

## Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR) update

### Background

1. A report on the introduction of Domestic Homicide Reviews was discussed at the Safer Stockton Partnership meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2011. It is now a requirement for Community Safety Partnerships to conduct a Domestic Homicide Review following a domestic homicide. This requirement came into effect on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

### Partnership meeting 17<sup>th</sup> May 2011

2. Following the last meeting of the Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP) a meeting was held on the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2011 with DCI Peter McPhillips and colleagues from Redcar, Middlesbrough and Hartlepool to discuss the implications of DHR's. Currently the Police have 7 fully trained Independent Management Review (IMR) authors to work on Serious Case Reviews (SCR) and this resource would be used on a DHR from a Police perspective. Due to the high time demand for working on a DHR and completing IMR reports it is not feasible to loan these authors out to other organisations.
3. As the DHR will follow along a similar path of a SCR, existing agencies who already participate in SCR's will have access to IMR authors. There may be an issue in relation to smaller organisations and third sector bodies that may not have this resource. There is the possibility of organisations accessing IMR author training as this has been done before. Peter is going to explore the cost implications of this and see if a number of possible training providers can be identified. A training session has been carried out in the past in Redcar and it is believed that this was free of charge, although this is yet to be confirmed.
4. The main issue for any subsequent DHR will be finding a suitable independent chair who will ultimately be responsible for the final overview report. Due to the high level of responsibility and experience required it is likely that this individual will be working at a relevant senior level with the appropriate skills and expertise to effectively contribute to the process. It was agreed at the meeting that colleagues could explore the possibility of pooling resources based on a north south split (i.e. Hartlepool/Stockton and Middlesbrough/Redcar & Cleveland) but with the flexibility for resources to be offered outside of this arrangement if there were capacity issues. A request was made to report this back to the SSP to see if the partnership could identify a number of individuals deemed suitably experienced and qualified to act as an independent chair. It is important to add that it is likely that this role will require a significant time commitment. The independent Chair will be required to pull together all of the IMR's for the final report and will be accountable for the subsequent findings and actions which arise from the review. Early consultation with Durham suggests that the authority plans to buy in independent chairs for DHR reviews. To contract an independent Chair and any additional IMR authors costs an average of £500 per day per person. As the DHR process can take 6 months the final cost of a review could exceed £10,000. There has recently been a domestic homicide in Durham which took place after the introduction of DHR's.

## Next Steps

5. At the meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> May it was agreed that the ideal situation for all Tees Valley partnerships would be to establish a bank of independent chairs who could be called upon to lead any subsequent review. In addition to this it was agreed that it would be useful for each partnership to provide a confirmed list of IMR authors within the respective agencies, as well as identify any suitable training providers who could support organisations that do not have access to IMR authors.
6. A further meeting is being held on the 13<sup>th</sup> July to discuss progress within each respective partnership. Since the last meeting it has been confirmed that Middlesbrough do not want to be part of any partnership arrangement in relation to DHR's and will look to complete the process with their own resources.
7. It is **RECOMMENDED** that
  - (a) members of the Partnership consider whether they would be prepared to act as independent chairs, and whether they would need additional training for this purpose; and
  - (b) members of the Partnership suggest any other options for resourcing DHRs.