



City of

NOTTINGHAM

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Dr Roger Morgan
Director of Children's Rights
National Care Standards Commission
St Nicholas Building
St Nicholas Street
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE1 1NB

DPA 2002

Dear

Dr Morgan

RE: REPORT FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF Name Redacted

I write further to my letter of **DPA** 2002.

I and my colleagues welcome the opportunity to meet on **DPA** 2002 to discuss this report.

The tragic death of **Name Redacted** has saddened us all. We as a department are determined that if there are any lessons to be learned any appropriate action will be taken by this Authority. We have worked hard to achieve our reputation as a two star Social Services Authority and are constantly striving to improve by forward thinking, action, audit and review.

I would ask that following discussion of the substantive text of the report and in particular recommendations 8.1 to 8.9, that consideration be given, where appropriate, to those recommendations being modified.

In this letter I include:

1. A list of the report's recommendations with my comments thereon. I would be grateful if these could be used as a starting point for our discussions.
2. An appendix containing a response to the substantive text of the report highlighting both factual inaccuracies and additional comment. We would ask that these be considered to have a bearing on the form of the recommendations.

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Director of Social Services: Paul Small

Recommendations

- 8.1 This recommendation has already been complied with. All the children were moved from Woodborough Road to new placements by the DPA 2002. This was following all reviews and risk assessments having been done.

Woodborough Road is a home where it was known that work needed to be done in relation to staffing and other matters. That work was ongoing at the time of Name Redacted's death. Woodborough Road had a current Statement of Purpose.

There are firm plans in place to refresh all aspects of operations at Woodborough Road with a view to it being reopened. This planning is of course being done in line with the Children's Homes Regulations and the National Minimum Standards.

The problems experienced at Woodborough Road were individual to that establishment and were not indicative of systemic problems relating to all the city's establishments.

Please see Appendix - Factual Inaccuracies 6.5, 6.6, 6.8 and Comments 5.3, 6.5 and 8.1.

- 8.2 With reference to this recommendation I have had sight of the response to the report sent to you from DCI Wilson, Vice Chair Nottingham ACPC. I would endorse her comments and would ask that recommendation 8.2 be deleted. I would submit that the Child Protection procedures currently being operated are as a result of extensive interagency involvement including that of Nottingham City Council.

Please see Appendix - Factual Inaccuracies 3.4.

- 8.3 With reference to this recommendation I have again had sight of DCI Wilson's response. I would endorse her comments and would ask that recommendation 8.3 be deleted.

The setting up of a Serious Case Review was not one for Nottingham City Council alone, but was properly an interagency decision which was taken on the DPA 2002. The Social Services Department had taken a decision immediately after Name Redacted's death to initiate its own management review. Although there was no immediate proposals from Nottingham City Social Services to promote the idea that there should be a Serious Case Review, it was an issue under constant review.

Please see Appendix - Factual Inaccuracies 3.4.

8.4 It is agreed that Nottingham Social Services Department will review its procedures regarding notification of significant events. Please note that the current guidance has already been reissued.

Please see Appendix - Comments 5.1, 6.1 and 8.4.

8.5 In relation to this recommendation I would ask that it be modified in order to take account of the fact that there are emergency occasions, having regard to the child's welfare and his or her views, when this is necessary. We now have emergency contact numbers for National Care Standards Commission and will ensure that you are immediately informed in any future circumstance. Since 1st September there has only been one child over numbers and currently none.

Please see Appendix – Comments 6.3.

8.6 In relation to this recommendation the acknowledged problems related specifically

and to Woodborough Road were not systemic as far as the other children's

8.7 homes were concerned. I would ask that consideration be given to modifying or deleting recommendations 8.6 and 8.7.

Please see Appendix - Factual Inaccuracies 6.8.

8.8 In relation to this recommendation please note that an initial framework report has been given to members relating to the circumstances surrounding Name Redacted's death. Consideration will be given to this report when it becomes a full and final one as opposed to a draft.

8.9 In relation to this recommendation it has already been highlighted that there was ongoing work in relation to Woodborough Road. This had the full knowledge and support of the Social Services Board Executive Member.

Please see appendix Comments 6.5 and 8.1.

I would be very grateful if you would feel able to contact me ahead of the meeting if there are any of my points on which you are unclear or to commence the discussion itself.

I look forward to meeting you on the DPA 2002.

DPA

Andrew Lowe – Director Social Services (Acting)
Nottingham City Council