

LANCASTER COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

DOMESTIC HOMICIDE REVIEW

OVERVIEW REPORT-FINAL

VICTIM: KENNY

Independent Chair: David Hunter

Independent Author: Paul Cheeseman

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The principal people referred to in this report are;

Kenny	Victim	White British
Sarah	Perpetrator	White British
Address one	Scene of homicide	

1.2 This report concerns the homicide of Kenny. At the time of his death he was in an intimate relationship with Sarah. They were living together in a caravan at address one. At 00.10hrs on a Friday in the summer of 2015 Sarah made a telephone call requesting an ambulance for Kenny as he had a wound in his chest caused by a knife. Police and ambulance officers attended and Kenny was taken to hospital. He was pronounced dead at 01.28hrs. A post mortem examination found that Kenny died as a result of a stab wound.

1.3 Sarah was arrested and later charged with the murder of Kenny. She appeared before a Crown Court and was found guilty of the offence. She received a life sentence with a minimum term to be served of 12 years, less 178 days spent on remand in custody awaiting trial.

1.4 Sarah was known to agencies in Lancashire and Kenny was known to agencies there and in other areas. However, no agency held any information that domestic abuse had taken place between Kenny and Sarah. This report will examine what information was available, or could have been discovered, by agencies about their relationship and whether the homicide of Kenny could have been predicted and prevented.

2. ESTABLISHING THE DOMESTIC HOMICIDE REVIEW [DHR]

2.1 Decision Making

2.1.1 Lancaster Community Safety Partnership decided that the death of Kenny met the criteria for a DHR as defined in the Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews August 2013 (the Guidance).

2.1.2 The Guidance states that a decision to hold a DHR should be taken within one month of the homicide coming to the attention of the Community Safety Partnership and says it should be completed within a further six months. The completion date was set as 17.03.2016. The Panel experienced substantial difficulties¹ in engaging with Kenny's wider family and friends and on the advice of Sarah's lawyer decided not to approach Sarah and her family and friends as Sarah wanted to appeal against her conviction. The Home Office was notified of the delay. The report was completed and presented to Lancashire Community Safety Partnership on 01.07.2016.

2.2 DHR Panel

2.2.1 David Hunter was appointed as the Independent Chair on 17.10.2015. He has chaired and written previous DHRs, child serious case reviews and multi-agency public protection reviews. He was supported by Paul Cheeseman who has chaired and written previous DHRs. Neither has been employed by any of the agencies involved with this DHR and they were judged to have the experience and skills for the task. The first of four panel meetings was held on 06.11.2015. Attendance was good and all members freely contributed to the analysis, thereby ensuring the issues were considered from several perspectives and disciplines. Between meetings additional work was undertaken via e-mail and telephone.

2.2.2 The Panel comprised of:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| ➤ Janette Abbotts | Blackpool Teaching hospitals NHS foundation trust |
| ➤ Craig Brown | Lancaster City Council |
| ➤ Paul Cheeseman | Author & Support for Independent Chair |
| ➤ Garry Fishwick | Lancashire Constabulary |
| ➤ Nicola Guthrie | Service Manager 'Letgo' ² |
| ➤ David Hunter | Independent Chair |

¹ See paragraph 2.4 for further details.

² The Letgo Service provides a range of services to people aged 16 and over experiencing domestic abuse. www.impathousing.org.uk

- Fiona O'Donoghue Safeguarding Adult Lead Nurse. Fylde & Wyre & Lancashire North CCG's
- Andrya Prescott Safenet Domestic Abuse Services (Lancaster District)
- Andrea Smith Heath, Equity, Welfare & Partnerships Lancashire County Council
- Jo Wade Letgo (Impact Housing)

2.3 Agencies Submitting Individual Management Reviews (IMRs)

2.3.1 The following agencies submitted IMRs and/or chronologies;

- Lancashire Constabulary
- National Probation Service (Humberside)
- SEAD Project³
- Fylde & Wyre & Lancashire North CCG

2.3.2 The following agencies provided reports or other relevant information;

- Merseyside Police
- North Lincolnshire Council (Substance Misuse)
- North Lincolnshire Council (Children's Services)
- Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board

2.4 Notifications and Involvement of Families

2.4.1 The DHR panel wish to record their condolences to Kenny's family on their loss.

2.4.2 Tragically, Kenny's mother died suddenly nine days after Kenny's Homicide. Kenny's long term step father said that he would like to engage with the DHR panel and to provide them with a picture of Kenny and his life.

2.4.3 David Hunter and Paul met personally with him on 22.03.2016. His description of Kenny and his life is incorporated within section 3.2 of this report. When the work of the panel was completed, their findings were shared with Kenny's step father and he was invited to make any further contributions to the report that he felt might be helpful.

³ A service supporting homelessness in Sefton www.homeslessuk.org

- 2.4.4 The panel recognised that those perpetrators convicted of homicide can very often minimise their involvement. However, because so little information was available from the friends and family of Kenny about his relationship with Sarah the panel felt it would be helpful to speak to Sarah. David Hunter made an appointment to see Sarah, in the presence of her Offender Supervisor and Offender Manager, at the prison she is serving her sentence on 22.04.2016. This meeting did not take place as Sarah contacted her solicitor who advised Sarah not to keep the appointment because she was appealing against her conviction.
- 2.4.5 The panel also felt it would be helpful to speak to Sarah's mother to see if she could provide any helpful information on her daughter's relationship with Kenny. David Hunter wrote to her but did not receive a reply. He included the Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse⁴ leaflet. He followed this up with a telephone call which went unanswered. He left a message asking for contact. It appears Sarah's mother telephoned Sarah's solicitor after receiving David's message. David Hunter then received a call for from Sarah's solicitor who said she had advised Sarah's mother not to contribute to the review pending the appeal as Sarah's mother was a witness in the case. To date there is no information that an appeal has been made.
- 2.4.6 The experience of the DHR chair and author is that perpetrators' families can be more difficult to engage with than those of victims. In this case the Panel learned from the offender's solicitor, that the family believed the conviction of Sarah was not justified by the evidence and the lack of engagement with the review was driven by the desire to appeal. The Panel felt it was inappropriate to approach Sarah's mother again. Perhaps the family would have benefitted from making contact with AADFA.
- 2.4.7 During conversations with Kenny's step father he told David Hunter and Paul Cheeseman that on one occasion Sarah had visited some relatives of Kenny's in Liverpool. Even though they had very limited contact with the couple the panel felt these people might have some information on the couple's relationship. David Hunter and Paul Cheeseman travelled to Liverpool and tried to trace these relatives from addresses provided within the police IMR. They visited addresses there and were not able to make contact with the relatives (see paragraphs 3.4.3 and 4.3.12-14). Eventually they spoke with staff at the SEAD project who had very limited knowledge of Sarah and knew a little more about Kenny.

