



Edward Timpson MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families

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Professor Nick Frost
Independent Chair of Bradford Safeguarding Children Board

27 November 2013

Dear Nick,

Thank you for your letter dated 20 November and the detailed response to the questions I posed in relation to the serious case review of Hamzah Khan. I appreciate the swift response and the level of detail provided by Bradford Council.

Our statutory guidance, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2013 stresses that the purpose of a serious case review is to be “transparent about any mistakes which were made so that lessons can be learnt”. The LSCB must commission a review which meets this objective, looking at what happened in a case and why, what action will be taken to learn from the review findings and publishing the report in full.

As you know, I had reservations about the serious case review you commissioned into the death of Hamzah Khan. I felt it left important questions unanswered and decisions unexplained. I was not convinced that it was sufficiently transparent, clear and comprehensive to reassure the public that the necessary lessons had been learned in order to make the improvements needed in local services.

Your responses to the questions I set out in my letter of 13 November, and your letter to me, provide fuller answers to those questions. I welcome the fact that you have now put your letter to me into the public domain and have indicated that you will be publishing the detailed answers to the questions in due course. It is important, however, that this information is published in a way that does not harm the welfare of other children or vulnerable adults involved in this case.

It is not my responsibility as Children’s Minister to pass judgement upon the actions of individuals or organisations. It is my responsibility to ensure that serious case reviews are transparent and complete.

The law is clear on the duties placed upon local authorities under section 17 of the Children Act and the action and investigation required under section 47, and has been clear since 1989. I would be happy to receive any analysis from Bradford about how the section 47 thresholds held any professional back in this case.

*Yours ever,
Edward*

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Copy to Tony Reeves, Mark Burns-Williamson and Heathcliffe Bowen.