and diversity section of the report is a little underdeveloped and does not sufficiently reflect the protective characteristics pertinent to this review e.g. pregnancy. Ella also had a history of mental health issues, self-harm, and the removal of children.
- Section 6 should be 2 separate sections in line with the statutory guidance.
- It would be easier to follow if all key lines of enquiry were included in the main body of the report.
- The pen portrait of Ella ought to be at the front of the report.
- A number of spelling and grammatical errors appear in the report which will need to be corrected before it can be published. There are also issues with paragraph numbers and formatting is inconsistent.

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