2.5 Terms of Reference

2.5.1 The purpose of a DHR is to;

- Establish what lessons are to be learned from the domestic homicide regarding the way in which local professionals and organisations work individually and together to safeguard victims;
- Identify clearly what those lessons are both within and between agencies, how and within what timescales they will be acted on, and what is expected to change as a result;

⁴ AAFDA a registered charity that supports families involved in domestic homicides.

- Apply these lessons to service responses including changes to policies and procedures as appropriate;
- Prevent domestic violence, abuse and homicides and improve service responses for all domestic violence and abuse victims and their children through improved intra and inter-agency working.⁵

2.5.2 Timeframe under Review

The DHR covers the period 07.01.2013 to the date of death of Kenny. The reason for this was because that was the date on which Kenny commenced his last period in custody following his conviction for Arson (see paragraph 4.3.4).

2.5.3 Definitions

The Government definition of domestic violence can be found at Appendix B. (Hereinafter referred to as domestic abuse).

2.5.4 Case Specific Terms

1. What, if any, indicators of domestic abuse did your agency have in respect of the subjects and what was the response in terms of risk assessment, risk management and services provided?
2. How did your agency ascertain the wishes and feelings of the adults in respect of domestic abuse and were their views taken into account when providing services or support?
3. Were single and multi-agency policies and procedures followed; are the procedures embedded in practice and were any gaps identified?
4. What knowledge did the family, friends and employers have of the adults' relationship that could help the DHR Panel understand what was happening in their lives; and did family and friends know what to do with any such knowledge?
5. How effective was inter-agency information sharing and cooperation in response to the subjects' needs and was information shared with those agencies who needed it?
6. How did your agency take account of any racial, cultural, linguistic, faith or other diversity issues, when completing assessments and providing services to the subjects
7. How effective was your agency's supervision and management of practitioners involved with the response to the needs of the victim and perpetrator and did managers have effective oversight and control of the case?

⁵ (Multi-agency Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews [2013] Section 2 Paragraph 7)

8. Were there any issues in relation to capacity or resources within your agency or the Partnership that affected your ability to provide services to the victim?

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The information in this section was obtained from agency IMR's, witness statements provided to the DHR by Lancashire Constabulary, and interviews undertaken with family members.

3.2 Kenny

3.2.1 Kenny was born and raised in Scunthorpe North Lincolnshire. He is survived by his brothers and sister, whom he was said to adore. Kenny's step father says he was 'generous to a fault' with them and they, and he, miss Kenny very much. He is still trying to come to terms with his loss and said he is receiving help for this from Victim Support.

3.2.2 Kenny had little, if any, contact with his natural father. His step father said that Kenny called him 'Dad'. In his early years he was raised by his mother and then went to live with his grandparents in North Lincolnshire when he was about ten years of age. Kenny's step father described Kenny as being 'a good lad'. He said that Kenny 'lived for his football' and that as a young person he undertook trials to become a professional footballer.

3.2.3 Kenny's step father said Kenny did some work in the building and construction industry. He said that like some young men in the town Kenny started to hang around on street corners, where he would drink alcohol. His step father said that Kenny's downfall was alcohol. He said he was physically a 'big lad' at 6'2", and that when he had too much to drink he would start fighting with people.

3.2.4 Shortly before he died, Kenny's step father said he had been doing very well in respect of overcoming his issues with alcohol. At the time he died, Kenny was thinking of returning to Scunthorpe and his step father speculated that, had he done so, he might have survived.

3.2.5 Because of his mother's tragic and sudden death, Kenny's step father took responsibility for arranging Kenny's funeral and acted as the family point of contact with Lancashire Constabulary. He said that Kenny was a very popular young man with many friends. To illustrate this he showed David Hunter and Paul Cheeseman the order of service for Kenny's funeral. This was decorated with pictures of friends and family, and set out with the colours and emblems of Leicester Football Club. Kenny's favourite team. His step father felt this provided a picture of who Kenny was. He said that he misses him every day and often mistakenly believes he has seen Kenny walking by in the street.

3.3 Sarah

3.3.1 Despite making contact with her mother the panel have not been able to discover any useful information about Sarah for the reasons set out in paragraph 2.4.5 and 2.4.6. They understand she was born, raised and educated in the Lancaster District and that she worked as a hairdresser there. The panel recognise this is a gap. David Hunter therefore tried to establish contact with a friend of Sarah's who she engaged with on Facebook. He did not receive any responses to his request for information (see paragraph 3.4.3).

3.4 Kenny and Sarah Relationship

- 3.4.1 The DHR panel looked closely for anything that agencies held on Kenny and Sarah. While there is some limited information on them as individuals, the DHR panel could find no information at all in respect of their relationship as intimate partners. The panel has therefore relied upon the recollections of Kenny's family and the SEAD Project. Some, very limited, information that emerged as part of the investigation into Kenny's homicide.
- 3.4.2 Kenny's step father said that, while he hated what she had done to Kenny, he could not hate Sarah as a person as he had never met her. The DHR Panel felt that was magnanimous position to take. He described their relationship as being 'on and off'. Although Kenny did not tell him much about Sarah, his step father felt there might have been some jealousy in the relationship on her behalf. He was aware this might have related to messages that had been posted on 'Facebook' by Kenny. He said a factor might be that Kenny was told Sarah was pregnant and then later that she was no longer carrying the child.
- 3.4.3 Kenny's step father did not think that Sarah fitted in well with Kenny's family. He said he was aware that Kenny and Sarah had visited Liverpool to stay with Kenny's cousins. He heard that Sarah had stayed in her room for the period they were there and had not mixed with the family. Just before the homicide, Kenny's step father said that he heard that Kenny had split up with Sarah and was thinking of returning to Scunthorpe.
- 3.4.4 His step father said he was aware Kenny had had a few previous girlfriends, although he did not have any long term relationships. He was not aware of any violence or abuse in the relationship between Kenny and Sarah and said he did not believe that Kenny had ever been violent toward any other partners.
- 3.4.5 Kenny's step father was asked if he felt anything could have been done to prevent the homicide of Kenny. He said that he did not believe anything could have been done.
- 3.4.6 The Judge's full sentencing remarks can be found in Appendix A. The following extract provides an insight into the relationship and corroborated and added to the DHR Panel's knowledge of the relationship.

