

Statement of the Independent Chair of Barking & Dagenham Safeguarding Adults Board on the publication of a Safeguarding Adults Review into the case of 'Drina'

Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adults Board is today publishing a report into the care and safeguarding interventions provided to a young woman who is suspected to be a victim of modern slavery.

This case has highlighted unexpected levels of ignorance regarding the issue and a number of inappropriate actions by professionals.

Publication of this report follows a decision by Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adult Board on 31 January 2018. The Board confirmed improvement actions required and the need for further learning by practitioners and managers across all organisations about Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery.

The Overview Report of a Safeguarding Adults Review within the terms of the Care Act 2014, Section 44 is being published in full. The report was compiled independently by retired senior police officer, David Byford. It focusses mainly on the actions of Barking and Dagenham Council and the Metropolitan Police. Notwithstanding that, the conclusions of the report and the 'messages' it sends out are important for all social care, public protection and health care organisations in Barking and Dagenham, and potentially more widely.

The circumstances of a woman with learning disabilities who was probably trafficked from Romania failed to be appreciated properly. These were not investigated adequately by a number of professionals prior to her repatriation in December 2016. The possibility that she may well have been a victim of modern slavery, whether individually or as part of an organised system, and a vulnerable person in that context, was never properly known. Her current location or well-being in her home country, or elsewhere in Europe, is currently unknown.

The review author sought information from London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, the Metropolitan Police and North East London NHS Foundation Trust. The report's author draws conclusions about weaknesses in professionals' awareness, actions, and failures to put in place necessary safeguarding arrangements. The report makes a number of recommendations for improvement actions.

The report's conclusions and recommendations for actions have been accepted by all relevant statutory organisations represented on Barking and Dagenham's Safeguarding Adults Board, and indeed by the Safeguarding Adults Board as a whole.

Having initially received a first draft of the Independent Overview Report at its quarterly meeting on 16 October 2017, the final report was then accepted formally by all parties. At its next meeting on 31 January 2018, the Safeguarding Adults Board:

- Confirmed a ten point action plan (also being published), with several of its improvements already implemented or well on the way to being so
- Emphasised to all members of the Board, senior leaders of the relevant statutory bodies, and indeed all professionals and the public more widely in Barking and Dagenham, the importance of greater awareness of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery, how it may manifest itself and what safeguarding actions are required
- Confirmed that all organisations represented on Barking and Dagenham's Safeguarding Adults Board have put in place their own organisation-specific awareness and training programmes
- Agreed that, in addition, multi-agency safeguarding adults learning sessions about Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery would be put in place by the Safeguarding Adults Board, with the first such session in May 2018.
- That the full Safeguarding Adults Review report, the 10 point Action Plan and this introduction would all be published on Barking and Dagenham's Safeguarding Adults Board website, with the learning then available within Barking and Dagenham and more widely.

Brian Parrott
Independent Chair, Safeguarding Adults Board
Barking and Dagenham
February 2018

Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adults Board members:
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
Metropolitan Police
Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups
North East London NHS Foundation Trust
Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospital NHS Trust