

## “Lucy”

*Lucy was the subject of a serious assault by her partner, Daniel on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014. Lucy was pregnant at the time. Lucy and her unborn baby, Sarah, died as a result of the assault and her partner was found guilty of her murder on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2014 and given a life sentence.*

### A) The Findings

The GSCB has reflected on the findings from the Serious Case Review and will use its’ authority and statutory role to make sure that these findings are shared throughout all organisations working with children and young people in Gloucestershire. A series of Serious Case Review briefing sessions are planned and the findings will also feed into all Single Agency and Inter-Agency Safeguarding training. This will include DSL Forums for education settings and the GSCB Annual Safeguarding Roadshows.

### B) What the GSCB has already done

The GSCB and its partner organisations have not waited for the outcome of the Serious Case Review before initiating action. Together we have:

- Worked with and supported young people in the local area to raise awareness of teenage domestic abuse and where to go for support and advice if you think that you or a friend is being abused
- Utilised funding awarded through the DfE Innovation Fund to explore new ways of working together, with a particular focus on changing the way that we work with vulnerable children aged 11 or over who are in need of protection or are on the edge of care

- Worked with Gloucestershire Health Living and Learning (GHLL) to launch a Safeguarding curriculum, People in the Know (PiNK) covering all key stages
- Held an event for Schools in March 2015 where the Teenage Relationship Abuse curriculum resource was relaunched and a new curriculum resource surrounding consent, called Give and Get was launched
- Shown the production 'Behind Closed Doors', which is a play about domestic abuse to education professionals at the event in March 2015.
- Worked with the Hollie Gazzard Trust on the launch of the new app, Hollie Guard
- Shared headline findings from the review with practitioners at the GSCB safeguarding roadshows in November 2015
- Shared headline findings from the review with education professionals at the Designated Safeguarding Leads forums in October 2015
- Begun the process of embedding the learning in relation to the risks of inter-relationship domestic abuse in children and young people through multi-agency training
- The Police are currently piloting the Vulnerability Indicator Screening Tool which will ensure the appropriate identification of risks and the actions that needs to be taken

### **C) Further Action**

The revised Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance (2015) is less prescriptive about responses to Serious Case Reviews and other case reviews than previous versions of the guidance. The revised guidance highlights that the LSCB should oversee the process of agreeing what action partners need to take in light of the findings; establish timescales for action to be taken, agree success criteria and assess the impact of the actions. LSCBs should publish information about actions which have already been taken in response to the review findings; the impact these actions have had on improving services and what more will be done.

The 'findings' of a systems case review are insights rather than recommendations for set action. They highlight underlying patterns of influence on performance. In contrast to the previous SCR approach, there is no assumption that the implications for the action

required to achieve improvements is either known or knowable in any absolute sense. It may therefore be more appropriate for LSCBs to focus on how they respond to these insights, rather than on the specifics of how they implement a particular action plan.

By following the principles set out within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 about case reviews, including Serious Case Reviews, this response plan will:

- Recognise the complex circumstances in which professionals work together to safeguard children
- Support a culture of continuous learning and improvement across the organisations, identifying opportunities to draw on what works and promote good practice
- Be proportionate to the complexity of the issues being examined
- Keep professionals fully involved in further communications and learning
- Be published in order to achieve transparency; and be included in the LSCB annual report, describing the impact of the SCR on improving services to children and their families
- Make sure that improvement is sustained through regular GSCB monitoring and follow up, so that the findings make a real impact on improving outcomes for children and young people.

