



## Learning from the Joint Domestic Homicide Review/Child Safeguarding Practice Review on Darren & Bethany

**Recommendation:** The Safer Lincolnshire Partnership (SLP), Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Partnership (LDAP) and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) need to coordinate the raising of professionals' awareness, knowledge and understanding of:

- i) the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Domestic Violence Protection Orders (to be led by Lincolnshire Police).
- ii) The risks during separation of harassment and stalking.
- iii) Coercive and controlling behaviours
- iv) The fact that household domestic abuse is always harmful to children. (Utilising the lives of Bethany and Darren would help understand as a case study and each agency to support the learning by also delivering agency specific guidance.)

**Outcome:** All training delivered across the partnerships has been reviewed in light of the learning from this review. Key messages are being shared across both the adult and child workforces. A new eLearning has also been developed focusing on the impact of Domestic Abuse on children. Courses are reviewed regularly in light of learning from reviews, audit activity and participant feedback. The partnerships have also introduced a process for impact assessing the training in practice and will report on this in the LSCP Annual Report.

**Recommendation:** The LDAP and the LSCP should seek assurance from partners that when they work with victims of domestic abuse, who are unable to or reluctant to engage, that they consider the best individual, or agency, who could facilitate this engagement, in order to ensure that any risk posed to the victims and their children in these families is properly assessed and the victim can be suitably supported. (As an example, this may be through Lincolnshire Children Social Care (CSC) process 'Family Seeing' as it may be a family member best placed as it was in this case to make more use of Bethany's mother or through the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process and an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA).

**Outcome:** Within Lincolnshire, the majority of Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings are led by a practitioner external to Children's Services and identified by the child and family. Thus, demonstrating families are supported by the network they have the best relationship with. Referrals to both MARAC and our specialist Domestic Abuse Services come from a variety of organisations that are working with families and identifying the support needed. LSCP Disguised Compliance and Working with Reluctant Families training has been reviewed in light of this review and attendance at the course is monitored by both the

LDAP and LSCP. Following further audit activity, Lincolnshire CSC also developed and delivered bitesize training on networks and engaging with fathers. Signs of Safety training includes input on building the family's network. All partner agencies provided positive assurance in response to this recommendation.

**Recommendation:** 3i) The LSCP must seek assurance from Children Social Care that they have made changes to the local Child in Need processes which makes them more inclusive and that all relevant agencies, including those providing services to adults, are included in the process and meetings. This also includes the consideration for the meetings to have records taken.

**Outcome:** Children Services have made the recommended changes to the Child in Need (CIN) processes and have developed a suite of resources and training for staff to embed these. Invites and attendance at CIN meetings will be tracked and any barriers identified and addressed. Records and minutes should accurately capture key discussions, rationale for decisions, and next steps. Planned audit activity will provide further assurance of changes to practice and evidence of CINs becoming more inclusive. Training will then complete the cycle of learning and improvement in CIN practice.

**Recommendation:** 3ii) The SLP and the LDAP should seek assurance from all agencies that their staff are aware of the impact that Domestic Abuse has on Safeguarding Children. That the agencies also ensure that any perpetrator risk assessments feed into the safety planning around any children in the family.

**Outcome:** The LPFT (Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust) e-learning on Children who Experience Domestic Abuse went live in 2022 and attendance is monitored and reported to the LSCP and LDAP Operational Delivery Groups. As per 3i) work has been completed on ensuring that CIN process and meetings are more inclusive of all relevant partners.

**Recommendation:** 4i) The LDAP must seek assurance from those agencies, who are working with perpetrators of domestic abuse, that they are able to co-commission with them services that will provide a robust response with perpetrators to try and alter their abusive behaviours and prevent future domestic abuse

**Outcome:** The Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) have drafted a perpetrator service model based on needs assessment and learning from prior commissioned programme and have confirmed funding of 50% of the cost. Request for information closed with 4 interested parties. The Perpetrator Project Group has been re-established, to determine funding contributions and agree project management of the programme including implementation in 2024.

**Recommendation:** ii) The LDAP must also seek assurance that those supporting and working with perpetrators of domestic abuse are fully trained to ensure that interventions target and manage their abusive behaviours.

**Outcome:** LDAP will utilise the Make a Change resources to produce a training package and toolkit/easy use guidance notes to enable staff to respond to working with perpetrators. This work is in development and an integral part of 24/25 training plan. The

content of the training will complement the Lincolnshire Perpetrator Programme so is linked to 4i)

**Recommendation:** 5i) The LSCP and LDAP should engage with the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB), to promote that they use the learning from the deaths of Bethany and Darren as a case study to raise awareness and understanding of the domestic abuse risks involved in these cases.

**Outcome:** A case study has been produced and will be presented to the LCJB meeting in April 2024. This will then be developed into a resource available for all partners for use post publication and utilised in local internal and multi-agency training. All LDAP Domestic Abuse training is available free of charge to members of the LCJB.

**Recommendation:** 5ii) LSCP & LDAP to explore with the Local Family Justice Board (LFJB), provision of the multi-disciplinary training recommended by the Harm Panel, with a particular focus on coercive and controlling behaviour, including the ways that perpetrators utilise private law children's proceedings as part of this behaviour.

**Outcome:** The LFJB have confirmed their next annual conference will be held in June 2024 and have a focus on domestic abuse. Representatives from LDAP and LSCP have been invited to talk and share the learning and recommendations from this review with links to the Harm Panel recommendations. All LDAP Domestic Abuse training is available free of charge to members of the LFJB.

**Recommendation:** 6. The SLP and LSCP should seek assurance from partners that their information sharing systems, ensure that in cases of domestic abuse, information is being shared in a timely and appropriate manner and that the voluntary sector are included as an integral part of information sharing for safeguarding adults and children. This should include the agencies reminding individuals of their duty to share information and ensure these individuals have an opportunity to be fully trained in information sharing.

**Outcome:** LSCP have completed a review of their information sharing agreement and protocols and these have been signed off. Policy and top tips guide have been published and distributed across the partnership. LDAP have reviewed and updated their Domestic Abuse Framework.