

4. BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS

- 4.1 This section of the report briefly describes key events from the birth of child D's sibling. Further detail is then provided at appropriate points throughout the report.
- 4.2 Child D's family consisted of his mother and older sibling, child C, all of whom are white British. The identities of the children's fathers were unclear, due to conflicting accounts from the mother. She also has two other children, who were removed from her care in 2010, and now live in permanent placements elsewhere.
- 4.3 The mother had very difficult childhood and spent long periods in care from the age of 5. She experienced 15 different placements including secure accommodation. Her first child was born when she was still in care and a second child was born 2 years later. They were made subject to care proceedings in 2010 by a neighbouring local authority, due to concerns about neglect arising from the mother's transient lifestyle, multiple partners, use of alcohol and domestic abuse.
- 4.4 Following their removal, the mother continued to misuse alcohol, took several overdoses, and moved frequently, fleeing domestic abuse.
- 4.5 The mother returned to Swindon at the end of 2012 and a core assessment was completed in March 2013 before the birth of child C. A pre birth child protection conference was held in April 2013 when child C was made subject to a child protection plan under the categories of emotional and physical abuse.
- 4.6 There were some concerns about the mother's use of alcohol during the spring and summer of 2013, and about changes of partner. In December 2013, a review child protection conference decided to remove child C from a child protection plan; she was designated a child in need.
- 4.7 In February 2014 the mother and child C moved to a refuge in Devon. The refuge staff were concerned that the mother was leaving child C with unsuitable carers, so an initial child protection conference was convened in April 2014 following their return to Swindon. Child C was made subject to a child protection plan under the category of neglect, and a legal planning meeting was recommended.
- 4.8 In August 2014, the mother was so drunk that police were called and she was admitted to hospital. Child C was also admitted to hospital very briefly for her own protection. A review child protection conference later that month recommended that the Public Law Outline (PLO) process should start in respect of child C. In the same month, it was confirmed that the mother was pregnant (with child D) and that the pregnancy would be high risk.
- 4.9 A legal planning meeting within the PLO process took place in November 2014. A follow up meeting scheduled for January 2015 was cancelled due to the mother's deteriorating health. She was admitted to hospital in Swindon at the end of January due to serious complications with her pregnancy and subsequently transferred to a hospital in Oxford in mid February for specialist care. The review child protection conference in respect of child C, scheduled for the end of February 2015, was postponed as the mother was in hospital.

(Child C was in the care of her maternal grandmother). This was to be the pre birth conference in respect of child D.

- 4.10 Child D was born 6 weeks prematurely in Oxford and placed in the neonatal unit. The mother underwent major surgery following his birth. A week later child D and the mother were transferred to the Swindon hospital. Child D was placed in special care for two days, and then joined his mother on the post natal ward. Mother and baby were discharged home when child D was 12 days old.
- 4.11 During the following three days child D was visited by midwives, his health visitor and his social worker. The latter had no concerns about the home conditions or the mother's capacity to parent him. Child D was also taken to the GP practice when his mother requested painkillers for herself. It is reported that his mother was in a pub with child D the night before he died. The following morning he was found dead (aged 16 days) on the sofa after his mother had fallen asleep after breast feeding. No criminal charges were brought.
- 4.12 Child C was subsequently made subject to care proceedings and lives with a family member.