



Bristol Safeguarding
Children Board

making safeguarding everybody's business

Bristol Safeguarding Children Board publishes Child T Serious Case Review

The Bristol Safeguarding Children Board has published the findings of an independent Serious Case Review following the death of Child T on 14 January 2013, aged three months.

The circumstances of this tragic event have also been subject to other formal processes including a criminal investigation and trial, a Child Death Overview Process and coroner's inquiries.

Sally Lewis, Chair of the Bristol Safeguarding Children Board said: "On behalf of the Board and its partner members I wish to express my most sincere condolences to the families for their loss.

"I can report that a most thorough and comprehensive review has been undertaken of relevant circumstances that led to the tragic outcome. The review was undertaken by an independent professional commissioned for her significant qualifications and experience in this area of expertise.

"Protecting our children is a national, statutory and very personal concern. Sadly, it is virtually impossible to eradicate risk entirely. I can report that every organisation involved in the review has shown integrity to identify and address any areas where practice can be improved. Where shortcomings have been identified I want to express our most profound regret.

"Whilst we can never wholly eliminate dangerous behaviour, our communities rightly expect that we reduce the risk to the absolute minimum. It is important that this review has taken full account of, and incorporates learning from previous Serious Case Reviews; the level of improvement impact already made and the relevant findings from formal inspections.

"Improvements are already in place including better information and knowledge sharing to help spot risks early, revised training for professional staff and new processes and guidance to ensure any agency that comes into contact with a child or family at risk can respond more promptly and appropriately. More recently, in November 2014, Ofsted recognised that agencies in Bristol are working very effectively to tackle child sexual exploitation.

"As a consequence of this frank and rigorous approach, I have confidence in the robust and purposeful nature of the recommendations made to, and accepted by the Board.

"Since my appointment as independent board chair in August 2014 I have seen evidence of high levels of commitment from partner agencies in the delivery of this most critical area of public service. Work to implement the recommendations made in this Serious Case Review has already started and will be subject to ongoing scrutiny."

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. At the request of the family, this press release and all associated statements refer to 'Child T' rather than to the victim by name.
2. The main body of the serious case review into Child T's death was concluded during 2013 however publication has been delayed due to the requirement to wait until the criminal trial concluded.
3. In December 2013 William Stephens, Child T's father, was jailed for six years for manslaughter.

About the Bristol Safeguarding Children Board

Bristol Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) is a statutory, independently chaired multi-agency body established under The Children Act 2004.

The main function of Bristol Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) is to co-ordinate and lead work on child protection within Bristol, making safeguarding everybody's business. It ensures that there are adequate arrangements in place across agencies to protect children from harm. It also has obligations to ensure that the welfare of children is promoted.

Key statutory agencies which are members of BSCB are:

Acute Health Trusts, University Hospitals Bristol Foundation NHS Trust & North Bristol NHS Trust
Avon & Somerset Police
Avon & Somerset Probation
Bristol City Council
Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group
Bristol Community Health
Bristol Youth Offending Team
CAFCASS
Connexions: West of England
NHS Bristol
Strategic Health Authority

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/children-and-young-people/bristol-safeguarding-children-board>