

# **DOMESTIC HOMICIDE REVIEW**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**London Borough of Haringey Safer  
Communities Partnership**

**Report into the murder of Eleena  
March 2018**

**Author: Davina James-Hanman OBE**

**July 2019**

# DHR OVERVIEW REPORT INTO THE MURDER OF ELEENA, MARCH 2018

## Preface

The Independent Chair and the DHR Panel members offer their deepest sympathy to all who have been affected by the death of Eleena<sup>1</sup>, and thank them, together with the others who have contributed to the deliberations of the Review, for their participation, generosity of spirit and patience. We especially offer our sympathy to her surviving son and hope that his recovery continues.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) came into force on the 13th April 2011. They were established on a statutory basis under Section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004). The Act states that a DHR should be a review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by-

- (a) A person to whom she was related or with whom she was or had been in an intimate personal relationship or
- (b) A member of the same household as herself;

with a view to identifying the lessons to be learnt from the death.

Throughout the report the term 'domestic abuse' is used interchangeably with 'domestic violence', and the report uses the cross-Government definition as issued in March 2013.

1.2 This Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) examines the circumstances leading up to the death of Eleena who was murdered in March 2018 by her husband.

## 1. Overview

### Persons involved in this DHR

Name	Gender	Age at the time of the murder	Relationship with victim	Ethnicity
Eleena	F	35	Victim	Tanzanian

---

<sup>1</sup> Not her real name

Jonas <sup>2</sup>	M	39	Husband and perpetrator	Tanzanian
Jayden <sup>3</sup>	M	12	Eleena's son from her first marriage	

Address 1 is the home where all the above-named people lived. It is a terraced house divided into three flats. The family lived in the ground floor flat.

### 3. Parallel reviews

3.1 An inquest was opened and adjourned pending the outcome of the criminal trial. There are no current plans to resume the inquest. The trial took place in October 2018 where Jonas pleaded guilty to murder and was sentenced to life imprisonment with a minimum tariff of 23 years.

3.2 There were no other parallel reviews.

### 4. Domestic Homicide Review Panel

The DHR Panel was comprised of the following:

Davina James-Hanman	Independent DHR Chair and report author
Caroline Murphy	Director of Operations, Nia
Fiona Dwyer	Strategic Violence Against Women and Girls Lead, LB Haringey
Hazel Ashworth	Designated Professional for Safeguarding Adults NHS Haringey Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
Jennifer Cirone	Senior Manager, Solace Women's Aid
Karen Miller	Head of Safeguarding, Whittington Health NHS Trust
Liz Gaunt	Specialist Crime Review Group, Metropolitan Police

### 5. Independence

The author of this report, Davina James-Hanman, is independent of all agencies involved and had no prior contact with any family members. She is an experienced DHR Chair and is also nationally recognised as an expert in domestic violence having been active in this area of work for over three decades.

All Panel Members were independent of any direct contact with the subjects of this DHR and nor were they the immediate line managers of anyone who had had direct contact. This also applied to those agencies who provided chronologies, none of which prompted

<sup>2</sup> Not his real name

<sup>3</sup> Not his real name

a request for a full Individual Management Review.

## **6. Terms of Reference and Scope**

6.1. The timeframe for the DHR was set as being from 2008 which is around the time Eleena and Jayden arrived in the UK. This also captures the period of Jonas's first marriage.

6.2 The key issues identified as needing exploration in this DHR were:

- Protected characteristics of Eleena and Jonas and whether there was any indication of either being a vulnerable adult.
- Whether Eleena knew about domestic abuse services and were there any barriers to her accessing these?
- Whether Jayden was adequately protected?
- Whether Jonas had a history of abuse and if so, could more have been done to ensure this was known?
- Were there any concerns amongst family / friends / colleagues or within the community and if so, how could such concerns have been harnessed to enable intervention and support?
- Whether local service provision is adequate and sufficiently prioritised in local planning arrangements?
- Whether local agencies are adequately engaging with the local African population?
- Whether local agencies have robust domestic abuse policies and procedures in place both individually and on a multi-agency basis?
- Whether training is available to, and accessed by, staff in relation to responding to the above issues?

## **7. Confidentiality and dissemination**

7.1 The findings of this Overview Report are restricted. Information is available only to participating officers/professionals and their line managers, until after the Review has been approved for publication by the Home Office Quality Assurance Panel. Members of the victim's family have also been provided with a copy of the report.

7.2 As recommended within the 'Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews' to protect the identities of those involved, pseudonyms have been used and precise dates obscured.