'Your relationship with Kenny was destructive. You meant to help him overcome his demons, drink and drugs. You tried to help him become a better person and make something of his life. You wanted both of you to be happy.

Many murders are committed by far worse people than you. Until this happened, no one would have thought of you as an evil person. Yet what you did to Kenny was evil, during that one terrible moment in an otherwise blameless and productive life and in accordance with the jury's verdict, you must answer to the law for it'.

3.5 Events on the day of the homicide

- 3.5.1 About 23.30hrs the day before the homicide of Kenny the occupier of an adjacent caravan described hearing banging noises from the caravan occupied by Kenny and Sarah (address one). He could hear the music channel and said it sounded as though the occupants were enjoying themselves.
- 3.5.2 After about 30 minutes, the witness said the mood seemed to change. It sounded as though there was arguing coming from the caravan. This stopped and the witness said there was a period of silence. This was broken when Sarah started banging on the door of the witness's caravan asking for help and saying 'Kenny please....please will somebody help me'. The witness then went to address one and found Kenny badly injured on the floor and he rendered first aid.
- 3.5.3 At 00.10 on the date of the homicide North West Ambulance Service received a telephone call from Sarah. She requested an ambulance and said that Kenny was drunk and had been messing with a knife that had gone into his chest. Sarah also said they were messing about throwing things at each other. She told the ambulance service that Kenny had pulled the knife from his chest which had caused a deep wound. An ambulance was sent to address one.
- 3.5.4 North West Ambulance Service informed Lancashire Constabulary and three police officers were sent to address one. The police officers arrived at address one shortly before the ambulance did and they administered first aid to Kenny. A police officer noted that Sarah was using a telephone and was shouting to someone that her boyfriend was dying. Enquires identified that Sarah had called her mother. A large knife with some blood on it was located on a bench seat within address one.
- 3.5.5 Police officers started to administer emergency first aid to Kenny and it was clear he was gravely injured. Paramedics arrived and took Kenny to hospital. Information provided by the ambulance service and the police outline the extraordinary lengths their staff went to save Kenny's. Sadly, despite all they did Kenny died at the hospital at 01.28hrs. A Post Mortem was carried out and the cause of death was given as a penetrating deep stab wound directly into the heart. This was said to be entirely typical with a stabbing incident and could be caused by using a moderate degree of force.
- 3.5.6 Sarah was spoken to by a police officer at address one and gave the following explanation; 'We were messing around, we were playing around, stuff like that. He picked up a knife and pretended to get me with it. I like hit him away and it stuck into him'.
- 3.5.7 Sarah was later arrested on suspicion of the murder of Kenny. She was interviewed and did not answer any questions although she did provide a prepared statement. In it she gave a different explanation and said she and Kenny had been bickering. She said he had thrown his telephone on the floor and was laid on the couch nearby. There was a knife on the counter next to Sarah and she said Kenny asked her to throw the knife to him. She presumed Kenny was going to use the knife to somehow fix his telephone.

- 3.5.8 Sarah said she threw the knife towards Kenny and was aiming for the floor in front of him. The next thing she saw was Kenny pulling the knife out from his chest and blood was pouring from him. She then called for an ambulance. Sarah said the initial account she gave was not accurate (see paragraph 3.5.6). She thought that if she gave a different account at the time she would be less likely to be arrested.

Trial and Judge's Sentencing Remarks

- 3.5.9 During the trial evidence emerged that Kenny and Sarah started living together at address one a few weeks before the Homicide. Kenny had bought a new mobile telephone and began adding pictures of himself on Facebook, in some of which he was pictured shirtless. This had caused disagreements between the couple.
- 3.5.10 On the night of homicide Sarah told a friend on Facebook that she paid the rent while he spent money on a mobile phone and shopping. She said she was planning to leave Kenny and move back in with her mother. In one message Sarah reportedly said to Kenny 'I'm so angry and hurt I honestly want to f***** stab you'.
- 3.5.11 Because there was no information available from agencies concerning Kenny and Sarah's relationship, and little independent evidence, the DHR panel felt the sentencing remarks of the trial judge Mr Justice Kerr were extremely important as he had heard first-hand what family and friends had to say about Kenny and Sarah. His remarks are reproduced in full at Appendix A and the panel carefully considered them as they felt they gave important insight into why Sarah killed Kenny. The panel will make further reference to them when addressing the terms of reference at section 5 post.

4. THE FACTS BY AGENCY

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The agencies who submitted IMRs and chronologies are dealt with separately in a narrative commentary which identifies the important points relative to the terms of reference. The main analysis of events appears in Section 5.

4.2 Events Pre 07.01.2013

Lancashire Constabulary

4.2.1 Lancashire Constabulary held no information on Kenny. However their records show they attended two domestic incidents at the address where Sarah lived in 2002 and 2003. At this time she would have been nine and ten years old respectively. There is no information to indicate whether or not Sarah was present when these incidents occurred. They appear to have involved verbal abuse between adults and were both categorised as 'standard risk'.

4.2.2 On 13.08.2007 Sarah and three other females, all of whom were schoolgirls, went to the address of a former friend. Each of them hit the victim in the face causing minor injuries. The incident was reported to Lancashire Constabulary. Sarah admitted her part and received a Police reprimanded.

4.2.3 On 30.11.2007 Sarah approached a 15 year old female who was waiting for a school bus. Sarah threw a drink over her and then punched the victim in the face. The victim sustained a cut to her mouth that required four stitches. Sarah admitted the offence and received a final Police warning.

4.2.4 When sentencing Sarah, Mr Justice Kerr commented on these matters saying; 'I take into account that you have two previous cautions for relatively minor offences involving violence. They do not affect me much one way or the other; you were very young, and the offences pale into insignificance beside this one'.

Humberside Police

4.2.5 On 24.12.2011 Humberside Police received an allegation that Kenny had assaulted his then partner. She alleged he grabbed her by the throat and banged her head against a wall causing bruising. He was arrested, interviewed and charged with an offence of assault by beating⁶. He was found guilty when he appeared before the court and received a sentence of two months' imprisonment to run consecutively to other matters he faced. The case was assessed as 'high-risk' by the domestic abuse unit, and the victim was referred to support services and the case managed via MARAC⁷.

