

# **The Death of Lee Irving**



**Safeguarding Adults Review**

**Easy Read: April 2018**

## The murder of Lee Irving



Lee Irving was a man with a learning disability who was murdered in 2015.



Lee died because he was beaten up by a man he shared a house with. He had lots of horrible injuries to his body.



The man who murdered him was sent to jail.



Three other people who Lee thought were his friends did nothing to help him.

They were sent to jail for allowing the death of an 'adult at risk'. This means an adult who because they have a disability, or a mental health issue may not always understand how to keep themselves safe from abuse.

## What this report is about

This report looks at how Lee was supported by different organisations in his life. This includes:



- The Police
- Social Workers
- The health services
- Housing services

The report will look at whether the different organisations:



- Worked well together
- Could they have done anything differently
- Need to improve how they work together to support people

## The life and death of Lee Irving



Lee was born and brought up with his brothers and sisters in Newcastle.



Lee went to Percy Hedley School for people who have a disability. When Lee left school his life did become more difficult.



Lee got into trouble with the police and was arrested a lot of times. This was often to do with drink, drugs and stealing.



When Lee left home he moved into a house with other adults that he thought were his friends.

People started to worry that the other people in Lee's house were using him and hurting him.

## Support for Lee



The Social Workers and Police were worried about how well Lee was coping with living independently and how safe he was.

**They did not know how much support Lee needed. This was partly because:**



- Lee missed lots of meetings or appointments where people could talk to him about offering support.
- Lee wanted to make his own choices about how he lived.



Lee was asked to do some tests to find out what level of support he needed.

It was found that Lee needed more support to understand things than people realised.



This meant that Lee could not always make the best decisions to keep himself safe in the community.



The Social Workers started working with Lee to move into Supported Living with other people with a disability and support staff.

This was still being looked at when Lee was murdered.



## Lees relationship with his family



Lee's family say he was well looked after at school.



When Lee left school, his family feel he stopped getting the support from services that he needed.



This was because Lee was now treated as an adult. Lee's family said that he may have been older but he was not ready to be treated like an adult.

When Lee left home, life became more difficult for him. Lee's family found it harder to support him and meet his needs.

## Disability Hate Crime



A disability hate crime is when somebody is hurt, abused or bullied because they have a disability.



The Adult Safeguarding Board believes that Lee was treated differently because he had a learning disability.



The court did say that the people who allowed his death were guilty of 'causing or allowing the death of a vulnerable adult'.

## Some of things that need to improve



Lee's family feel:

- Lee had poor support when he left school
- Lee's family was not asked enough about how to support Lee



The different organisations did not:

- Share information properly about the work they were doing with Lee
- Work together to look at why Lee did not go to meetings and appointments



Sometimes people with a learning disability make decisions that can put themselves at risk.

This can mean that other people need to make decisions for somebody so that they are safe.



There is a law called the Mental Capacity Act. The law can be used to decide if a person with a learning disability needs somebody to make decisions for them.



The Mental Capacity Act could have been used more often to keep Lee safe. Many staff did not understand how to use the Mental Capacity Act to support people.



## Recommendations



Make sure people get good support as they move from school to adulthood.



Organisations should:

- Share information about people in a much better way
- Work together to agree the best way to support somebody
- Think of better ways to support people if they keep missing meetings and appointments.



Training about keeping people safe:

- Should be looked at to make sure it is good enough
- People should be trained to understand hate crime. Lee's story should be used in training



Sometimes a lot of different people say they are worried about the same person.

When this happens, the person should be seen as quickly as possible, so they are kept safe.



Many people now communicate using social media. The different organisations must make sure they understand how to use social media to improve what they do



All the different organisations wrote their own reports about how to improve the support for people.

They should make sure the ideas in these reports are used to change services.

## Keeping yourself and other people safe



The report into the life and death of Lee has now finished. We know that it is very upsetting for people. Remember there is a lot of support to keep people safe from abuse.



Keeping people safe is called safeguarding. Safeguarding adults means working together to stop abuse happening and help everyone to live free, happy lives and make their own choices.



Abuse is when someone does or says things to you that make you upset or frightened. Abuse can happen in different ways.



It could be:

- Emotional
- Financial
- Sexual
- Physical
- Neglect
- Discriminatory



If you think that you or somebody that you know is being abused, you should tell someone.



**You can tell someone you trust.**

This could be:

- A nurse
- The police
- A social worker
- A family member
- A friend
- A carer



You or the person you tell should call Adult Social Care and let them know that abuse is happening. They can then look at what needs to be done to keep people safe.

**Some ways you can get support if you or somebody you know is being abused.**



You can phone the police using:

**999**



You can make a safeguarding alert by phoning:

Monday – Friday between 8am-5pm

**0191 278 8377**

Weekends and evenings between 5pm-8am

**0191 278 7878**



**Sending a letter to:**

Community Health and Social Care Direct  
2nd Floor, Allendale Road,  
Newcastle upon Tyne,  
NE6 2SZ



**Textphone** 0191 278 8359

(Monday - Friday, 8am-5pm)



**SMS** 07968474891

(SMS for D/deaf or hard of hearing customers)

(Monday - Friday, 8am-5pm)



## What happens next?



When Adult Social Care get a **safeguarding adults referral** they need to find out how serious the abuse is.



They will talk to you about what has happened and offer you support.



Talk to other people to find out what has happened.



Take action to make sure that you are safe.