The table in this response plan sets out the further actions that will be taken forward. When considering the findings and the questions for consideration by the GSCB, there were three key issues for consideration:

**a) Decide to do nothing?**

*Rationale* – it is being addressed already; it isn't a priority; it is a risk to hold and manage

**b) Do the thinking required in order to inform our response plan?**

*Rationale* – some issues may need further work by the Board or Sub-Groups to inform decisions about action or non action

**c) Do something specific?**

*Rationale* – the finding triggers views or links to knowledge about specific strategies we need to put in place as a response

The response plan has been informed by action plans from each agency involved in the review. These Single Agency response plans will be monitored by the GSCB Serious Case Review Sub-Group and progress against both Single Agency and Multi-Agency actions will be reported to the Executive on a quarterly basis.

| <b>Finding One: In Gloucestershire safeguarding teenagers at risk can lead to challenges between the young person's autonomy and the duty of professionals to keep them safe</b>  |  |  |                |
|---|--|--|----------------|
| <b>How Will We Know We Are Making a Difference?</b>   | <b>What are We Going to Do?</b>  | <b>Who will Lead?</b>                      | <b>By When</b> |
| The BASE model, which is being designed for working with young people, will have been directly informed by the findings from this SCR – so that more young people have been and have felt fully engaged in the plan for their safety and wellbeing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share the findings from the Serious Case Review with the Innovations Project Group</li> <li>Pilot of Base model is going and use this case as a scenario in risk management tool training</li> </ul>  | Rob England                                | June 2016      |
|   |  | Karen Goulding                             | September 2016 |
| Professionals will be able to work collaboratively with young people, whilst effectively identifying and managing risk  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request a presentation and discussion at a GSCB Board meeting in relation to the Innovations work</li> <li>Share findings from the review with educational settings</li> <li>Explore through the WfD Sub-Group whether bespoke training in relation to the challenges of safeguarding teenagers at risk should be commissioned</li> </ul> | Rob England                                | September 2016 |
|   |  | Jane Bee                                   | June 2016      |
|   |  | Carol Oram/Izzy Dougan                     | July 2016      |
| The Board will be assured that when a child becomes pregnant the focus remains equally on the child and the unborn baby rather than shifting from the child to the unborn baby  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the safeguarding process when a child at risk becomes pregnant, alongside the CP Conference Team, Youth Support Service and Ambassadors for Vulnerable Children and Young People</li> </ul>  | Karen Goulding/Cathy Griffiths/Rob England | July 2016      |

**Finding Two: The design of the Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harrassment and Honour Based Violence (DASH) form makes it highly likely that critical information will be missed if used for people under 18 and/or victims of teenage domestic abuse**

| How Will We Know We Are Making a Difference?   | What are We Going to Do?   | Who will Lead?   | By When   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>The risks to children and young people will be appropriately assessed and managed through a coordinated multi-agency response</p> | <p>The Task and Finish Group consider that the DASH remains a good tool to use with victims of domestic abuse. However, to ensure robust tools that can be used for either children or adults depending on individual needs and circumstance, we will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering the national response to young people who are suffering from domestic abuse within a relationship</li> <li>• Holding a ‘managing risk’ multi-agency workshop to confirm the range of risk assessment tools available to practitioners and young people at risk of domestic abuse.</li> <li>• GSCB sign off of the revised pathway and launch</li> </ul> | <p>Sophie Jarrett/Alison Croft</p> <p>Sophie Jarrett/Alison Croft</p> <p>Sophie Jarrett/Alison Croft</p> | <p>July 2016</p> <p>August 2016</p> <p>September 2016</p> |

**Finding Three: This review indicates a general lack of understanding of how to recognise key features of domestic abuse between young people, leaving child victims and perpetrators without the necessary support and protection**