4.3 Events Post 07.01.2013

⁶ S39 Offences Against the Person Act 1861

⁷ MARAC (Multi-Agency-Risk-Assessment-Conference) is a meeting where information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local agencies.

Lancashire Constabulary

- 4.3.1 On 26.12.2013 Sarah was involved in a verbal domestic incident with her then partner. This was not Kenny. They had both been out drinking and due to her intoxication Sarah had fallen into a bush. Her partner left the scene when a member of the public intervened. Police officers attended and took Sarah home. The incident was assessed as a 'standard risk' and Sarah identified as the victim. The report was shared via the multi-agency sharing hub and the independent domestic violence advocate so that further support could be offered in relation to domestic abuse.
- 4.3.2 On 18.03.2015 Sarah was stopped driving a motor vehicle and was found to be over the prescribed limit. She received a fine and was disqualified from driving for 12 months. Kenny was not known to Lancashire Constabulary.

National Probation Service

- 4.3.3 Kenny had been known to the National Probation Service (formally Humberside Probation Trust until 31.05.2014) in Humberside since 2010. He had thirty three previous convictions recorded against him between 2008 and the date of his homicide. These included offences against the person, damage to property and the possession of an offensive weapon. There is a significant amount of information in the Probation Service IMR relating to contact with Kenny however, only the most relevant information is repeated in this report.
- 4.3.4 Kenny received a sentence of 24 months custody at Grimsby Crown Court on 07.01.2013 for an offence of Arson. Having only been released from custody the previous day, Kenny damaged police vehicles by setting fire to them and smashing their windscreens. It was felt these offences formed part of a pattern of similar offending whilst under the influence of alcohol. Kenny demonstrated an inability to cope with life outside of the prison establishment, committing such offences to ensure that he was detained. Accommodation had become a significant problem for Kenny given some of the offences he committed involved Arson.
- 4.3.5 Kenny was released from prison on licence on 09.09.2013 and resided in Approved Premises in Scunthorpe. There were a number of episodes there which indicated Kenny was misusing substances such as 'spice'⁸ and he was returned to custody⁹ later that month as it was felt there was a risk of him re-offending and causing serious harm.
- 4.3.6 Kenny was willing to engage with rehabilitation service to address substance misuse and funding was secured so that Kenny could be placed in a residential rehabilitation facility in Lancaster. Kenny was released from prison and taken there on 09.09.2014.
- 4.3.7 Kenny appeared to progress well on the rehabilitation programme. However on 08.02.2015, three weeks before the end of the programme, he left stating that he had met a female partner and wanted to move in with her. Several attempts were made to access the records of the rehabilitation provider. However, the provider has recently changed and despite searching for the records have been unable to locate

⁸ Spice is the name commonly used to describe 'legal highs' or more correctly 'new psychoactive substances'.

⁹ For breaching the conditions of his parole licence.

them. The Panel was frustrated by this but had to accept that Kenny's record could not be found.

- 4.3.8 There is no indication of where Kenny was living between leaving the rehabilitation programme in Lancaster and 05.05.2015. On this date an application form in respect of Kenny was received by a housing provider. This indicated Kenny had returned to North Lincolnshire and was homeless. On 20.05.2015 Kenny advised a member of the North Lincolnshire Specialist Substance Misuse Service that he had returned to Lancaster and was seeking accommodation there.

The Sead Project Bootle Merseyside

- 4.3.9 Enquiries by the DHR panel disclosed that Kenny was resident in The Sead Project from 15.05.2015 until his death. This project provides accommodation for young single homeless people aged between 16 and 25. David Hunter and Paul Cheeseman travelled to Liverpool and visited the Sead project to meet with staff there and establish if they held any information of value.
- 4.3.10 Staff there remember Kenny and describe him as being a 'lovely lad', who got on very well with staff and other residents. However Sead staff recognised that Kenny had an alcohol addiction problem. They recalled an occasion he returned to the hostel having consumed alcohol and that he had bruising and other marks suggesting he had been fighting. Staff felt that Kenny might have been visiting pubs and 'surfing'¹⁰ other people's drinks and this may have led to him being assaulted. This may explain the assault attended by Merseyside Police (see paragraph 4.3.11). The panel are satisfied these injuries were not caused by Sarah as the timing did not correspond with her visit to the hostel.
- 4.3.11 Sead signposted Kenny to a local substance misuse services for alcohol dependency. It has not been possible to identify if Kenny sought help there. He joined the local gym as he was keen to reduce his drinking and to find other ways of spending his time. Sead staff were aware that Kenny was in a relationship and he spent days away from the Project visiting Sarah in Lancaster. On his return to Sead, Kenny would talk about missing Sarah and of his intention of moving to Lancaster to be closer to her.
- 4.3.12 Staff at Sead state that Sarah visited the Project on one occasion. She went to Kenny's room and spent most of the visit there. A support worker chatted with them both about their future plans. The worker states Sarah did not say very much however he thought that there did not appear to be any issues between the couple. On the limited information he had, he saw no signs that Kenny was displaying indicators of domestic abuse as a victim or perpetrator. They thought that Sarah was a little aloof. Staff at Sead said they have good knowledge of what to do if they saw signs they suspect might be indicators of domestic abuse and they are conversant with the Sefton referral and MARAC¹¹ processes.

Merseyside Police

¹⁰ An expression that describes someone who consumes other customer's unattended drinks.

¹¹ Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference. A process whereby agencies meet to share and discuss information about high risk cases and agree actions to protect victims.

- 4.3.11 At 02.51hrs on 16.05.2015 Merseyside Police officers were told by ambulance control of an assault outside a public house in Bootle. They attended and found Kenny had been repeatedly punched and kicked to the face and was unconscious. He was reluctant to engage with police officers and CCTV evidence from the area did not provide any information. A crime of common assault, with Kenny as the victim, was recorded by Merseyside Police and was filed undetected. There is no indication that Sarah was with Kenny on this occasion or any evidence that she was responsible for the assault.
- 4.3.12 At 02.21hrs on 08.06.2015 Merseyside Police attended an address in Bootle after a female telephoned to report a domestic dispute. Police officers spoke to a female there who said she was Kenny's aunt. Both she and Kenny were described as being drunk. Kenny had a cut to his finger caused by a broken mug. Kenny left the premises and police officers recorded the matter as a domestic abuse incident and the risk was assessed as 'bronze'¹².
- 4.3.13 At 05.12hrs on 24.06.2015 Merseyside Police received an anonymous telephone call reporting a domestic incident at another address in Bootle. Police officers attended and founded Kenny and one of his male cousins aged 31 years had been arguing with another person in the street. There was no complaint of a crime and the matter was recorded as an affray.
- 4.3.14 At 21.08hrs on 30.07.2015 police officers attended a street in Bootle after reports of a male behaving in an intimidating manner, punching shop shutters and cash machines. Police officers found it was Kenny and that he was drunk. He became aggressive towards police officers, removed his shirt, spat at them and smashed a window in a police vehicle. He was arrested for a public order offence and later given a fixed penalty notice in respect of the offences he committed.

