



city & hackney  
safeguarding  
children board

# **CHSCB Response**

## **Serious Case Review - Child N & O**

**May 2018**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In March 2017, the Independent Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB), Jim Gamble QPM, decided to initiate a Serious Case Review (SCR) into the death of child N and the serious injuries sustained by child O.
- 1.2 The Chair's decision to undertake the SCR was made in line with Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Board Regulations 2006 and the statutory guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.
- 1.4 The SCR itself was not determined by any particular theoretical model and was carried out in accordance with the underlying principles set out in statutory guidance. Its overall purpose has been to look at what happened and why, to identify the learning for organisations and to make recommendations for either improvement or the consolidation of good practice.
- 1.5 Overall, whilst the SCR has identified a number of relevant practice improvements, these are limited in number. As highlighted by the SCR author, '*nothing distinguished this couple (the parents of child N & O) from the many thousands of others in comparable circumstances*'. This was not a family with an extensive history of professional involvement and as such, there was minimal information to analyse in this context.
- 1.6 Furthermore, when considering the involvement of professionals immediately prior to the incident, this was overwhelmingly characterised by good practice. As the SCR concluded, '*No agency or individual was able to (nor could be reasonably expected to) anticipate or prevent the actions taken by father within so few days of him raising concerns about his partner*'. Indeed, this was not a case affected by either individual or systemic weakness, although it has reinforced the importance of the following:
- Identified or unidentified fathers in terms of potential value or risk
  - Routine enquiries with respect to the possibility of domestic abuse
  - The relevance of cultural / linguistic barriers to mutual understanding
- 1.7 The full report and associated recommendations of the SCR have been accepted in full by the CHSCB. Alongside the monitoring of relevant actions assigned to a

number of organisations, the CHSCB will ensure the learning from this particular SCR is cascaded as appropriate, in partnership with colleagues leading on the Violence Against Women's and Girls (VAWG) agenda.

- 1.8 Of particular significance will be the promotion of a wider understanding and focus upon issues relating to faith or culture not diluting the safeguarding response for either children or adults exposed to domestic abuse.