## **8. Methodology**

8.1 Only three agencies had contact with the subjects of this Review prior to the murder: two with Eleena and one with Jayden. No agencies had any record of contact with Jonas.

- 8.2 Chronologies were provided by Eleena's GP, the Metropolitan Police and Jayden's school.
- 8.3 Eleena had in the past been in contact with the Metropolitan Police both as a victim of theft and as a witness in another crime. Whilst these contacts were not relevant to the Review, they did at least demonstrate that Eleena was not reluctant to contact the Police and had some confidence that matters reported would be taken seriously. It cannot be assumed that she would have felt the same about reporting domestic abuse, but it is probably reasonable to conclude that she was not wholly unwilling.
- 8.4 Eleena also had contact with her GP. This was over an on-going health issue which predated her meeting the perpetrator and was unrelated to this Review.
- 8.5 Jayden's school had noted no concerns over his behaviour. This is perhaps to be expected given that Jayden would later give evidence that he had never witnessed so much as an argument between his mother and stepfather.
- 8.6 As a consequence of this minimal contact, no Individual Management Reviews were felt to be necessary.
- 8.7 This report is an anthology of information and facts gathered from:
- The chronologies and a short report from the Metropolitan Police summarising the witness statements taken during the course of the criminal investigation
  - The Police Senior Investigating Officer and Family Liaison Officer
  - The criminal trial and associated press articles, including those in Tanzania where the trial was extensively covered
  - DHR Panel discussions
  - Information from family members.

## **9. Involvement of family and friends**

- 9.1 The family of the victim were informed by letter about the commencement of the DHR and invited to participate. The letter made clear that involvement in the DHR was voluntary and could happen in a way and at a time of their choosing. The Home Office leaflet on DHRs was provided, along with information about the service provided by Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA). The letter outlined the different ways in which they could be involved in the DHR, including a face-to-face meeting, telephone conversation, written statement or other ways that could be discussed. The letter invited contact directly from them, or through any service or person who may be supporting them. No reply was received.
- 9.2 Once the trial had concluded, a second attempt was made. Again, no replies were received. The Panel was subsequently informed that Jayden had gone to live in his

father's country and had ceased all contact with other family members.

- 9.3 The Chair then tried to contact other family members and eventually made contact with Eleena's maternal Aunt who lives in the UK. Subsequent to this very helpful conversation, further attempts were made to speak with Eleena's mother who lives in Tanzania, but these were ultimately unsuccessful.
- 9.4 Post-conviction, the perpetrator was contacted in prison and invited to participate. No response was received.
- 9.5 A summary of witness statements taken by the police during the criminal investigation was provided to the Panel. This included a statement from Jonas's ex-wife and from two of Eleena's friends.

## **10. Summary chronology**

- 10.1 Jonas was married before in Tanzania in 2012. They were married for around three and a half years during which time he was emotionally and physically abusive. His first wife eventually escaped and fled to another country.
- 10.2 Very little additional information is known about Jonas.
- 10.3 In February 2017, Eleena went to Tanzania for an Aunt's funeral. Whilst she was there, she met Jonas for the first time and they had a whirlwind romance which continued via social media after she returned to the UK. Eleena told friends and family that she was madly in love.
- 10.4 In May 2017, they were married in Tanzania. Eleena returned to the UK alone whilst Jonas made an application to come to the UK. At the start of December 2017, the couple met again on a holiday in Dubai where Leyla introduced him to her son, Jayden.
- 10.5 One evening when they were in Dubai, Eleena and Jonas went out to a nightclub. Eleena's mobile rang and seeing it was Jayden, she answered whilst moving outside the club so that she could hear better. Jayden had rung to say goodnight to his Mum and they spoke together for a few minutes. By this time, Jonas had noticed she was missing and followed her outside. He immediately accused her of speaking to an old boyfriend and slapped her across the face. A security guard intervened and Eleena left and went home. The following day she told her Mother about the incident. Her Mother was alarmed and told Eleena that a man should not treat you like this and you need to think carefully about taking him with you to the UK. Eleena reassured her mother that he wouldn't dare behave like that in the UK as there, the laws on domestic abuse were very strict. It should be noted at this point that a UK visitor's visa can take up to six weeks to process so it is likely at this point that Jonas already had his visa to the UK.
- 10.6 At the end of the holiday, Jonas went to the UK, arriving on a six-month visitor's visa in mid-December 2017. This immigration status meant he had no right to work in the UK and he became a house husband, looking after the home and Jayden when required.