Other Agencies

- 4.3.15 Health hold no relevant information concerning Kenny and Sarah as a couple and no direct or indirect information to suggest that Kenny or Sarah were victims or perpetrators of domestic abuse. Kenny registered with a GP in Lancaster when he was released from prison. He told the doctor that saw him on his first attendance that he was trying to get away from Scunthorpe and 'old temptations and influences'.
- 4.3.16 He appeared to have given the doctor a comprehensive account of his time in custody, and his abuse of alcohol and substance misuse. He disclosed he was depressed and was later given medication and counselling. Kenny made no reference to his relationship with Sarah and it appears the depression was as a result of unconnected matters including the death of his grandfather.

¹² Merseyside Police categorise domestic abuse incidents using the terms 'Gold', 'Silver', 'Bronze'. A 'Bronze' incident is the lowest category of risk.

5. ANALYSIS AGAINST THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Each term appears in ***bold italics*** and is examined separately. Commentary is made using the material in the IMRs and the DHR Panel's debates. Some material would fit into more than one term and where that happens a best fit approach has been taken.

5.1 *What if any indicators of domestic abuse did your agency have in respect of the subjects and what was the response in terms of risk assessment, risk management and services provided?*

- 5.1.1 The panel carried out a comprehensive search with agencies for information concerning Kenny and Sarah both as individuals and as a couple in an intimate relationship. While there was information about them as individuals, there was no information about them as a couple.
- 5.1.2 There was no information to indicate that Sarah had perpetrated domestic abuse upon Kenny. Conversely there was no information to indicate that Kenny had perpetrated domestic abuse upon Sarah.
- 5.1.3 Kenny was convicted in 2011 of an offence of assault on a former partner (see paragraph 4.2.5). He received a term of imprisonment and the victim was referred to support services and MARAC. That appeared to be an appropriate response to the offence.
- 5.1.4 Kenny was involved in two more recent incidents that were reported to Merseyside Police as domestic abuse (see paragraphs 4.3.12 and 4.3.13). The first of these incidents on 08.06.2015 involved Kenny and his aunt. There was no evidence the incident involved Sarah. The matter appears to have been correctly recorded and assessed as a 'bronze' incident; indicating there was a low risk of serious harm.
- 5.1.5 The second incident on 24.06.2015, while initially reported as a domestic incident, transpired to have involved Kenny and a male cousin who had argued in the street with another person. There is no record of who the third party was and the matter was eventually recorded as an affray rather than a domestic incident.
- 5.1.6 On 26.12.2013 Sarah was involved in a domestic abuse incident in Lancashire that involved her partner (who at that time was not Kenny). Sarah was intoxicated and fell into a bush. The matter was assessed and recorded as a 'standard risk' and information shared with other agencies so that support could be offered. Those actions appear to have been proportionate to the nature of the incident.
- 5.1.7 There was information that as a child Sarah had been living in a household to which Lancashire Constabulary had responded on two occasions to reports of domestic abuse (see paragraphs 4.2.1-4.2.2). Neither of these incidents involved Sarah as a victim or perpetrator and it is not clear whether she was actually present when the events reported to the police occurred.

5.2 *How did your agency ascertain the wishes and feelings of the adults in respect of domestic abuse and were their views taken into account when providing services or support?*

- 5.2.1 No agency held any information that Kenny or Sarah had perpetrated domestic abuse on each other. Consequently there were no opportunities to ascertain their wishes and feelings in respect of services or support for domestic abuse.
- 5.2.2 Kenny had extensive contact with Substance Misuse Services in North Lincolnshire and North West England as well as with National Probation Service, accommodation providers and GP services.
- 5.2.3 All of these services appeared to be aware that Kenny misused drugs and alcohol. There is evidence within the IMRs and reports provided by agencies of extensive work to engage with him in an attempt to address his needs. For example, North Lincolnshire Substance Misuse Service identified funding so that Kenny could move to a rehabilitation programme in Lancaster.
- 5.2.4 It appears that Kenny understood the nature of his problems with drugs and alcohol and engaged with services. He appeared to be successfully addressing his needs while in the rehabilitation programme in Lancaster. Kenny's GP in Lancaster appeared to understand Kenny's background and his addiction and referred Kenny for counselling in respect of his depression.
- 5.2.5 When Kenny moved to Merseyside and entered the Sead Project, it appears they gained an understanding of his needs and engaged with him and with Sarah. Sead also referred Kenny to a programme in respect of his addiction. Unfortunately Kenny's move to Merseyside appeared to coincide with a relapse in his addiction, and he was then involved in a number of incidents involving alcohol and violence/damage (see paragraph 4.3.11-14).

5.3 *Were single and multi-agency policies and procedures followed; are the procedures embedded in practice and were any gaps identified?*

- 5.3.1 In relation to Kenny and Sarah, because no agency received any reports or information concerning domestic abuse between the couple there was no opportunity to implement multi-agency policies and procedures.
- 5.3.2 Other incidents of domestic abuse involving Kenny with his former partner in 2011 in Humberside and with his aunt in Merseyside on 08.06.2015 appear to have been dealt with appropriately and recorded in line with those police forces' contemporary policies relating to domestic abuse.
- 5.3.3 Similarly the incident involving Sarah and her former partner in Lancashire on 26.12.2013 appears to have been dealt with in accordance with multi-agency policies and information shared via the multi-agency hub.
- 5.3.4 The incidents that occurred in 2002 and 2003 have not been assessed in relation to their compliance with multi-agency policies. They did not involve Kenny and Sarah and policy has changed so significantly since then that there would be no value in analysing compliance.
- 5.3.5 No trace could be found that Kenny made any contact with domestic abuse services in Lancaster. Despite this, the panel still felt it would be helpful to consider how easy access to them might have been should Kenny have wished to contact them.

