



Domestic Homicide Review Team
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Monday 19th May 2025

Re: 'Bobo' Domestic Homicide Review Publication

Dear DHR Review Team

My name is Cathal Ryan and I am the Lead Officer for Hackney Council regarding Domestic Abuse.

Thank you for the advice and comments contained in the letter received from the Home Office DHR Quality Assurance Panel (QA panel), on the 22nd January 2025 regarding the DHR of Bo bo.

We note your feedback 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, and at the request of the CSP, only the DHR recommendations may be published."

Just to clarify, we have not requested that only the DHR recommendations be published. The Overview Report and Executive Summary will be published as per the 21st June 2024 submission of documents to the Home Office Quality Assurance panel.

Consideration has been given to the points raised by the Home Office QA panel and addressed with Panel members as needed and with the independent chair and author of the review.

I am aware your office will not be able to amend the QA panel letter to reflect any changes that have been made to the final review without further submission to the QA panel. To prevent avoidable delay in the publishing of this report, we will attach the Home Office QA panel letter along with this response to demonstrate our response to your feedback and to highlight any changes made, which are set out in the table below.

Areas for Final Development (feedback from Home Office QA Panel)

Feedback from Home Office QA Panel	Response
It would be helpful to provide more detail on how the agreement to formally commission the review in April 2021 came about and who was involved in this decision making.	Hackney Council's VAWG Lead Officer approached Norfolk County Community Safety Partnership in July 2020 to discuss jointly commissioning the DHR due to Bo bo having lived most of her life in Norfolk, much of the domestic abuse concerns having occurred in Norfolk and many of the key agencies required for the DHR panel being based in Norfolk. This was agreed in 2021 with Hackney continuing as the 'lead' commissioning Local Authority given that Bo bo's death had occurred in Hackney where Bo bo was living at the time.
While appreciating that this review spans two locations, 41 panel members does seem a lot, so a comment on how panel discussions were managed would be beneficial.	Standing Together managed and administered the Panel meetings, this included identification of the range of panel members required to fully satisfy this review. Discussions were managed by ordering discussions based on theme, and areas to be addressed from the Terms Of Reference. .
For transparency, it would help to note when the Chair retired from the police service (1.13).	The Chair retired from the police service in 2011.
Within the Equality and Diversity section, it is unclear why there is some discussion about the evidence related to women and suicide here, given that this was a homicide.	Hackney Council and Norfolk County Council agree with the point raised by the Home Office Quality Assurance Panel and have shared this feedback with Standing Together who authored the report. We do not think the issue requires deletion / amendment in the DHR documents themselves.
This section also discusses the impact of menopause for older women, which seems out of place given there is no evidence this was a concern for the victim.	Hackney Council and Norfolk County Council agree with the point raised by the Home Office QA Panel and have shared this feedback with Standing Together who authored the report. We agree that while there is a link with menopause and mental health the reasoning / link could have been more explicit in the report. We do not think the issue requires deletion / amendment in the DHR documents themselves.
The dissemination list (1.14.2) should also include the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office.	Hackney Council and Norfolk County Council agree with the point raised by the Home Office QA Panel and have shared this feedback with Standing Together who authored the report. Hackney will share the DHR Overview report and Executive Summary with the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office.
As the analysis is framed around individual agency responses. There is a missed opportunity to offer analysis on what the family knew, how they responded, and the support/information that might have benefitted them.	Hackney Council and Norfolk County Council take the view that this issue, raised by the Home Office QA Panel, is sufficiently addressed. Bo bo's family members' views are reflected within the Overview Report in section 4.1. The Analysis section, while not having a specific section addressing information provided by the family, is clearly informed by the family's feedback and perspectives e.g. 5.1.1, 5.24, 5.3.70 and 5.3.83.

Para 2.2.3 states that 'Mike was not the biological father of Elaine's children. At this point Mike's children were living in the London Borough of Enfield'. Is this referring to the same children?	This was not referring to the same children. We do not think the issue requires deletion / amendment in the DHR documents themselves.
There could be further use of research and evidence within the report. There are some statements where an evidence source should be referenced. For example - 'Expressions of suicidal thoughts by partners are known to be a risk factor for domestic abuse' (5.3.37)	Hackney Council and Norfolk County Council accept the point raised by the Home Office QA Panel and have shared this feedback with Standing Together who authored the report. We do not think the issue requires deletion / amendment in the DHR documents themselves.
Whilst the recommendations are quite thorough and do relate to the learning identified, some are not currently SMART and some of the detail in some could be represented in the action plan instead (e.g. 7.1.4, 7.1.21).	Hackney Council and Norfolk County Council accept the point raised by the Home Office QA Panel and have shared this feedback with Standing Together who authored the report. We have also shared this feedback with East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) Mental Health (whose recommendation is set out in para 7.1.4 of the Overview Report) and Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust (NCHC) (whose recommendation is set out in para 7.1.21 of the Overview Report). We do not think the issue requires deletion / amendment in the DHR documents themselves.
The Executive Summary provides a good summary of the process and findings. However, it does not actually state what happened in this case to lead to a DHR and would benefit from a brief introductory paragraph on the fatal incident.	Hackney Council and Norfolk County Council accept the point raised by the Home Office QA Panel and have shared this feedback with Standing Together who authored the report. This amendment has been made to the Executive Summary (paragraph 1.1.1)
The recommendations within the action plan do not all correlate exactly with those in the overview report and should do. The 'scope' column is not consistently populated. There is at least one occasion where the scope is said to be national when it appears to be local/regional. Some recommendations have no actions against them.	Hackney Council and Norfolk County Council can assure the Home Office QA Panel that the Action Plan is populated and all actions are being taken forward.
The report would benefit from a proofread prior to publication.	Hackney Council and Norfolk County Council accept the point raised by the Home Office QA Panel and have shared this feedback with Standing Together who authored the report.

Additional

Paragraph 1.3.2 of the Overview Report has been amended to include the dates of the Home Office Quality Assurance Panel and the date feedback from the Panel was provided, authorising publication.

Paragraph 1.4.1 states that *"The panel considers that publication should be limited to recommendations only."* which the Home Office has responded to in your letter dated 22nd January 2025 (*"the Home Office is content that on completion of these changes, and at the request of the CSP, only the DHR recommendations may be published."*)

Following the completion of the DHR, Norfolk County Council and Hackney Council organised and chaired a meeting in April 2024 between members of Bo bo's family, their advocates and representatives of key agencies who participated in the DHR Panel.

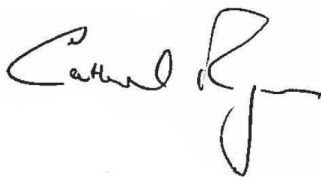
Since then, the issue of publication has been discussed thoroughly.

The Chair of the DHR Panel has maintained their view that only the recommendations ought to be published.

In full consultation with the family, their advocate and criminal justice partners the risks regarding publication to the family have been considered. The family fully supports the publication of the report and after due consideration they feel strongly that its publication in full carries a powerful message and has the potential to influence working practices across services, helping to prevent other families and victims from experiencing similar tragedies. Norfolk County Council and Hackney Council, having explored the risks and through assurance that all reasonable steps are being taken to mitigate these risks, have decided to proceed in line with the family's wishes and to publish the Overview Report and Executive Summary.

Yours sincerely

Cathal Ryan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cathal Ryan', with a stylized flourish at the end.