| How Will We Know We Are Making a Difference?   | What are We Going to Do?   | Who will Lead?  | By When   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Professionals will have a clear understanding of the features of domestic abuse in children under the age of 18 years and will be confident in identifying and responding to their needs</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research what existing or new training and awareness raising is available for professionals and whether this should be commissioned in Gloucestershire</li> <li>• Clarify local and national expectations, including how we define teenagers who are suffering domestic abuse within a relationship</li> <li>• Establish a Task and Finish group to develop and communicate a Gloucestershire pathway to clarify how professionals respond to children under 18 who are experiencing domestic abuse within a relationship</li> <li>• Work with the Ambassadors for Vulnerable Children and Young People on creative and innovative ways to share the learning from the review across the workforce</li> </ul> | <p>Carol Oram/Izzy Dougan</p> <p>Sophie Jarrett/Alison Croft</p> <p>Sophie Jarrett/Alison Croft</p> <p>Alison Croft/Izzy Dougan</p> | <p>July 2016</p> <p>August 2016</p> <p>September 2016</p> <p>September 2016</p> |
| <p>Commissioning arrangements in Gloucestershire will have been shaped by the findings from the review, as well as the availability of more robust data and intelligence so that children and young people are appropriately supported and protected</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share the findings from the review with the Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Steering Group</li> <li>• Consider how the Board can use its role of holding to account to ensure that agencies are appropriately implementing the revised pathway</li> </ul>  | <p>Alison Croft</p> <p>MAQuA</p>  | <p>June 2016</p> <p>March 2017</p>  |

**Finding Four: A healthy culture of challenge and response is not fully embedded in Gloucestershire. This may leave children more vulnerable**

| <b>How Will We Know We Are Making A Difference?</b>                                 | <b>What are We Going to Do?</b>  | <b>Who will Lead?</b> | <b>By When</b>     |
|---|--|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Healthy challenge will be evidenced as an integral part of our professional culture | Continue the work that we are already doing to raise awareness of the importance of healthy challenge across the children’s workforce in Gloucestershire | GSCB Business Unit    | Ongoing            |
|   | The GSCB Business Unit will gather examples of where healthy challenge has been effective in order to inform and increase confidence and competence      | GSCB Business Unit    | Throughout 2016/17 |
|   | Review and update the Escalation Policy to include healthy challenge principles and standards  | P&P Sub-Group         | September 2016     |

**Finding Five: In Gloucestershire there is a lack of established practice and process to support a full multi-agency understanding of the child’s experience and this inhibits a comprehensive assessment of risk**

| <b>How Will We Know We Are Making A Difference?</b>  | <b>What Are We Going To Do?</b>   | <b>Who will Lead?</b> | <b>By When</b> |
|--|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| Professionals in Gloucestershire will have a complete multi-agency understanding of the child’s views and experiences and this will inform a full assessment of risk to ensure that the most appropriate support can be put in place | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request an analysis of how often multi-agency chronologies are produced before an Initial Child Protection Conference takes place</li> </ul> | P&P Sub-Group         | July 2016      |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue work to produce a GSCB multi-agency chronology guidance document,</li> </ul>  | P&P Sub-Group         | August 2016    |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  | <p>to include reference to the child's voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the MARF to consider whether a chronology prompt could be added to the form.</li> <li>Request that a piece of work is undertaken through the South West Child Protection Procedures to produce shared guidance in relation to the use of multi-agency chronologies</li> </ul> | <p>Alison Croft/Julie Miles</p> <p>P&amp;P Sub-Group</p> | <p>July 2016</p> <p>September 2016</p> |
|--|--|--|--|

**Finding Six: In Gloucestershire understanding how to work effectively and safely with young males who are perpetrators of domestic abuse requires further development**

| <b>How Will We Know We Are Making A Difference?</b>   | <b>What are We Going to Do?</b>  | <b>Who will Lead?</b>  | <b>By When</b>   |
|---|--|--|------------------|
| <p>Young people, especially young males at risk of developing abusive or unhealthy behaviours will be identified as early as possible and there will be appropriate support services in place to stop their behaviours from escalating.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request a report on the work that is currently taking place with young males who are the perpetrators of domestic abuse, specifically in relation to the interventions that are in place</li> <li>Work with the Innovations Project to explore the national picture and the types of services that are available to support young males who are perpetrators of domestic abuse</li> <li>Explore whether professionals have the skills and experience to work and engage with young male perpetrators</li> </ul> | <p>Tina Hemingway/Sophie Jarrett</p> <p>Rob England/Karen Goulding</p> <p>Rob England/Karen Goulding</p> | <p>July 2016</p> |

## **Appendix 1 – Questions for Consideration by the Board**

### **Finding One**

In Gloucestershire safeguarding teenagers at risk can lead to challenges between the young person's autonomy and the duty of professionals to keep them safe.