- 5.3.6 The main domestic abuse services within the Lancaster District are commissioned by Lancashire County Council. Lancaster City Council contribute towards this along with the other thirteen district councils that form the Lancashire County Council. Adult support services (16 years and above) are provided by LetGo, this includes the Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) service. Early support for families (Children, young people & adult female parent) are provided by SafeNet. SafeNet also provide refuge and accommodation support within the Lancaster District. There is also additional accommodation support provided by Calico.
- 5.3.7 The DHR report author carried out some basic internet searches for services in the Lancaster area. This returned numerous hits for the services described above. These contained comprehensive details about how to contact agencies by e mail and telephone together with much useful advice. While the main focus of service delivery was for women, mention was also made that men can be victims as well. Further down the search hit list was a site hosted by Lancaster City Council. Again this contained comprehensive advice and a specific advice line and contact details for men who may be victims of domestic abuse. The author concluded that, for someone like Kenny who appeared to rely upon social media and the internet, had he wished to, he would have been able to find access to services through this medium.
- 5.4 *What knowledge did the family, friends and employers have of the adults' relationship that could help the DHR Panel understand what was happening in their lives; and did family and friends know what to do with any such knowledge?***
- 5.4.1 Kenny's step father had some limited information that Kenny was in a relationship with Sarah. However he had not met Sarah and therefore had no first-hand knowledge of her. He felt the relationship was 'on and off' and had a belief that the relationship was punctuated by some jealousy on the part of Sarah towards Kenny because of the use of 'Facebook'. He had no information that Sarah had perpetrated domestic abuse upon Kenny and nothing that he could have shared with agencies. Kenny's death at the hands of Sarah came as a complete shock to him.
- 5.4.2 There is evidence that the relationship between Kenny and Sarah was quite publicly rehearsed through the pages of 'Facebook'. Sarah alleged that Kenny placed pictures of himself on that site and that these pictures were shared with other females. Kenny's step father says the people these were shared with were all friends; as opposed to potential rivals for Sarah's affections.
- 5.4.3 Kenny's actual intention behind posting these pictures will never be known. However they do appear to have upset Sarah. She responded to them by saying they were 'Gross'. In turn Kenny then posted an offensive comment back to Sarah. In turn she then posted a message to Kenny in which she included the remark; 'I'm so angry and hurt I honestly want to f***** stab you'.
- 5.4.4 The panel carefully considered this information and what it meant. In doing so they took into account Mr Justice Kerr's sentencing remarks that he did not interpret that message as evidence of premeditation. The panel recognised that social media can be used as a means for perpetrators to exercise power and control over their victims. However in this case it did not appear that either Kenny or Sarah were using social media in that way and there was no evidence adduced at the trial to suggest this was the case.

5.4.5 The panel wondered whether Kenny and Sarah were, like many other people of their generation, people who simply played out their lives and emotions through social media without really understanding the impact their behaviour and language would have on those who received or viewed their messages.

5.5 *How effective was inter-agency information sharing and cooperation in response to the subjects' needs and was information shared with those agencies who needed it?*

5.5.1 No agencies held information concerning the relationship between Kenny and Sarah and therefore there were no opportunities to share information. There is evidence that information was shared and cooperation took place between agencies in respect of the incident in 2011 when Kenny assaulted his then partner. Similarly there is evidence that information was shared through Lancashire multi-agency sharing hub (MASH) when a report was received of a domestic incident between Sarah and her then partner on 26.12.2013.

5.5.2 There is extensive evidence of information sharing within criminal justice agencies, the local authority and substance misuse services in respect of Kenny's needs as an addicted person while in custody and upon his release.

5.6 *How did your agency take account of any racial, cultural, linguistic, faith or other diversity issues, when completing assessments and providing services to the subjects*

5.6.1 Given the lack of any agencies involvement in the relationship between Kenny and Sarah there were no opportunities for agencies to take account of racial, cultural, linguistic or diversity issues. However, all agencies reporting to this DHR have such policies in place.

5.7 *How effective was your agency's supervision and management of practitioners involved with the response to needs of the victim and perpetrator and did managers have effective oversight and control of the case?*

5.7.1 Given the lack of any agencies involvement in the relationship between Kenny and Sarah there were no issues involving supervision and management of practitioners.

5.8 *Were there any issues in relation to capacity or resources within your agency or the Partnership that affected your ability to provide services to the victim?*

5.8.1 Given the lack of any agencies involvement in the relationship between Kenny and Sarah there were no issues involving capacity or resources.

6. LESSONS IDENTIFIED

The panel gave very careful consideration to this issue. They recognised that one of the most important reasons for conducting a domestic homicide review is to identify lessons that can be implemented to improve services. However, with no local agency having any contact with the couple, they did not find any aspects of this case that provided lessons. While agencies in other areas had more contact with Kenny and Sarah, this was still very limited and there did not appear to be any missed opportunities to identify the indicators of domestic abuse. The panel, reluctantly, came to the view that this tragic case did not identify any lessons for local or national agencies.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Kenny struggled with alcohol and drugs and spent a number of periods in prison. His step father described him as being a 'good lad' however he recognised that alcohol was his downfall. Mr Justice Kerr described drink and drugs as Kenny's 'demon'. There was evidence that Kenny recognised he had issues with drink and drugs and following his release from his last prison sentence he appeared to engage well on a rehabilitation programme in Lancaster. He told his GP that he moved there to get away from 'old temptations and influences'. Paradoxically, his move to Lancaster led to him forming a relationship with Sarah which ultimately led to his death.
- 7.2 Kenny did not appear to remain settled in Lancaster and moved between there, Scunthorpe and eventually Bootle in Merseyside where he settled in accommodation for young homeless people. He was described by staff there as a polite young man. Unfortunately Kenny's demons returned and in a very short period in June and July 2015 Merseyside Police documented one incident in which he was the victim of an assault outside licensed premises and three incidents in which Kenny was involved in disturbances, one of these being of a domestic nature albeit not involving Sarah (see paragraph 4.3.12). The last of these incidents on 30.07.2015 resulted in Kenny being arrested when drunk and for damaging a police vehicle.
- 7.2 Although there was evidence that, as a young person, she had engaged in some acts of aggression Mr Justice Kerr said Sarah led a 'blameless and productive life'. There was no evidence adduced during the trial that Sarah had perpetrated domestic abuse upon Kenny. While Kenny was convicted of an assault in 2011 on his then partner, and was involved in a domestic incident with his aunt on 08.06.2015, there was no evidence and no claims made by Sarah that he had perpetrated domestic abuse upon her.
- 7.3 It does appear that Kenny and Sarah conducted an 'on and off' relationship. The trial judge described this as 'destructive' and there were tensions between them. These appear to have related to Kenny's use of social media and in particular 'Facebook' on which he posted pictures of himself. This appears to have led to some jealousy on the part of Sarah who seemed to believe the purpose of these posts was to befriend other women. Kenny's step father took a contrary view and said the people Kenny posted these too were simply friends.
- 7.4 Whatever Kenny's reason for posting these messages, it is clear from the responses she posted that Sarah was upset by Kenny's actions. In response to what Sarah posted Kenny responded with messages that contained language that may have been intended to cause her distress. To what extent Kenny's behaviour was as a result of his difficulties with drugs and alcohol is not clear.
- 7.5 However Mr Justice Kerr appeared to recognise there might have been a connection and that Kenny's behaviour caused Sarah distress when he said in his sentencing remarks; 'You had great difficulties to endure because of Kenny's problems with alcohol and drugs, and his shortcomings as a boyfriend'.
- 7.6 The panel considered, and were not able to reach a view on, a number of possibilities to explain Sarah's behaviour. For example that she might have acted in the way that she did because she felt intimidated by Kenny's behaviour and may have felt unable to report domestic abuse. While the DHR panel recognised there were shortcomings in Kenny's behaviour towards Sarah they also felt it was important to reinforce that