- 10.7 Eleena had invited Jonas out one evening in March 2018. Jonas forgot about this and decided that he did not want to go as he was tired and they didn't have anyone to look after Jayden. Eleena wasn't happy about this as she wanted them both to go out. She met up with her friend and they travelled together to the first bar in a taxi. At some point they went to a second bar and just before 4am, got a taxi home. Eleena's friend was dropped off first and Eleena was dropped off at address 1 shortly after.
- 10.8 Jonas said that he was waiting up for Eleena when she got in. What followed between 4 am and approximately 6.40 am is unknown but it is clear that the account provided by Jonas is untrue.
- 10.9 Jayden was woken up around 6.40am by the sound of his mother screaming for him to call the police. He went to Eleena's bedroom and saw Jonas strangling his mother on the bed. Jayden screamed at Jonas to stop, to which he responded by getting up off the bed and leaving the room. He returned almost immediately, only this time carrying a knife. By this time, Eleena had got up off the bed and was standing. Jonas pushed her to the floor and began stabbing her. Eleena was screaming and trying to protect herself and Jonas shouted at Jayden to get out. Jayden grabbed some clothes from his room and was on his way out when Jonas emerged from the bedroom, his hands covered in blood. He took the flat keys from Jayden who fled the flat and called the police.
- 10.10 A few minutes after the 999 call from Jayden, a man called the Police and stated that his wife had attacked him with a knife and he had defended himself. He said he was at address 1. It would later be confirmed that the mobile phone number that made this call belonged to Jonas.
- 10.11 Two police officers responded to the call and on arrival were met at the main front door by a man (Jonas). He had blood on his hands and a small superficial cut on his left forearm. He was immediately handcuffed. The officer asked, 'Where is she?' to which Jonas replied, 'She's down there, she's injured me'.

One officer remained with Jonas while the other officer checked the ground floor flat. He found the lifeless body of Eleena lying face down in the doorway to the bedroom wearing just a small vest top. The most significant injury and cause of death was a slash to her neck of such severity that it had damaged the spinal bone. She had also been stabbed six times in the head and neck, 22 times in her arms and 21 times on her trunk. She was also covered in bruises and her eyes showed evidence of strangulation.

- 10.12 Jonas was arrested and charged with murder.

## **11. Key findings and lessons learned**

The purpose of this review is to highlight the lessons that might be learned from cases of domestic homicide. Only two agencies had any contact with Eleena and in neither case was the contact relevant to this Review. Only one agency had contact with Jayden and this too yielded no relevant information. No agency had any contact with Jonas.

Having established that there was no organisational information, the Panel then explored whether there were any signs of abuse that Eleena felt unable or was unwilling to report.

It is clear that Jonas had a history of being violent and controlling to his previous wife and possibly other female partners. There is also evidence that he was – on at least one previous occasion – physically violent to Eleena and that he was also jealous and possessive. There is, however, a paucity of evidence of the impact of this behaviour on Eleena. Jayden reported that he never saw them argue, although this could have simply been the result of protective parenting by Eleena. Her friends and family did report that she socialised less often after Jonas arrived in the UK, but it is possible that this was, at least in part, of Eleena's choosing, wanting to spend time with her new husband. Even if she were affected by his attempts to control her, it didn't stop her going out drinking with a friend the night before the murder.

Nevertheless, Eleena had told her mother that they were often arguing and on one occasion made reference to the fact that he was only in the UK on a six month visitor's visa saying that he had six months to 'prove himself' otherwise he'd be gone.

Jonas was only in the UK for a short time, but comments made to others reveal that he was already unhappy with his situation. His exact expectations remain unknown, but he did not like having no money and being unable to work. Given his past behaviour in relationships, it is likely that he (wrongly) felt emasculated at not being in control.

Two dangerous cultural narratives contributed to this incident. Firstly, the myth of whirlwind love affairs being romantic rather than a cause for concern and secondly the myth that 'real' men control 'their' women. Unpicking and dispelling myths like these are fundamental to the work undertaken by specialist services in the Borough, including those working with perpetrators.

The Review Panel has critically reviewed this case to identify any potential lessons to improve the future. In line with the terms of reference, the Panel has assured itself that local service provision is adequate, reaching the local African population and that processes are in place to provide quality interventions. Despite the best efforts of the Panel, there were no lessons identified from this DHR. The services provided, policies and procedures will continue to be reviewed and improved within the auspices of Haringey Community Safety Partnership.

## **12. Recommendations**

- 12.1 Upon receiving permission to publish, Haringey Safer Communities Partnership should attach a full and unredacted copy of this report to Jayden's Social Care Records should he later wish to find out more information about his mother's death.