

A3.18.2. One general comment is particularly important in emphasising the existence at all times of good work in the Department. The processes of exposing and remedying both the failed response to [LA-A29] and the poor practice relating to fostering, sprang from initiatives and persistence by the Department's own staff. Both of the Inquiries resulted from internal vigilance, skill and determination, not from exposure by an external source.

A3.19. The Management of the Department

A3.19.1. In the previous Part of this Appendix I dismissed the possible culpability of the "others", those with corporate responsibilities outside the Department's management, for not having interfered in the management of the Department. It is now incumbent upon me to demonstrate to the Council that I have also carefully considered the accountability of all those holding office in the Department's relevant senior managerial structure. The criticism process has included consideration of the actions of several more Departmental officers than the two openly criticised in this Report. I now set out the reasons why I have decided not to criticise their involvement with [LA-A29] disclosure.

A3.19.2. The overall responsibility for the conduct of the Social Services Department lay with the then Executive Director. I explained in paragraph 6.7.6. SPR why I do not criticise the person who was the temporary Acting Director at the time [LA-A29] made his disclosure. Criticism of the Executive Director who succeeded him in office is made in sub-section A3.25. below.

A3.19.3. Within the Social Services Department there were two Divisions whose officers should have been directly involved in the response to [LA-A29] disclosure - the new Children and Families Division and the new Quality and Strategy Division. The Acting Assistant Director in charge of the Children and Families Division was, from the beginning, in apparent personal charge of the Departmental process for organising a response to [LA-A29] disclosure (Section 6 SPR). Criticism of this Assistant Director is made in sub-section A3.26. below.

A3.19.4. Those under the Assistant Director's control can only be subjected to criticism if they disobeyed her, or failed properly to support the process which she directed. In examining the details of what happened within that Division's work, I have noted some work of the Assistant Director's subordinates of which I am critical, but none of sufficient contributory seriousness to warrant criticism in this Report. As explained in sub-section A3.17., I have written to the current Executive Director for her to pursue these criticisms managerially.

A3.19.5. The Assistant Director in charge of the Quality and Strategy Division, and his subordinates, all took repeated action to enable a Child Protection process to be re-instated, from the time they were first aware of [LA-A29] disclosure (paragraph 6.17.2. and Section 7 SPR). This included twice referring their concerns to the Executive Director of the Department. When a new opportunity arose to pursue their concerns in 1998 they immediately took it (Section 8 SPR). When their conduct is viewed in this way, further consideration of their conduct by way of criticism does not arise.