Kenny is the victim in this case and lost his life at the hands of Sarah. Whatever Kenny may have said to Sarah or posted on 'Facebook' could never justify his homicide. Mr Justice Kerr reinforced this when he said; 'This does not in any way absolve you'.

- 7.7 It is clear from what emerged at the trial and from the sentencing remarks of Mr Justice Kerr that Sarah's actions on the night she killed Kenny were not premeditated. She did not intend to kill him and that was a fact accepted by the Crown. However Mr Justice Kerr was clear that Sarah did intend Kenny serious harm and that intent was only formed moments before the homicide. Mr Justice Kerr was clear that he did not interpret the Facebook message in which Sarah threatened to kill Kenny as evidence of premeditation.
- 7.8 The panel have been guided by Mr Justice Kerr's remarks and have similarly discounted Sarah's comments as evidence she really wanted to end Kenny's life. The panel looked carefully for evidence of single instances of domestic abuse or a pattern of behaviour by Sarah towards Kenny and found none. They therefore concluded, as did Mr Justice Kerr, that Sarah's actions were 'one terrible moment' rather than an escalation of abusive behaviour that led to Kenny's homicide.

8. PREDICTABILITY/PREVENTABILITY

- 8.1 While agencies held some limited information concerning both Kenny and Sarah as individuals, none of it related to domestic abuse within their relationship. Given Sarah's actions were a single 'terrible moment', the panel believe there were no missed opportunities for agencies to identify domestic abuse between them. None of their family or friends held information that Kenny was at risk of harm from Sarah. Consequently the panel concluded the homicide of Kenny was neither predictable nor preventable.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 While the review panel did not identify any lessons for agencies they did feel the following recommendation should be implemented;
- i. That Lancaster Community Safety Partnership asks agencies to review their domestic abuse policies so as to ensure they provide advice that allows hard to reach groups and young males to understand the nature of domestic abuse and how to access local services, and report in writing what they have found or plan to do.

Preston Crown Court

19 February 2016

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-v-

Sarah

Sentencing remarks of Mr Justice Kerr

1. Please remain seated for the moment. The jury has convicted you of murdering Kenny. Just after midnight on 14th August last year, you stabbed him to the heart with a single thrust using a kitchen knife you picked up.
2. This is a distressing, indeed tragic case. You did not mean him to die, but you meant to cause him really serious injury. You took his life, yet you loved him. You have taken him from his family forever.
3. Your relationship with Kenny was destructive. You meant to help him overcome his demons, drink and drugs. You tried to help him become a better person and make something of his life. You wanted both of you to be happy.
4. Many murders are committed by far worse people than you. Until this happened, no one would have thought of you as an evil person. Yet what you did to Kenny was evil, during that one terrible moment in an otherwise blameless and productive life and in accordance with the jury's verdict, you must answer to the law for it.
5. For this offence of murder, the sentence I am required by law to pass is one of life imprisonment.
6. I have to determine the minimum term of imprisonment which you must serve before being eligible to apply to the Parole Board to be considered for
7. To do so, I have to consider the provisions of Schedule 21 to the Criminal Justice Act 2003 regarding the seriousness of the offence, to determine the minimum term of that life sentence that you must serve as the punishment and deterrent term of the sentence, before consideration can be given to your release.
8. A minimum term is not the same as an ordinary sentence of imprisonment where a defendant will normally serve only half of that sentence before being released on licence. A minimum term is the term that must be served before your case may be referred to the Parole Board for a consideration of your release upon licence. It means the actual length of time that you will spend in prison before that process can take place.
9. Whether or not you will be released after the minimum term has been served will be for the Parole Board to consider at the end of the minimum term. The Parole Board will not decide that you can be released at that stage, unless it is satisfied that you are not a risk to the public, and are ready for release into society.

