

In reaction to the conviction of three people for causing or allowing the death of a child in Haringey borough, Maggie Atkinson, President of ADCS, said

“This loss of life is clearly an individual tragedy, but it is not a symptom of a broken child protection system. It does not reflect the dramatic steps forward that have been made in child protection practice, policy and procedures in recent years. The systems and professional development of staff that are needed to ensure good standards of practice are constantly being developed and improved. The development of common frameworks for reporting and recording, combined with improving standards of professional practice are having a direct impact on the outcomes for the most vulnerable young people.

Child protection is complex and difficult and sadly we cannot eliminate risk or the miscalculation of risk. We must work to ensure the highest standards of service in every case and we must continue with our relentless determination to support and develop the whole workforce. Sadly there are those who will continue to kill and seriously harm children. Not every tragedy can be prevented but we must continue to strive to do so - we owe this child and those who loved him that much.”

Following the announcement that Lord Laming is to undertake an inquiry into progress on his recommendations, Maggie added:

“We look forward to working constructively with Lord Laming to assess the progress that has been made in recent years following his recommendations on child protection. Our members stand ready to assist him in his investigations in whatever way necessary.”

In reaction to the announcement that an immediate inspection of child protection in Haringey is to be undertaken, Maggie Atkinson continued:

"It is right that where there are concerns over the way a case has been handled that the whole process is looked at with a fresh pair of eyes, and the seriousness of this case clearly merits immediate scrutiny. The inspection of services in Haringey will reveal whether or not there were processes that could have been improved to help Child P before his tragic death. We welcome the multi-agency approach to the inspection, and the involvement of a well-respected DCS, to reflect the involvement of a number of agencies in the case itself."