- How will the Board address the balance within a safeguarding system that is geared towards protecting younger children but is having to work increasingly with young people, as we learn more and more about their vulnerability?
- How can the Board be confident that they fully appreciate and understand the challenges faced by professionals working with this older but equally vulnerable group?
- How will the Board seek assurance that the right people, with the right skill sets, are being deployed to work with this age group?
- How can the Board assure itself that when a child becomes pregnant the focus remains equally on the child and the unborn baby?

### **Finding Two**

The design of the Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour Based Violence (DASH) form makes it highly likely that critical information will be missed if used for people under 18

- How the Board is confident there is a satisfactory risk assessment tool for young people who are victims of domestic abuse? Safe Lives developed a young person's DASH form in 2013
- How is the Board confident the suite of tools they have to assess risk all work together effectively and are clearly understood by frontline professionals?
- How does the Board consider the MARAC framework and/or the child protection process, as part of the suite of tools available, could be more effectively used to support multi-agency working around domestic abuse for 16-17 year olds?
- In what way would the Board consider it to be appropriate for data from completed DASH forms to be collated?
- Is the Board confident that the wider implementation of the Young Person's DASH form is the best way to safeguard teenagers who are subjected to domestic abuse, or whether other processes should be better utilised?

### **Finding Three**

This review indicates a general lack of understanding of how to recognise key features of domestic abuse between young people, leaving child victims and perpetrators without the necessary support and protection

- Does the Board accept that system improvements are required to better protect children who are victims of domestic abuse?
- How will the Board work with strategic partners to secure future sustainable action for interventions and services for this age group, which are responsive and reflective of local need?

- Do all Board members think it would be fitting to challenge the disparity of the response cross-agency given to adult victims and child victims of domestic abuse and if so how could this be achieved?
- What can the Board do to promote agencies developing appropriate mechanisms to record child victims of domestic abuse data and intelligence, to inform future strategic need assessments and evidence based responses?
- Does the Board consider the multi-agency systems and processes currently in place to manage risk consist of adequate skills, capacity and access to safe places to engage with under 18s?
- How does the Board intend to embed an understanding of the new offence of coercive control, in as far as this applies to those aged 10 and over and its interface with the wider offence of domestic abuse which legally only applies to those aged 16 and over?

### **Finding Four**

A healthy culture of challenge and response is not fully embedded in Gloucestershire. This may leave children more vulnerable.

- How can the Board capture the extent to which agencies are able and willing to challenge other professionals when an apparent difference of opinion arises around a child and their family?
- How can the Board support agencies create a culture in which healthy challenge is the norm?
- Does the Board share the view that the escalation policy is not sufficiently embedded across its partner agencies and if so how can the board fully embed the policy into practice?
- How can the Board empower agencies to use the escalation policy with confidence and in a timely manner?
- Is the Board confident that the escalation policy gives sufficient guidance as to within what timescales one should implement the policy and resolution be achieved?

### **Finding Five**

In Gloucestershire there is a lack of established practice and process to support a full multi-agency understanding of the child's experience and this inhibits a comprehensive assessment of risk.

- What would the Board consider to be an effective way of bringing all the information together?
- What does the Board consider are the barriers to the use of multi-agency chronologies?

### **Finding Six**

In Gloucestershire understanding how to work effectively and safely with young males who are perpetrators of domestic abuse, requires further development.

- How will the Board maximise the opportunities to work with young males who are perpetrators of domestic abuse, including in the child protection arena?
- Does the Board consider the specialist support services currently in place to encourage engagement of teenage victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse in criminal and civil justice processes to challenge perpetrator behaviour are sufficient?
- How can the Board support agencies to develop and maintain programmes for early identification of children at risk of developing abusive or unhealthy behaviours?