10. If you are released at that time, or any later time, you will be released on licence with specific conditions attached, and may be recalled to continue serving your life sentence if you breach any licence conditions that are imposed upon you.
11. You did not take the knife to the scene of the murder. It was already there. I therefore take the statutory starting point for the minimum term as 15 years.
12. The case has certain aggravating features:
 - i. The use of a knife. This is always an aggravating feature
 - ii. The stabbing took place in Kenny's own home
 - iii. You must have come upon him unawares. He was unable to defend himself. There were no significant defensive injuries. He was therefore a vulnerable victim.
 - iv. You told implausible lies to a lady from the ambulance service and to the police, including in a prepared statement after Kenny had died.
13. There are, however, also mitigating features in this case, to which your counsel, Mr Trafford QC, has eloquently drawn my attention during the trial:
 - i. The crime was completely unpremeditated and you regretted it immediately. I accept that you were as horrified as everyone else about what had just happened.
 - ii. You did not intend to kill him. The Crown accepted that, and so do I. You did, however, intend to do him really serious injury. That is the jury's verdict.
 - iii. I am satisfied that you formed the intention to do serious harm to Kenny only moments before carrying it out. I do not interpret the Facebook messages relied upon by the Crown as evidence of premeditation.
 - iv. Although this was a murder by stabbing with a knife, you are not a person who carries knives, as so many knife murderers do. You picked up the knife on impulse, on the spur of the moment.
 - v. Your love for Kenny was deep and moved by a spirit of kindness and generosity. Your conduct towards him did you great credit until this happened.
 - vi. You are not to blame for failing to realise that your attempt to save him from himself was misguided, as hindsight shows. You were too young and in love to understand that. You meant well for him right up until seconds before you took his life.
 - vii. You had great difficulties to endure because of Kenny's problems with alcohol and drugs, and his shortcomings as a boyfriend. This does not in any way absolve you. This is not a case of loss of control; but it is a mitigating feature.
 - viii. You did all you could to save Kenny. You called the emergency services and tried to stop the blood with a quilt, following the advice from the ambulance service.
 - ix. Finally, as I have said, you were at the time a very young woman, only 22 years old. You are now 23. Your age is a factor that I take into account.
14. These aggravating and mitigating features must be balanced against each other, and weighed in the scales by the court when considering whether to increase, or reduce, or adopt, the starting point of 15 years as the minimum term you must serve.
15. Balancing the aggravating and mitigating features of this very sad case, I find that, unusually, even though this is a case of murder by stabbing, the mitigating features

outweigh the aggravating features, so that I move downwards rather than upwards from the 15 year starting point.

16. I do not do so lightly, but only after very careful reflection. I know what a scourge knife crime is, and I know that sentences in cases of murder by stabbing normally require minimum terms well above the 15 year starting point.
17. Because of the unusual features of this case, which emerged in detail from the evidence called by the Crown during the trial, I think that this is a case where the minimum term should be less than the starting point.
18. I take into account that you have two previous cautions for relatively minor offences involving violence. They do not affect me much one way or the other; you were very young, and the offences pale into insignificance beside this one.
19. Stand up please. The sentence of the court for the murder of Kenny is life imprisonment, with a minimum term to be served of 12 years, less 178 days spent on remand in custody awaiting trial.
20. The statutory charges apply.

Definitions

Domestic Violence

1. The Government definition of domestic violence against both men and women (agreed in 2004) is:

"Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse [psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional] between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality"

2. The definition of domestic violence and abuse as amended by Home Office Circular 003/2013 came into force on 14.02.2013 is:

"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

3. *Controlling behaviour is:* a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

4. *Coercive behaviour is:* an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Vulnerable Adults No Secrets (Now superseded by Chapter 14 Care Act 2014)

5. The broad definition of a 'vulnerable adult' referred to in the 1997 Consultation Paper Who decides? issued by the Lord Chancellor's Department, is a person:

"Who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation".

6. A consensus has emerged identifying the following main different forms of abuse:
 - physical abuse, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
 - sexual abuse, including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting;

- psychological abuse, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks;
- financial or material abuse, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;
- neglect and acts of omission, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating; and discriminatory abuse, including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

7. Incidents of abuse may be multiple, either to one person in a continuing relationship or service context or to more than one person at a time. This makes it important to look beyond the single incident or breach in standards to underlying dynamics and patterns of harm. (Source: Section 2 No Secrets Department of Health 2000)

Risk Factors

Individuals at risk for domestic violence could include those with the following risk factors:

- Planning to leave or has recently left an abusive relationship
- Previously in an abusive relationship
- Poverty or poor living situations
- Unemployed
- Physical or mental disability
- Recently separated or divorced
- Isolated socially from friends and family
- Abused as a child
- Witnessed domestic violence as a child
- Pregnancy, especially if unplanned
- Younger than 30 years
- Stalked by a partner

The following factors may indicate an increased likelihood that a person may choose violence:

- Abuses alcohol or drugs
- Witnessed abuse as a child
- Was a victim of abuse as a child
- Abused former partner
- Unemployed or under employed/financial worries
- Abuses pets
- Criminal history including weapons
- Mental health issues/suicide attempts

Panel Recommendation						
No	Recommendation	Key Actions	Evidence	Key Outcome	Lead Officer	Date
1	That Lancaster Community Safety Partnership asks agencies to review their domestic abuse policies so as to ensure they provide advice that allows hard to reach groups and young males to understand the nature of domestic abuse and how to access local services, and report in writing what they have found or plan to do.					



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Craig P Brown
Community Safety & Safeguarding Officer
Health & Housing Services
Lancaster City Council
Lancaster

3 January 2017

Dear Mr Brown,

Thank you for submitting the Domestic Homicide Review report for Lancaster to the Home Office Quality Assurance (QA) Panel. The report was considered at the Quality Assurance Panel meeting on 13 December 2016.

The QA Panel would like to thank you for conducting this review and for providing them with the final report. The Panel found this to a clear and easy to follow report. However, the Panel were concerned with the lack of lessons learnt and actions given the failings drawn out in the narrative of the report. The Panel felt specific recommendations for agencies rather than one generic one for all agencies would add value to the report.

There were also some other aspects of the report which the Panel felt could be revised, which you will wish to consider before publication:

- Please check the report thoroughly for spelling and grammatical errors;

- The Panel would like to see more exploration and detail about Sarah and Kenny's relationship to draw out more clearly the dynamics of that relationship with a view to providing greater context to the homicide;
- The Panel felt the Report would benefit from a clearer articulation of why Sarah and her family declined to participate in the review;
- The Panel felt there could have been more probing to understand the challenges in getting information from families and agencies.

The Panel does not need to review another version of the report, but I would be grateful if you could include our letter as an appendix to the report.

I would be grateful if you could email us at DHREnquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk and provide us with both a copy of the final report and the URL to the report when it is published.

The QA Panel felt it would be helpful to routinely sight Police and Crime Commissioners on DHRs in their local area. I am, accordingly, copying this letter to the PCC for Lancashire for information.

You may wish to be aware that the Home Office has published updated Statutory Guidance on the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews which can be found using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revised-statutory-guidance-forthe-conduct-of-domestic-homicide-reviews>. We have also published key findings from analysis undertaken by

Home Office researchers on a sample of 40 DHRs from across England and Wales completed between 2013 and 2016. The report can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-homicide-review-lessons-learned>

Yours sincerely

Christian Papaleontiou

Chair of the Home Office DHR Quality Assurance Panel

End of Final

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