

## **Domestic Violence Homicide Review and Serious Case Review: Child D**

- In March 2014, Child D (aged 22 months) and her mother (Ms AB) were murdered by Mr YZ (father of Child D).
- Prior to February 2014, apart from general health matters and the birth of Child D, the family had no contact with local agencies.
- The review focusses on interactions between Ms AB and local Police in a short window prior to the incident.
- The findings of the review are of relevance to all agencies.

### **Summary**

- Ms AB and Mr YZ were in a relationship for 18 years and had lived together for 14 of those years. They had three children from this relationship but both also had children from previous relationships.
- Mr YZ was known by friends, colleagues and neighbours to be controlling and financially exploitative but there was no known physical violence against Ms AB.
- By October 2013, the relationship had broken down and by January 2014, Ms AB issued Mr YZ with an ultimatum that he needed to move out of the family home by March 2014.
- In February 2014, Mr YZ allegedly told a neighbour that we would burn down the house with her and the children in it rather than accept the break-up.
- On being informed, Ms AB reported this to the police.
- Due to inexperience, this threat was recorded by a police officer as 'threat to commit criminal damage' rather than 'threat to kill'.
- A pre-assessment checklist wasn't completed so information that a threat had been made against a child was not shared with Hackney CSC.
- These errors should have been picked up in supervision and the actions completed.
- However there was confusion in the police as to what had been done and who was responsible for what.
- Secondary investigators incorrectly assumed that uniformed colleagues had undertaken supervision and rectified the actions needed.
- A strategy was therefore not produced and actions to ensure arrest were not activated, so nothing was done to track Mr YZ down.
- The secondary investigator was also preoccupied with other cases and went on rest days before reporting sick which meant the case was not progressed for 12 days.
- It was subsequently picked up by a colleague, but it took another 23 days to be assigned for investigation.
- At this point, cursory checks were made and a voicemail left for Ms AB to make contact.
- No other action was taken until the day of the incident in March 2014 – 47 days after the report from Ms AB.
- On the morning of the incident, Ms AB called her daughter (A) who was an auditory witness to the assault.
- (A) made an emergency call to the Police and provided information from what she had heard. On arrival, there were no signs of disturbance on the ground floor. Due to uncertainty and confusion as to the location of Ms AB, 40 minutes passed before forced entry. Ms AB and Child D were found lifeless in the third floor bathroom. Mr YZ had self-inflicted wounds but later recovered in hospital.
- The case was referred to the Independent Police Complaints Commission.
- The three detectives and the call handler were each subject to a misconduct meeting.
- In December 2014, Mr YZ was convicted of murder and sentenced to 35 years imprisonment.